

# Administrative Ethical Reasoning in Good Governance

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## Abstract

This paper is an attempt to answer the question “Should administrative ethical reasoning be focused in good governance?”<sup>2</sup> The purpose of this paper is to show that administrative ethical reasoning should be focused in good governance. The research problem to be solved is why administrative ethical reasoning should be focused in good governance.<sup>3</sup> The hypothetical solution is that administrative ethical reasoning can control the administrator of the government in order to reach peaceful society.<sup>4</sup> The hypothetical solution is proved by using of the descriptive method to represent the facts of which collected by literature review and will be evaluated by the principle of logical validity.<sup>5</sup> This paper will contribute to the understanding that the administrative ethical reasoning of an ethical administrator can construct the peaceful society through good governance.<sup>6</sup>

**Keywords:** *Administrative ethical reasoning, Good governance, Logical validity, Peaceful society*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This paper is an attempt to study administrative ethical reasoning in good governance. Administrative ethical reasoning has three words; administrative, ethical, and reasoning. The word administrative is concerned with administration that means performance of executive duties, management, worked in the administration of a government. It refers the act or process of administering something. The word ethical is concerned with ethics that means the rational justification for moral judgments; it studies what is morally right or wrong, just or unjust. It reflects on human beings on freedom, on responsibility and on justice. The word reasoning means the drawing of inferences or conclusions from known or assumed facts. Ethical reasoning is the ability to identify, assess, and develop ethical arguments from a variety of ethical positions. The purpose of ethical reasoning is to integrate ethical questions into the intellectual work required in the administration.<sup>7</sup> Hence, it can be said that administrative ethical reasoning is the reasoning of the ability to identify, assess, and develop ethical arguments from a variety of ethical positions in administration process.

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<sup>2</sup> Research question

<sup>3</sup> Research problem

<sup>4</sup> Hypothetical solution

<sup>5</sup> Research principle

<sup>6</sup> Contribution

<sup>7</sup> Retrieved 12 August 2023, from <https://www.google.com/search?q=ethical+reasoning>

### **1.1. Research Question**

In studying administrative ethical reasoning, the research question is that “Should administrative ethical reasoning be focused in good governance?” The word, governance refers to all processes of governing, the institutions, processes and practices through which issues of common concern are decided upon and regulated. Good governance adds a normative or evaluative attribute to the process of governing.<sup>8</sup>

### **1.2. Aim and Objectives**

This paper aims to prove the problem statement that administrative ethical reasoning should be focused to be good governance. The objectives of this paper are; to define administrative ethical reasoning, to realize the nature of good governance, to apply the logical ability of ethical reasoning in administration and to construct the peaceful society through good governance. The research problem to be solved is why administrative ethical reasoning should be focused to be good governance. The hypothetical solution to be described is that administrative ethical reasoning can control the administrator of a government in order to reach peaceful society. This hypothetical solution will be proved by using of the descriptive method to represent the facts of which collected by literature review and evaluated by the principle of logical validity. It hopes that this paper can contribute to the understanding that the administrative ethical reasoning of an administrator can construct the peaceful society through good governance. The key words to be described through literature reviews are; administrative ethical reasoning, good governance, logical validity, peaceful society.

## **2. ADMINISTRATIVE ETHICAL REASONING**

Administrative ethical reasoning is a reasoning that refers to systematic and logical thinking in administrative process ethically. To understand administrative ethical reasoning, it is essential to study the nature of administration.

### **2.1. The Nature of Administration**

It should not be denied that the nature of administration is bureaucratic nature. Administration can be defined as the universal process of efficiently organizing people and resources in order to achieve the organizational objectives. It can be said that board of members of any administration group is normally concerned with administration.<sup>9</sup> In other word, it can be seen that administration is a process of collective and cooperative effort, directed towards the realization of a consciously laid down goals & objectives by any organization. Management is a part of administration towards achievements of the goals. Management Study Guide said;

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<sup>8</sup> Retrieved 12 August 2023, from <https://www.google.com/search?q=what+is+good+governance>

<sup>9</sup> Retrieved 12 August 2023, from <https://www.toppr.com/ask/question/the-nature-of-administration-is-bureaucratic/>

Administration is a decision-making function. Management decides who should do it & how should he do it. Administration decides what is to be done & when it is to be done. Management is a doing function because managers get work done under their supervision.<sup>10</sup>

Thus public administration is concerned with the organization and the formulation and implementation of public policies for the welfare of the people. It functions in a political setting in order to accomplish the goals and objectives. They are formulated by the political decision-makers. It can be found that a development administration is change-oriented administration. The changing of administration involves the movement of system or a structure from one point to another. Thus, it can be said that a development administrative system would be dynamic and not 'static'.

Hence, it can be realized that the nature of administration is an activity, a function, a process, a discipline and much more. Planning, organizing, leading, motivating, controlling, coordination and decision making are the major activities performed by the management. Some said that management brings together five kinds; men, material, machines, methods, and money. The principles of administration are: hierarchy, span of control, unity of command, power and authority, supervision, delegation and co-ordination. There are various types of administration, including public administration, private administration, nonprofit administration, government administration, corporate administration, educational administration, and healthcare administration.

It can also be understood that public administration refers to orderly managing the resources to achieve the purposes established by the government. Private administration is concerned with the operation, management and organization of the affairs of the business enterprise. So, it can be said that administration means the act of administering including public affairs and the service rendered. Professor H. George Frederickson and Jeremy David Walling said in the article " *Research and Knowledge in Administrative Ethics*";

The study and practice of public administration has never been regarded as just technical or managerial. Attempts to parse the work of government into politics and policymaking as the expression of values, on the one hand, and administration as the mere technical and value neutral carrying out of policy, on the other hand, have not succeeded.<sup>11</sup>

So, it can be viewed that the characteristics of the administration are related with the values of different functions. The different characteristics of the administration establish the very varied capacities of the science of the administration. There can be two views with regard to the nature of public Administration. One is managerial view and the other is integral view. According to managerial view, public administration is concerned with the various activities of the officers of the government. According to integral view, administration is concerned with public interest.

The government makes administration of laws and rules for various activities. Public administration helps implement these laws properly. The government monitors whether

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<sup>10</sup> Retrieved 5 August 2023, from [https://www.managementstudyguide.com/management\\_administration.htm](https://www.managementstudyguide.com/management_administration.htm)

<sup>11</sup> Terry L Cooper.(2012).*Hand Book of Administrative Ethics*. New York: Marcel Dekker, Inc. p.38.

people follow these laws. The government punishes those who break the law. The government has to work with other governments at the state, national and international levels. Thus the nature of administration is related to governance of the government.

Edward W. Weidner said that development of administration is a dynamic concept which brings about socio- economic and politico-economic changes in society. An administrator must aim to development for change of growth, progress and overall development in every sphere of a country because an administrative system can decide development on appropriate methods of coordination and control for different functions at different levels. Therefore, it should not be seen that the nature of administration is not just public administration. It is a goal-oriented administration with emphasis on achieving social and economic goals. In essence, the objectives of administration are; to build decision making capabilities, to hold complex issues in the personnel, to train the effective use of technology and to bring change in administrative development.

Leadership in administration is the leading of the body of a society to achieve the goals. The vision, mission, and purpose are created by the leaders of a society. *Thus, the administration of a leader should serve communities to advance the common good and effect positive change.* Hence it can be said that professional administration is concerned with skills of ethical reasoning to manage at all levels of government.

It has been known that an administrative organizational structure is a typically hierarchical arrangement of lines of authority. It determines how the roles, power, and responsibilities are assigned. It determines how the work process flows among different management levels. Planning is the first and the foremost thing to be done in an administration. It can be said that effective administrative management includes a strategy to promote leaders from within, and this will require developing the abilities of existing team members and honing their skills. The development of leadership is closely associated with succession planning, and both are very important for any organization. Management is a systematic way of managing people and things within the organization. Therefore, the administration is defined as an act of administering the whole organization by a group of people. Management is an activity of business and functional level. Administration is a high-level activity. Hence, this level of administration consists of an organization's board of administrators and the chief executive or managing director. It can be concluded that it is the ultimate source of power and authority, since it oversees the goals, policies, and procedures of a society and the nature of administration is bureaucratic nature. To support the administration, it is essential to study the nature of ethics.

## **2.2. The Nature of Ethics**

The nature of ethics is to guide what human ought to do, usually in terms of right, obligations, fairness and specific virtue. It is related to issues of propriety; rightness and wrongness, what is right in ethical, what is wrong in unethical.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Retrieved 5 August 2023, from <https://www.distanceeducationju.in/pdf/Philosophy.pdf>

The word "ethics" is derived from the Greek word *ethos* (character), and from the Latin word *mores* (customs). Ethics can define how individuals choose to interact with one another. The nature of ethics is theoretical because it supplies the underlying concepts based on moral judgments. The nature of ethics is practical because it concerns an ultimate goal and the tools to achieve it. Thus, it can be said that ethics is concerned with both theoretical and practical.<sup>13</sup>

Ethics can do the rational justification for moral judgments. Ethics studies what is morally right or wrong, just or unjust. Ethics reflects on human beings and their interaction with nature and with other humans, on freedom, on responsibility and on justice.<sup>14</sup> Ethics is a branch of philosophy that seeks to determine the correct application of moral notions such as good and bad and right and wrong or a theory of the application or nature of such notions. Ethics is traditionally subdivided into normative ethics, meta-ethics, and applied ethics. Ethics can be defined as the analysis of human actions from the perspective of "good" and "evil," or of "morally correct" and "morally wrong." If ethics categorizes actions and norms as morally correct or wrong, one then speaks of normative or prescriptive ethics. Ethics can be defined as the analysis of human actions from the perspective of "good" and "evil," or of "morally correct" and "morally wrong." If ethics categorizes actions and norms as morally correct or wrong, one then speaks of normative or prescriptive ethics.

The concept of ethics is applied to human beings only as they have freedom of choice and means of free will. Some said that ethics is more a science than an art. It is about moral behavior and human conduct. The nature of ethics is concerned itself with the good and evil nature of actions and seeks to guide behavior in a way that increases good actions in society. Ethics can also be called moral philosophy. Ethics involves *systematizing, defending, and recommending concepts of right and wrong behavior*.

It can be seen that nature of ethics refers to the normative standards of behavior pertaining to the ideal code of conduct of human beings. This is substantially different from that of feeling. But it can be said that the ethical choices get affected significantly by feelings.

It can be seen that the words, 'proper', 'fair' and 'just' are also used in the place of right and ethical. It can be said that 'pleasure is good' and prosperity of nation is good. It may be agreed upon that pleasure or prosperity is one of the good things of life. Plato and Aristotle said that a good man or ethical man was the one who was a good citizen.<sup>15</sup> *The practical aspects of the study of ethics are concerned with a theoretical study of moral problems.*

Socrates said that virtue is knowledge. For him, no one can be moral by accident or without true knowledge of the nature of moral act. In *Jaina* ethics, the practical application of non-violence is the highest virtue. It is stated that 'knowledge must precede compassion'. Therefore, it can be concluded that knowledge of virtue is the foundation of the practice of

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<sup>13</sup> William Lillie. (1957). *An Introduction to Ethics*. London: Methuen & Co.Ltd.p.2.

<sup>14</sup> Retrieved 5 August 2023, from <https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/services/values/ethics/code/what-is-ethics.html>

<sup>15</sup> Retrieved 20 August 2023, from <https://www.bartleby.com/essay/Aristotle-And-Plato-Definition-Of-A-Good>

virtue. Thus the theoretical discussion of the ethical problem is the very foundation of its application in practical life. It can be said that the nature of ethics is incomplete, unless and until the nature of normative science and the nature of reasoning are explained.

### 2.3. The Nature of Reasoning

The word reasoning is always used in order to describe logical thinking. The reasoning can make decisions for a judgment. The reasoning means discuss or argue and the *rationare* in Late Latin meaning "to discourse." Three types of reasoning can be found from the standpoint of logic; induction, analogy and deduction. Induction consists in deriving a general principal from particular acts observed. Analogy consists in inferring a new particular fact from the particular facts observed. Professor Bradley H. Dowden said in his book "Logical Reasoning";

The goal of this book is to improve your logical-reasoning skills. These skills are also called "critical thinking skills." They are a complex weave of abilities that help you get someone's point, generate reasons for your own point, evaluate the reasons given by others, decide what or what not to do, decide what information to accept or reject, explain a complicated idea, apply conscious quality control as you think, and resist propaganda. You're most important critical thinking skill is your skill at making judgments not snaps judgments that occur in the blink of an eye, but those that require careful reasoning.<sup>16</sup>

Thus, it can be said that logical reasoning is concerned with the correctness of arguments and a mental activity that aims to arrive at a conclusion in rigorous way. Four types of reasoning are; deductive reasoning, inductive reasoning, abductive reasoning and reasoning by analogy. Critical thinking is the use of a combination of logical and philosophical skills and attitudes that promotes the ability to discover the validity in decision making. Critical thinking derives methods for analyzing and evaluating arguments. Thus Reasoning is essential for posing, exploring, making sense of, and patiently solving problems.

Logic may be defined as the organized body of knowledge, or science that evaluates arguments.<sup>17</sup> Logic is traditionally defined as the study of the laws of thought or correct reasoning, and is usually understood in terms of inferences or arguments. Reasoning is the activity of drawing inferences. Arguments are the outward expression of inferences. Hence an argument is a set of premises together with a conclusion. Critical thinking is the analysis of available facts, evidence, observations, and arguments in order to form a judgment by the application of rational, skeptical, and unbiased analyses and evaluation. Critical thinking is a disciplined process for conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating information gathered from observation, experience, and reasoning. It is based on clarity, accuracy, consistency, relevance, depth, breadth, and fairness. Logical thinking is the process of evaluating truth conditions and the legitimacy of connections between statements by applying formal deductive logic. Critical thinking needs to logical thinking processes.

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<sup>16</sup> Bradley H. Dowden.(2017). *Logical Reasoning*. California: Philosophy Department, California State University Sacramento. p.1.

<sup>17</sup> Patrick J. Hurley, Lori Watson.(2018). *A Concise Introduction to Logic* (Thirteenth Edition). New York: Cengage Learning.p.1.

Reasoning skills generally refer to critical thinking skills like analysis, evaluation and synthesis. However, they also include wider skills like more abstract thinking, creative thinking, and information processing and problem-solving.

Reasoning is the ability of the mind to think and understand things in a logical way. Why is logical reasoning important? Logical reasoning skills help administrators in improving their decision-making skills, problem-solving skills, and setting goals. These personal skills are necessary for building a stable career foundation of the government. The most common form of logic is the syllogism: an argument with a major premise, a minor premise, and a conclusion. Logical forms are either valid or not—as long as the form of the argument and the premises are true, then the conclusion must be true. Reasoning helps in problem solving as it is the process of gathering and analyzing information to arrive at conclusions. Thus, reasoning helps to arrive at conclusions through certain information. Logical thinking can also be defined as the act of analyzing a situation and coming up with a sensible solution. It is similar to critical thinking. Logical thinking uses reasoning skills to objectively study any problem, which helps make a rational conclusion about how to proceed in good governance.

The administration of a leader should serve communities to advance the common good and effect positive change. The practical aspects of the study of ethics are concerned with a theoretical study of moral problems. Logical reasoning skills help administrators in improving their decision-making skills, problem-solving skills, and setting goals in accordance with ethical principles. Hence, it can be concluded that administrative ethical reasoning is the reasoning of the ability to identify, assess, and develop ethical arguments from a variety of ethical positions in administration process.

### **3. THE NATURE OF GOOD GOVERNANCE**

Good governance adds a normative or evaluative attribute to the process of governing. From a human rights perspective, it refers to the process of public institutions conduct, public affairs, manage public resources and guarantee the realization of human rights.

It can be found that good governance has eight major characteristics. It is participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive, and follows the rule of law.<sup>18</sup> Thus it can be said that good governance should be measured by the eight factors. They are; rule of law, transparency, responsiveness, consensus oriented, equity and inclusiveness, effectiveness and efficiency, and accountability. *Good governance should improve the performance of government with administrative ethical reasoning in order to reach peaceful society.*

#### **3.1. What is good?**

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<sup>18</sup> Retrieved 31 August 2023, from [https://www.academia.edu/15352372/Eight\\_Elements\\_of\\_Good\\_Governance](https://www.academia.edu/15352372/Eight_Elements_of_Good_Governance)



The word good has adjective better or best. It is having admirable, pleasing, superior, or positive qualities; not negative: a good idea; a good teacher. Morally excellent or admirable; virtuous; righteous: a good man. Good can be meant as goodness. Goodness contains morality and virtue. Goodness refers to qualities of character or conduct that entitle the possessor to approval and esteem. Goodness can be understood the simple word for the general quality recognized in character or conduct. Goodness can be expressed through loving kindness, generosity of spirit and deed, and the thoughtful consideration of others. Goodness comes in many forms.

Virtues are distinguished from other traits of character by commitment to goodness because it is goodness. This explains the special admiration for the virtuous rather than the merely skilled. Plato said that perfect goodness is the form of the Good, upon which everything that has being is ontologically and causally dependent. Aristotle said that the good can be identified with the end or purpose of a natural being. The good is that towards which all things move for the fulfillment of their natures.

The use of the notion of 'good' in language can be identified six kinds of goodness: namely utilitarian goodness, instrumental goodness, technical goodness, medical goodness, hedonic goodness, and the good of man. It should be realized that goodness of character is a settled condition of the mind which wills or chooses the mean relatively. The goodness can be determined by a rule of the wise in ethics. Rightness is a property of acts while goodness concerns various kinds of things. There can be certain features in common: real properties, indefinable, pluralistic and knowable through intuition.

Socrates said that supreme good is virtue. Virtue can be defined as moral excellence, and an individual should be considered virtuous if their character is made up of the moral qualities that are accepted as virtues. It can be seen that ancient Greece commonly accepts that virtues includes courage, temperance, prudence, and justice.

Philosophers also distinguish subjective goods. Good things are good for someone in particular from objective goods. They are good from everyone's point of view. Plato and Aristotle said that the world had genuine meaning and purpose. The cosmic values of truth define reality. Goodness fulfills its purpose and beauty. It is lovely are objective in nature and knowable by the noble seeker.

To bring together the definition of a good man, Socrates said that a man who always considers his actions and acts in a good and just manner. Aristotle said that a good man acts unto virtue and derives his happiness and pleasure from that virtue. *So, it can be assumed that the governance should have a man who is prudent, virtuous, and just.*

### **3.2. What is governance?**

What does governance mean? Governance can be defined as: "The system by which entities are directed and controlled. It is concerned with structure and processes for decision making, accountability, control and behavior at the top of an entity. Governance has been defined as the rules of the political system to solve conflicts between actors and adopt decision. It has also been used to describe the "proper functioning of institutions and their



acceptance by the public". Governance is a system that provides a framework for managing organizations. It identifies who can make decisions, who has the authority to act on behalf of the organization and who is accountable for how an organization and its people behave and perform.

Good governance is a new approach that includes all the principles necessary for the consolidation of democratic management. These principles can be stated as participation, transparency, accountability, effectiveness, consistency, fairness and rule of law.<sup>19</sup>

Supreme good is virtue. Virtues include courage, temperance, prudence, and justice. The governance should have a man who is prudent, virtuous, and just. Thus, it can be said that the nature of good governance is to improve the performance of government with administrative ethical reasoning in order to reach peaceful society.

## **4. CONCLUSION**

### **4.1. Analyzing and Appraisal: Peaceful Society**

Ethics is concerned with well based standards of right and wrong. It prescribes what public servants ought to do. Good governance is an aspect of ethics which refers to the set of systems, principles and processes by which public service organizations are governed. This paper is an attempt to answer the question "Should administrative ethical reasoning be focused in good governance?" It can be said that administrative ethical reasoning should be focused in good governance because administrative ethical reasoning can control the administrator of the government in order to reach peaceful society.

The word ethical is concerned with ethics. It means the rational justification for moral judgments. Ethics studies what is morally right or wrong, just or unjust. Ethics reflects on human beings and their interaction with nature and with other humans, on freedom, on responsibility and on justice. The word reasoning means the drawing of inferences or conclusions from known or assumed facts. Ethical reasoning means the ability to identify, assess, and develop ethical arguments from a variety of ethical positions. Administration can be said as the universal process of efficiently organizing people and resources in order to achieve the organizational objectives. Ethics can guide what human ought to do, usually in terms of right, obligations, fairness and specific virtue. Reasoning is the ability of the mind to think and understand things in a logical way. Logical thinking uses reasoning skills to objectively study any problem, which helps make a rational conclusion about how to precede in good governance. The governance should have a man who is prudent, virtuous, and just. Administrative ethical reasoning is a reasoning that refers to systematic and logical thinking in administrative process ethically. It can be described that Administrative ethical reasoning should be focused in good governance because administrative ethical reasoning can control the administrator of the government in order to reach peaceful society.

### **4.2. Evaluation and Suggestion: Logical Validity**

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<sup>19</sup> Fikret Toksoz.(2008). *Good Governance: Improving Quality of Life*. Turkey: TESEV Publication. p.3.

Logical validity refers to the evaluation of the soundness of an argument. An example of a valid argument is given by the following well-known syllogism: All men are mortal. Socrates is a man. Therefore Socrates is mortal. Logical validity is that logically valid deductive arguments have premises that guarantee the truth of the conclusion. An invalid deductive argument gives no reason to think the conclusion is true. In that case the premises can be true and the conclusion can be false at the same time. Logical or rational validity is the estimate of how much a measure represents every single element of a construct. Deductive arguments always will be valid because the truth of the premises is sufficient to guarantee the truth of the conclusion; if the premises are true, the conclusion will be also.

To obtain useful results, the methods that are used to collect data must be valid: the research must be measuring what it claims to measure. This ensures that ethical reasoning of the data and the conclusions that are drawn are also valid toward peaceful society. Thus this paper hopes to get contribution to the understanding that the administrative ethical reasoning of an ethical administrator can construct the peaceful society through good governance.

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