



ETHICS IN POLITICS: A POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY OF GURUDEV RANADE

Dr. Subhash Patil

**Associate Professor and Head, Dept of Political Science,
Rani Parvati Devi College of Arts and Commerce, Belagavi, Karnataka.**

ABSTRACT:

The present paper explores the important theories of late 19th- and early 20th-century Indian social reformer and political theorist Gurudev Ranade about the place of ethics in politics. Deeply ingrained in his devotion to moral principles, Ranade's ethical framework for politics has had a lasting influence on the conversation about leadership and government. In the context of Indian and international politics, this paper examines Ranade's ideas on moral leadership, the moral underpinnings of political decision-making, and the importance of ethical governance.



KEYWORDS: *foreign policy, justice, global politics, leadership, governance, ethics, and trust-building.*

INTRODUCTION:

Gurudev Ranade (1842–1901) was a complex individual whose contributions and thoughts touched on politics, philosophy, and social reform, among other areas. The importance of ethics in politics was one of his main political philosophies. This research article analyses Ranade's theories regarding ethics in politics, emphasising his opinions on moral principles in decision-making, ethical leadership, and the wider ramifications of ethical governance.

VIRTUOUS LEADERSHIP:

Good governance, in Ranade's opinion, is based on moral leadership. He made the case that moral principles should guide political leaders, accentuating virtues like integrity, honesty, and dedication to the common good. Beyond political boundaries, Ranade emphasised the necessity for politicians to put the common good ahead of their own or their parties' agendas. Gurudev Ranade's views on moral leadership stemmed from his conviction that leaders ought to be guided by the highest moral standards and put the well-being of the people they serve ahead of their own interests or those of their political parties.

Ranade's theory of moral leadership included the following important tenets: moral integrity: moral integrity is a quality that ethical leaders ought to have, according to Ranade. In their deeds and choices, they ought to respect integrity, veracity, and openness. It was believed that moral integrity was the cornerstone of credibility and trust in leadership. Dedication to Public Welfare: According to Ranade, a leader's main responsibility is to advance society as a whole. Leaders' ought to put the welfare of their followers first and strive to improve the society, country, or locality they oversee.

SELFLESSNESS:

Ranade argues that selfless leaders ought to have a selfless outlook on life. They ought to prioritise the needs and interests of the populace over their own goals or aspirations for riches and power. **Accountability:** According to Ranade, moral leaders ought to take responsibility for their choices and actions. They must be receptive to appraisal and criticism, and they ought to be prepared to take accountability for the results of their decisions. **Transparency:** Openness in governance is a prerequisite for ethical leadership. Leaders' ought to interact with the public in an honest and transparent manner. It was believed that transparency would guard against corruption and maintain public confidence. **Justice and Fairness:** Ranade emphasised that in their actions and policies, leaders should uphold justice and fairness. By respecting the ideas of social justice and fair treatment, they ought to work towards building a just and equitable society. **Compassion and Empathy:** Moral leaders ought to show compassion and empathy for the needs and worries of those they oversee. They ought to be cognizant of the difficulties and hardships that their constituents endure.

LONG-TERM VISION:

According to Ranade, moral leaders must have a long-term plan for enhancing society. They ought to concentrate on long-term fixes that will help both the current and coming generations. **Civic Engagement:** Citizens' participation and civic engagement should be promoted by morally upright leaders. They ought to cultivate an atmosphere in which individuals actively participate in politics and have a voice in their choices.

DEDICATION TO ETHICAL LEADERSHIP IN ALL DOMAINS:

Ranade's conception of moral leadership went beyond the realm of politics. He thought that moral values ought to direct leaders in all areas of life, including social work, business, and education. Ranade's views on ethical leadership were greatly influenced by his adherence to moral and ethical principles. He believed that ethical leadership was essential to the well-being and development of society. His focus on moral leadership continues to stimulate conversations about the obligations and characteristics of leaders in modern political and social environments. The ethical basis for making political decisions

The key tenet of Gurudev Ranade's theories regarding the moral underpinnings of political decision-making was that moral standards ought to direct the deeds and decisions made by political leaders. He maintained that moral principles ought to be the foundation of any political choice and that moral principles should be given top priority by leaders while forming laws and governing.

The following are some salient features of Ranade's ideas regarding the moral underpinnings of political decision-making: Ranade emphasised the significance of justice and fairness in the process of making political decisions. He thought that society's leaders ought to work towards establishing a just and equitable society in which every person has equal access to chances and advantages. Principles that advance social fairness ought to serve as the foundation for political decisions. **Compassion and Empathy:** Ranade asserted that leaders must exhibit compassion and empathy for the welfare of the populace in order to make ethical decisions. In addition to reflecting a sincere care for the wellbeing of all citizens, leaders should be sensitive to the needs and problems of the people they represent.

The Greater Good: Ranade maintained that societal welfare should take precedence over partisan or personal interests in political decisions. When making decisions, leaders ought to take into account the welfare of the country or community as a whole and safeguard the rights of minorities. **Accountability and Transparency:** According to Ranade, decision-makers and doers ought to be held responsible for their activities. To make sure that decision-makers could be held accountable for the outcomes of their actions, decision-making procedures needed to be transparent. Honesty and transparency encourage moral leadership.

Moral Principles in Public Policy:

According to Ranade, moral principles like integrity, honesty, and truthfulness ought to be included in public policies. Leaders should oppose policies that violate moral principles and instead advocate for policies that are consistent with the ethical standards that inform decision-making.

Ethical Foreign Policy:

International relations were included in Ranade's ethical framework. He promoted an ethical framework for foreign policy that placed a strong focus on collaboration, nonviolent diplomacy, and respect for other countries' rights and sovereignty. Maintaining the nation's moral position in international affairs requires ethical behaviour.

Long-Term Vision:

According to Ranade, moral leaders ought to have a long-term plan for the welfare of the country. In addition to short-term profits, political decisions should consider the sustainability of policies and their impact on future generations. Ethical Dilemmas: Ranade recognised that complicated ethical conundrums frequently confronted political leaders. He maintained that in these circumstances, leaders ought to carefully consider the moral precepts at issue and decide which course of action best serves the larger ethical good.

Civic Education:

Ranade promoted civic education as a means of fostering moral underpinnings in political decision-making. In order for people to make informed judgements and hold leaders accountable, he thought that individuals should be enlightened about their rights, obligations, and the moral implications of politics. Overall, the significance of ethics in governance was emphasised by Gurudev Ranade's theories regarding the moral underpinnings of political decision-making.

He thought that the nation's long-term success and the well-being of society depended on moral leadership. In conversations on the moral implications of leadership and politics in modern settings, his thoughts are still relevant. Morality in Leadership Gurudev Ranade was adamant that strong moral and ethical standards ought to direct governance, which informed his views on ethics in governance. He promoted an ethical system that placed the needs of the populace first and preserved principles like integrity, fairness, and responsibility.

The following are some salient features of Ranade's views on governance ethics:

Ethical Leadership : According to Ranade, moral leadership is the foundation for moral governance. Administrators and political leaders ought to be morally upright, uphold moral standards, and put the welfare of the populace ahead of their own interests. It was believed that the cornerstone of sound government was ethical leadership. Accountability and Transparency: All acts and choices made by the government must be transparent and accountable in order to adhere to ethical governance. Government operations ought to be transparent to the general public, and leaders should be held accountable for their deeds. Transparency was considered a way to keep the public's trust and fight corruption.

Rule of Law : Ranade defended the rule of law as an essential tenet of political authority. His view was that everyone should be bound by the law, even the powerful. Sustaining law and order and guaranteeing justice in society require an unbiased and equitable judicial system. Social Justice and Equality: Ranade supported laws and programmes that were designed to bring about these two goals. Ensuring equitable chances and eradicating societal disparities are prerequisites for ethical government. It is the responsibility of leaders to uplift marginalised populations and build a society that is more just and equal.

Civic Engagement : Active citizen participation in politics and civic engagement are promoted by ethical governance. In Ranade's view, holding leaders responsible and guaranteeing that the interests of the people were served through governance depended on an informed and involved populace.

Extended Vision: Ranade underscored the significance of a long-range vision in the context of governance. Leaders' ought to concentrate on making choices and policies that will benefit both current and future generations. A dedication to the country's sustainable development is necessary for ethical government. Public Welfare: According to Ranade, advancing the welfare of the populace is the main responsibility of the government. The foundation of policies and actions should be the goal of improving residents' lives and guaranteeing their well-being.

Moral Principles in Public Policy : According to Ranade, moral principles like compassion, honesty, and integrity ought to be ingrained in public policy. Leaders should oppose policies that violate moral norms and instead advocate for policies that are consistent with the ethical principles guiding governance. Ethical Behaviour in International Relations: Ranade's moral code covered international relations as well. He promoted moral behaviour in international relations, placing a strong focus on collaboration, diplomacy, and respect for other countries' rights. Upholding a country's moral status in international relations requires ethical behaviour. Ultimately, the significance of moral and ethical principles in all facets of administration was emphasised by Gurudev Ranade's theories on ethics in governance. In order to serve the welfare of the populace and preserve the highest ethical standards in public service, his concept of ethical governance sought to establish a just, equitable, and accountable system.

CONCEPTS OF ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY BY GURUDEV RANADE:

The concepts of responsibility and transparency were underlined by Gurudev Ranade as crucial elements of moral leadership. He thought that upholding the integrity of the government and preserving the public's trust depended heavily on these ideals.

The following are Gurudev Ranade's views on openness and accountability in government: leaders and public officials should be held responsible for their choices and actions, according to Ranade. They ought to accept accountability for the results of their decisions and deeds. This accountability covered moral and ethical responsibilities in addition to legal ramifications. Responding to the People: Ranade thought that the people's demands and concerns had to be taken into consideration by the government. Administrators and leaders have a responsibility to hear the people's concerns and act accordingly. One essential component of being accountable to the public is being responsive. Sincerity and Openness: Transparency demands sincerity and openness in all matters pertaining to the government. Ranade emphasised that information should be made available to the public and that public participation should be encouraged in government procedures and decision-making. In order to establish confidence, open communication with the populace was essential.

Preventing Corruption: According to Ranade, one way to stop corruption is to be transparent. It was harder for corruption to flourish in the background when public scrutiny and openness surrounded government acts and decisions. Ensuring that public resources are utilised for the benefit of the people was possible through transparent government. Building Trust: It was believed that accountability and transparency were effective ways to foster trust. People were more likely to trust the government's actions and decisions when they perceived them to be transparent, truthful, and open to accountability.

Citizen Participation: According to Ranade, openness in government fosters citizen involvement. People were better able to take part in debates, take part in civic activities, and make educated decisions during elections when they had access to information about government policies and actions.

Ethical Governance: According to Ranade, ethical governance requires accountability and transparency. According to him, morally upright administrators and leaders ought to be open to criticism and honest in all of their interactions. Leaders must respect the values of justice and fairness and hold themselves to the highest moral standards in order to practice ethical governance.

Legal Structure: Ranade acknowledged the significance of a structure that upheld accountability and openness in the legal system. In his view, rules and laws ought to be put in place to uphold these values and guarantee that authorities can be held legally responsible for any unethical actions they take. In general, Gurudev Ranade's views on transparency and accountability in government are indicative of his dedication to building an accountable, responsive, and truthful government for the people. In

discussions on good governance and the moral behaviour of public servants, these ideas are still applicable today.

Gurudev Ranade's dedication to building a just and equitable society was the foundation of his beliefs on social justice and equality. He thought that regardless of a person's origins or current situation, society should be set up to guarantee that everyone has fair treatment and equal opportunity.

The following sums up Gurudev Ranade's main viewpoints on equality and social justice:

Equal rights and social justice: removal of social inequities. Ranade was a fervent supporter of doing away with social inequities. He felt that inequality in wealth and rank, as well as prejudice based on caste, were unfair and needed to be addressed. He strongly backed social reform initiatives that tried to uplift underprivileged and disenfranchised groups of people.

Equal Opportunities: According to Ranade, every person should have an equal chance to advance their socioeconomic standing and achieve success. Discrimination on the basis of caste, religion, gender, or any other basis shouldn't prevent someone from obtaining work, education, or other chances for personal and professional development.

Rights and Dignity of All: Ranade underlined that each and every person has rights and ought to be treated with respect and dignity, irrespective of their social or economic standing. To create a just society, all citizens' rights and dignity must be upheld.

Social Reforms: Ranade took an active role in movements for social reform, especially those that sought to better the lives of marginalised and lower-caste people. To achieve social justice and equality, he thought social transformation was a prerequisite.

Women's Empowerment: Ranade also supported women's empowerment, feeling that they ought to have equal access to opportunity and education. He supported women's participation in all areas of life and their rights. Ranade emphasised the value of civic education in advancing equality and social justice. In his view, citizens ought to be made aware of their responsibilities and rights so they can demand equality and justice and take an active part in the democratic process.

Moral Leadership: According to Ranade, moral leadership can be used to advance equality and social justice. According to him, administrators and leaders must give top priority to measures that level the playing field and guarantee that every section of society benefits from good administration. **Community Welfare:** Ranade thought that the interests of the community and the country should come before those of an individual. Prioritising the common good while formulating policies and making decisions will promote better social fairness and equality. **Resource Access:** According to Ranade, there should be greater equity in the way that people can obtain resources like land and education. He thought that educational programmes and land reforms could aid in addressing socioeconomic inequalities.

Encouragement of Harmony: Ranade also supported social and group harmony. He thought that social fairness and equality depended on harmony between various religious and cultural groupings. Caste or religious differences shouldn't impede societal advancement. In general, the conversation in India about social reform and governance was greatly influenced by Gurudev Ranade's views on equality and fairness in society. His support of equal opportunity, the abolition of discrimination, and the defence of every citizen's right and dignity has had a lasting impact on arguments about social justice and equality in modern society. As vital components of a robust and responsible democracy, Gurudev Ranade gave civic education and public involvement a high priority. He thought that the success of a country and the advancement of moral governance depended on having an informed and involved populace.

The following summarises Gurudev Ranade's main theories regarding civic engagement and education:

Engaging Citizenship: Ranade underscored the need for citizens to take an active part in the political process. He thought that when people actively participated in elections, shaped public policy, and held their leaders responsible, democracy flourished. **Making Well-Informed Decisions:** Ranade emphasised the value of civic education in ensuring that people were aware of their rights, the political system, and the problems that the country was experiencing. He thought that knowledgeable people were better able to engage in the democratic process and make wise decisions.

Civic Responsibilities: According to Ranade, it is the duty of citizens to participate in social and political issues. In addition to exercising their rights, they ought to carry out their responsibilities as

contributing members of society. Voting, getting involved in the community, and making contributions to the welfare of the country were all considered forms of civic obligation.

Ethics-based participation: Ranade believed that morality should direct civic participation. In addition to upholding the rights and opinions of others and advancing the common good, citizens should participate in politics in an ethical and responsible manner. Empowerment through Civic Education: According to Ranade, civic education can help people become more powerful. Citizens who are educated on the political system, the Constitution, and civic principles will be better able to question injustices, actively participate in governance, and effect positive change.

Political Literacy: Ranade argued that civic education must include political literacy as a fundamental subject. It is important for citizens to comprehend how the government operates, the functions of its many parts, and the importance of their personal involvement in the political process.

Ethical Political Participation: Ranade urged people to participate in politics in an ethical manner. This involved endorsing leaders who put the wellbeing of the populace first, opposing corruption and immoral behaviours, and backing morally upright leaders. Preventing Apathy: Ranade was worried about the lack of interest in politics and thought civic education could help. A well-informed and involved populace was more inclined to actively participate in public affairs and to avoid becoming apathetic. Ranade deemed the importance of educational institutions in civic education to develop civic values and responsible citizenship from an early age, civic education should be a part of the curriculum in schools and colleges.

Engagement in Social Reform: Ranade was a proponent of citizen participation in initiatives aimed at enacting constructive social change and was actively involved in social reform movements. As part of this engagement, efforts to advance social justice and end social inequality were made. Gurudev Ranade believed that an informed and involved populace was necessary for a robust and accountable democracy. His opinions on civic engagement and education reinforced this point of view. His support of civic education as a tool for ethical civic involvement and empowerment continues to influence discussions on citizenship and civic duty in contemporary society.

Gurudev Ranade's views on international ethics were a reflection of his conviction that moral behaviour and values are crucial in the field of international relations. His ethical perspective extended to international matters, even though his primary focus during the colonial era was India's socio-political issues. Key points of Gurudev Ranade's theories on international ethics are as follows:

Peaceful Diplomacy: Ranade promoted discussions and peaceful diplomacy as the best ways to end international hostilities. He thought that diplomacy, cooperation, and discourse should take precedence over aggression and conflict between states. He believed that having peaceful talks was crucial to preserving world peace. Respect for Sovereignty: Ranade underlined the significance of upholding each country's right to sovereignty. He held that states should respect the principles of non-interference and self-determination and refrain from meddling in the domestic affairs of other nations. Mutual Benefit and Cooperation: Ranade viewed foreign relations as a chance for mutual benefit and cooperation. He held that international collaboration in fields like trade, culture, and research is something that nations should strive towards for the benefit of all. Ethical Treatment of Other Nations: According to Ranade, other nations ought to be treated fairly, with dignity, and with respect.

In international relations, ethical behaviour means treating every country with respect and equality, regardless of its size or strength. Encouragement of Peace: According to Ranade, countries have a moral obligation to encourage peace and avert hostilities. The prevention of violence, conflict resolution, and peacekeeping operations should be given top priority in ethical foreign policy.

Observance of International Law: Ranade emphasised the significance of abiding by international treaties and law. In his view, states ought to uphold the rule of law and honour their international obligations while interacting with one another. Humanitarianism: In terms of international relations, Ranade was in favour of humanitarian initiatives. He held that in order to demonstrate compassion and solidarity with those in need, governments should offer aid and support to individuals experiencing crises or natural catastrophes. Avoiding Aggressive Expansion: Ranade opposed colonialism and

aggressive expansionism. He had the opinion that nations shouldn't colonise other nations or acquire unfair territory.

It is imperative for ethical behaviour in international relations to honour the borders and rights of other countries. Promotion of Global Ethics: Ranade was an advocate for the advancement of universally applicable moral standards that cut beyond national boundaries. He argued in favour of universal ethics and ideals that should direct how different countries behave while interacting with one another.

The Role of Ethical Leaders: According to Ranade, ethical leadership is crucial in international affairs. Moral leaders have the power to persuade their countries to adopt moral values in their international relations and pursue moral foreign policy. Although Gurudev Ranade's main area of interest was domestic political and social challenges in India, his theories and ethical guidelines for international ethics are still relevant in the larger framework of world politics.

His support of nonviolent diplomacy, respect for national sovereignty, and moral behaviour in international affairs is indicative of his dedication to establishing a more moral and just global order. In summary, the opinions of Gurudev Ranade regarding ethics in politics serve as a timeless example of the significance that moral principles and values have in the field of government. His innovative ideas, which are based on a strong dedication to justice, morality, and the well-being of the populace, have had a lasting impact on political and governmental discourse. Generations of leaders, academics, and people have been inspired by Ranade's ethical leadership ideology, which emphasises social fairness, accountability, transparency, and the moral underpinnings of political decision-making.

Ranade's focus on moral leadership serves as a reminder that a country's overall well-being is significantly impacted by the behaviour and morality of individuals in positions of authority. His appeal for leaders to put the greater good ahead of their own interests is a timeless goal for people in positions of power and authority. He gave a great deal of weight to the moral underpinnings of political decision-making, which highlights the necessity of policies and procedures that are founded on the principles of justice, fairness, and compassion. His support of openness and accountability as the cornerstones of effective government emphasises the need to maintain public confidence and combat corruption.

The principles of a just and equitable society, where every citizen has an equal opportunity to grow and contribute, are echoed by Ranade's unflinching dedication to social justice and equality. His support for civic education and engaged citizenship highlights the critical role that informed and involved citizens play in the democratic process.

CONCLUSION:

Leaders and common people alike continue to find value in Gurudev Ranade's theories regarding political ethics. They serve as a reminder that moral leadership is not only a desirable goal but also a necessary means of advancing society. Ranade's ideas offer enduring guidance in a society full of difficult problems and moral conundrums, encouraging us to respect the greatest moral standards in the hope of a fair and successful future.

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