

# **ETHICS AND VALUES- ARE THEY FORGOTTEN IN OUR WORK PLACE, COMMUNITY AND SOCIETY?**

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## **Abstract**

Throughout history, every human society has had its norms and values that its members obey to sustain its smooth existence. When people deviate from these norms, the society is in decadence. In the traditional society, hard work, respect for others and their belongings, the protection of one's dignity and name and that of one's family, honesty, constitute the basic ingredients of morality. As can be observed in the society of today, morality has been on the decline. This present generation is fast putting the ethics of life off shore giving way to immorality, violence, unethical practices that each day seems to say "I have come to stay" defiantly in the face of our wide spreading religion.

Patterns of behaviour that were universally deemed to be morally unacceptable (both in the society, work place, or community) are today being vigorously promoted as viable alternatives. This is most evident in the area of sexual behaviour of men and women (child abuse), corruption in high places, misappropriation of assets, just to mention a few of the unethical behaviour.

This paper attempts to evaluate the causes of unethical behaviour and its attendant consequences within the society. More specifically, this paper will address the possible strategies that can be put in place to ensure decorum in the conduct of business and general behaviour.

The paper further examines the roles expected from the following key players in the society: the family, religious organizations, professional bodies that regulate the conduct of business practices, governments, non-governmental organizations, schools and counsellors.

# **ETHICS AND VALUES- ARE THEY FORGOTTEN IN OUR WORK PLACE, COMMUNITY AND SOCIETY?**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This topic could not have come at a better opportune time than now having witnessed the spate of corruption (stemming from all the embracing “get-rich-quick” syndrome) and unethical behaviours that permeate the society we live in.

Before we dwell on the topic of this paper, there is need to define the key concepts. This is so because, some people do not realise the implication and extent of ethical issues. On this premise, the following terms will be defined.

## **DEFINITION OF TERMS**

### **ETHICS**

The Chambers Universal Learners Dictionary defines ethics as, “ rules or principles of behaviour”. Ethics in other words, implies issues concerning morals, justice or duty. Sternberg (1994) in her book “ Just Business” argued that ethics in the world of business involve “ordinary decency” which encompasses such areas as, integrity, honesty and fairness.

### **VALUES**

The Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary defines values as beliefs about what is right and wrong and what is important in life.

According to Stephen P. Robbins, (2001) in his book: Organizational Behaviour, 9<sup>th</sup> edition, defines values thus; ‘as basic convictions that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end state of existence.

He also went further to define value system as a hierarchy based on a ranking of an individual’s values in terms of their intensity.

**MORAL VALUE SYSTEMS** : It has to do with the principles of what is right and wrong behaviour and with the difference between good and evil.

### **INTEGRITY**

The Websters New Collegiate Dictionary defines integrity as: “an unimpaired condition; soundness; firm adherence to a code of moral or artistic values; the quality or state of being complete or undivided; completeness; synonymous with honesty.’

This in order words implies that integrity is:

- (i) A matter of honesty;
  - Freedom from deceit
  - Self delusion and offence
  
- (ii) A matter of purity
  - Freedom from adulteration or corruption
  - Freedom from duplicity of speech or action (insincerity)  
ie. being what you ought to be or what you claim to be.
  
- (iii) A matter of uprightness
  - Being morally right
  - Following the right precepts, doctrines, protocol and etiquette.

## **TRANSPARENCY**

The same Webster defines transparency “as the quality or state of being transparent”.

The word transparent implies:

- (i) something fine or clear enough to be seen through;
- (ii) that which is free from pretence or deceit – frank
- (iii) one easily detected or seen through; obvious and one readily understood i.e clear.

It is common knowledge that the subject of ethics in business has long been in focus among management scholars and business leaders around the world over the years. There is broad agreement around the world that as a matter of corporate policy, every business organisation should be committed to operating in a manner that is ethically sound and transparent.

Behaving in an ethical manner is seen as part of the social responsibility of business, which itself is hinged on the philosophy that business ought to impact the society in ways that transcend the profit maximization objective.

These two behavioural attributes are no different from sound business ethics. The failure of which the monster; corruption would rear up its head.

## **WHAT IS CORRUPTION?**

Corruption could be variously defined. It is the use of public office for private gains. In a broader perspective, it is the misuse of office for unofficial ends. Corrupt acts include but not limited to:

- bribery
- extortion
- influence peddling
- nepotism
- fraud
- embezzlement.

Integrity is a moral issue. It has to do with moral values. No one for instance carries out indecent act without his conscience judging him wrong and warning him not carry out the act in the first place. After being engaged in the unholy act, he tries to cover up or conceal the wrong.

## **STAGES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF MORAL VALUES (KOHLBERG 1973)**

Variations in values, beliefs, and practices pertaining to all aspects of sexuality have occurred throughout time. Attitudes about the existence of childhood sexuality and about the occurrence of sexual practices between adults and children are no exception; there have been considerable changes in thought in these areas as well. While sexual abuse of children has existed throughout history and across cultures, whether such behaviour was conceived of and defined as abuse has been dependent on the societal values of the particular period.

A significant patron of the values we hold is established in our early years from parents, teachers, friends and others.

An understanding that individual’s values differ but tend to reflect the societal values of the period in which they grew up can be a valuable aid in explaining and predicting behaviour.

The possibility that children's views on moral issues change with age according to predictable stages has been the subject of extensive research by Lawrence Kohlberg at Harvard University. Using Piaget's work on moral reasoning, (Piaget, *The Moral Judgement of the Child*, 1932), Kohlberg sought to determine whether there are universal stages in the development of moral judgements.

Kohlberg's studies indicate that the moral judgements of children who are seven and younger are predominantly at Level I – actions are evaluated in terms of whether they avoid punishment or lead to rewards. By age 13, a majority of the moral dilemmas are resolved. At Level II – actions are evaluated in terms of maintaining a good image in the eyes of other people. This is the level of conventional morality. In the third stage (Stage 3) one seeks approval by being “nice”, this orientation expands in the next stage (Stage 4) to include “doing one's duty,” showing respect for authority, and conforming to the social order in which one is raised.

According to Kohlberg, many individuals never progress beyond Level II. He sees the stages of moral development as closely tied to Piaget's stages of cognitive development, and only if a person has achieved the later stages of formal operational thought is he capable of the kind of abstract thinking necessary for post-conventional morality at Level III. The highest stage of moral development (Level III, Stage 6) requires formulating abstract ethical principles and conforming to them to avoid self-condemnation. Kohlberg reports that less than 10 percent of his subjects over age 16 show the kind of “clear-principled” talked about earlier.

Kohlberg describes the child as a “moral philosopher” who develops moral standards of his own; these standards do not necessarily come from parents or peers but emerge from the cognitive interaction of the child with his social environment. Movement from one stage to the next involves an internal cognitive reorganization rather than a simple acquisition of the moral concepts prevalent in his culture.

## STAGES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF MORAL VALUES

<b>LEVELS AND STAGES BEHAVIOUR</b>	<b>ILLUSTRATIVE</b>
<b>Level I. Premoral</b>	
1. Punishment and obedience orientation	Obeys rules in order to avoid punishment
2. Naïve instrumental hedonism	Conforms to obtain rewards, to have Favours returned
<b>Level II. Morality of conventional role-conformity</b>	
3. “Good-boy” morality of maintaining good relations, approval of others	Conforms to avoid disapproval, dislike by others
4. Authority maintaining morality	Conforms to avoid censure by legitimate authorities, with resultant guilt.
<b>Level III. Morality of self-accepted moral principles</b>	
5. Morality of contract, of individual rights, and of democratically accepted law	Conforms to maintain the respect of the impartial spectator judging in terms of community welfare
6. Morality of individual principles of conscience	Conforms to avoid self-condemnation

Kohlberg (1973)

Kohlberg's studies, while controversial, raise interesting questions about the teaching of moral principles. If moral values are relative to the culture in which one is raised, as many people assume, then the task of the educator is to present the cultural values, point out their relativity, and tell each child that he must form his own values while bearing in mind the good of society. Within this view, it is not the educator's job to teach moral principles. Kohlberg, on the other hand believes that moral values are universal and that each child should be helped to reach the highest stage possible. He suggests presenting moral dilemmas in the classroom and, through discussion, helping each child to understand the moral principles at the stage just above his own (Kohlberg, 1973).

## **SEXUAL STANDARDS AND BEHAVIOUR (SORENSON 1973)**

The bodily changes that accompany sexual maturing are a source of both pride and embarrassment. How comfortable the adolescent feels with his new physique and the urges that accompany it depends to a large extent upon the attitudes toward sexual development conveyed by his parents and peers. Parental attitudes of secrecy or taboos concerning sex cannot fail to generate feelings of anxiety among teen-age offspring.

The past decades, however, have witnessed an almost revolutionary change in attitudes toward sexual activity. Views regarding premarital sex, homosexuality, extramarital sex, and specific sexual acts are more open and permissive today than at any time in history. Young people are exposed to sexual stimuli in magazines, television, internet, and the movies to a greater extent than ever before. Satisfactory birth control methods and the availability of abortions have lessened fear of pregnancy. All of these changes give the newly matured individual more freedom today. These changes may produce more conflict too, since guidelines for “appropriate” behaviour are less clear than in the past. In some families, the divergence between adolescent and parental standards of sexual morality may be great.

Have more permissive attitudes toward sex been accompanied by changes in actual behaviour? Some experts maintain that young people today are simply more open about activities their predecessors carried on in secret. But the data beginning to accumulate indicate definite changes in adolescent sexual behaviour. A nationwide survey that interviewed 13 – 19 year olds found that 59 percent of the boys and 45 percent of the girls reported having experienced sexual intercourse at least once. And a sizable proportion of these nonvirgins had become so by the time they were 16 (Sorenson 1973).

While strictly comparable data from earlier periods are not available, the studies conducted by Alfred Kinsey about 55 years ago found that only about 20 percent of the females and 40 percent of the males reported experiencing sexual intercourse by the time they were 20. Today’s adolescents appear to be engaging in heterosexual activity at an earlier age than their parents.

The change in sex standards does not seem to be in the direction of greater promiscuity. While some of the boys said they had experienced intercourse with several partners, most of the girls reported they had limited their sexual relations to one boy with whom they were “in love” at the time. These young people feel that sex is a part of love and of intimate relationships, and that it need not necessarily be restricted to the context of marriage.

An important task confronting the adolescent is the development of a sense of his own identity – a conception of who he is and where he is going. To find out who he is, he must formulate standards of conduct for himself and for evaluating the behaviour of others. He must know what he values as important and worth doing. And he needs a sense of his own worth and competence.

As we know, the child’s values and moral standards are largely those of his parents; his feelings of self-esteem reflect primarily their view of him. Then as he moves away from the family during the high-school years, the values of his peer group and their appraisal of him become increasingly important. The adolescent tries to pull these appraisals together into a consistent picture.

To the extent that parents, teachers, and peers reflect the same values, his search for identity is easier. When parental views and values differ markedly from those of his peers and other important figures, the possibility for conflict is great and the adolescent may experience what has been called role diffusion – he tries one role after another and has difficulty synthesizing the different roles into a single identity.

### **RE-EXAMINATION OF BELIEFS (KANDEL AND LESSER 1972)**

The adolescent is engaged in a re-examination of many of the beliefs he had previously considered to be immutable truths. New experiences and the new cognitive abilities that emerge during adolescence prompt him to challenge some of the values and beliefs he has incorporated from his parents. Prior assumptions about religion, sex, drugs, the value of hard work, and the omnipotence of one's parents are those most apt to be questioned. A girl who has accepted her parents' code of sexual conduct may discover that many of her high-school classmates do not consider virginity a virtue. An adolescent whose home and religious training has emphasized the dangers of drugs may find that some of his peers not only fail to share this view, but consider drug experiences an important avenue of self-awareness.

Questioning of previously accepted values is intensified during the early adolescent years for several reasons. For one thing, the youngster usually has progressed from a small neighbourhood elementary school to a larger and more heterogeneous junior or senior high school, and is exposed to a wider peer group of different backgrounds. Second, the cognitive abilities of the teen-ager have developed to the point where he can think in more abstract and relative terms. He can envisage alternatives to the way things are. He begins to realize that morality is not absolute; whether an action is good or bad depends on a number of circumstances, including the culture in which one is raised. These new experiences and capabilities prompt a re-examining and adjusting of values. Some of the earlier beliefs may be reinstated; others may be left open to question or discarded (Kandel and Lesser 1972).

### **THE GENERATION GAP (MEADS 1970, COLEMAN 1961)**

According to some views, our society has been changing so rapidly that the values of today's parents are inappropriate to the problems and conditions faced by their teen-age children. Drugs, the pill, and a climate of increased sexual permissiveness create problems for young people that their parents did not have to face. Rapid scientific and technological advances have tended to make parental knowledge obsolete with reference to what their children are expected to know. These and other factors have led some experts to conclude that there is an almost insurmountable gap between the values of today's parents and those of their adolescent sons and daughters. Their view will alarm the lack of understanding and communication between the two generations (Meads, 1970; Coleman, 1961).

### **PEER GROUP INFLUENCES (BRONFENBRENNER, 1970)**

Although the adolescent shares many of his parents' values and derives security from his relationship with them, the peer group serves an important role in his progress toward independence. His concerns over physical appearance, popularity and the vicissitudes of relations with the opposite sex can be helped by discussions with others coping with similar problems. The adolescent needs the support and approval of peers, as well as parents, in attempting to crystallize his identity.

On important issues the peer values tend to be similar to those of the parents, because teenagers usually pick friends with a common background in terms of race, social class, and educational goals. Thus peer values tend to support adult values in areas concerned with social and moral issues. Where peer values have their greatest influence and differ most from adult standards is in such matters as dress styles, tastes in music and entertainment, dating patterns, and use of language. It is in these more superficial characteristics that young people differ most from their parents; and the visible differences prompt the adults to conclude that adolescents are a new and foreign breed.

Instances where peer influences play a very dominant role in an adolescent's life may result from lack of attention and an unsatisfactory relationship at home. One study found that adolescents who are strongly peer oriented are more likely to have a negative view of themselves (and of their friends) and to report less affection, support, and discipline at home (Bronfenbrenner, 1970).

Individuals vary in their need for conformity, whether it be to parental or peer standards. The more self-confident and assured the young person is, the less he will feel the need for blind adherence to anyone else's norms. He can evaluate for himself what is important among the various views proposed and arrive at his own conclusions. This is the essence of finding one's identity.

### **SOCIAL LEARNING THEORY**

Although the parents play a role in the psychoanalytic view of development, their role is essentially reactive – they react to expressions of internal states in the child.

In the social learning analysis of development, in contrast, the presence or absence of dependency, aggression, and sexuality are almost totally dependent on external agents, primarily the parents.

### **MODELING AND REINFORCEMENT**

Bandura and Walters propose two mechanisms by which parents are effective in shaping behaviour: modelling and reinforcement.

Modeling relates to the tendency of children (and adults) to imitate other people who are “rewarding, prestigious, or competent, who possess high status, and who have control over rewarding resources.” a description that probably fits most parents, at least in the eyes of their children. Modeling can account for a child's acquisition of a behaviour. In order to strengthen and maintain it, however, reinforcement is necessary.

Reinforcement relates to the consequences of behaviour; if the consequences are positive, the child will be likely to repeat the behaviour; if they are not, the child will not. It is the parents who largely have control over consequences, at least during the child's formative years. A good example of how modeling and reinforcement work together to produce aggressive behaviour has been provided by Bandura and Walters(1963).



## **DEVIANT BEHAVIOUR**

The dual processes of modeling and reinforcement operate in the establishment of other classes of behaviour, such as dependency and sex. A child who has highly dependent parents for models and who is reinforced by these parents for dependency behaviour will, in adulthood, encounter adjustment problems in a world that expects a great degree of independence. Similarly, parents who are highly anxious over sexual matters may, as models, react with anxiety to any sexual behaviour on the part of the child. Again, the child enters adulthood with anxieties concerning sexual behaviour. In extreme situations, modeling and reinforcement can work to produce deviant sexual behaviour, as in a case of exhibitionism cited by Bandura and Walters.

A 17 year old was arrested for exhibiting himself in a public park. Apparently this behaviour had been going on for a number of years. It turned out that his mother had taken frequent showers with the boy until he was 13 years old. The mother took great pleasure exhibiting herself to the boy, thus serving as a model for exhibitionistic behaviour. She also took great pleasure in viewing his body, commenting on his "beautiful masculine endowment," thereby reinforcing exhibitionistic display on the boy's part.

In sum, according to social learning theory, the important influences on personality development originate outside of the child in parental models and reinforcements – not, as psychoanalysts would have it, in needs and demands within the child.

## **EMPIRICAL REVIEW**

Childhood sexual abuse of females is well documented and discussed in professional literature (Russell 1986). Currently, discussion of sexual abuse of male is also entering the professional literature. Hunter (1990), Timms & Connor (1990) with increased awareness of abuse and with broader definitions of abuse, it is estimated that about 1 in 3 females are sexually abused before the age of 18 and about one in five males are also abused. Simple fondling of a child by an adult may cause severe problems when that child reaches maturity which can last well into the adult years.

**For adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse, there are 3 possible reactions in sexual domain.**

- Shutting down of awareness and expression of sexual feelings
- The developing of normal sexual responsiveness and expression
- Becoming sexually promiscuous.

The latter is due to blurring of sexual boundaries as a result of the abuse history.

**Adult consequences of childhood abuse frequently include: ANXIETY, DEPRESSION, DISSOCIATIVE DISORDERS, HEALTH ISSUES, HYPERTENSION IN MALES, LOWERED SELF - ESTEEM, EATING DISORDERS, SEXUAL DYSFUNCTION, POWER AND CONTROL ISSUES, ADDICTIVE BEHAVIOURS AND COMPULSIVE BEHAVIOURS INCLUDING SEXUAL PROMISCUITY.**

Promiscuous behaviour according to Gordon Baunebache (1992) has become increasingly risky. Some people engage in damaging and dangerous behaviour, against their best interests. Education alone often fails to curb such behaviour when it serves an important role in the individual's psychological organization.

With the emergence of lethal sexually transmitted diseases ( like HIV/AIDS), people are threatened with the increasing level of promiscuity in the society. In spite of knowledge, people frequently act against what they know to be in their best interest.

**Promiscuity** is a concept with varying meanings. It may be used to describe behaviour or to pass judgment on behaviour or on the person exhibiting such behaviour.

In addition, promiscuity has had differing meanings in different times and cultures. Often, it has carried implicit or explicit pejorative judgements that have been significantly gender related. Men and women were not judged by the same standard regarding their sexual conduct. Promiscuity is sexual behaviour with multiple partners which is physically or emotionally damaging to the individuals engaging in it (Fluker, 1983). Promiscuity itself is not the basic problem but a symptom of a problem which the individual attempts to manage by driven and destructive sexual behaviour.

Sexual abuse happens to approximately one in three females and one in five males before age eighteen. This abuse produces many behavioural, emotional and physical problems in adult life. One such consequence is adult sexual promiscuity. Anxiety which arises with childhood abuse will be dealt with by compulsive or addictive behaviours. Repressed or forgotten abuse may manifest itself in adult life symptomatically by out of control behaviours which are abuse of self and/or others. Such compulsive behaviour reflects an attempt to gain mastery over the original abuse and the abuser. Keeping promiscuous behaviour secret reinforces the original abuse pattern and leads to guilt, shame and isolation (Robert J., Timms Connors 1992).

Sexual abuse in childhood casts long and dark shadows over adult life. Several recent publications describe the long – term consequences in adulthood resulting from such abuse. (Everstine and Everstine, 1989; Gannon, 1989). Current clinical experience shows as many as 80% of hospitalized substance abuse patients have a history of childhood sexual abuse. Similar findings are reported for patients with eating disorders.

## **COMMERCIAL SEX**

The major types of female prostitutes today are street walkers, brothel prostitutes who work in massage parlours, and “escort services” and call girls. Poverty and sexual and /or physical abuse figure prominently in the backgrounds of many prostitutes. Teenage runaways with marginal skills and limited means of support may find few alternatives to prostitution. Most patrons of female prostitutes are “occasional Johns” who also have regular sex partners. Male prostitutes typically begin selling sex in their teens. They may be homosexual or heterosexual but most service male clients.

**Prostitutes are at greater risk of HIV transmission** because they have sexual relations with many partners, often without protection. Many prostitutes, their clients and their other sex partners also inject drugs and share contaminated needles.

In prostitution, a person exchanges sexual services for money or items of value. Most prostitutes are females and virtually all customers are males. The major motives for prostitution throughout history and currently is economic. Perhaps 80% of prostitutes were victims of rape, sexual abuse or incest

Any form of sexual contact between an adult and a child is **abusive**. In most cases, the molesters are close to the victims relatives, step – relatives, family friends and neighbours. Genital fondling is the most common type of abuse. Paedophiles are sexually attracted to children and are almost exclusively male but not all child molesters are paedophiles. Incest involves sexual relations between people who are closely related and brother, sister incest is the most common. Incest victims often suffer social and emotional problems that persist into adulthood. Children need to learn the difference between acceptable and unacceptable touching and should be encouraged to tell. (Source: Human Sexuality in a World of Diversity Rathus Nevid et. al 1994)

In relation to sexual abuse, eating disorder and psychological problems have been noted as well as feelings of rejection, guilt, unworthiness, inability to cope with normal sexual relationship and a general distrust of helping agencies (Oppenheimer 1985 p. 27). In a comprehensive study of the long-term effects of child sexual abuse, Beezley and Mrazek (1981) list 25 problem areas ranging from aversion to sexual activity and problems with parents or in-laws to masochism and murder.

Sexual abuse victims may protect their self- image by convincing themselves that there is nothing wrong in sexual relationships between adults and children and may indulge in such activities themselves or ignore the abuse of their own children by another adult.

Certain abused children may grow-up to wreak havoc in society (prostitutes) for example writing of those men who raped children and can be described as fixated paedophiles. Ray Wyrre (1986) comments, “many men in this category have been sexually abused as children and have incorporated their abuse experiences into their own sexuality”.

Classes of professional prostitutes – their real character is known only to their own clientele and their close female companions;

- Occasional prostitutes are women who alternately emerge from and lapse into an irregular life.
- Incidental prostitute – are those who carry on more or less prostitution without interrupting some honourable employment.
- Of women who practise prostitution under cloak of other occupation.
- Of women who cease to be kept as mistresses practise prostitution as a stop – gap until a firmer footing is once more found.
- Of women who reserve themselves by express arrangement for a small group, one of whom can alone afford their support.
- Of women, who are faithful to one individual at a time are still taken up by a succession of men paying for favours.
- Finally, of married women by no means always of the lowest classes, who perhaps irreproachable in the eyes of the world, are not above earning through ignominy the prices of luxuries.

### **Economic Factors of Prostitution**

Sociological studies of prostitution also look at economic factors. Studies like that of Parent – Duchatelet in (1857), (Bullough, 1964) consider prostitution to be the outcome of dire economic need.

In circumstances where there is no welfare service it is perhaps reasonable to interpret prostitution as the only choice between survival and starvation e.g. third world or developing countries.

The economic explanation of prostitution in affluent societies is therefore not in terms of dire need but rather in terms of the relatively limited opportunities for women in such societies to earn a living wage, to win promotion and achieve a secure career and to be economically independent of men. Complete economic independence remains a possibility for only a small minority of women with the consequences that a majority are not only employed in low-paid, insecure work but are also dependent on husbands, lovers and fathers or in some cases, a paternalistic welfare state. Given such prospects prostitution may well appear a favourable career to many women. The prostitute takes out a series of “short-lived” “contracts” with several men in return for an economic reward. The tendency to reject the argument that prostitution is a consequence of extreme poverty may therefore only be relevant in advanced industrialized society where absolute poverty is uncommon.

**Why society objects to prostitution. It is repugnant for the following reasons:**

- Prostitution leads to personal demoralization
- Prostitution amounts to economic waste
- Prostitution is a major medium/channel in the spread of venereal diseases.
- Prostitutes have intimate association with disorder and or crime.

The full-time notorious prostitutes who are the special objects of police care exemplify all the count in this indictment; they are themselves, demoralized and spread demoralization, they cause enormous waste, they inevitably and invariably spread disease and because as a rule they have criminal, or quasi-criminal connections.

Part time prostitution, occasional prostitution, and pretentious prostitution – all the various kinds and grades enumerated above naturally and inevitably conduce to similar results. They may be less conspicuous or less offensive, but they are equally dangerous.

Venereal disease is the certain harvest of any degree of promiscuity in the sex relation.

## **THE STARTING POINT: THE HOME FRONT**

Where do we start cultivating the concepts of Ethics and Values? Basically the answer is the **HOME**.

The **HOME** constitutes the family unit where we have the mother and father (nuclear family) and uncles, aunts, nephews, nieces, grandmother, grandfather, etc. (extended family). The family constitutes the bedrock of any society. A child has its first contact with the society through his/her parents. Through socialization with his immediate and extended families, he/she learns formally or informally some basic ethics and values systems.

## **WHERE HAS THE HOME FAILED IN ITS RESPONSIBILITY?**

- Broken homes through dissolved marriages
- The use of house helps to take care of the kids
- Watching TV as instructor of ethics and values
- Lack of Role model
- Solo parenting
- Buck passing to teachers

## **THE SOCIETY**

The society comprises the following:

- The School
- The Community
- The organization

## **RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SCHOOL**

The school is responsible to impart academic knowledge, while the character formation takes its roots from home. Notwithstanding, teachers too involve in instilling discipline in a child but parents have a greater role to play on this issue.

It is important to note that children spend only 7 hours out of the 24 hours that we have in a day at school. In other words, our children spend most of their time at home.

## **WHERE HAS THE TEACHER FAILED IN HIS RESPONSIBILITY?**

- Poor remuneration
- Work-load
- Non-qualified teachers
- Lack of adequate teachers
- Self-and-Time management

## **THE COMMUNITY**

The community is the reflection of the family. We live in a pluralistic society, which is made up of different cultures. Here you have cultural diversities. It is left for an individual to uphold the right ethics and values in the face of unethical behaviours that abound.

## **WHO CONSTITUTES THE COMMUNITY?**

- Non-Governmental Organizations
- The Professional Bodies
- The Government
- The Counsellors

## WHY HAVE THEY FAILED?

- Lack of Control mechanism
- Failure to bring culprits to book
- Failure to provide immunity against whistle-blowers
- Leadership by precepts not by example

## THE MANY FACES OF UNETHICAL PRACTISES IN THE WORKPLACE

- (1) Outright stealing of cash and hiding it
- (2) Teeming and lading
- (3) Physical concealment of stocks
- (4) Improper allocation of expenses in financial statements
- (5) Manipulation of the computer to falsify figures.
- (6) Manipulation of the telex to send out false information, e.g. banks transferring funds from corporate accounts to fictitious accounts.
- (7) Destroying financial records
- (8) Inflation of contracts
- (9) False valuations: "window dressing"
- (10) Liquidations and reconstructions
- (11) Custom duties
- (12) Oil explorations and bunkering.
- (13) Over-invoicing and foreign exchange round tripping
- (14) Tax evasion and avoidance.
- (15) Distrust between employees and employers
- (16) "Doctored" Annual Reports
- (17) Sexual Harassment
- (18) Punishing whistle blowers
- (19) Corporate Hypocrisy: avoid law suits
- (20) Pay as when due
- (21) Lay off/down sizing (in the name of Quality Systems Implementation)
- (22) Discrimination

## OVERALL CONSEQUENCES

<b><u>Society/ Country</u></b>	<b><u>Home</u></b>	<b><u>School</u></b>	<b><u>Organisation</u></b>	<b><u>Students</u></b>
GDP declines	Violence	Poor performance-	Poor Wages/	Cheat
Inflation	Child abuse	Low standards	Remuneration	Seductions
Poverty	Slavery	Unwillingness to learn	Cheat	Exhibitionism
Homelessness	Alcohol	Absenteeism	Fear	Irresponsibility
Debased society	Drug dependence	Teenage pregnancy	Disloyalty	Failure to correct
Corruption	Show bad example	Gangsterism	Deception	Indiscipline

Nepotism	Push duty to schools and governments	Cultism	Untruths, Half-truths and Cosmetic truths	Disrespectful for tradition or culture
Fraud	Buck passing	Buck-passing (Home & Govt)	Figure fixing	
Embezzlement	Single Parenting	Fear of higher Quarters hammer	Bribery (Facilitation/ Intermediation Charges)	Lack study culture
Nominees Accounts (Overseas Secret Accounts)	High Divorce rate	Outside influence	Contingency/Miscellaneous Expenses	Unthankful
Fragile /Poor Infrastructure	Child-Parenthoods			Careless
	Indecent dressing		Over/Under invoicing	Nude/Spaghetti Dressing
Foreign goods/ Importation syndrome	Exhibitionism		Tax Evasion	Cultism to Intimidate
Over invoicing	Hawking		Dismantling/Death of workers Unions	Prostitution
Under invoicing			Destruction/Dissolution of families/marriages	Major HIV/AIDS, & STD vectors
Loss of Revenue			Longer Working Hours	Covetous
Low Production base			Ultimate Management Power	Masculinity/ Effeminacy
Lack Maintenance Culture				Artificial/Plastic
Crime/Insecurity			Powerless Employees	Poor Physical/ Mental Health
Suicide			Insecurity	
High Health Bills			Quality Assurance/ Continuous Downsizing	
Poor Physical/ Mental Health			Insider Dealing	
High Alms Dependency			Employees Less Skilful/More Dependency on Employers	
Cultism				
High Incidence of Civil Unrest			Harassment/ Discrimination	
Covetousness				

Please, note that the list is inexhaustible



Integrity is not an all comers' affairs. It is indeed a serious quality that every professional must possess if our organisations are to survive the current state of distrust and disrespect from international bodies. It is the application of integrity that will rescue our nations, sub-regions and continent from the current state of corruption and moral decadence.

It is good at this juncture to ask ourselves if the ethics and values are actually taught or passed down from generation to generation? Who are the teachers of ethics?

### **INTEGRITY IN THE MANAGEMENT PROCESS**

In this section, we shall examine the impact of integrity or the lack of it on each of the functions of a manager. It is pertinent to point out that the manager's role is mainly decision-making. To that extent, the manager exercises tremendous influence on matters affecting resource allocation. He decides how much is spent, how it is spent, on whom it is spent and when it is spent.

#### **PLANNING**

As part of the manager's planning function, he sets the objectives to be achieved, makes forecasts, and analyses problems. Where the manager lacks integrity, he can set spurious objectives (hidden agenda). His forecasts are not likely to be reliable because for him anything goes.

Reliable forecasts call for hard and thorough investigations, which by his nature he will be incapable or unwilling to undertake. For him it is a hassle trying to adhere to high code of moral values. He will settle for any method that will generate any forecast.

#### **ORGANISING**

At the organising stage, the manager identifies the activities necessary to achieve the set objectives and assigns tasks to individuals or groups. For one with integrity, staff will be assigned tasks in accordance to their capacity and competence. The more experienced staff are assigned the more complex and/ or difficult tasks. This will ensure higher productivity and better performance including high quality. On the other hand, a manager without integrity will apply extraneous factors in assigning the work. Thus he may assign the most difficult work to a relatively inexperienced staff who happens to be his "enemy" or who does not belong. Where a job is to be contracted out, the manager with integrity will give out the job in a manner that serves the best interest of his employer.

First he will select the best contractor on the basis of competence. Next he will negotiate the best terms for his organisation in terms of total cost, quality of product or service, payment schedule, delivery schedule, etc. For those who do not have integrity their decisions will be based on their personal considerations rather than the good of all concerned.

#### **ACTIVATING**

At this stage, the manager with integrity can easily motivate a workforce because he is admired, respected, and preferred by his staff to the one without integrity. The staff are more likely to believe what he tells them than they will do the other man. The lack of credibility of the latter will hunt him in the entire organisation because he will not be believed or trusted by both his superiors and subordinates, alike.

## **CONTROL**

At the control level, the manager is expected to measure performance and compare the result with the expected. For the man with integrity, he will accurately discuss the results frankly with his staff. His staff who have confidence in their “boss” will gladly accept his honest assessment. But this is not so for the man who lacks integrity. Because it is not in his character to be honest; he cannot be believe or trusted. It may get to a stage that even when he scores a staff “excellent” in his assessment, the staff concerned will not believe such a high score. As a result, the entire appraisal and control systems become suspect, ineffective and finally, collapse.

## **PROMOTING INTEGRITY**

Integrity is a moral issue. It has to do with moral values. It is not dependent on wealth. This is why we have some very poor people with integrity while some very rich people are busy stealing and cheating. As one proverb puts it, “integrity does not increase with age and wealth”.

Integrity has its root in contentment. And contentment does not depend on how much you have but how you appreciate even the little you have. Some may have very little but feel satisfied with that little that they have. Others may have half of the world and still feel they have not enough. This is greed. Therefore greed is the root cause of lack of integrity. This greed induces the impairment of our vision; the incomplete and divided state, all of which make it impossible to see clearly and make sound decisions. It would appear that greed is the cataract that will not let us see properly to enable us make sound judgment.

For integrity to thrive in nations and organisations, it must deliberately, effectively and aggressively be promoted. The best approach will be to apply reward and sanction, carrot and stick. First a moral persuasion to show the evils of lack of integrity and that it does not pay a good dividend. Organisations, Governments, and Communities must join hands to wage war against corruption in the society. They must begin to recognize integrity. Awards, chieftaincy titles, appointments based on integrity will go a long way to reinforce the notion that it pays to be honest. On the other hand, government and enterprises must publicly prosecute and sanction those identified to be fraudulent and dishonest. The various religious groups have a herculean task in this regard.

## **I feel the following points if considered would score points.**

- (1) **The Concept of Abundance and Scarcity Mentality**  
The abundance mentality means you don't see life as a big competition and most of your psychic satisfactions don't stem from competitions or comparisons. People with abundance mentality see life as having “plenty for everybody” and attempt to create many options to help others make the most of every situation. By rejoicing in the successes of others, they are perceived as being more successful themselves. When we admire good outside ourselves.

Most people develop the opposite of the abundance mentality - the scarcity mentality. They see life as a “zero sum” game and think that when someone else wins, in some way they lose. They think in adversarial, competitive ways. A person with a scarcity mentality does not rejoice in the success of others. They feel that success outside themselves takes away from them.

Their thinking is based on the assumption that there are limited resources, only so much success and prosperity, and if someone is getting part of it, then the remaining part available to them is diminished. That is why people with a scarcity mentality seek to maintain prerogatives of positions, possessions, and power, be it economic, political or social.

- (2) In the second place, society appears to accept and thereby encourage unethical practices. To begin with, the extended family system in which one breadwinner caters for many dependents puts enormous pressure on the few who work or are in business. This pressure leads to the temptation to cut corners in order to make ends meet. It requires strong moral character to remain upright.
- (3) There appears to be a serious lowering of moral standards in our society. Time was when people who acquired wealth through doubtful means were despised in the society. Today it appears that “the end justifies the means”. No wonder armed robbers and fraudsters who have made money through dubious means are frequently honoured with chieftaincy titles and other commendations for their “achievements”, even in our churches and mosques.

Corrupt and unethical cases even when detected are never really sanctioned. Cases abound where Government begins to negotiate how much of the looted property is to be returned while the “accused” is left to enjoy the remainder of the loot.

## **SOME CHALLENGES AND IMPERATIVES IN PROMOTING ETHICAL BUSINESS CONDUCT**

So what are the challenges and imperatives if we must make business to behave ethically?

**First**, is the challenge of instituting appropriate internal controls and the mechanisms for investigations and application of sanctions on individuals or groups that violate the corporate creed. While it is important for every organisation to profess a commitment to business ethics, it is more important to put in place controls, processes and mechanisms that help the organisation to operate in an ethically sound manner. Here, controls dealing with products handling, payment system, award of contracts, procurement processes etc, are all critical. Loopholes that can give room for abuses must be avoided. Where controls are inadequate or sanctions are hardly applied when need be, no amount of rhetoric about ethics in business will suffice.

**Second**, there is the challenge of ensuring that employees are paid competitive compensation packages that can meet and exceed the normal needs of their families. Where this is the case, so long as stiff sanctions are applied when there are violations, majority of employees would only do what is seen as being ethical within the context of the organisation's definition of the subject. Where employees can hardly make ends meet from their legitimate earnings, the temptation to engage in unethical practices will always be there. Contentment should be our watch word. Human beings are wanting animals.

**Third**, there is the challenge of working in concert with other like-minded organisations to fight corruption in the country and promote the virtues of business ethics. I personally believe that this is a worthy cause and the organized private sector and professional bodies need to champion this cause.

**Fourth**, there is the challenge of strengthening corporate governance through appropriate law reforms. Boards of Directors, the Board Audit Committees or any other shareholder group, must have power to pry into the activities of the management. More importantly, they need to be alive to their responsibilities. Most shareholders in the country merely look forward to receiving their dividends at the end of the year without showing any interest in the activities of the organisation. This should not be so. The Board of Directors in particular must ensure that things are done in a very transparent manner and in the overall interest of the organisation at all times. **Auditors** involved in providing statutory professional services must ensure that they do a thorough job at all times.

There is no human endeavour that does not require proper management for its proper functioning. Every organisation whether small, medium or big, requires good management to function effectively.

Managing is one of the most important human activities that permeate all organisations. Whenever people work together, there is generally a need for the co-ordination of efforts in order to attain expected results in reasonable time and within the available resources. All people who oversee the function of other people who must work in subordinate position are managers.

In other words, managers are people who are primarily responsible for the achievement of organisational goals.

### **UNIVERSALITY OF MANAGEMENT**

Management function is identical in all formal organisations whether it is profit making organisation or a non-profit making organisation.

In other words, all managers perform the same type of functions. People who occupy management **positions** plan, organise staff, direct and control. They get things done through and with their subordinates. Their principal responsibility is to achieve organisational objectives through group efforts.

The concept of the universality of management implies that all managers irrespective of their position in the organisational hierarchy perform at one time or the other identical functions.

## **TYPES OF MANAGERS**

### **(a) First Line Managers**

They direct operating employees e.g. production, supervisor (or foreman) in a manufacturing plant, the technical supervisor in a research department.

### **(b) Middle Level Managers**

Middle level managers direct the activities of other managers below them.

### **(c) Top Level Managers**

They are responsible for the overall management of the organisation. They formulate policies. Typical titles such as CEO, Deputy Managing Director belong to the realm of top management.

## **EXAMPLE OF CODE OF ETHICS FOR MANAGERS**

### **(A) THE MANAGERS CONDUCT AND COMPORNTMENT**

- The manager should maintain high standard of personal conduct in the course of discharging his duties.
- The manager should strive to become and remain productive in professional practice.
- The manager should regard as primary the service obligation of his profession.
- The corporate manager should act in accordance with the highest standards of professional integrity.

### **(B) ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITY TO CLIENTS**

- Respect the privacy of clients and hold in confidence all information obtained in the course of rendering professional service.

### **(C) ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITY TO COLLEAGUES**

- Treat colleagues with Respect, Fairness, Courtesy and good faith.

### **(D) ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITY TO EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYING ORGANISATIONS.**

- Commitment to employing organisations.

### **(E) ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITY TO YOUR PROFESSION**

- Uphold and advance the values, ethics, knowledge and mission of your profession.

It is important to note that the ethics of management demand accountability.

A **code**, as highlighted above, is a statement of policies and principles that guides behaviour. A code of ethics should guide the behaviour of all persons. Stating a code of ethics is not enough but by appointing an ethics committee holding regular meetings, checking and enforcing violations to the ethics code and reviewing and updating the code. Any organisation that does this is seen as being committed to the principle.

## THE WAY OUT OF THE DEBACLE

- 1. COMMITMENT.** Unless leaders and their key colleagues in the organization are 100 percent committed to doing the right thing, employees and subordinates will not buy into the ethics code. Everywhere, leaders cut corners and engage in sharp practices to expedite action or gain favour. This is wrong. It is better to lose that deal than to violate sound ethics.
- 2. ACCOUNTABILITY.** Assigning distinct individuals the responsibility for ensuring the solidity and viability of institutional ethical culture is necessary today. Integrity implementation programmes are needed because the public is distrustful and suspicious; while, overseas executives can quickly clarify or obtain guidance from Head Office.
- 3. POLICIES.** Directors and top executives are to ensure they have clear policies in place that cover all critical institutional ethical issues: from appropriate ways of dealing with workplace misconduct, to dealing with overseas corruption, human rights, labour rights and local community needs.
- 4. AUDIENCES.** Leaders are to access the diverse audiences that organizations have to reach in order to buy-in, support and understand their ethical values and approaches. Therefore, in the first conversation with the organization; leaders should let others know the kind of ethical principles that guide operations that employees understand and are ready to adhere.
- 5. PROGRAMMES.** To ensure understanding and buy-in amongst the various audiences of employees, partners, and customers; requires the effective development of target-oriented educational programmes, whereas, securing support for viable ethics is not automatic. People needed to be trained and also encouraged to report misconduct wherever and whenever it is seen.
- 6. MONITORING.** Monitor the progress of good ethics programmes. Since each programme area is a veritable source of vulnerability, now , than ever before.
- 7. COMMUNICATING.** Leaders need to communicate internally and externally about values and integrity on a continual and consistent basis. They are to consistently build trust and confidence and tirelessly work to secure a reputation that enables goodwill to stand out clearly
- 8. FILMS CENSORSHIP.** Films shown on our Television screens should be those that enhance the dignity of man. Those films that are amorous or tended to petting should be beamed very late at nights, if at all. It has been revealed from confessional statements of some die-hard “repented” criminals that “Crime”/”Detective” films shown on Television were used by them as rehearsal or coaching materials to perfect their ignoble acts. It was after a series of reviews and analyses of such films that they go to act them out on unsuspecting people, they say.
- 9. COUNSELLORS.** Competent counsellors should be made available to students and teachers in all tiers of the school system. They should also be available in the work place. Since there is a dearth of counsellors, a sharing/training formula should be worked out to make their services available to all.

## CONCLUSION OF THE WHOLE MATTER

....."IS THAT CHARITY BEGINS AT HOME"

## COMPARISON BETWEEN THE OLD AND NEW GENERATIONS (GENERATION GAP)

### OLD SCHOOL

Marriage before Sex  
Marriage is the norm  
  
Protection of Family Name  
Name in high esteem  
Uphold Traditions & Customs  
Fashion  
Sex, a matter of Privacy  
Chastity (The Watchword)  
Naturalness  
Respectful  
Loved  
Peaceful  
Subjection  
Followed  
Community Cohesion  
Children Free  
Community Interest (We)  
Basic Needs  
Searched for Substance  
Perking Order  
Enjoyed Work & Working  
More Honest  
Decorum  
Futuristic

### NEW SCHOOL

Sex before Marriage  
No Marriage but Co-Habitation/  
Marriage of Convenience (If at all)  
Family name unimportant  
What is in a Name? (Meaningless)  
Broke down Traditions in the name of  
  
Sex is Commercialized (Plc-Public)  
Promiscuity (The Watchword)  
Cosmetic & Artificial (Plastic People)  
Rude  
Hate (Hatred)  
At War (With themselves)  
Wild  
Bosses  
Individualistic Disarray (Left in the Cold)  
Caged Children  
Greed, Avarice and Selfishness ( I )  
Esoteric, Exotic or Avant-Garde  
Look for Chaff  
Disorganized Locusts  
Pleasure Seeking and Wasteful  
Out to Cheat  
Dissonant  
Futureless

Let us use the Nuclear Reactor (Nuclear family) principle to drive this point home. If you have a stable radioactive atom (family) that is capable of decay (change) and a stressor denoted by Neutron strikes it, three things happen:(i) atom (family) could disintegrate with release of three neutrons (stressors) that are capable of striking three other atoms (homes), (ii) neutrons (stressors) could be swallowed up or (iii) no visible effect on atom (home) as the neutron (stressor) just passes by.

Stressors, like death, divorce and joblessness could result in three routes for the children of that home: (i) go to school, (ii) forced into labour and (iii) form emergency (unplanned) home. If these are further hit by stressors, the second-generation set of problems becomes nine...."and a stitch in time saves nine". The third generation / stage now has to grapple with 27, and so on and so forth.

If we consider a practical example of 100 families, then the multiplicity of problems confronting them is mind -boggling:  $3^{100}$  ( $5.153775208 \times 10^{47}$ ).

Consequently, if the population we are dealing with becomes one million people, the multiplicities of problems can better be imagined, than for them to stare us in the face. As, only GOD Himself can solve them.

Come to think of it, should we be giving God problems or we should be doing things that would make Him happy that He created us in **"HIS IMAGE AND LIKENESS"?**

It therefore, follows that the Ethical Values problem in the Work Place cum Society could only be resolved to the general good of all, if we return to GOD as we **"TRAIN UP A CHILD IN THE WAY HE SHOULD GO: AND WHEN HE IS OLD, HE WILL NOT DEPART FROM IT"(PROVERBS 22:6).**

**FOR "CHARITY BEGINS AT HOME "AND HERE, I REST MY CASE.**

**THANK YOU FOR LISTENING!**



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