Chapter 11
Ethics in Higher Education

Suja R. Nair
Jain University, India

ABSTRACT

Institutions of higher education have a major role to play in preparing the younger generation for a propitious future. Apart from imparting quality education, they need to instill high ethical values and practices amongst the student fraternity. The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the various facets of education and the role of ethics in the field of higher education. An attempt has been made to emphasize and highlight the perspective on the importance of ethics in higher education through a review of literature. A small primary study was also conducted involving the faculty of a few universities in India as respondents. The respondents were administered a questionnaire on "Ethics in Higher Education" to gauge a link between the theory and practice.

INTRODUCTION

As a discipline, 'Ethics' deals with what is 'good' or 'bad' and also is concerned with the moral duty and obligations . For generations, every culture and society across the world, has established for their members' an ethical code which is to be adhered and practiced. Each cultural environment is made up of certain institutions and forces which affect and shape that society's (people) values, beliefs and behaviors (Kotler, *et al.*, 2010). Beliefs may be assumptions and convictions that are considered to be true by individuals, built up on the basis of real knowledge, opinion, or faith (Kotler, 2010, p.129).Rokeachdefined values as centrally held and enduring beliefs or standards used by people to guide actions across specific situations and beyond immediate goals towards the final states of existence (Rokeach, 1968). Individual behavior will be directed by moral judgment of what is right and what is wrong, which is dependent on the national culture. Therefore, national culture plays a very important role in establishing the ethical standards in a specific society and to be practiced by all (Alas, 2006). Hence, every organization carrying out business knows about ethics, but the question arises on the extent to which these institutions are actually maintaining an ethical culture at the work place and also having a framework of code of conduct? We are living in the information age with a lot of scope of 'virtual' reality. Moreover, the current economic and social climate could also give way to unethical practices and behavior (Mann, 2012). So as to avoid such an occurrence it is imperative that

institutions engaged in imparting higher learning to the younger generation (students) inculcate and instill in them a value system which will teach them the importance of practicing ethics in all walks of life.

The chapter commences with an overview on the evolution of education in the MENA(Middle East and North Africa)region, necessity to invest in higher education and prospects of its growth in this region. This is followed by a detailed discussion on the importance of ethics, and its role and need in the field of higher education. The faculty community play a significant role in imparting knowledge on ethics to the student fraternity. They are required to maintain a high academic integrity while teaching and also hold high moral and ethical standards while doing scholarly work and other services. However, not much research in recent times is available on the their(faculty) perceptions in relation to the study of importance of ethics in higher education (Madsen, 2009; Sami *et al.*,2012). In the latter part of the chapter, the findings of a study to examine this aspect involving faculty members as respondents are presented. The main objective of the chapter is to impress upon institutions of higher education to revisit their ethical practices and train individuals to make ethically-oriented behavior a way of life. Another objective is to initiate higher education institutions to adopt code of ethics, which when practiced can help to create a learning environment where all are motivated and work towards becoming responsible and ethical citizens of the nation.

'EDUCATION', THE FIRST STEP TOWARDS GAINING KNOWLEDGE

All knowledge that the world has ever received comes from the mind; the infinite library of the universe is in our own mind. Real education is that which enables one to stand on his own feet"- Swami Vivekananda, a Philosopher. (speaking-tree.in, 2013)

In a general way, the term 'Education' can be referred to as the transmission of values and knowledge accumulated by a society to its members through the process of socialization or enculturation. Every individual will acquire education that will guide him to learn a culture, wherein he molds his behavior and directs it towards the eventual role in the society. Even in the primitive cultures, where there was little formal learning, education was acquired through activities conducted by adults who performed the role of teachers and the entire environment took the place of the school. Their aim was to guide children through participatory learning to become good members of their tribe. In many of the early civilizations like the Egyptian, Mesopotamian, Mayan, Incas, Aztecs, ancient India etc., formal education was practical oriented aimed to train scribes and priests for intellectual pursuits as well as preserve the culture (Anweiler, *et al.*, 2013). However, with the growth of society and increasing complexity, education emerged as a separate discipline concerned with a formal system of teaching and learning.

The following discussion based on a study (Anweiler *et al.*, 2013, pp. 3-152) on' Importance of Education' will reveal more on this. Early Greek history speaks about education imparted with an emphasis on arts, sports and the moral aspects. A system of higher education emerged with the appearance of the Sophists (mostly foreign professional educators) who adopted a teaching process that had a realistic perspective, education for political participation. This system of higher education became more organized and directional with the efforts of two great educators,Plato (the philosopher) and Isocrates(the orator). Plato's teaching emphasized on good governance which can come from an educated society while Isocrates teachings were more practical based on working out commonsense solutions to life's problem. The early Muslim education had emphasized on practical aspects such as using technical expertise for the development of irrigation system etc. The renaissance and the golden age of the Islamic culture

29 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: www.igi-global.com/chapter/ethics-in-higher-education/114343

Related Content

Creating a Culture of Assessment: A Case Study for Building a Sustainable Model for Communicating Results to Guide Change

Amy E. Heathand Carrie Barrett (2024). *International Journal of Innovative Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (pp. 1-15).*

www.irma-international.org/article/creating-a-culture-of-assessment/337288

Critical Components in Preparing Students for Short-Term Study Tours to Asia

Tracey Bretag, Robert van der Veen, Sonia Saddiquiand Ying Zhu (2016). *Handbook of Research on Study Abroad Programs and Outbound Mobility (pp. 188-214).*

www.irma-international.org/chapter/critical-components-in-preparing-students-for-short-term-study-tours-to-asia/164118

Digital Badge Use in Specific Learner Groups

Jacob H. Askerothand Timothy J. Newby (2020). *International Journal of Innovative Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (pp. 1-15).*

www.irma-international.org/article/digital-badge-use-in-specific-learner-groups/245769

Development of an Enhanced Study Abroad Curriculum in Teacher Education

Yasemin Krkgöz (2020). *Academic Mobility Programs and Engagement: Emerging Research and Opportunities (pp. 198-224).*

www.irma-international.org/chapter/development-of-an-enhanced-study-abroad-curriculum-in-teacher-education/238325

A Machine Learning-Based Admissions Support System With a Case Study on D.K.M. College for Women, Vellore

M. Vasumathy (2024). *Design and Implementation of Higher Education Learners' Learning Outcomes (HELLO) (pp. 253-270).*

www.irma-international.org/chapter/a-machine-learning-based-admissions-support-system-with-a-case-study-on-dkm-college-for-women-vellore/335878