Self Evaluation of an ethical professional

Name

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ABSTRACT

 Ethics are very important, both in personal life and in the various professions. For this reason, this study focuses on a self evaluation of ethical behaviours I have learnt, and how they have shaped me to become an ethical professional. In this respect, I have learnt certain ethical standards that will enable me sound decisions about what is right or wrong when faced with moral issues. Moral issues come up daily in our lives and it is therefore important to have personal and professional codes that will help in making the right decisions. Ethical behaviours such as honesty, confidentiality, transparency, and respectfulness are what separates professional from all other people in the job market today.

**Introduction**

Of all the courses I have learnt, ethics in psychology stands out as one of the most informative and interesting concepts I have learnt so far in helping me cope with life after school. This is because I have learnt what ethics is, the various ethical issues in our society, ethical issues related to certain professions, importance of ethics, and how to develop an ethical culture in oneself. Without a doubt, ethics is one of the ongoing concerns in our society, and it’s no surprise that most of the legal suits revolve around cases of ethics, and how they were violated. The most difficult part of ethics is that it’s difficult to come up with a uniform code of ethics since people develop their own customized personal ethics and professional ethics.

**Section1: Ethical Autobiography**

 On a personal level, am often faced with moral issues that require me to judge and decide what is wrong or right. For example, I have heard cases where employers fire their employees via text; and like everyone one else, am left to wonder, how ethical is that? Is it right or wrong to dismiss an employee via text? When faced with conflicting moral and ethical issues, I often rely on the theoretical lessons I have learnt, the federal laws, and the social behaviours I have learnt. I am the first born in a family of three, and my upbringing me has shaped me to become very respective and rational thinker.

 My mother is a committed Christian, and would literally drag us to church even when we acted reluctant to do so. She believed that church is very important since one is able to grow spiritually and the same time receives a “discerning spirit” that guides in differentiating between good and bad. As a result of the religious upbringing, I have grown up to become a person who determines good and bad based on biblical teachings; I often rely on religion especially when faced with moral issues such as homosexuality and cloning. At the same time, I truly believe in obeying the law so as to keep off from trouble; probably this is due to the fact that my mother kept warning me of how bad jail life is and that one should stay out of legal trouble at all times. At the same time, religion made me a respecter of law, people and their property.

Some of the ethical behaviours I have learnt in my religious background include responsibility (owing to the fact that I am a first born), honesty, respectfulness, and obedience of the law. These are personal standards that have grown in me and I live to memorize and practise them each coming day. The four ethical behaviours are not only applicable in social interactions but also very essential in the professional circles; in other words they are my survival kit of values. At first, these values seemed irrelevant and pretty theoretical not until I got the chance to interact with people of various culture and background in College, and it’s at that point I realized how helpful they are; without them I would have no friends, and would constantly be in jail due to disobedience of law.

Professionally, obeying the law governing the particular industry is a legal requirement and therefore I would have no problem keeping up with the laws and codes that govern my profession, for example confidentiality of company secrets. Secondly, to survive in any working environment, one must respect his/her colleagues so as to enhance teamwork and ultimate success; respect is a virtue to me. Honesty is difficult to maintain but in the end it’s very rewarding, and this applies in the business world; honest service providers earn the trust and loyalty of consumers. To survive at work, and achieve promotions and salary reviews, one must prove to be responsible, and therefore am more than grateful that my tough upbringing taught me this important value.

**Section 2: Professional/Ethical Hero**

 **One of my all time role model has been Richard Branson, in terms of ethics, he lives up to his words. Richard Branson is one of the richest men in the World, with over 400 companies all over the Globe, he is the founder of the Virgin brand; am sure by now the word virgin Atlantics rings in your head, yes that is his too. Despite all the wealth and success, Branson remains a very humble and respectful individual that is law abiding. With over 3000 employees, Branson still maintains a very friendly and mutual relationship with all his employees, often motivating them in all the good ways one can imagine.**

 **Apart from the motivational talks made by Richard Branson, he is very active in encouraging his employees to conduct their tasks in an ethical way and in accordance with the laws governing the various countries. Branson is also actively on the look out to ensure that his competitors do not operate in an unethical manner; one such instance is when he reported frauds and bribery made by British Airlines.** “Transformational leaders also display idealized influence (II-B) or pro-social charismatic behaviours to role model organizational values such as high levels of ethical performance standards. Such behaviour elicits attributions of idealized influence (II-A) or charisma from followers who perceive the leader as trustworthy and worthy of respect and emulation. As a result, followers are willing to show support for the leader’s vision. For example, the Virgin Group’s CEO Richard Branson exemplifies an idealized leader who holds high expectations of performance and ethical behaviour for his associates” (Burke & Cooper, 2006)

 Personally, Richard Branson inspires me in so many ways. For one, he gives me hope that I can achieve great things in life with determination and hard work, this is seen in the fact that he comes from a very humble background, not to mention he was born with dyslexia but has made all the way to the topic. Secondly he is very ethical and this only proves that one does not need to engage in unscrupulous and unlawful activities so as to get rich, or succeed in life. He handles thing in such a professional manner regardless of stiff competitions, and this proves that he is a true ethical leader, no wonder he is so successful. Branson is also a very responsible entrepreneur and takes it upon himself to make sure that his business do not pollute the environment, and has implemented several green programs to protect the environment. His actions and professionalism have made me value integrity, responsibility, obedience of the laws, and integrity.

**Section 3:** **Ethical Decision-Making Style**

 When confronted with an ethical issue, whether personal or professions, one often wonders where to start, what side to take, and the consequences of making a decision. Usually when am in such a dilemma, the first thing I do is look at the problem carefully and then consider all those people affected by the moral issues. For example, if it is an issue about overpricing goods by monopolies: I will look at both parties involved; monopoly and the consumers, and their arguments for or against the action respectively. The other step is to consider the effects the issue has on the affected parties and then consider all alternatives that can be implemented to resolve the issues. The other decision would be to select at least three options from the probable alternatives. The other step entails weighing my options on the three based on the laws in existence, and personal values. (WebGuru)

 Usually my decision to select a certain alternative is based on certain objectives such as the virtue approach whereby I make a decision based on my personal values and from a religious perspective, the utilitarian approach where I consider the consequences of the various alternatives, the Fairness approach in which I consider the alternative that is fair to parties involved in an ethical issues, and the common good approach that guides to make a decision based on what many people would prefer; for example’ Is raising prices by a monopoly for the common good? If the answer is no, then it’s definitely not ethical to raise prices. (Santa Clara University)

 I must admit that religion, and my upbringing also plays a big role in helping me make ethical decisions. Once in a while I find myself asking my mother what religion thinks about a certain issues, and depending on the direction of religion, I find myself swayed towards the religion’s opinion. In school however, I have learnt that religion in most cases blocks our judgement and is not a good basis to make ethical decisions, and instead that one should base their decisions on the laws that are in existence. Therefore I have gradually learnt to make decisions based on legal facts and profession codes of conduct rather than on emotions and religion.

**Section 4:** **Professional and Ethical Development**.

 As mentioned earlier, ethics is an ongoing concern, and every other day there are new ethical codes and standardized being developed everyday in the many industries of the economy. Ethical development is bound to continue because of the social changes taking place in our societies, and therefore professionals have to keep enhancing their codes of ethics to keep at par with these changes. In particular learning about ethics in healthcare was eye opening to me as it is one of the sectors where ethics change so often.

The HIPAA code of ethics was a good development, in particular the privacy rule and security rule for patients. However more development can be done in the healthcare sector because there are so many complains about the mediocre services offered in most public hospitals. It would be more helpful to develop more specific ethics that enhance the performance of the medical personnel in hospital that they can memorize and practice.

Technology is also changing at a very fast rate, and there is need for businesses and professionals to move in line with technology; this entails developing ethics that cater for technological changes. For example, with the development of cell phone technology, there is increased number of incidences where employers fire employees via text: How ethical is this? To answer this question, companies need to evaluate the technological changes and the effect they have on their operations, and develop ethics to suit the changes.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, it is undeniable that ethics are applicable in every part of our life, and therefore there is need to have them to avoid anarchy in the society. The only problem encountered in development of ethics is that people cannot agree on standardized set of codes due to the differences in cultural believes religions, and personal values. However, regardless of our differences there always seems to have a consensus on what is wrong or right in most of the moral issues in the society. Professionals also tailor-make ethics that are suited and relevant to their field of work so as to ensure respect and uniform course of action when faced with a particular ethical issue. “Although a code of professional ethics is designed primarily to prescribe how members of a profession ought to pursue their common ideals of service to society and clients, it also solves a coordination problem. A code of ethics protects members from certain consequences of competition by making it unlikely that other members will take advantage of their good conduct” (Heller & Meaney, 2001)

References

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