Module 4

Ethics and public administration

Introduction

Ethics is one of the most important (yet misunderstood) concerns in public administration. The field of public management ethics deals with questions about whether specific public administration practices are acceptable.

By its very nature the field of public management ethics is controversial, and there is no universally acceptable approach for resolving this question. There are universal values and principles that govern ethics in all areas. These values define what is right or wrong in a society or organisation and may include respect for other people, human equality, honesty and fairness. Ethics exists outside our various professions but no profession exists without ethics.

Studying ethics in public administration is important for many reasons. Recent incidents of unethical activity in federal, state and local governments in several countries underscore the need for a better understanding of the ethical decision-making process. The lack of transparency and accountability also contributes to ethical and unethical activities in the public as well as private sectors. Personal moral philosophies and decision-experience may not be sufficient to guide administrators in the public world.

There is, however, another set of challenges and set of skills that are equally implicated in effective public administration; the ethical dilemma that all public managers confront and the skills they need to resolve them in an effective manner is also paramount.

The purpose of this module is to help students improve those skills they may need to better prepare them for the ethical issues that will arise in the course of their career as public administrators. A good knowledge of ethics will help students make better decisions, assume greater responsibility, perform their duties in a more ethical and justifiable manner and be able to explain their actions more reasonably.

Module outcomes

Upon completion of this module, you will be able to:

Outcomes

- *Define* ethics and the code of ethics.

- *Explain* why government organisations need a code of ethics.

- *Describe* the major ethical theories and their relationship to public administration.

- *Analyse* governmental ethics from a cross-cultural perspective.

- *Describe* the appropriate action to take in order to resolve unethical practices in the government workplace.

- *Apply* ethical decision-making processes to arrive at rational and fair decisions.

- *Evaluate* the role of specialised government agencies that are designed to regulate ethical conduct in the workplace.

- *Explain* the contribution of the deontological and teleological theories in understanding the ethical dilemma in public administration.

- *Describe* the core ethical competencies of an ideal public administrator.

- *Implement* the appropriate actions that public servants can take as administrators to support ethical climates in a government institution.

What is ethics?

Ethics often refers to the choice between what is good and what is bad, or between right and wrong. In ethical theory, good is first defined, and then the right action is deemed to be a way of achieving that good (Shaw & Barry, 2010). Ethics is concerned with moral duty and obligation. Another word for ethics is morality. The Greek philosopher Aristotle stated that ethics deals with the conduct of human action.

In public administration, ethics focuses on how the public administrator should question and reflect "in order to be able to act responsibly" (Bruce, 2001; Standwick & Standwick, 2010). Ethics requires enquiry and contemplation into the truth that is, seeking "the right answers to one's questions" (Kaplan & Ross, 1968). According to Henry (2010, pp. 121–179), ethics is "better business, good government and personal success".

What is morality?

Morality refers to the standards of behaviour by which people are judged and particularly to the standards of behaviour by which people are judged in their relationships with others. Morality also refers to good character and right actions that build and support noble and virtuous character (Geuras & Garofalo, 2005).

Morality implies equitable conduct, fairness, moral eminence and freedom from the taint of questionability (Shaw & Barry, 2010). A person in the middle of a desert, isolated from everyone else, might act in a way that is immature or stupid, but they could not truly be said to have acted immorally since that behaviour could have no impact upon others, unless it were to waste water or some other resource needed by travellers in the future (Cooper, 2006).

Ethics, on the other hand, encompasses the system of beliefs that supports a particular view of morality (Dibie, 2007). If a person believes that other people should not smoke in a crowded room, it is because they have accepted the research findings of most scientists and the published statement of the Surgeon General that tobacco smoke is harmful to health. Their acceptance of those findings is their ethic for that particular situation.

The difference between morality and ethics is easy to remember if one speaks of moral standards of behaviour and ethical systems of belief.

Activity 4.1

Activity

1. What are the major differences between ethics and morality? Why are the two concepts important to the public administration profession?

2. Can good character alone make a government efficient and effective in the provision of goods and services to its citizens? Explain.

Moral problems in the public sector

Moral problems occur frequently in public management. They extend beyond the commonly discussed issues of bribery, theft, mismanagement, waste of public resources and the deliberate act of distortion of information in order to deceive the public (Geuras & Garofalo, 2005). Moral problems also involve using public position for self-aggrandisement.

Moral problems truly are managerial dilemmas in government. They represent a conflict between government financial performance and unethical practices of public administrators. The moral problem could be measured by revenue, costs, and provision of adequate goods and services. The nature of the obligation of government is open to interpretation, but most of us would agree that it includes effective and efficient delivery of basic goods and services to all citizens. The obligation of government also involves protecting loyal employees, producing safe roads and preserving environmental features (Cooper, 2006; Lewis & Gilman, 2005).

Unfortunately, the dilemma of public management is that these obligations are never met adequately. Sometimes, these obligations are costly both for the government, evaluated by financial standards, and for managers subject to unethical behaviours. Good public administrators should be able to provide answers to moral questions by considering the economic outcomes, the legal requirements and the ethical duties to serve the public.

Moral standards

Moral standards of behaviour are our gauges of individual and organisational actions. They are the means we all use to decide whether our actions and those of other people and other groups with whom we live and work are right or wrong, fair or unfair, just or unjust.

The problem is that moral standards of behaviour are subjective. They are personal (Standwick & Standwick, 2010; Bruce, 2001). They are the way each of us intuitively feels about our actions and those of our neighbours, friends and associates, but we cannot really justify those feelings.

Such an understanding is perfectly acceptable when we are dealing with a minor moral problem such as lying to avoid causing discomfort to a friend. However, such an understanding — to agree to disagree — is not acceptable when we are concerned with a substantial moral problem such as building a huge hydro-electric dam that will benefit millions of people who live far away yet harm the thousands of individuals who live right there (Cooper, 2006). We have to decide the issue, not ignore the conflict; and the first step is to understand that moral standards are not an adequate framework for a decision because they are variable as well as personal.

Moral issues vary by individual, group, region, country, culture and time (Shaw & Barry, 2010)*.* For example, contractors in South and Central America (and large parts of Africa and Asia) think that it is perfectly acceptable to make small payments to government officials to facilitate needed documents, permits and contracts. That is termed bribery in the United States (Bruce, 2001).

Government officials in the United States, however, believe that it is perfectly acceptable to work for foreign firms that have a business relationship with the government, after retirement from government employment. That is termed treason in South and Central America and a large part of Asia (Geuras & Garofalo, 2005).

Moral standards of behaviour differ between people because the goals, norms, beliefs and values on which they depend also differ. And those goals, norms, beliefs and values in turn differ because of variations in the religious and cultural traditions and the economic and social situations in which the individuals are living or immersed.

Recognising the moral impact

It is suggested that in order to start analysing a moral problem and determining the solution you identify exactly who is going to benefit and who is going to be harmed. The first step is to make certain that everyone involved in the moral problem understands what is happening to everyone else.

This can be done by asking the following questions:

Benefits — whose wellbeing will be substantially improved by the present or proposed action?

Harms — whose wellbeing will be substantially harmed by the present or proposed action?

Rights — whose rights will be exercised and made more certain by the present or proposed action?

Wrongs — whose rights will be denied and made less certain by the present or proposed action?

The next step in the analytical process is to clearly state the moral problem so that everyone fully comprehends the issues (regardless of religious and cultural traditions) as well as the economic and social situation.

Ethical duty by members of a society

Ethical duties in moral analysis refer to the obligations owed by members of a society to other members of the society. Clearly, some obligations do exist.

- Not to lie to each other — or agreement will not be possible.

- Not to cheat each other — or contracts will not be possible.

- Not to steal from each other — or communities will not be possible.

The problem is that if I could lie just a little bit, cheat just a little bit and steal a little bit the society could still be maintained, although weakened, and I would be advantaged though you would be harmed. Note that the focus in moral analysis is between self-interest and social interest (Shaw & Barry, 2010; Weimer & Vining, 1992).

The doctrine of ethical duties does not look for a balance between duties. It does not say that a little more lying, cheating or stealing by one group can be balanced by a little lying, cheating and stealing by another and society will be better off. Instead, it attempts to set the rules or conditions under which some very specific instances of lying, cheating and stealing would be permissible (Cooper, 2006).

Ethical duties get down to the absolute essence of what is right, just and fair for everyone. Remember this "for everyone" condition. An ethical principle is meaningless unless it can be applied to all. Public managers are, therefore, expected to create an ethically healthy work environment in government institutions.

Activity 4.2

Activity

1. Summarise the nature of unethical behaviour of public administrators in your country.

2. Compare the unethical behaviour of political leaders and that of public administrators in your country.

3. What do you perceive to be the major differences between corrupt public managers and private business professionals in your country?

4. What do you consider to be the ethical duties of a society? Why are these ethical duties important in achieving good governance?

5. In what ways are moral issues in public organisations different from those in the private sector?

Ethical relativism

Ethical relativism is a technique of moral reasoning. It addresses a very basic question:

Are there objective universal principles upon which one can construct an ethical system of belief that is applicable to all groups in all cultures at all times?

The ethical system of belief supporting the moral standards of behaviour also differs in each group, in each country and in each time period. Ethical belief can also give a clear explanation of the basis of a society's actions (Standwick & Standwick, 2010). The question in ethical relativism is not whether different moral standards and ethical beliefs exist; they clearly do, and we all have experiences to confirm that fact (Cooper, 2006). The question addressed by ethical relativism is whether there is any commonality that overrides those differences.

Fortunately, there is one principle that does seem to exist across all groups, cultures and times and tends to form part of every ethical system (Rawls, 1994). This principle is the belief that members of a group do bear some form of responsibility for the wellbeing of other members of that group (Ratan, 2002).

People in all cultures, even the most primitive, do not act solely for their own self-interest, and they understand that standards of behaviour are needed to promote co-operation and ensure survival (Shaw & Barry, 2010; Weimer & Vining, 1992). These standards of behaviour can be either negative (it is considered wrong to harm other members of the group) or positive (it is considered right not to harm other members of the group), but they do exist.

Consequently, the important question in moral relativism is not whether your moral standards are as good as mine; it is whether they help other members of society as well as mine do.

What is equity?

Equity implies conformity to acceptable standards of natural rights, laws and justice (Bruce, 2001; Martin, 2005). Equitable behaviour is devoid of prejudice, favouritism or fraud. It also implies the qualities of justice, fairness and impartiality.

Elements of inequality

Discrimination

The injurious treatment of people on grounds that is rationally irrelevant to the situation. In other words, the differential treatment of people. It must be emphasised that discrimination is an act based on prejudice or a system of applied prejudice. Prejudice, by contrast, is an attitude — albeit hostile — that may or may not materialise in action.

Racial discrimination

An intrinsic social evil, it has led to increased injustice, oppression and hatred in several countries or societies that are bent on justice, tolerance and morality. The potency of racial discrimination stems from collective ignorance, rigid belief and indifference to the dictates of conscience.

The doctrine of superior races — ethnocentrism

The perception that one's own culture or race is better or superior to other cultures or races.

The fallacy of racial morality

An unconscious discrimination practice on a racial basis that affects an entire category of employees or applicants for employment. The employer may claim to be moral but in practice is unconsciously discriminating against a minority group.

Institutional racism

Discriminatory practices that are inflicted by institutions (public and private) rather than by individuals.

Reverse discrimination

Adverse treatment of white men, based on their race and gender. In the United States, for example, white men dominated the professional workforce until the Civil Rights Act was passed in 1964 and the Affirmative Action policy born of it. Thereafter, in order to have a more diversified workforce most organisations started recruiting more minority persons and fewer white men. Thus, an affirmative action policy is a positive proactive step taken on a temporary basis to correct the effect of past discrimination practices.

Unequal treatment

Unequal pay (gender-based wage differences). Education of women in the nation must begin to emphasise career opportunities for women in non-traditional occupations at an early age. There is a need to emphasise the societal need as well as the economic benefit to the employer to provide day care for children, parental leave, flexible hours and other non-monetary compensation that allows women to remain in employment positions instead of retreating from their positions at the onset of bearing children.

Women must become increasingly aware of the value of their market power. The answer to this market imperfection, therefore, is not only for employers to provide women with wages equal to those that men receive but also to encourage women to identify and exercise their market power, as do other under-represented classes.

Finally, equality can exist only where all individuals are treated the same, where they are rewarded or punished to the same degree for the same behaviour, regardless of race or gender. Managing diversity and differences is based on the premise that public managers can learn how to manage employees' differences in ways that make workers more productive and compatible as team members.

What is justice?

Justice implies qualities of justness, fairness, impartiality, integrity and honesty (Hosmer, 2006).

Aristotle used the term justice to mean "practising virtue towards others and conforming to truth, facts and reasons". Aristotle thought that achievement of justice in a society contributed to the development of friendship between people and an atmosphere in which ethical behaviour could take place (Shaw & Barry, 2010).

Justice can be defined as the type of human behaviour that disallows undue interference in the lives or affairs of others and, whenever possible, prohibits other people from committing such transgressions (Rawls, 1994). Under the justice concept, people should be respected for their own basic worth and regarded as equals. The just person is one who consciously governs his or her actions so as not to disturb the proper concerns of others. If injustice, the opposite of justice, leads to conflict and insecurity, then we can argue that justice can help a society achieve harmony and stability.

Activity 4.3

Activity

1. Why is justice and equality important to all societies?

2. How might a public administrator that practices virtue help to promote ethical services in the public sector?

3. Would you consider an act that is based on prejudice to be fair? Explain your reasons.

Theories of ethical reasoning

The moral absolutism theory argues in favour of a universal moral standard that could be applied everywhere in the world (Hosmer, 2006; Robertson, 2008). It contends that if bribery is viewed as unacceptable in the United Kingdom, the United States and the Republic of South Africa, then there should be a global policy that prevents Pakistani citizens from paying or taking bribes.

The ethical relativist doctrine argues that it is morally appropriate to pay a bribe in Pakistan where bribery is a common practice and culturally acceptable (Robertson, 2008). The current corruption dilemma in most developing countries falls between the moral absolutism and relativism arguments.

Ethical duties get down to the absolute essence of what is right, just and fair for everyone, which stipulates that we should never take any action that is not kind and that does not build a sense of community, a sense of

all of us working together for a commonly accepted goal (Fisher & Lovell, 2006).

Government and its leaders should not take any action that does not result in greater good than harm for all citizens. Political leaders, public administrators and privileged citizens in the private sector should realise that the people in the nation have different social and economic wants. A nation needs a rule to protect the poor (and uneducated) who lack the power and position to achieve those wants. Therefore, political leaders, public administrators and privileged citizens in a nation should not take corrupt actions in which the least (or poor) among the citizens will be harmed (Hosmer, 2006). Political leaders, public administrators and privileged citizens should never take corrupt action that will interfere with the rights of others for self-development and improvement (Fisher & Lovell, 2006).

As Aristotle stated, ethics deals with the conduct of human action (Hosmer, 2006). In public administration, ethics focuses on how the public administrator should question and reflect in order to be able to act responsibly. Ethics requires enquiry and contemplation into the truth that is, seeking "the right answers to one's questions" (Kaplan & Ross, 1968).

Six ethical principles are adopted in this unit. These six ethical principles should remind public administrators that no single value, such as economic efficiency, can provide an adequate basis for all decision-making; rather, moral principles and the values they represent are fundamental to ethics.
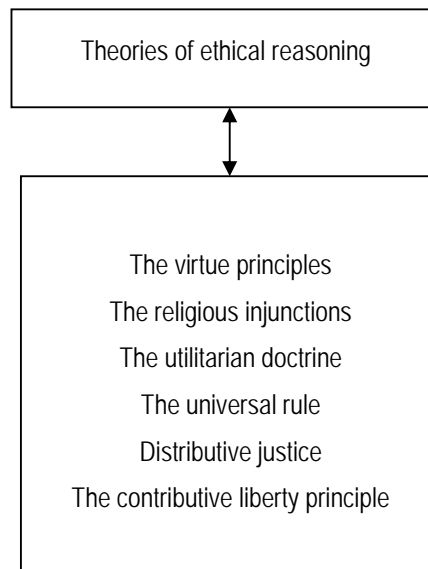

Figure 4.1 Dynamics of ethical theories

Source: Dibie (2007)

1. **The virtue principles** by Aristotle (384-322 BC) stipulate that public leaders have to be honest, open and truthful; for example, to eliminate distrust, they should live temperately so as not to

incite envy (as cited in Hosmer, 2006). It is difficult to be proud of actions that exploit or oppress others (Cooper, 2006). The principle then can be expressed as "never take any action that is not honest, open, truthful and that you would not be proud to see reported widely in national newspapers and on network television".

2. **The religious injunctions** by St. Augustine (AD 354-430) and St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) indicated that honesty, truthfulness and temperance are not enough (as cited in Hosmer, 2006, and Lewis & Gilman, 2005). Public leaders and public administrators should have some degree of compassion and kindness toward each other to form a truly good nation (Dibie, 2007). Compassion and kindness are best expressed as the golden rule. Reciprocity and compassion together build a sense of community (Hosmer, 2006; Fisher & Lovell, 2006). The principle then can be expressed as "never take any action that is not kind and that does not build a sense of community, a sense of all of us working together for a commonly accepted goal".

3. **The utilitarian doctrine** that was postulated by the eighteenth-century philosopher Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832) and John Stuart Mill (1806–1873) in the nineteenth century contends that compassion and a sense of community would be ideal if everyone was compassionate, kind and worked for the good of the community rather than for themselves (Geuras & Garofalo, 2005). An act is then "right" if it leads to greater net social benefits than social harm. This is the rule that is often summarised as "greatest good for the greatest number" (Hosmer, 2006). The principle can be expressed as "never take any action that does not result in greater good than harm for the nation of which public leaders are a part".

4. **The universal rule** promoted by Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) pointed out that what we need is a rule to eliminate the self-interest of the person who decides in any given situation, and we can do that by universalising the decision-making process (Geuras & Garofalo, 2005; Robertson, 2008). The principle, then, can be expressed as "never take any action that you would not be willing to see others take against you if you are faced with the same (or similar) situation" (Hosmer, 2006).

5. **Distributive justice** contends that people have different social and economic wants (Rawls, 1994). Political leaders and public administrators need a rule to protect the poor and the uneducated who lack the power and position to achieve those wants (Geuras & Garofalo, 2005). If we did not know who among us would be poor and educated everyone would be in favour of such a rule. The principle, then, can be expressed as "never take any action in which the least among us will be harmed in any way" (Hosmer, 2006; Robertson, 2008).

John Locke (1632–1704) and Rawls (1994) also present moral rights or ethical arguments that complement the work of Kant

(Fisher & Lovell, 2006). Locke claimed that every person is born with, and possesses, certain basic rights that he referred to as "natural rights" (Robertson, 2008). These rights are inherent in a person's nature; they are possessed by everyone equally and cannot be taken away.

On the other hand, Rawls (pp. 21–38) asks an interesting question: "Which principle of justice would a rational person formulate if he were behind a veil of ignorance?" That is, if he does not know whether he is young or old, male or female, rich or poor, highly motivated or an introvert, or anything about his status in society (Hosmer, 2006). Unable to predict which principles, if picked, will favour him personally, Rawls argues, such a person will be forced to choose principles that are fair to all (Rawls, 1994).

6. **The contributive liberty principle** by Robert Nozick (1938–2002) pointed out that perhaps liberty, the freedom to follow one's own self-interest within the constraints of the law and markets, is more important than justice, the right to be protected from extremes of that law and those markets (Cooper, 2006; Geuras & Garofalo, 2005). No one should interfere with the rights of anyone else to improve their legal abilities and marketable skills. The principle, then, can be expressed as "never take any action that will interfere with the rights of others for self-development and self-improvement" (Hosmer, 2006). Note that the focus in moral analysis is between self-interest and social interest. Ethical principles are meaningless unless they can be applied to all.

The World Bank and many scholars have defined corruption as the abuses of public office for private gain (World Bank, 2006; Adamolekun, 1999; Fisher & Lovell, 2006). The World Bank also argues that corruption is greater where distortions in the policy and regulatory regime provide scope for it and where institutions of restraint are weak. This argument stipulates that regulation, distorting policies, weak bureaucracies and weak judicial systems all allow for more corruption (Dibie, 2007).

Ethical ideas do influence our attitudes, but very little. Socrates (469–399 BC) believed that knowledge is virtue and Plato (429-347 BC) put up arguments to prove that our knowledge of moral ideas and values can make us good (Donaldson & Werhane, 1999).

This view, as we observe in some African nations, is mistaken. There are criminals among intellectuals, the military and political leaders in some developing nations' communities and public institutions. Many of them should be sent to jail, but their knowledge and social position enables them to act against morality and the law and to escape punishment (Dibie, 2007). The most ethically deprived sectors of the African and Asian societies are not the illiterates, the mass of workers and farmers, or even the innocent youth who are reacting to the example of the larger society. The most immoral or unethical people in some developing nations are the elite, be they business people, presidents, ministers, military or police officers, public administrators or professionals.

Teleological or consequentialist theory

The Greek term *teleios* means "consequences or to bring the matter to its end or purpose".

Teleological theory determines the moral worth of an action by the extent to which that action accomplishes a purpose or an end (Shaw & Barry, 2010). Therefore, the consequences of the act determine the act's correctness (Hosmer, 2006). If the result is good, then the act is right; if the result is bad, the act is wrong. Two of the best-known teleological theories are utilitarianism and social justice (Boatright, 1997).

The teleological theory postulates that the rightness of an action is determined solely by the amount of good consequences it produces. Actions are justified by virtue of the ends they achieve rather than some feature of the actions themselves (Rohr, 2002; Robertson, 2008). The concept of goodness is fundamental in teleological theory, and the concepts of rightness and obligation (or duty) are defined in terms of goodness (Donaldson & Werhane 1999; Fisher & Lovell 2006).

The consequentialist theory of ethical reasoning, also referred to as the teleological theory, concentrates on the consequences of human action and evaluates all actions in terms of the extent to which they achieve desirable results. Another consequentialist notion also holds that a right action must maximise overall good; that is, it must maximise good or bad from the standpoint of the entire human community (Donaldson & Werhane, 1999; Geuras & Garofalo, 2005). The best acceptable label for this type of consequentialism is utilitarianism.

Bentham coined this term, although its best-known proponent was Mill. As formulated by Bentham, the principle of utility states that an action is right if it produces the greatest balance of pleasure or happiness (and unhappiness) in light of alternative actions (Fisher & Lovell, 2006). Mill supported a similar principle, using what he called "the proof of the principle of utility", namely, the recognition that the only proof of something being desirable is that someone actually desires it (Hellriegel & Slocum, 1994).

Boatright (1997) discusses the teleological and deontological ethical theories in his work. The deontology theory comes from Kant (as cited in Hosmer, 2006, and Bozeman, 2008). Kant believed that ethical reasoning should concern activities that are rationally motivated and should use precepts that apply universally to all human actions.

Kant argued that the proper focus for ethical judgments should not be consequences but moral precepts: the rules, norms, and principles that guide human action. Kant stressed that the only thing that can be good or worthwhile without any provisos or stipulations is an action of the will freely motivated for the right reasons. Other aspects such as wealth, beauty and intelligence are certainly valuable but are not good without qualification because they have the potential to create both good and bad effects.

Bentham and Mills (as cited in Cooper, 1991) perceived utilitarianism as a revolutionary theory. Bentham and Mills contended that an action is right if, and only if, it produces the greatest balance of pleasure over pain for everyone (Cooper, 1991; Bozeman, 2008). Bentham and Mills also contended that an action is right if, and only if, it conforms to a set of rules, the general acceptance of which would produce the greatest balance of pleasure over pain for everyone.

These approaches to ethics hold that public managers' decisions should be consistent with fundamental rights and privileges, such as those of life, freedom, health, privacy and property. Employees, customers and the general public should also have the right not to be intentionally deceived on matters about which they should be informed (Dibie, 2007). These principles could in turn be the values of a just society.

According to Dibie (2007), in a just society, the concepts of fairness, equity and impartiality are supported by three implementing principles.

The distributive justice principle requires managers to not treat individuals differently on the basis of arbitrarily defined characteristics.

The fairness principle requires employees to support the rules of the organisation when the following conditions are met: the organisation is just or fair and the employees have voluntarily accepted benefits provided by the organisation or have taken advantage of opportunities offered in order to further their own interests. Employees are then expected to follow the organisation's rules, even though the rules might restrict their individual choices.

The natural duty principle requires that public managers base decisions on a variety of universal obligations. These obligations are: the duty to help others who are in need or in jeopardy, provided that the help can be given without excessive personal risk or loss; the duty not to harm or injure another; the duty not to cause unnecessary suffering; and the duty to support and comply with just institutions.

The World Bank (2006) argues that lack of accountability can be seen as a chief cause of corruption. Corruption is greatest where distortion in the policy and regulatory regimes provide scope for it and where institutions of restraint are weak. Therefore, corruption could be linked to the size of the rents under a public official's control, the discretion that the official has in allocating those rents and the accountability that the official faces for their decisions. The World Bank contends that democratic accountability can help check corruption. Ethics in the public service cannot be achieved when political elites and bureaucrats who distribute government resources are not scrutinised by a free press or by an opposition party. Mbaku (2000) also argues that although few African nations have a press that is independent and free of government manipulation, the police and national judiciary system in some African nations is pervaded by a high level of corruption.

Diamond (1988) presents the argument that African culture and political history are the reason for high-level corruption. Colonial experience has also been identified as key to understanding corruption in some African nations. Frederickson (1999) contends that the arbitrary nature of the formation of states in Africa helps to explain why low levels of state

legitimacy and neo-patrimonial politics have galvanised corruption. Geuras and Garofalo (2011) also argue that what the West (Western Europe and North America) view as corruption is actually a naturally expected relationship that ties leaders and people together in Africa.

Easterly and Levine (1996) attribute much of sub-Saharan Africa's difficulties to ethno-linguistic fractionalisation. They argue that, insofar as there are poor policies, poor education, political instability, inadequate infrastructure and weak public institutions, corruption will take place. They link ethnic interest groups with redistributive policies in some developing nations as a cause of corruption.

Other scholars have blamed corruption on the fact that post-colonial African states were characterised by over-centralisation of power, absence of participatory democracy and increased government control of economic activities and resources, along with poverty and the lack of political will to combat the presence of corruption (Dibie, 2007).

Activity 4.4

Activity

1. According to religious injunctions, what can a public administrator do in order to achieve a good society?

2. Are actions that lead to the greatest good for the greatest number always ethical? Explain your reasons.

3. Discuss the major premise of the teleological theory. What do you like about this theory? How does the theory help to promote ethical values?

Deontological theory

The deontological theory is also known as obligation theory, because *deontos* in Greek means duty or obligation (Shaw & Barry, 2010; Geuras & Garofalo, 2005).

Deontological theorists judge the rightness or wrongness of an act on the basis of its obligatory nature. If the act is right, neither the intent behind it nor its consequences matter. The act is right. To the deontologists, the act is all that matters and all other factors are irrelevant (Dibie, 2007). This is why deontological theories are also known as inconsequential — unconcerned with the consequences.

The first statement is "take no action that you would not be willing to see that others, faced with the same or an equivalent situation, should also be free or even forced to take" (Bruce, 2001). The second statement is "treat each person as an end in himself or herself, worthy of dignity and respect, never as a means to your own ends" (Fisher & Lovell, 2006). This ethical theory stipulates that the moral worth of an action cannot be dependent on the outcome because those outcomes are so indefinite and uncertain at the

time a decision to act is made (Shaw & Barry, 2010). Instead, the moral worth of an action has to depend on the intentions of the person making the decision or performing the act. If I wish the best for others, then my moral actions are praiseworthy. Therefore, good intentions will normally result in beneficial outcomes.

Deontologists typically hold that certain actions are right not because of some benefits to an individual or group but because of the nature of these actions or the rules from which they follow (Ross, 1930; Geuras & Garofalo 2011; Carson, 1985; Danley, 1983). Therefore, both the idea contained in "do unto others as you would like them to do unto you" and bribery are wrong because of their very nature, regardless of the consequences.

Kant propounded the deontology theory or the principle of universal duties (Hosmer, 2006). Kant stipulated that personal intentions can be translated into personal duties or obligations because, if we truly wish the best for others, then we will always act in ways to ensure those beneficial results; and those ways become duties that are incumbent on us rather than a choice that is open to us:

- It is our duty to adhere to contracts.

- It is our duty to tell the truth.

- It is our duty not to take property that belongs to others.

Truthfulness, legality and honesty can be logically derived from the basic principles of all ethical systems (Bozeman, 2008). In deontological theory they are the duties that we owe to others. Our personal duties are universal, applicable to everyone, and consequently much of deontological theory is also termed universalism, just as large portions of teleological theory are called utilitarianism.

The first duty of universalism is to treat others as ends and not as means. No actions can be considered to be "right" in accordance with personal duty if they disregard the ultimate moral worth of any other being (Hosmer, 2006: Robertson, 2008). Kant argued that an act (or decision) can be judged to be right and just and fair only if everyone must (without qualification) perform the same act or reach the same decision given similar circumstances.

Kant started with the proposition that it is unfair for me to do something that others do not, cannot or would not do to me (Cooper, 1991). This is not because the total effect on society might be harmful if everyone took the same action, such as refusing to pay taxes. Instead, all of us owe others the duty of acting logically and consistently. The fact is that I should pay taxes because I want a world of law and order, and therefore I must also want to provide the financial support for the law and order (Martin, 2005; Fisher & Lovell, 2006). Law and order and taxes are right for me if, and only if, they are right for everyone else. That is, if they are universal. Kant's universal principles can be understood as an attempt to tie moral actions to rational decisions, with rationality defined as being based on consistency (Hosmer, 2006).

The two formulations by Kant were:

1. Act only in ways that we would wish all others to act, if faced with the same set of circumstances.

2. Always treat other people with dignity and respect.

The common law is a good form of universalism or the deontological theory. Everyone, faced with a just debt, should pay that debt and no one, needing money, should rob banks. All public managers, in considering promotions and pay increases, should include length of service as well as individual ability. No public administrator should contact few employees or agree to trade favour with attractive female employees or hire staff from the same ethnic or racial group due to tribalism.

Activity 4.5

Activity

1. Why is the ethical duty (or obligation) of public administrators important in order to create a good government?

2. Discuss the major premise of the deontological theory. What do you like about this theory?

3. How do the deontological and teleological theories differ from each other? What are their similarities?

4. In your opinion, what is wrong with the deontological theory?

5. In your opinion, why is it important to treat other people with dignity and respect?

Why should students study ethics in public administration?

Concerns about ethical wrongdoing are almost epidemic today.

The mass media report unethical activities in government departments and agencies nearly every day. Several national surveys found that more than 60 per cent of senior public administrators in developing countries and business executives in most industrialised nations believe that people are at least occasionally unethical in their business dealings (Lewis, 1991; Dibie, 2007). Henry (2010) contends that graduates of top public administration programmes in the United States rank maintaining ethical standards as the single most important skill by far for achieving success, regardless of where they are employed — government, business or non-profit organisations.

Studying ethics in public administration is valuable for several reasons:

- Many people believe that if an organisation hires good people with strong ethical values then it will be a good ethical organisation.

- Good ethics courses provide students with an awareness of ethical issues they might confront.

- Good ethics courses also help cultivate an attitude of ethical obligation in pursuing a career in public service.

- True moral rules can be related to a variety of situations in life, and some people do not distinguish everyday ethical issues from business ones.

(Dibie & Gadzekpo, 2003)

Our concern, however, is with the application of moral rules and principles in the public management context. Many important ethical issues (such as those related to family and sexuality) do not arise very often in the public management context, although they remain complex moral dilemmas within one's own personal life (Madsen & Shafritz, 2006). Professionals in any field, including public administration, must deal with individuals' personal moral dilemmas as these affect their ability to function on the job. Just being a good person and (in your own view) having sound personal ethics may not be sufficient to handle the ethical issues that arise in a public organisation.

Studying public management ethics helps students to identify ethical issues and recognise the approaches available to solve them. Students learn more about the ethical decision-making process and about ways to control ethical behaviour within the organisation. By studying public management ethics, students may begin to understand how to cope with conflicts between their personal values and those of the organisation where they work.

Ethical activities in public organisations

Ethical standards must be part of the organisational culture, if such an organisation can truly work effectively (Bozeman, 2008; Fisher & Lovell, 2006). As professionals have an important function in making public policy, an association of professionals may be well positioned to encourage a more meaningful code of conduct for its members.

Major ethical variables

Leadership: The distinguishing characteristics of the executive function require not merely conformance to a complex code of moral conduct but also the creation of a moral code for others. For example, employees must know what is expected, and managers ought to work to set the example in daily operations by talking about the needs of the public as well as the agency and the ethical implications to them.

Training: A large number of survey participants recommend an organisational training and development strategy to fortify leadership by example. Managers should seek to achieve a "positive buy-in by involving employees in the goals and process of creating an agency ethics code" (Fisher & Lovell, 2006). Public managers should also practise what they preach by showing good examples. Such training would encourage leadership throughout the organisation irrespective of rank or function.

Effective modelling can come from the bottom as well as the top when first-line supervisors and middle managers set a clear standard for their

units (Bruce, 2001; Geuras & Garafalo, 2011). Ethics in public agencies means verbal and behavioural management leadership.

Administration: The way ethical concerns are defined and reported is crucial in the day-to-day business of an organisation. Not every dilemma will have a right solution, but it should be possible to agree on a problem-solving procedure. Examples of administrative practices that take place in many agency programmes include:

- inconsistent application of rules,

- the use of double standards,

- punishment of whistleblowers,

- secrecy, and

- cat-and-mouse procedures that catch the innocent but fail against those who are unprincipled.

Finally, leadership behaviour must include (and be supported by) an organisational training strategy that focuses on a code of ethics.

Activity 4.6

Activity

1. Discuss three major ethical variables that are necessary for a public administrator to be ethically well-behaved.

2. Name some unethical administrative practices that take place in public organisations in your country.

Code of ethics

There are universal values and principles that govern ethics in all areas. These values and principles include:

- respect for other people,

- human equality,

- honesty, and

- fairness.

Codes of ethics and ethical training, although somewhat useful, tend to remain as an ethically superficial document (Lewis, 1991; Martin, 2007). Therefore, it could be argued that codes of ethics are limited with regard to promoting the development of morally mature and responsible public administrators. The fact that codes of ethics (or codes of conduct) fail to deal with the need for moral guidance, the development of ethical skill and the examination of moral issues is left unaddressed by several organisations (Madsen & Shafritz, 2006).

Why have a code of ethics?

The need for special ethical principles in a scientific society is the same as the need for ethical principles in society as a whole. A professional society is a voluntary, co-operative organisation, and those who must conform to its rules are also those who benefit from the conformity of others. Each has a stake in maintaining general compliance (Cooper, 2006; Bozeman, 2008; Geuras & Garofalo, 2005).

The major reasons for having a code of ethics are:

- to define accepted or acceptable behaviours,
- to promote high standards or practice,
- to provide a benchmark for members to use for self-evaluation,
- to establish a framework for professional behaviour and responsibilities,
- to be a vehicle for occupational identity, and
- to be a mark of occupational maturity.

Merits of a code of ethics

Several scholars have identified some merits for having a code of ethics (Bruce, 2001; Cooper, 2006; Lewis, 1991; Standwick & Standwick, 2010). Below are some of the merits for having a code of ethics in an organisation:

- They can project ideals, norms and obligations.
- They can be inspirational and aspirational, presenting lofty values and ideals.
- They can establish an ethical status to which members of a profession may aspire to the moral optimum rather than the moral minimum established by ethics legislation.
- They can also be tailored to agency-specific needs and circumstances and help socialise employees into a profession.

Codes of ethics shortcomings

Much as there are merits to having codes of ethics, they also have their shortcomings, as listed below:

- Codes of ethics are often vague, abstract, lofty and difficult to apply in specific situations.
- Codes of ethics often fail to connect their general sentiments, such as being honest in thought and deed, to specific behaviours.
- Codes of ethics are noble but subject to differing interpretations.
- Codes of ethics can take the form of an elegant plaque that is hung on the office wall and thereafter ignored.
- Codes of ethics may be quoted on ceremonial occasions but never taken seriously enough to use in assessing the conduct of individual members.

- Even when enforcement is part of the code of ethics, the code may still be meaningless, as most public sector professional associations are not the gatekeepers for their professions.

Codes of ethics demand more than simple compliance. They mandate the exercise of judgment and acceptance of responsibility for decisions rendered. Simply urging public employees to exercise judgment and accept responsibility is clearly inadequate. Public employees, like all human beings, need advice and guidance as well as the opportunity to develop ethical skills and the ability to discuss the ethical challenges they face on a daily basis. To illustrate this point, let us evaluate the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) Code of Ethics (2006).

The ASPA Code of Ethics is exemplary. Its five categories are:

1. Serve the public interest.

2. Respect the Constitution and the law.

3. Demonstrate personal integrity.

4. Promote ethical organisations.

5. Strive for professional excellence.

These five categories cover the ethics spectrum, touching on the major areas of concern in public administration.

Codes of ethics are like mission statements. They provide broad direction, not specific details. This is only reasonable, and we do not fault codes of ethics for these characteristics (Lewis, 1991).

This module's concern rests with the three assumptions that seem to govern attitudes and behaviour toward codes of ethics. A code of ethics provides sufficient or effective direction to enable public administrators to exercise judgment in the public interest. Most senior public administrators are already conversant with effective approaches to the exercise of discretion and other ethical concerns. Organisations, once having developed or displayed a code of ethics, have met their responsibility.

Like the code of ethics, ethical training has become a widespread fixture in public organisations, perceived by many public officials as "a key element to an effective code of ethics" (Bruce, 2001; Cooper, 2002; Lewis, 1991; Standwick & Standwick, 2010).

In many developed countries ethics training is required at the federal, as well as many state and municipal or local government levels (Adamolekun, 1999). A code of ethics and ethical training together constitute the official organisational, indeed governmental, response to expectations of trust, responsibility and accountability.

How to write a code of conduct

Before articulating the culture of an organisation through a code of ethics or statement of values, the organisation must first determine its mission.

A code of conduct or ethics may delineate this foundation both for internal stakeholders such as employees as well as external stakeholders such as clients or citizens. The code should, therefore, enhance both

organisational reputation and also provide concrete guidance for internal decision-making, creating a built-in risk management. How successful these codes are depends (largely in part) on the process by which they are conceived and written as well as their implementation. As with the construction of a personal code or mission, it is critical to *first ask* what you or the organisation stands for.

- Why does the organisation exist?

- What is its purpose?

- How will it implement these objectives?

The *second step* is to support this change in the articulation of a clear vision regarding the organisation's direction.

- Be clear about the objectives that the code is intended to accomplish.

- Get support and ideas for the code from all levels of the organisation.

- Be aware of the latest laws and regulations that affect the organisation.

- Write as simply and clearly as possible. Avoid legal jargon and empty generalities.

The *third step* is to identify clear steps as to how the culture shift will occur. Processes and procedures need to be put in place that will help support and sustain the organisation's vision.

To have an effective code that will successfully impact culture, there must be a belief throughout the organisation that this culture is achievable. Therefore, the principles of trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship must be embodied in the code.

The code content should be:

- understandable,

- achievable, and

- justifiable.

All employees should be brought into the code creation process and it should be widely distributed and made fully accessible to all stakeholders. The organisation should enforce the code and do so consistently and fairly, ensuring that a mechanism is in place to monitor and obtain feedback.

Note that if the organisation is quite large and includes several large programmes or departments, it may have an overall corporate code of ethics and then a separate code to guide each programme or department. Codes should not be developed out of human resources or legal departments alone, as is often done. All staff members must see the ethics programme being driven by top management. The code of ethics and code of conduct may be the same in some organisations, depending on the culture and operations of the organisation.

Consider the following guidelines when developing a code of ethics:

1. Review any values needed in order to adhere to relevant laws and regulations.

2. Review which values produce the top three or four traits of a higher ethical and successful product or service in your area.

3. Identify values needed to address current issues in your workplace.

4. Identify any values needed, based on findings during strategic planning (SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis techniques).

5. Consider any top ethical values that might be prized by stakeholders.

Based on the above steps, the top five to 10 ethical values considered high priorities in your organisation should become clear.

Examples of ethical values may include:

- **trustworthiness** — honesty, integrity, promise-keeping and loyalty;

- **respect** — autonomy, acceptance, privacy, dignity, courtesy and tolerance;

- **responsibility** — accountability, pursuit of excellence;

- **caring attitude** — compassion, consideration, giving, sharing, kindness and loving;

- **justice and fairness** — procedural fairness, impartiality, consistency, equity, equality and due process; and

- **civic virtue and citizenship** — law-abiding, community service and protection of the environment.

Activity 4.7

Activity

1. Compare a business code of ethics with that of a government organisation.

2. Compare the code of conduct of two national governments.

3. Why is a code of ethics important for public organisations and public administrators?

4. Discuss the key elements of a code of ethics.

Is administrative ethics possible?

Two major objectives to administrative ethics arise from the concepts of the role of individuals in organisations. These concepts are called:

1. The ethics of neutrality

2. The ethics of structure

Administrative ethics involves the application of moral principles to the conduct of officials in organisations (Cooper, 2006). Administrative ethics is a type of political ethics that applies moral principles to political life more generally (Ferrell & Fraedrich, 2006). Broadly speaking, moral principles specify:

- the rights and duties that individuals should respect when they act in ways that seriously affect the wellbeing of other individuals and society, and

- the conditions that collective practices and policies should satisfy when they similarly affect the wellbeing of individuals and society.

(Cooper, 2006; Shaw & Barry, 2010)

Moral judgments presuppose the possibility of there being a person to make the judgment and a person or group of persons to be judged. The most general challenge to administrative ethics would be to deny the possibility of ethics at all or the possibility of the political ethics (Bozeman, 2008). The more direct challenge to administrative ethics comes from those who admit that morality is perfectly possible in private life but deny that it is possible in organisational life.

The ethics of neutrality

The conventional theory and practice of administrative ethics holds that administrators should carry out the orders of their superiors and the policies of the agency and government they serve (Bruce, 2001). Administrators ought to act neutrally in the sense that they should not follow their own moral principles but the decisions and policies of the organisation. Therefore, public administrators are neutral in the sense that they do not exercise independent moral judgment. They serve the organisation so that the organisation may serve the society. Ethics of neutrality does not deny that administrators must often use their own judgement in the formulation of policy.

The ethics of neutrality portrays the ideal administrator as a completely reliable instrument in the goals of the organisation (Cooper, 2006; Sheeran, 1999). They never inject their personal values into the process of furthering these goals. A variation of the ethics of neutrality gives some scope for individual moral judgment until the decision or policy is final. This variation puts neutrality in obeying orders, but suspended neutrality is still neutrality, and the choice for the administrator remains to obey or resign.

Three sets of criticism may be brought against the ethics of neutrality:

1. Because the ethics underestimate the discretion that administrators exercise, it impedes the accountability of administrators to citizens. The ethics of neutrality provides no guidance for this wide range of substantive moral decision-making in which administrators regularly engage.

2. A set of objections centres on the claim that holding office implies consent to the duties of office as defined by the organisation. But administrators' ability to do so may depend on their serving loyally while in government, demonstrating that they are good "team players" on whom any organisation, public or private, can rely.

3. The dynamics of collective decision-making discourages even the conscientious official from resigning on principle.

A fourth way in which the ethics of neutrality distorts the duties of public administrators is by limiting their courses of action to two:

1. Obedience

2. Resignation

(Fisher & Lovell, 2006; Cooper, 2006)

These considerations not only determine whether an official is justified in opposing the organisation's policy, but they also help to indicate what methods of dissent the official may be justified in using to express opposition (Geuras & Garofalo, 2005).

Many decisions are incremental. Therefore, their objectionable character apparently is only in their cumulative effect. Proponents of the ethics of neutrality may still insist that officials who cannot fulfil the duties of their office must resign however difficult it may be to do so (Cooper, 2006; Bruce, 2001). As citizens we should hesitate before endorsing this as a general principle of administrative ethics. Because we do not want to drive persons of principle from office, we should recognise that there may be good moral reasons for staying in office even while disagreeing with the policies of the government. This recognition points to the third set of objections to the ethics of neutrality — that it simplifies the moral circumstances of public office.

It tends to portray officials as assessing the fit between their moral principles and the policies of the organisation, obeying if the principles and policies match, resigning if they diverge too much. The more justified an official's opposition, the more justified the official is in using more extreme methods. The methods of dissent may be arrayed on a continuum from the most extreme to the most moderate.

Four types of dissent that any dissenter must consider:

1. A form of dissent in which an official protests within the organisation but still helps implement the policy or asks for a different assignment in the organisation.

2. Officials with the knowledge of ethics but against the wishes of their superiors carry their protest outside the organisation while otherwise performing their jobs satisfactorily.

3. The open obstruction of policy: Officials may, for example, withhold knowledge or expertise that the organisation needs to pursue the policy. Officials may also refuse to step aside so that others can pursue it or refuse to give information and other kinds of assistance to outsiders who are trying to overturn the policy.

4. Covert obstruction: Unauthorised disclosure (the leak) is the most prominent example. Leaks vary greatly in purpose and effect. Some simply provide information to other agencies that are entitled to receive it.

(Geuras & Garafalo 2005; Bruce, 2001)

Other forms of dissent may embarrass particular officials within an agency but do not otherwise subvert the agency's policies. Others may release information to the press or public, ultimately reversing a major government policy (Bruce, 2001; Fisher & Lovell, 2006). At the extreme, other forms of dissent give secrets to enemy agents and count as treason. The important task, with respect to disobedience as well as the other forms of dissent, is to develop the criteria that could help determine when each is justifiable in various circumstances (Ferrell & Fraederich, 2006). The ethics of neutrality makes that task unnecessary by denying that ethics is possible in administration. As we have seen, administrative neutrality itself is neither possible nor desirable.

The ethic of structure

The second major obstacle to administrative ethics is the view that the object of moral judgment must be the organisation (or government) as a whole. This ethic of structure asserts that even if administrators may have some scope for independent moral judgment, they cannot be held morally responsible for most of the decisions and policies of government (Sheeran, 1999). Their personal moral responsibility extends only to the specific duties of their own office for which they are legally liable. The ethic of structure asserts that not administrators but the organisation should be held responsible for its decisions and policies.

Proponents of the ethic of structure put forward the following three arguments to deny the possibility of ascribing individual responsibility in organisations and thereby to determine the possibility of administrative ethics:

*   It is argued that no individual is a necessity for or sufficient cause of any organisational outcome.

*   Another argument points to the gap between individual intention and collective outcomes.

*   The duties of office and the routine of large organisations require individual actions which in themselves harness, or even in some obligatory sense combine to produce harmful decisions and policies by the organisation.

(Lewis & Gilman, 2005)

Without some sense of personal responsibility, officials may act with less moral care, and citizens may challenge officials with less moral effect. Democratic accountability is likely to erode (Bruce, 2001). How can these arguments be answered so that individual responsibility can be maintained in organisations? We should not assess an official's moral responsibility solely according to the proportionate share they contribute to the outcome. The force of the second argument, which points to the gap between individual intention and collective outcome, can be blunted if we simply give less weight to intention than to consequence in

assessing moral culpability of officials, at least in two of the senses that intention is commonly understood — as a motive and direct goal (Martin, 2005; Fisher & Lovell, 2006).

What about officials who directly intend only good results, but because of other people's mistakes (or other factors they do not foresee) contribute to an unjust or harmful policy? Where the welfare of many people is at stake, officials must make exceptional efforts to anticipate consequences of their actions.

Finally, the ethic of neutrality and the ethic of structure theories help us to argue that administrative ethics is possible. We are forced to accept neither an ethic of neutrality that would suppress independent moral judgment nor an ethic of structure that would ignore individual moral agency in an organisation. To show that administrative ethics is possible is not to show how to make it actual but to understand why administrative ethics is possible as a necessary step, not only putting it into practice but also in giving it meaningful content in practice.

Activity 4.8

Activity

1. How can a public organisation address the dilemma of officials who directly intend only good results but because of other people's mistakes or other factors they do not foresee, contribute to an unjust or harmful policy?

2. In what ways have the ethics of neutrality and structure helped you to understand if administrative ethics is possible?

3. Administrative ethics involves the application of moral principles to the conduct of officials in organisations. Based on this statement, who should be held responsible for the mistakes of a public organisation?

International analysis of public administration ethics — case studies

Case study 4.1

Case study

| Ethics in Ghana and Nigeria |

Among the nations of the world, Nigeria is known as one of the most corrupt countries after Russia and Pakistan. On the other hand, Ghana is ranked 63rd among corrupt nations of the world (Transparency International (2011). The research done by Dibie & Gadzekpo (2003) draws a parallel example of the practice of unethical behaviour in the civil services in Ghana and Nigeria. It also tries to create an awareness that corruption is not only in Ghana and Nigeria but is also in other parts of the world. These ethical provisions of better business, good governance and personal success, according to Dibie and Gadzekpo (2003), are expected to remind public officials in Ghana and Nigeria that economic efficiency alone cannot provide an adequate basis for all decision-making; rather, moral principles and values that public servants represent are fundamental to ethics.

The major emphasis for Ghanaian and Nigerian leaders in high-level political and military circles seems to be personal achievement rather than national development. Their personal ambition and rhetoric on nationalism often conceals the backwash effect of their abuse of public trust. When these abuses, the excessive greed and the lack of genuine patriotism by senior officials of the governments were disclosed by the press, people become alarmed and called for action to address the contradiction. Thus, under Generals Gowon, Babangida and Sani Abacha of Nigeria and, in comparison with former President Nkrumah of Ghana, General Akufo and other military leaders, there were chronic occurrences of ethics violation of government officials, which included the presidents and ministers of these nations.

In sum, corruption directly or indirectly affects the implementation of management principles and sustainable development programmes in Ghana and Nigeria. Deployment of huge sums of money into private use results in the abandonment of projects or their unsatisfactory completion. Given the spiralling rate of inflation in Ghana and Nigeria, the time spent by government officials in negotiating kickbacks increases the costs of projects.

The enduring social effects of structural adjustment policies that contribute to high unemployment rates and lower education and health

standards raise considerable doubt about the future of management in the two nations. The problems are part of the issues that structural adjustment programmes were supposed to redress. In effect, public institutions that are corrupt and steadily suffer goal displacement can hardly be expected to be efficient. The twenty-first century should be an era when political leaders in Ghana and Nigeria are expected to introduce ethical and moral polices that will serve the public good and not their personal interests.

In the 1980s and 1990s the government of Ghana took very strong measures against corrupt public administrators and politicians. Several of the corrupt public leaders were sent to prison, but others escaped from the country to avoid prosecution by the Rawlings regime. In Nigeria, the government was very weak in implementing any serious disciplinary process during the military regimes in the 1980s and 1990s. Hence, most military officers were very corrupt.

Between 1999 and 2007 the government of Obasanjo in Nigeria established the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) but mostly used the agency to prosecute opponents of the ruling party. Thus a high level of corruption is still practised in Nigeria. Police officers are known to collect bribes openly on the highways from citizens.

Most important for the public sectors of Ghana and Nigeria are ethical values, and these should be the solution to the problem. These ethical values include the quality of integrity, openness and transparency, accountability, provision of services in good faith to citizens, a code of ethics, the role of law and the introduction of checks and balances in the political system. A clear and strong commitment to ethical ideas and behaviour on the part of public servants should be a prerequisite to creating organisational cultures of integrity in ministries and public agencies in both nations.

Activity 4.9

Activity

1. What are the circumstances that made the governments of Nigeria and Ghana become corrupt?

2. What went wrong in the implementation of moral and ethical values in the public sector in Nigeria?

3. Can the establishment of laws and a code of ethics alone guarantee an ethical public administration environment in Nigeria and Ghana? What other factors does the government have to implement in order for moral and ethical values to prevail in both countries?

Case study 4.2

Case study

> **Ethics in India and the United Kingdom**

In India and the United Kingdom, the purpose of public administration is the production and supply of goods and services to society. There is also a very important additional parameter of ensuring social progress and justice to the populations of both countries.

When India gained its independence in 1947, things changed. Many aspects of moral life and old values disappeared. New values that could hold the society together were thought to have emerged. Unfortunately, the new values created a crisis of moral character and of society's confidence in public administrators. Increased material prosperity without a sense of moral wrong values had now affected politicians, senior and junior public administrators as well as individual members of society who acted in ways that were pernicious to the larger good of society.

To find a solution and an end to these problems the Santhanam Committee was formed. This committee created the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in 1963 and the Vigilant Commission in 1964. Several laws were also enacted by these committees for stabilising things in India, including constitutional provisions, the Dowry Prohibition Act, conduct rules on the acquisition of property and provisions under the the Civil Service Management Code (CSMC).

The CSMC in the United Kingdom consists of 13 different and broadly framed articles. The code emphasises, among other things, the values of integrity, honesty, impartiality and objectivity and the duty of civil servants to assist the duly constituted government. In the United Kingdom and India some rules were also enacted:

- new rules for disciplinary action against civil servants, and

- rules for preventing criminals from entering legislatures.

Activity 4.10

Activity

1. Why did the moral values of India's politicians and public administrators start to change after independence in 1947?

2. When the government of India realised that the nation's public administrators and politicians were getting too corrupt, what measures did they take?

3. In what ways can you use the ethic of neutrality and the ethic of structure concepts to explain how administrative ethics were handled in India?

Case study 4.3

Case study

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South Korea

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South Korea is experiencing a serious economic crisis that has recently affected other Asian countries. The causes of this crisis have been discussed from many aspects including mismanagement of the powerful chaebol (business conglomerates) and the inefficient banking system.

The main method of corruption in South Korea is the offering of gifts and bribery. Gifts and bribes provide a good example of this case. Gifts and bribes are separate. Gifts are ethical but bribes are unethical and often illegal. In South Korea the offering of a gift is different. The situation is unique. Like the scope for sending condolences, it's extremely broad.

Koreans also give gifts to attract the attention of someone who could be influential for their business. Quid pro quo, or an equal exchange, is a serious issue in the question of gifts in South Korea. In this situation, the areas of gifts and bribes almost completely overlap, and it is hard to distinguish gifts from bribes.

The prevailing corruption and bribery are a serious problem in South Korea because of the confusion between gifts and bribes among Koreans. However, the issue of corruption and bribery must be addressed and solved in order for South Korea to prosper. In 1997, the government initiated a movement to solve the problem of bribery by proposing a guideline for ethically allowable amounts of gifts or donations by government officials, but it did not make enough effort to implement the rules and regulations for changing unethical behaviour among public administrators and politicians in the country. Some citizens of South Korea have now courageously declared a war against the traditional gifts and bribes.

Activity 4.11

Activity

1. How has the confusion between gifts and bribery further enhanced moral and unethical dilemmas in South Korea?

2. In what way can the culture of a people affect the moral values of public administration?

3. What can be effectively done to promote ethical values in the public sector in South Korea?

4. How is giving gifts in the public organisations different from giving gifts in the private sector in South Korea?

How can governments resolve ethical problems in public administration?

The complexity of the causes of unethical behaviour in public management and the persistence of a weak professional code of conduct in several nations make the selection of a pragmatic method of public administration very necessary for the twenty-first century.

Below are some possible ways of resolving the unethical behaviour of public administrators and political leaders.
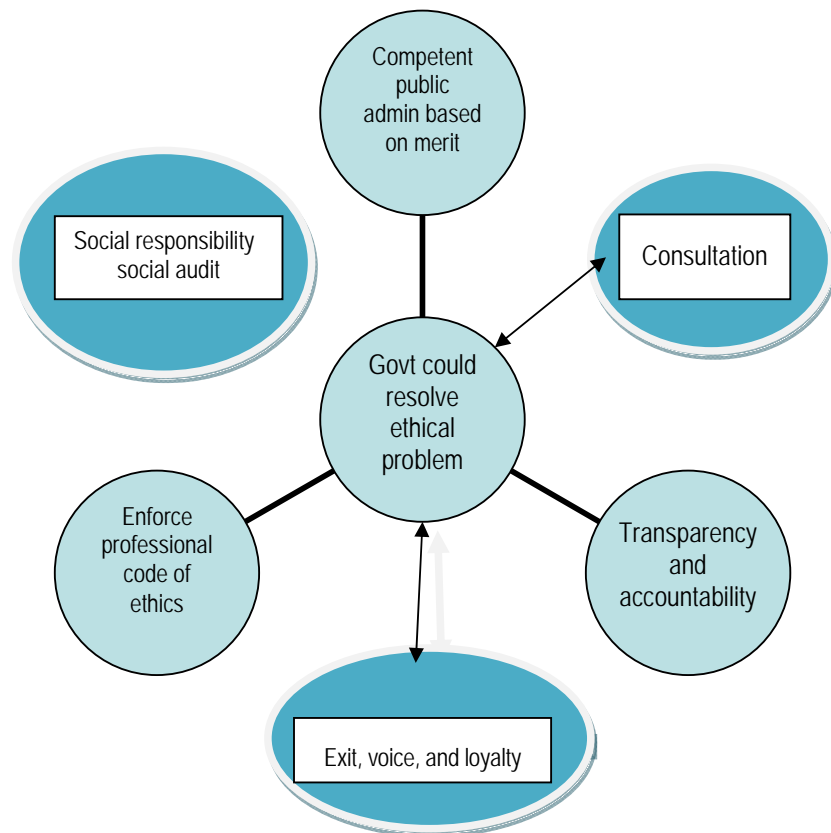

Figure 4.2 Instruments for resolving unethical behaviour

Source: Dibie (2007)

Establish competent public administration based on merit

Roger and Njoku (2001) contend that government must start by developing a public administration that is responsive to the needs of the people. The implication of this is that the nation's civil service must be competent and possess a significant level of professionalism. Hiring

decisions (as in the United States) should be based on merit and superior qualification. Senior positions should be awarded to individuals who possess the ability and expertise to efficiently perform assigned duties. Public administration positions should not be used as rewards for political support, swapped for bribes or used to meet an obligation to one's ethnic group. Incompetent, unqualified and unprofessional civil servants contribute significantly to failures in development, force the nation to remain essentially underdeveloped and contribute to corruption (Dibie, 2007; Mbaku, 2000).

Senior bureaucrats, military juntas and managers in both the public and private sectors can do many things to help improve organisational productivity. They could develop new approaches to old problems, recommit to quality, demonstrate a concern for process and method, improve use of time to reduce the cost of what is done and contribute to the pleasantness of the environment. Public productivity improvement requires an infusion of professionalism in public management. The public interest is intimately related to administrative decisions, giving them direction and meaning in all they do. As this relationship involves moral duty and obligation on the part of the public administrator, it involves ethics.

Ethics, then, become crucial to the entire range of activities with which the public administrator is involved. Professionalism means a commitment to an ethic or a need to do better from top to bottom. Managing means more than living well; it is more than presiding; and it is more than keeping everyone happy. It is a passion and an obsession.

Avarice, expediency and other self-serving motives that blur judgments and boundaries are common among those guilty of ethical violations. Nevertheless, well-meaning political leaders, military juntas, police officers and senior management personnel are also vulnerable to the ethical dilemmas that are in the nation. A variety of factors complicate ethical judgment in many sub-Saharan and Asian nations. These factors include:

- personal trust,
- public and private sector managers' reputation,
- the status of current and future employment,
- continued access to public policymakers, and
- inadequate/unclear guidelines and laws.

Many of these factors involve implications that go well beyond ethical issues (for example, ethnic and religious values) in some nations. The range of unethical behaviour in the nation may also be associated with the legacy of colonial regimes, inexperience, and ignorance of specific ethical principles and lack of accountability by public managers.

Establish and enforce a professional code of ethics

The development of professional ethics and a code of conduct, either collectively or individually, may be viewed as an attempt to correct some of the unforeseen ethical dilemmas in several developing nations. The

ambiguities concerning the consequences of available alternatives and poor enforcement of punishment have made public officials undermine the need to stay above these ethics in many countries.

Corruption directly (and indirectly) affects the implementation of public and private programmes. The deployment of huge sums of money by public managers of several developing nations to private use results in the abandonment of development projects or unsatisfactory completion. Given the spiralling rate of inflation in the nation, the time spent by government officials negotiating "kickbacks" increases the costs of projects. Corruption also lowers the morale of subordinate officers who work under corrupt superiors.

Transparency

How can public managers determine what is in the public interest?

Transparency refers to the actions of those in government being visible rather than hidden (or covert) (Geuras & Garofalo, 2005). Its underlying premises relate to accountability and ethics. This means that things should be done (not only rightly) but that they should be seen to be ethical. This is not about the appearance of doing things accountably and ethically, to the point that governments, in their day-to-day practices, create a culture of making their activities easy to see — openly and visibly (Shaw & Barry, 2010).

Another way to state this would be to emphasise that the reasons and actions behind a decision should not just be "findable", after extensive and detailed questioning and investigation, but should be readily transparent in the first place, or at least after minimal enquiry. (Cooper, 2006; Fisher & Lovell, 2006). This would also help the judicial review of decisions, as courts could simply and quickly refer to the required explanations behind decisions.

In this respect, a pragmatic and popular way to achieve ethical obligation (and to minimise the need for investigation or challenge) is to explain the reasons for decisions when they are made. Public agencies in many countries (especially in the West), are required "to make explicit the reasons behind particular decisions", and decision-makers are "required to abide by due procedure and record for accountability" (Standwick & Standwick, 2010).

This allows aggrieved citizens to discover the formal reasons for a decision and, if it is perceived to be flawed or unfair, to challenge the decision. Judges in the courts can review the reasons for the decisions and reaffirm the decision or overturn it on a procedural basis (Olowu, 1999; Bruce, 2001). Such a determination would not be made on substantive grounds (for instance, on the basis of later evidence or personal preferences) but on procedural grounds only.

Bureaucratic accountability

According to Lewis and Gilman (2005), bureaucratic accountability means ensuring that public administrators make decisions that are in the best interests of the public. Bureaucratic accountability holds that public administrators in a democracy are safely hemmed by a welter of restraints

from making decisions and policies that are antidemocratic, unfair, unethical or illegal (Henry, 2010). In the public sector, it is expected that any policy following implementation will be very much anchored by a spirit of accountability — for instance, appropriate and effective spending of taxpayers' money (Bozeman, 2008). Public sector accountability is different from that of the private sector. It is not about the bottom line but rather about adding value to the community (Cooper, 2006; Stillman, 2010).

If private sector accountability is to shareholders, public sector accountability can be seen more clearly as being to stakeholders. Suggestions for accountability, or reforms relating to accountability, have included financial reporting, auditing, management performance, access to information, including freedom of information, and conflict of interest considerations (codes of conducts, etc.). In broader terms, policy-makers (political or administrative) are accountable for policy being formulated and carried out in accordance with the constitution, the promises of political platforms and the stated aims and methods of policy statements. (Rosenbloom, Kravchuk & Clerkin, 2009).

Accountability is a pivotal concept in democratic governance, underpinning most analysis. Its constant presence dictates the behaviour of policy-making actors, both in terms of the responsibility of those charged with policy-making and the behaviour of those observing and seeking to influence it from the wider society (Cooper, 2006; Lewis, 1991). Politicians are typically held to account by the ballot box every few years. Serious breaches of responsibility can result in the dismissal of politicians but usually this occurs at the following election. When accountability is established to examine problems in the public sector, politicians are usually required to examine some crisis, mismanagement or maladministration that impacts the public. In doing this they bring to public light mistakes, errors in judgment and bad practices that affect the ways policies are developed and executed (Bruce, 2001; Henry, 2010). Public servants are less directly accountable.

Despite the potentially powerful positions of some, there has been little formal constraint or analysis of politicians' actions. But there is increasing pressure (Bozeman, 2008). Legislation providing freedom of information in many nations provides an avenue for the public to gain access to information previously withheld. It is possible that some of the actions taken in the policy process may be identified in such a process (Dye, 2011).

If the public takes advantage of such legislation, there may be much more exposure of the influences on policy-making and implementation of decisions. The values brought to the process, and the use of power and influence, may become more visible. Some of the points made in the ethics section above make these points clear. The importance of accountability cannot be overstated.

Accountability and transparency are essential for the efficiency of all public organisations. Some of the strategies for enforcing accountability and transparency include:

- **Internal** — those measures that are used by government to ensure that work within the organisation conforms to institutional goals. The mechanism includes rules and regulations as well as codes of conduct, system performance appraisals, remuneration and organisational reviews.

- **External** — including executive-based compliance systems such as ministerial control, periodic independent auditing and investigative powers of the legislative branch of government.

Participation and consultation

There is now extensive literature on public participation and consultation in policy-making processes (Bruce, 2001; Dye, 2011).

The levels of involvement suggested by "participation" range from complete devolution of decision-making power to token involvement. A closely allied term, "consultation", can mean anything from a high level of ongoing involvement to the mere exchange of information. Clearly, the two are strongly inter-related. A useful definition given by Henry (2010) and Standwick and Standwick (2010) takes participation beyond mere involvement on voting day.

"Public participation" as used in this module refers to any activity or group (or persons) directly or indirectly aimed at taking part in influencing the affairs, decisions and policies of the government or public corporation. The range of activities that has been defined as open to participation includes intelligence gathering, consultation and advisory planning, programme administration, negotiation, delegated decision-making and control (Dibie, 2007).

Throughout this section, consultation is positioned as one type of participation. This is how it is often portrayed in studies. In its broadest sense, participation recognises the citizen as a policy maker and part of a team of planners, not merely a recipient of public goods and services.

Exit, voice and loyalty

Hirschman (1970) suggests the notion of "exit, voice and loyalty" in his book. He explores how people can react when they are dissatisfied with the organisations in which they participate. According to Hirschman, they may exercise voice by working to change the organisation from within, or they may simply exit the organisation for another. In Hirschman's framework, loyalty helps determine how much voice is exercised before exit is chosen. The author finds it useful to use Hirschman's concepts of voice and exit. The author also wishes to use disloyalty instead of loyalty.

Management personnel could exercise various combinations of voice, exit and disloyalty when they confront value or ethical conflicts (Lewis,1991). If managers notice unethical acts or policies in their organisations, they might try to change them through protest or objections within their agencies (Madsen &Shafritz, 2006). If supervisors lack either the inclination or the authority to reverse these policies, then they might make their objections formally through memoranda to supervisors and to successive superiors until they reach the highest-ranking official with the authority to change the policy.

Hosmer (2006) and Olowu (1999) point out that exit opportunities are used in cases where goods and services can be produced by a variety of service providers. A variant of the exit option is the use of internal markets for service bids that are not appropriate for provision by the private sector. Dibie (2007) contends that voice mechanisms in Africa provide opportunities for citizens to voice their concerns about maltreatment, and misuse of position or public resources by officials.

Combining voice with the threat of exit by issuing an ultimatum is likely to be ethically superior to simply resigning.

Why does someone find a particular policy or behaviour objectionable, while others approve of it? Perhaps the answer is that some individuals have a better-developed ethical sense or are more principled. On the other hand, the reason for disagreement may be that both the employees and their superiors hold morally justifiable values that happen to conflict. Although there may be some concern about maintaining diversity within African public agencies, the danger of selective attrition seems less serious when it results from legitimate differences of opinion rather than from a clash between expediency, such as basic principles.

Another action to consider is disloyalty to the agency. Individuals might share (or leak) confidential information of their agency's plans to journalists, interest groups' leaders or other persons who can interfere with them. Even if you are not a pure Kantian, any time you do not act openly and honestly, you should closely scrutinise the morality of your actions. Further, an important moral tenet is that one takes responsibility for one's actions. One also forfeits the opportunity to continue a protest within the agency.

Whistleblowing

Another possibility is that individuals speak out until silenced. This approach is often referred to as whistleblowing (Rosenbloom et al., 2009; Dresang, 2006).

Individuals might also be justified acting covertly if they were convinced that they could prevent serious harm that might occur in the future by remaining in the public organisation (Cooper, 2006). The management strategy here is that the government official's obligation to honesty in the twenty-first century arises from a public trust as well as private virtue so that public dishonesty, unjustified by other overriding values, lessens the forces of confidentiality (Sheeran, 1999). Rather than waiting for a code of ethics, perhaps public managers should work toward an ethos for the new professionals of the twenty-first century. Managers of both public and private sectors in the nation should explicitly recognise their obligations to protect the basic rights of others, to support the democratic processes as expressed in their respective constitutions and to promote personal integrity (Ferrell & Fraedrich, 2006). These values should generally dominate their responsibility to clients in their ethical evaluation.

Social responsibility

The concept of social responsibility is the next approach to solving the problems of unethical behaviour in the public sector. Social responsibility can be divided into two strategies:

1. Traditional
2. Stakeholder

The traditional strategy holds that public managers should serve the interests of shareholders (Standwick & Standwick, 2010). This means that the overriding managerial obligations of managers in the nations in the twenty-first century are to maximise shareholders' profits and their long-term interests. This approach will encourage both public and private managers to be socially responsible and use their resources to engage in activities designed to increase profits so long as they stay within the rules of the game, by engaging in open and free competition without deception or fraud (Shaw & Barry, 2010).

The stakeholder strategy suggests that managers should have an obligation to identifiable groups that are affected by, or can affect achievement of, an organisation's objectives. These stakeholders should commonly include important customers, competitors, government agencies, unions, employees, debt holders, trade associations, important suppliers, shareholders and consumer groups.

The majority of managers who accept the stakeholder's strategy for the twenty-first century would probably endorse Boatright's (1997) interpretation of a firm's obligation — that the first social responsibility of business is to make enough profit to cover costs of the future. If this social responsibility is not met, no other social concerns can be met (Shaw & Barry, 2010). The rationale for public administrators and political leaders should include the general idea that a better society creates a good environment for business.

Duties and responsibilities concerning lawmaking, law observance, and law enforcement are critical. Law observance should be a duty for everyone. To ignore this duty, violating laws either systematically or capriciously, is to act unethically (Shaw & Barry, 2010). Mechanisms such as control through general criminal and civil laws, federal laws and regulations, control exerted by peers, specific legal controls from state licensing boards and civil litigation of malpractice complaints would protect the public from unlawful, incompetent and unethical actions perpetrated by managers and public leaders (Martin, 2005).

Members of the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government, from local councils to national government, should be among those who need to think of the probable consequences of action and inaction, seeking relevant knowledge and adjusting their behaviour accordingly to improve ethical and moral standards in the three nations under study. Through a committee system or otherwise, legislators or members of public assemblies should have an obligation to see to it that desirable legislation is considered and that unethical values are avoided.

Social audit

One important dimension to a successful implementation of ethical reform in developing countries should be the need to conduct social audits periodically. Social audits entail an attempt to identify, measure, evaluate, report on and monitor the effects of the organisations on their stakeholders and society as a whole. Social audit, in contrast to a financial audit, focuses on social action rather than on fiscal accountability (Stillman, 2010).

A social audit is an important measurement of achievement under the affirmative social responsibility strategy. Conducting such an audit is typically viewed as an optional activity under the stakeholder strategy. A government ethics programme needs to be audited periodically to see if all its elements are fully in place and working well. The audit should include a survey of members' opinions and perceptions of the programme and the agency's ethical climate. Besides being diagnostically useful, a survey is another way to communicate the importance of ethics (Martin, 2005; Dibie, 2007). Therefore, the affirmative social responsibility strategy draws on the moral rights and justice approaches. It obligates respective organisations to focus on social responsibility by using national resources to help meet society's needs. In order for public managers to achieve better results they must make better use of market-like completion in the provision of goods and services. This may be accomplished by:

- privatisation (contracting out services to the private sector),

- reorganising government agencies in such a way that they might be able to compete with one another, and

- making public administration more customer-driven.

(Dibie, 2007)

The new public management favours an organisational structure that is decentralised and businesslike in order to promote responsiveness.

Activity 4.12

Activity

1. In your opinion, is transparency just another accountability mechanism? If so, what is its particular feature and what benefits do you think it serves?

2. Is transparency a key issue in your home country? If so, how does it work? If not, how should it be encouraged?

3. What is the difference between accountability and ethics? How do they relate to each other? Is it possible to have one without the other?

4. Is accountability an achievable goal in public policy? Explain your argument.

Module summary

Summary

This module has examined the dynamics of ethical leadership, corruption and social responsibility in public organisations. It contends that state control of the economy and the excessive regulation of the economic activities create the opportunistic behaviour that includes corruption and lack of accountability.

Unethical practice also perpetuates ineffective rule of law and greed and ignorance by public leaders and business officials. The module further argued that corruption in developing countries' public administration cannot be eradicated by increasing the number of anti-corruption agencies but through pragmatic government efforts that look towards implementing a more encompassing reform of its political, administrative and economic operations.

This can only be achieved if there is an efficient and effective rule-of-law system in place. The module also suggested that any attempt at eradicating corruption in developing countries must rest on a comprehensive and sustained system of public accountability and transparency that takes into account the interactive nature of the social institutions, and the political, economic, legal, family, religious, educational and cultural values and norms.

It is unfortunate that most individuals who enter public service in many countries are either unprepared or under-prepared for the hard ethical choices that their profession will burden them with. A common practice in most developing countries has elected officials not for their ethical problem-solving abilities, but rather for their political posturing, charisma and other extraneous factors. The ways to overcome this lack of skill in the area of ethical analysis by most public officials are:

- by providing occasions for these officials to build and develop the necessary tools of analysis through training and education, and

- by implementing organisational development mechanisms that would be recognised as part of the territory of public service.

In the twenty-first century public leaders and senior public administrators in developing nations should consider themselves as guardians of the public good and trust. Utilitarianism maintains that morally right action is the one that provides the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people. Not only does it enable us to justify many of the obligations of individuals and organisations — such as refraining from bribery in the case of most Third World countries' public and private managers — but the principle of utility also provides a strong view about justice.

Cutting corners on public ethics and social responsibilities can cost nations dearly in the process of achieving sustainable development. Therefore, moral obligation and decision-making should be taken seriously as stipulated by the deontological theory.

The bottom line is that each public leader and senior public administrator must develop a cogent and viable code of ethics that serves as a moral compass for his or her public management teams. Specific laws, regulations and policies that guide the behaviour of citizens and public leaders should stem from this moral code. Module 5 will explore the planning and policy-making for managing human resources in government organisations. It will also examine the traditional internal processes of human resources such as recruitment and compensation.

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Further reading

Reading

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Activity feedback

Feedback

Activity 4.1

1. Ethics often refers to the choice between what is good and what is bad, or between right or wrong. In ethical theory, good is first defined, and then the right action is deemed to be a way of achieving that good. Morality refers to the standards of behaviour by which people are judged, and particularly to the standards of behaviour by which people are judged in their relationships with others. The difference between morality and ethics is easy to remember if one speaks of moral standards of behaviour and ethical systems of belief.

2. No. Good public administrators should be able to provide answers to moral questions by considering the economic outcomes, the legal requirements and the ethical duties to serve the public.

Activity 4.2

1. Issues of bribery, theft, mismanagement, waste of public resources reaching into such areas as the deliberate act of distortion of information in order to deceive the public. Acceptance of making small payments to government officials to facilitate needed documents, permits and contracts.

2. On the one hand, issues of deliberately mismanaging government resources for self-aggrandisement, looting government treasure, and depositing money in foreign bank accounts, and the primitive accumulation of property within the nation and in foreign countries is unethical. Further, deliberate acts of not enforcing the law to punish those who steal from the government is also a serious ethical problem. On the other hand, rigging elections in order to achieve political leadership position is considered the root of having unethical leaders who cannot promote shared governance and true democracy.

3. The nature of corrupt practice is the same in both the public and private sectors.

4. Ethical duties get down to the absolute essence of what is right, just and fair for everyone. The principle, then, can be expressed as never take any action that is not kind and that does not build a sense of community, a sense of all of us working together for a commonly acceptable goal.

5. In most cases the moral issues in the public and private sectors are about the same if we assume that unethical issues are more of a society's problem than just that of an institution.

Activity 4.3

1. Justice and equality are important because that is the only way a society can be classified as a good society.

2. A public administrator who practises virtue must be open, kind, truthful, honest, moderate and have compassion for other people. The virtue factors will help the organisation and society to be good.

3. No. An act that is based on prejudice is not fair and could be regarded as unethical.

Activity 4.4

1. Public leaders and public administrators should have some degree of compassion and kindness toward each other to form a truly good nation.

2. No, because sometimes such actions may be unethical, for example, as in the case of Robin Hood.

3. The teleological theory postulates that the rightness of an action is determined solely by the amount of good consequences it produces. Actions are justified by virtue of the ends they achieve rather than some feature of the actions themselves.

Activity 4.5

1. Public leaders and public administrators should have some degree of compassion and kindness toward each other to form a truly good government. Public administrators must be honest, open and truthful, for example, to eliminate distrust, and they should live temperately so as not to incite envy in the government.

2. The deontology theory, or the principle of universal duties, stipulates that personal intentions can be translated into personal duties or obligations because, if we truly wish the best for others, then we will always act in ways to ensure those beneficial results. Deontologists typically hold that certain actions are right not because of some benefits to an individual or group but because of the nature of these actions or the rules from which they follow.

3. Deontological theorists judge the rightness or wrongness of an act on the basis of its obligatory nature. If the act is right, neither the intent behind it nor its consequences matter — the act is right. The teleological theory postulates that the rightness of action is determined solely by the amount of good consequences it produces.

4. The universal principles aspect of deontological theory is problematic because it is difficult to tie moral actions to rational decisions, with rationality.

5. All of us owe others the duty of acting logically and consistently. No actions can be considered to be "right" in accordance with personal duty if they disregard the ultimate moral worth of any

other being.

Activity 4.6

1. In a just society, the concept of fairness, equity and impartiality should be supported by all public organisations. These obligations are the duty to help others who are in need or in jeopardy provided that the help can be given without excessive personal risk or loss to the public administrator. Therefore, a public administrator must be given training in leadership, ethics and administration

2. Inconsistent application of rules, the use of double standards, punishment of whistleblowers, secrecy, cat-and-mouse procedures that catch the innocent but are useless against those who are unprincipled.

Activity 4.7

1. A government code of ethics:

    - serves the public interest,

    - respects the Constitution and law,

    - demonstrates personal integrity,

    - promotes ethical organisations, and

    - strives for professional excellence.

A business code of ethics ensures:

    - Employee wellbeing is paramount to the success of the company.

    - Quality, excellence and continuous improvement are essential elements to the company's practices and products.

    - The highest ethical standards are adhered to in the pursuit and conduct of business.

    - The company will provide a stimulating and innovative environment in order to discourage unethical behaviour.

2. Contractors in Kenya think that it is perfectly acceptable to make small payments to government officials to facilitate needed documents, permits and contracts. That is termed bribery in the United States. Government officials in the United States feel that it is perfectly acceptable to work for foreign firms that have a business relationship with the government after they retire from government employment. That is termed treason in Brazil.

3. A code of ethics is important because it:

    - defines accepted or acceptable behaviours,

    - promotes high standards or practices,

    - provides a benchmark for members to use for self-

evaluation,

- establishes a framework for professional behaviour and responsibilities,

- is a vehicle for occupational identity, and

- is a mark of occupational maturity.

4. Key elements of a code of ethics:

   Codes of ethics can project ideals, norms, and obligations. Codes can be inspirational and aspirational, presenting lofty values and ideals. Codes can establish an ethical status to which members of a profession may aspire to the moral optimum rather than the moral minimum established by ethics legislation. Codes can also be tailored to agency-specific needs and circumstances and can help socialise employees into a profession.

Activity 4.8

1. Where the welfare of so many people is at stake, officials must make exceptional efforts to anticipate consequences of their actions.

2. The ethic of neutrality and the ethic of structure theories have helped us to argue that administrative ethics is possible. We are forced to accept neither an ethic of neutrality that would suppress independent moral judgment nor an ethic of structure that would ignore individual moral agency in an organisation. To show that administrative ethics is possible is not of course to show how to make it actual. But understanding why administrative ethics is possible is a necessary step not only toward putting it into practice but also toward giving it meaningful content in practice.

3. This ethic of structure asserts that even if administrators may have some scope for independent moral judgment, they cannot be held morally responsible for most of the decisions and policies of government. Their personal moral responsibility extends only to the specific duties of their own office for which they are legally liable. The ethic of structure asserts that not administrators but the organisation should be held responsible for its decisions and policies.

Activity 4.9

1. The desire for personal achievement rather than national development.

2. In Nigeria the government was very weak in implementing any serious disciplinary process during the military regimes in the 1980s and 1990s. Hence, most military officers were very corrupt. Between 1999 and 2007 the government of president Obasanjo established the EFCC but mostly used the agency to prosecute opponents of the ruling party. Thus, a high level of corruption is still being practised in Nigeria.

3. No. The government will have to effectively implement the rule

of law in such a way that nobody should be above the law. Those who violate the law should be punished according to the due process of the law in the country.

Activity 4.10

1. After independence in 1947, increased material prosperity without a sense of moral wrong values had now affected politicians, senior and junior public administrators as well as individual members of society who acted in ways that were pernicious to the larger good of society.

2. To find a solution and an end to these problems a committee was formed called the Santhanam Committee. This committee created the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in 1963 and the Vigilant Commission in 1964. Several laws were also enacted by these committees to stabilise things in India, including constitutional provisions, the Dowry Prohibition Act, conduct rules on the acquisition of property and provisions under the CSMC.

3. The ethic of neutrality and the ethic of structure theories have helped us to argue that administrative ethics is possible. We are forced to accept neither. However, where the welfare of so many people is at stake, officials must make exceptional efforts to anticipate the consequences of their actions. Some rules were also enacted:

   - New rules for disciplinary action against civil servants

   - Enacted, implemented and enforced laws in order to prevent criminals from entering legislatures where they could loot government treasury.

Activity 4.11

1. In this situation of quid pro quo, or an exchange of equal value, the areas of gifts and bribes almost completely overlap, and it is hard to distinguish gifts from bribes.

2. The culture of giving gifts in South Korea eventually spills over to corruption in its public administration.

3. The government of South Korea should make more effort to implement the rules and regulations for changing unethical behaviour among public administrators and politicians in the country.

4. Koreans also give gifts to attract the attention of someone who could be influential for their business in both the public and private sectors. Quid pro quo is a serious issue in the question of gifts in South Korea. The Korean government will have to enact new laws that will help to change the culture of gift-giving in the public sector.

Activity 4.12

1. Transparency refers to the actions of those in government being

visible rather than hidden (or covert) (Geuras & Garofalo, 2005). Its underlying premises relate to accountability and ethics. This means that things should be done (not only rightly) but that they should be seen to be ethical. This is [not] about [the appearance of] doing things accountably and ethically, to the point that governments, in their day-to-day practices, create a culture of making their activities easy to see — openly and visibly. No. It should be encouraged in such a way that government officials are forced to do things accountably and ethically, to the point that their day-to-day practices create a culture of making their activities easy to see — openly and visibly. Violators should be punished according to the rule of law.

2. Bureaucratic accountability holds that public administrators in a democracy are safely hemmed by a welter of restraints from making decisions and policies that are antidemocratic, unfair, unethical or illegal. Accountability requires public administrators to behave ethically.

3. Yes. Accountability is an achievable goal in public policy. Policy makers (political or administrative) are accountable for policy being formulated and carried out in accordance with the constitution, the promises of political platforms, and the stated aims and methods of policy statements.