

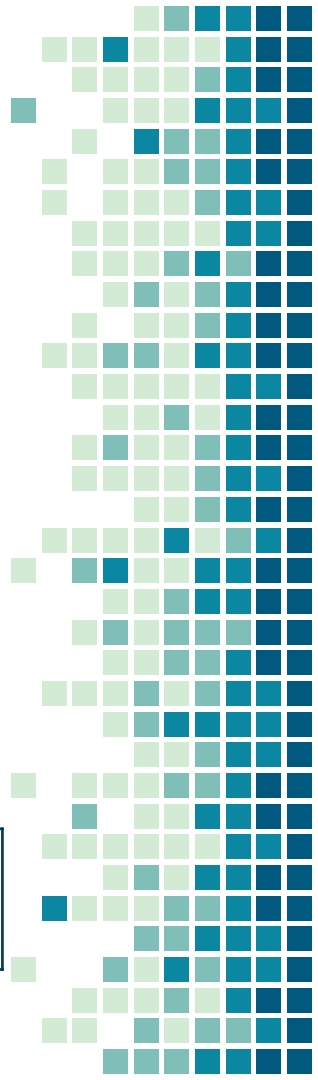


# DAR ES SALAAM SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM

- ❖ **MODULE NAME: MEDIA ETHICS**
- ❖ **MODULE CODE: JST 05102**
- ❖ **DEPARTMENT : JOURNALISM**
- ❖ **MODULE LEVEL: NTA LEVEL 5**
- ❖ **MODULE SEMESTER: SEMESTER 1**
- ❖ **TUTOR'S NAME: LILIAN NYINGISYE**



**OUR MOTTOR: MEDIA FOR DEMOCRACY**



## THIS MODULE CONSIST OF FOUR(4) TOPICS:

➤ **TOPIC 1**

MEANING AND CONCEPT OF MEDIA ETHICS.

➤ **TOPIC 2**

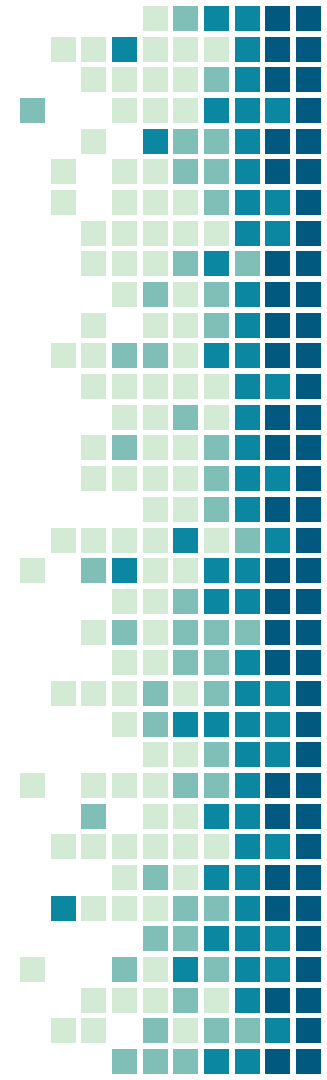
ETHICAL GUIDELINES AND TECHNIQUE RELATED TO  
GATHERING, PROCESSING AND DISSEMINATION OF JOURNALISTIC  
CONTENT

➤ **TOPIC 3**

PRIVACY

➤ **TOPIC 4**

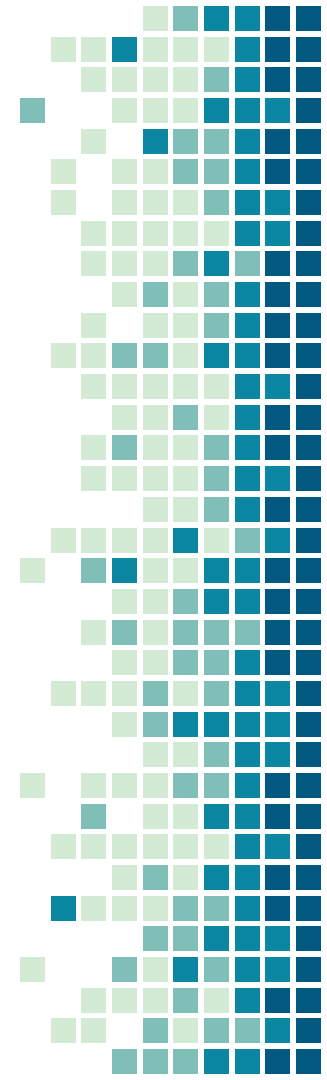
ETHICAL DILEMMAS





## TOPIC 1:MEANING OF MEDIA ETHICS

- **Ethics:** refers to moral principles that govern a person's, social grouping, or professional behavior. These principles help society distinguish between good and bad conduct.
- Ethics is only involved in voluntary human acts, undertaken willingly with active intellect and deliberation.
- These are therefore factors that raise the level of responsibility and accountability. Ethics does not deal with involuntary acts done without person's consent, will or intellect, as that would remove responsibility and accountability.



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## WHAT SHAPES ETHICS

A number of factors are known to shape ethics:

Societal norms and values

Political environment

Economic development

Religious inclination

Training

Professional needs

Need for respectability

Need for credibility

General norms and values

Ethical inquiry covers a wide range of possible subjects, among them:

Personal ethics: e.g questions about one's basic values and plan of life

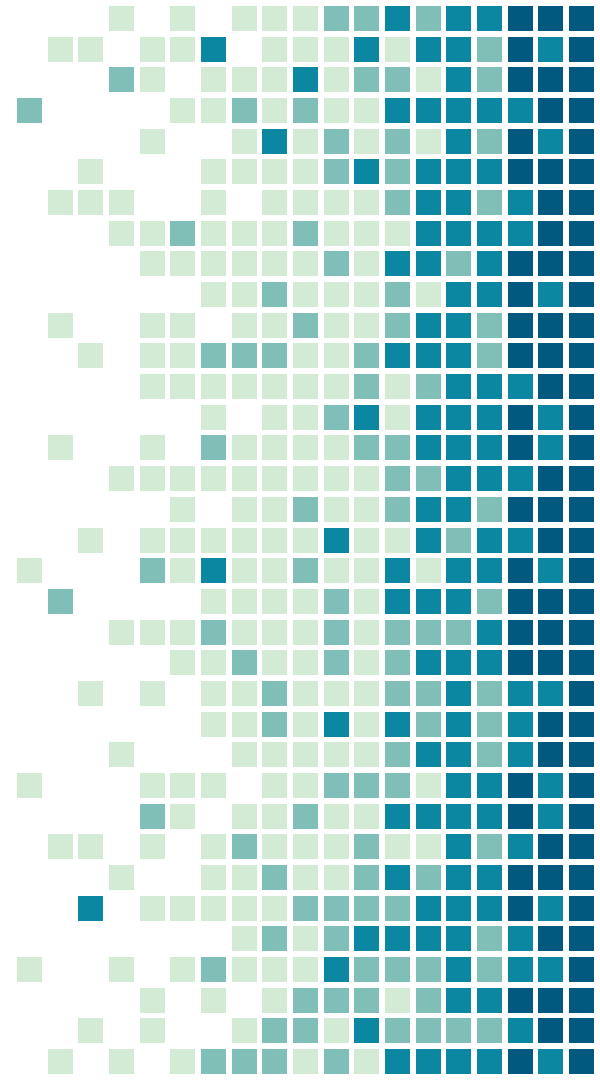
Professional ethics: principles and practices of major professions

Ethics of sexual and gender relations

Research ethics in academia and the private sector

Global ethics: ethics of international affairs, human right

Communication ethics, including media, public relations and journalism



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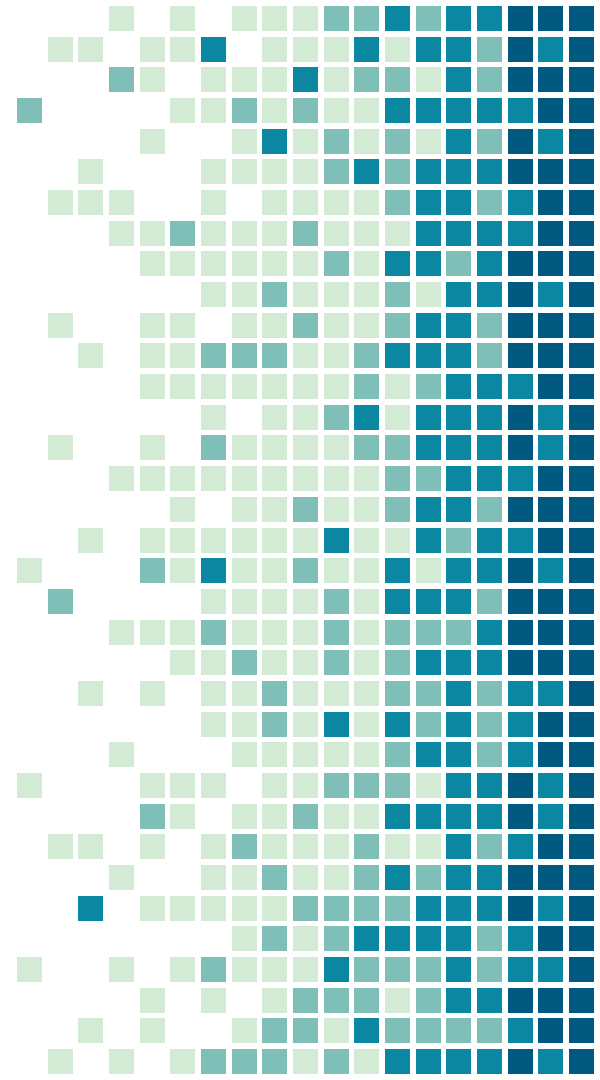
All professions determined to serve humanity must have some kind Of guidelines on how they ought to attend the society in an efficient, effective, equitable and just manner.

As an honorable profession that performs a public service by ensuring the dissemination of knowledge, journalism also has its ethics.

Media ethics are the modes of behavior to which all branches of the media should attempt to adhere. These include print, electronic and online.

Media ethics Is the subdivision of applied ethics dealing with the specific principles and standards of media, including broadcasting, film theatre, the arts, print media and the internet.

**Media ethics** are moral standards that apply to the media. Media professionals use media ethics as a compass when discharging their duties. The standards are also used by the media as a device for shielding themselves from attacks directed at them from time to time by members of the public displeased by their work.



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Media ethics relate to the application and evaluation of the principles and norms that guide journalism practice, with special attention to the most important problems in the field and contain both applied analysis and theory. Journalists often find themselves in situations that pose ethical dilemma. There are various guidelines which can help them make the right decisions. It is commonly agreed that ethical dilemmas result from conflicts arising between the values that people hold, the principles they use to make decisions and the duties they have to others or any combination of these. The solution for these dilemmas always resolve around four dimensions: gathering all available facts; identifying the values one standards for ( professional, moral or socio-cultural) ; identifying one's guiding principles or philosophy; and deciding on people one ought to be loyal to (yourself, employer, profession and society). These dimensions are also known as determinants of morality.

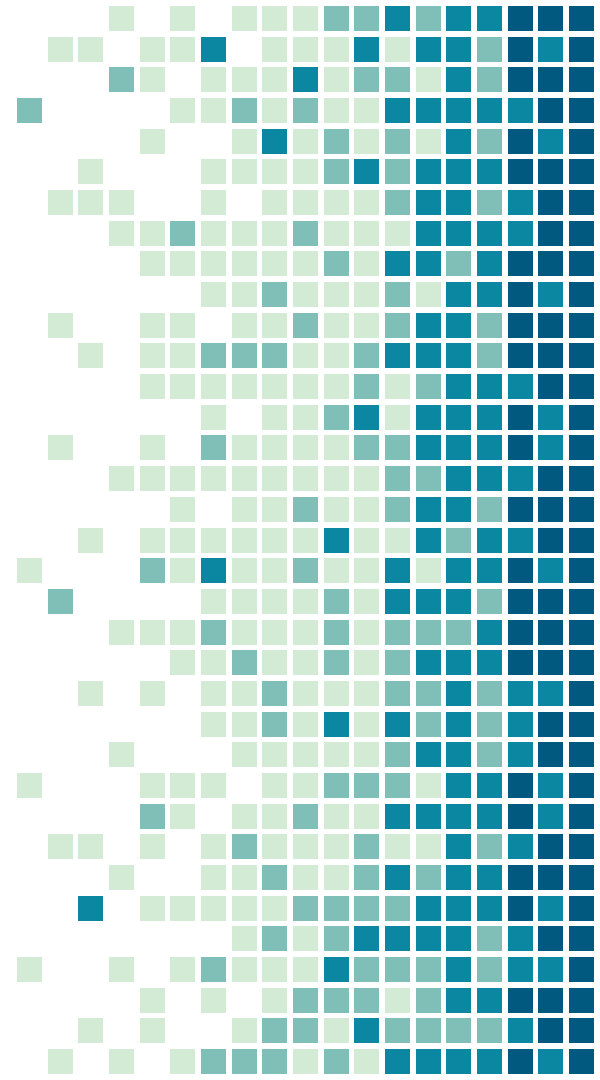


## FOUNDATION OF MEDIA ETHICS

Media ethics are drawn from a range of philosophical principles, including basic Judeo-Christian values, Aristotle's ideas about virtue and balanced behavior's (the golden mean), Kant's categorical imperative, Mill's principle of utility and Rawls's veil of ignorance. Journalism ethics were developed from a combination of ethical philosophies and principles of four major thinkers- Aristotle, Immanuel Kant, John Stuart Mill and John Rawls.

According to **Aristotle**, virtue is the mean between two extremes. It is a philosophy of moderation and comparison often referred to as the 'Golden Mean'. The journalistic concept of fairness reflects this philosophy.

**Immanuel Kant** developed the philosophy of categorical imperative as an extension of the Aristotle's philosophy of the golden mean. According to this philosophy, people make decisions based on principles they would want to be universally applied



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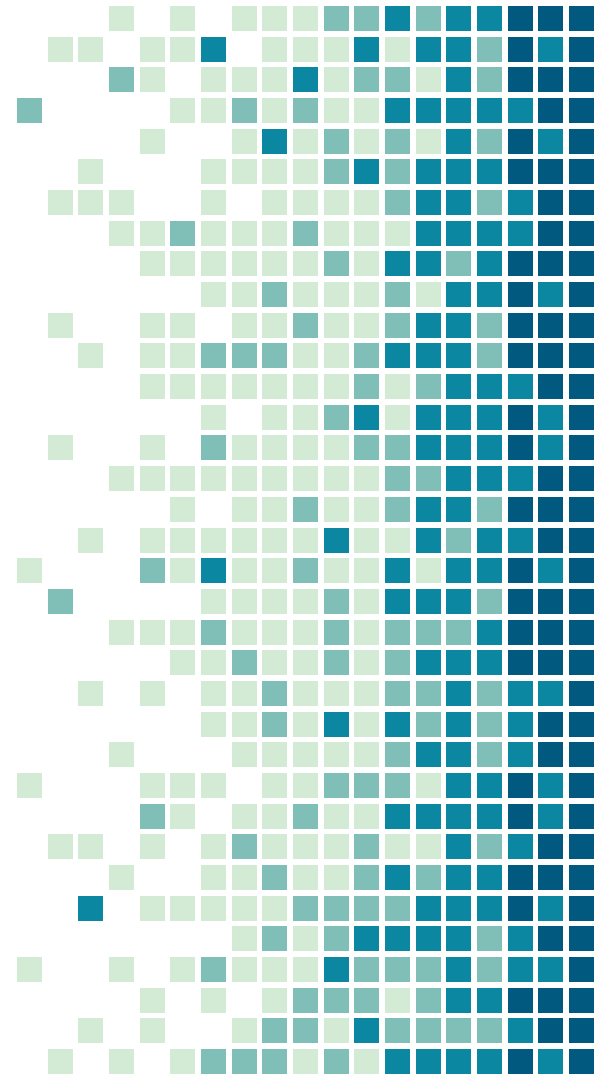
He argues that a society ought to be held together by universal norms and that, for those norms to make sense; each individual must act out of duty. Kant believes that motives for an ethical decision are based on duty. According to him, decision should be made because they are right without considering their consequences.

His philosophy encourages journalists to act out of duty as well as take decisions because they are right.

He insists that only by action from duty could one be said to be acting Ethically

**John Stuart Mill** propounded the philosophy of utilitarianism, meaning seeking the greater happiness for the greatest number of people.

According to him, the best decision is one with the biggest overall benefit for most human beings. Journalists base their action on this principle when their actions are attributed to public interest.





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If reporters and editors agree that the publication of a story will benefit more people than it would harm, the article is published.

**John Rawl** supported the egalitarian philosophy, according to which everyone works from a sense of liberty and basic respect for everyone, regardless of one's social position. Basing on this philosophy, journalists have developed the principle of non-discrimination.

On the other hand, the maxim “do unto others as you would have them do unto you” holds many journalists accountable for their actions as reporters. These philosophies, as well as others, constitute the core of media ethics.

Ethics in the media are, in essence, all about duty. They come with concepts of freedom and responsibility.

They comprise a set of principles and rules determined by means to allow most, if not all, media practitioners to serve the public better.

Ethics are not only a question of codes of conduct; they also cover omissions and commissions in behavior.

They are also not merely a set of rules to be followed; in fact, they have a lot more to do with the application of ‘objectivity’ and ‘neutrality’ in human conduct, based on reasonable principles complete with all its positives and negatives.

The basic principle involved in acquiring a code of behavior is that of ensuring quality.

