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ETHICS IN SHOWING KINDNESS TO OTHERS: AN EVALUATION OF BHAGWATI DEVI SHARMA'S VIEWS ON ETHICS

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ABSTRACT

In the current postmodern society, no one is kind towards others. Everyone is concerned about their own success and not others. This is not at all an exemplar of kindness, which [people need, especially elderly and students from weaker sections of society. here, Bhagwati Devi Sharma is an inspiration for others, as she donated her personal belongings. She was also of the view that respect is also important for animals, as they are creation of God, and needs utmost care. According to her kindness is a moral obligation for people to enhance their dignity. If there is ethical consideration in actions, then people proper attain their self-actualization.

Keywords: Ethics, kindness, Bhagwati Devi Sharma, views, modern society

1. INTRODUCTION

Parents teach children to be kind to others, for emerging as a good person. By this teaching, they act ethical. But to what extent is the society ethical in postmodern context is questionable. This is because people are selfish, and do not intend to think much about others. In this context, ethics and kindness cannot be placed in the same line for evaluation. However, Sharma et al., (2025) clarifies that ethics is the use of moral principles for expressing the right conduct at the right time. This conduct demarcates character of individuals based on the expression. If there is kindness in the expression, then individuals are ethical in their approach. This type of expression is inclusive of values like compassion, and generosity, which enhances human dignity. Indian spiritual and ethical frameworks consider kindness not merely as a sentiment but a lived obligation, which individuals have to follow for being a good person. This ethics strengthens social harmony, encouraging altruism, deepening trust among each other.

A little on Bhagwati Devi Sharma

Bhagwati Devi Sharma achieved accolades and glory as a prominent spiritual figure creating her mark in *Akhil Vishwa Gayatri Parivar (AWGP)*. She is renowned for her committed services toward women's upliftment and social welfare. Born in September 1926, her involvement increased in spiritual and social efforts. She emerged successful after complying with the principles of service, love, and inclusiveness (Awgp.org, 2025). With her guidance, Mahila Jagran Abhiyan gained widespread presence. With this spread, women in the Mahila Samiti achieved empowerment emphasizing empowerment with the practice of ethical living.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Ethical Themes by Bhagwati Devi Sharma

There are limitations in direct writings by Bhagwati Devi Sharma on ethics. However, her life and work are directed towards ethical orientations. This orientation emphasized kindness which makes a man moral. Here, one of the aspects is compassion, which is universal service expected by individuals. Bhagwati Devi Sharma treated everyone like her family. AWGP biography notes consist of dedication and commitment, which ensured visitors' comfort and spiritual guidance. By this, practices on ethics were grounded not only in obligation but in genuinely caring for others. This reflects an ethical stance taken for recognizing persons who are worthy of respect and kindness (Heifetz, 2016). Ethically, this stance is aligned with the idea that kindness is not according to the situation but is universal which is extended to the social constructs.

2.2 Generosity in spiritual and material renunciation

Bhagwati Devi creates lessons for others as she donated all her wedding jewelry for the establishment of *Gayatri Tapo Bhumi*. This act is strong ethical symbolism, which places collective spiritual well-being on a higher pedestal over personal gain. This emphasis reinforces generosity as an ideal aspect for following ethical considerations. This kind of renunciation aptly aligns with ethical principles, which truly defines kindness in terms of personal sacrifice. However, Tackes, (2022) argued that if sacrifice is worth of achieving true results, then only it is justified, otherwise not.

2.3 Empowerment through inclusion

After launching Mahila Jagran Abhiyan, Bhagwati Devi worked towards social upliftment of women. Here, social and spiritual parameters are taken into consideration. According to her, ethical kindness, involves enabling others considering their strengths more important as compared to merely offering charity — a distinction between *helping* and *empowering*, which is central in many ethical philosophies. Based on these aspects, it can be considered that ethical kindness should dignify the respect, which the receiver demands. Singh, R. (2025) is of the view that this does not undermining self-worth or agency.

2.4 Affection mapped in terms of ethical commitment

Bhagwati Devi's reputation is famous, as each visitor or follower was treated like a son or daughter. The setting was homely, which was reflected from her warm reception. According to Vocal TV desk (2025), this is a symbol of ethical worldview which is based on affection and non-discriminatory views. From an ethical perspective, this takes shape of universal benevolence, where others are treated on the basis of empathy and love, irrespective of their caste, color, creed, religion and race.

2.5 Ethical approach

Aspects which make Bhagwati Devi Sharma stand out from the crowd are integrative compassion, and role modelling. She combined spiritual teachings with practical service. As a result of this, she emerged as kind, which placed her well among others. Compliance with ethics bridged the gap between inner performance and outward action. Her focus was on upgrading standards of living for women, who need active support. Gupta, (2025) argues that these are the women who are in need of active support. If service providers are kind, then they adhere to ethical principles. Bhagwati Devi emerged as a role model among women by donating her precious ornaments. This was an ethical act, which embodied ethical principles more than that of merely preaching them. However, there was heavy reliance on spiritual and devotional frameworks which was adopted by AWGP. For people outside community, there was a need for language and idioms of kindness to be reinterpreted in terms of secular ethics. Explicit theoretical writings are limited as there is a dearth of philosophers practicing abstract systematization for ethics. Choudhary and Nagla, (2025) supports that Bhagwati Devi

Sharma's ethical vision is crystal clear, as it could be seen in practice. Evidence is biography, which has implicit ethics more than that of explicit texts.

3. METHODOLOGY

Post positivism philosophy is apt for the paper which intends to detect ethics in showing kindness to others, with the reference to ethical views presented by Bhagwati Devi Sharma. This is justified as evaluation is to be done for the after effects of applying scientific, real, objective, and epistemological knowledge of ethics and kindness. Evaluation, in the form of exploratory research design, is beneficial for exploring the unexplored realms of ethics and kindness as applicable within the postmodern society. here, inductive approach is useful for inducing new theories, facts, ideas and notions after applying reviews for the past literatures. Ethics is also denoted on acknowledging the sources used, for avoiding the instances of plagiarism and collusion. Data is collected from sources like books, journal articles, and papers, which are then analyzed through some case examples of kindness.

4. RESULTS

The following sections present clear, real-life–style examples and short cases on acts of kindness. First case is that of the kindness, which is deemed important for making daily life moral. For example, if a student in a class observes that another student is sitting alone, it is ethical for him to invite that child into the group activities. By this act, he practices empathy and inclusion. These small acts are important for reducing loneliness among children and building supportive environment, channelizing education into inclusion. Relating Bhagwati Devi Sharma here, she was more into inclusion, which was reflected in texts and writings. Her beliefs refrained from formal philosophical texts, which seemed theoretical and beyond human understanding most of the times. Through inclusion, she assembled people based on conducts which are based on practicality of ethics in the daily life. Her views on including lonely friends into group activities aligns with the beliefs that none should be isolated or excluded (Awgp.org, 2025). In her ethics, every child in the classroom is to be respected, felt belonged to the classroom and provided with emotional security. Including friends or newcomers in group activities, according to ethical terminology, is not only politeness for children, but a moral responsibility to emerge as a kind human being. Here, Bhagwati Devi is an inspiration for children as she treated everyone who came to the Gayatri Parivar as members of her own family. In this way, she reinvokes the idea of community upliftment, which is achieved through inclusion.

One of the other cases is kindness, which is reflected by sharing resources with others. For instance, during floods, local residents give shelter, foods, and clothes to displaced families. From this, they do not expect anything in return. This act shows compassion and social responsibility, which people are expected to show to others during crises (Sharma et al., 2025). If people are kind to this intensity, then it helps them to create solidarity among people, dignifying their individuality. Relating the views of

Bhagwati Devi, emphasis is placed more on collective participation as compared to individualism. Throughout her life, she practiced collective living and teamwork. This is by encouraging people, especially women and youth, to take part in group prayers, social service, learning circles, and reform movements. In ethical terminology, this participation enriches growth, as people confidently assert themselves in sharing resources. This is because they feel included. As a result of this, isolation reduces, increasing cooperation. The type of cooperation generated, creates social harmony. It has also been seen that if people share things, they are not egoistic. They cross the social barriers, which do not make them feel lonely. Bhagwati Devi was also of the view that inclusion enriches characteristics of people, making them a moral human being (Heifetz, 2016). She practiced and preached empathy, which attached respect to her character. Based on this, it is the responsibility of the teachers to create friendship among the students. They are also to teach students that friendship is not only a private bond. Rather, it is a means to connect people and lead them towards the creation of a large community.

Example can also be shared of the kindness which is needed towards elderly people. Some people have the tendency to help elderly persons in carrying heavy bags, giving them medicines, and taking their every possible care. By this care, they gain respect from elderly persons. According to Tackes, (2022), this type of kindness is important as it is ethical and protects the vulnerable people among the social constructs. Aligning with Bhagwati Devi Sharma's views, kindness is viewed as a moral responsibility of the people and not only a social custom. In her ethical terminology, care, respect are important attributes. She is of the view that caring for elders, respecting them enhances people of their dignity. If people use their life experiences for contributing towards society, especially towards elders, then they can do it diligently. For her, respect is the foundation enriching kindness into the character. Elders, as Bhagwati Devi believed, needs proper care, love, affection. As they are in their second childhood, therefore, active listening is to be exercised to their needs. Most of the people fail to practice this, as no one has the patience. Singh, (2025) on the other hand is of the view that if elders are properly cared, then they guide the youth towards success. Ethical considerations in recognizing the best way to serve elders are a source of wisdom for the youths and definitely not a burden. They are to be provided with emotional comfort, so that they do not feel hesitant to share their problems. Gupta, (2025) is of the view that elders are always to be included within the activities and events, so that their loneliness and ignorance is reduced. If they are included within the activities, it implies that they are valued within the familial and communal events. If the elders are neglected and not cared for, then youths morally fail to assert themselves. Evidence is youths failing to receive success, as they do not plan and approach work.

Reference can also be cited of kindness in education, which is mostly faded in the current postmodern context. There are few teachers who tend to care for helping students from poor economic backgrounds. Some times the teachers are not available, which puts studies at stake for these students.

Teachers who help these students express selfless care for illuminating knowledge for these students. Choudhary and Nagla, (2025) is of the view that these teachers gain much respect from the students, as they put students' learning needs fulfilment before their needs. This mentality is important for embracing equality among the students. Here, views of Bhagwati Devi Sharma can be related as she mapped education on the basis of kindness, compassion, and moral values. She was of the view that these attributes shape the character of the students and academic achievement comes only when these attributes are there in adequate quantity within the characteristics of the students. For her, education is a means of social upliftment for students from marginalized sections. They are to be provided with proper care and emotional support, so that they feel included within the school curriculum and activities. This type of teachers serves schools without any expectations. They only expect success of students, which aligns with Bhagwati Devi Sharma's **selfless service (seva) towards elders without expectations of** rewards or praise. She also believed in assisting the students from economically weaker backgrounds as much as possible in fulfilling their daily needs to ensure their well-being. Here, Sharma et al., (2025) states that affection and humility are the two most important attributes needed for gaining trust from the students, especially the ones from weaker sections of the society.

Kindness through forgiveness can also be referred in this context. For example, some persons tend to forgive others instead of taking revenge. For these people, learning by mistake is the main motto. By this approach, the persons show mercy and emotional maturity, under the ethical terminology. These attributes are important as, in the present age, no one tends to forgive others and take up revenge to recompensate for the damage and losses. However, Heifetz, (2016) was of the view that forgiveness reduces tendency to indulge in conflict, promoting peace. If attention is turned towards Bhagwati Devi Sharma, then her forgiveness is unleashed through her kindness. According to her, forgiveness is one of the highest expressions, which makes a man kind. In her ethical terminology, forgiving others is not a sign of weakness, rather a mark, enhancing inner strength, moral maturity, enriching overall spiritual growth. She is also of the view that forgiveness is a moral strength, which holds anger or resentment. Both anger and resentment are harmful for individuals within the society. Forgiveness, according to Bhagwati Devi Sharma, cleanses mind, promoting peace and stability. Overall, it can be established that by forgiving others, a person is kind not only toward others but also toward self (Tackes, 2022). But if revengeful attitude is shown, then character is wronged, as revenge is placed on a higher pedestal as compared to retaliation, which can be achieved through self-actualization.

Reference can also be shared of the kindness which is to be shown to animals. It is seen that most of the people throw stones at street dogs to remove them from streets and houses. Some garbage contains harmful substances which does not suit the animals, who reside near the garbage. There are other people, who love stray dogs, cats and take them to their home, and take their care. Now, there are groups, volunteers, who are active in rescuing injured stray animals and providing healthcare. As a

result of this, compassion is unleashed. This type of kindness matters as all beings, irrespective of whether they are humans or animals are to be treated equally. Here, Bhagwati Devi Sharma's views can be attached as she believed that kindness extends to all living beings. She is ethical in stating that animals are part of the universe, and they are to be cared for, with love, care, affection, respect, just like human needs are fulfilled (Singh, 2025). She believed that all forms of life are sacred and are God's creation. Causing harm to animals is ethically and morally incorrect as it implies taking life, which has been created by the almighty. All these aspects align with broad Indian ethics which are directed towards *ahimsa* (non-violence).

Kindness applicable in social services can also be related here. Some people love to engage into social services, which are directed towards community upliftment. Here, Bhagwati Devi Sharma can be placed in the same line, as she emerges as a true inspiration by donating her personal jewelry for social and spiritual welfare. Her focus was also on women's upliftment to change their predicament. As a result of this, sacrifice and altruism are enhanced. According to some customs, sacrifice is needed for achieving good results (Gupta, 2025). On the other hand, in other cultures, sacrifice is prohibited as it means destroying the life created by God. This is unethical.

Kindness in difficult situations is crucial for providing emotional support and understanding to people who lack effective companionship. For example, if someone has failed in an exam and is utterly dejected and frustrated, then his or her colleagues and friends are needed to motivate the person. However, true companion is lacking in this age, as most of them are selfish and only think about their own success. Here, Choudhary and Nagla, (2025) is of the view that if emotionally support and encouragement is provided, then people feel support towards dealing with sudden decisions and setbacks.

5. CONCLUSION

Review of the previous literature, and cases, places Bhagwati Devi Sharma as a true inspiration for the individuals who intend to emerge ethical and moral in their life. Actions performed by the individuals define their character. If there is kindness in the actions, then they are practical in their life. This is because in the acts of kindness, people confront many others who may not fully be kind to others. Actions, which are rooted in compassion, service, generosity, and empowerment, demarcates the character of a person as kind. Her approach is a true inspiration, creating the statement that *ethical kindness is not only a moral duty but a lived, practical experience embodying the way in which beings are to be portrayed in terms of self-sacrifice and inclusion*. After evaluating her views, notions, and ideas, an ethical model is shaped, which connects spirit and kindness. This is based on actions, which increases aspiration. This is a valuable perspective for researchers intending to take up the issue of moral principles guiding human behavior.

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