

## ABSTRACT

### STATUTORY RECOGNITION OF THE MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT: VIABILITY IN CONTEMPORARY SCENARIO

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*The Model Code of Conduct is a sine qua non to promote free and fair elections in a democracy. While the multi-party system plays a primary role in providing equal opportunities for contesting elections in India, it is tantamount to level the field. Involving into malpractices and manipulating the electorate defies the basic structure of the Constitution i.e. free and fair elections. Therefore the Election Commission of India, an autonomous body, owes the responsibility of conducting elections, providing an equitable floor to parties and candidates to appeal to the masses and supervise the conduct of contestants via the lens of Model Code of Conduct.*

*The manuscript aims at analysing the purpose of the Model Code of Conduct during elections and the need for its statutory recognition, which has become a considerate bone of contention. Although the vigilant performance of the Election Commission of India has been appreciated in certain cases, questions have also arisen over its contribution in maintaining concord and regulating the behaviour of contesting candidates and political parties in the contemporary scenario. With the advent of progressive electoral jurisprudence and advanced technological standards, the institution has to match its calibre accordingly. In this study, the authors have explored the novel challenges faced by the Election Commission when enforcing the Model Code of Conduct. Additionally, policy suggestions and alternatives on the topic have also been stipulated.*

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