Is The Academic Sector Of India Heading In The Right Direction?

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Abstract

Ethical behavior and professionalism is an ideal characteristic required among students and included as ‘must achieve’ and critical aspect of Students’ curriculum. This study proposes to determine the perceived unethical and unprofessional behavior among students and Faculties in a private university. The papers’ focuses want to identify unethical behaviors during the academic years and the differences between different types of faculties. The central purpose of a University in any given society is to offer an atmosphere for Learning and for the benefit of the learner, the society and humanity in general. This study contributes to the literature on the unethical practices being followed in Universities. Unethical practices are those when one is not conforming to approved standards of social or professional behavior. The research is carried out in ordered to explore & investigate the Top management, Teachers, Examination staff & Students malpractices in the promotion of unethical practices

Keywords: Social Media Addiction, Unethical practices, University Norms, Unethical Values

Introduction

Ethics, also known as moral philosophy, is a branch of philosophy that addresses questions about morality—that is, concepts such as good and evil, right and wrong, virtue and vice, justice, etc.” (Ethics, 2d ed., 1973. by William Franken). The central purpose of a University in any given society is to offer an atmosphere for learning and the benefit of the learner, the society, and humanity in general. Unethical practices are those when one is not conforming to approved standards of social or professional behavior. Students are the raw materials and main subject matter of those who teach at various levels. Hence, the students, their parents, guardians, and relations are the primary targeted victims of teachers in professional misconduct in some of the cases. The teaching code of ethics strictly prohibits teachers not to taking advantage of students or people
associated with students while dealing with them. Moreover, teachers are expected to be fair, objective, helpful, and resourceful at any cost for their students. Importantly, teachers are supposed to serve as role models to their students in words and actions which will assist in molding the character content of the student in the learning process. In the last three decades, higher education has grown rapidly as an industry, all over the world. From being an industry designed to serve the educational needs of the elite in the early 1960s – usually around 5–7 percent of the population – universities have become factories for turning out graduates and postgraduates, serving the needs of around 40–50 percent of the population in most developed and many rapidly developing nations. The marketization of universities has been the focus of much serious study, all over the world, and the conclusions are as expected. Marketwise universities – ones that depend increasingly for funding on student fees and grants from a wide range of organizations – behave as you would expect, but with one exception. They do not admit that their quality has been compromised in many ways and general pay lip service to the student as customers, preferring instead to manipulate the student experience and student feedback to maximize their future revenue earning opportunities.

‘difficult’ subjects are gradually being removed from the curriculum, literacy is declining among students and lecturers, and – most importantly of all – students now receive this clear message from universities, ‘If you want to get a good degree, chose subjects where you feel you can manage the assessment or where re-sits are allowed, learn how to manage anti-plagiarism software by putting other people's ideas into your own words, do not expect to get much time from your lecturers, whom we appoint primarily for the quality of their research – and who are under extreme pressure to continue performing well in research, whatever this means for teaching quality, and learn how to teach yourself. Most important of all, in student surveys, do not criticize our university, because this will devalue the brand that you will carry for the rest of your life. In this article, we document the many forms of corruption that take place in universities.

2. Purpose & Role of University Education:

The purpose of university education has become a subject of heated debate. Government cutbacks and the stress on education as a job-creation engine, a preparation for the marketplace is undermining the historic mandate of universities. In the past, a university prepared men and women for professional careers, gave them a better appreciation of the arts, literature, history, and science. As an institution of "higher learning", a university helped students to enjoy richer, more meaningful lives. And this original purpose should be reaffirmed. A university ought to be a place, which equips people to think and to grow, to exchange ideas, and get grounded in good books. Higher Education in India is referred to as a type of education that is pursued in postsecondary educational institutions including professional schools which are approved as institutions of higher education by the competent state authorities. These institutions have the basic responsibility for providing individuals with the advanced knowledge and skills that are required for their professional life and are the greatest asset of a nation (Mughal & Manzoor, 1999). The purpose of these institutions is not just to provide knowledge but also to have multi-dimensional objectives
with an aim to support and improve the process of social and economic development. Moreover, they develop the capabilities of individuals to the highest potential level so that they grow intellectually and contribute effectively to a society. One of the most important things people can get out of their university experience is learning about real life and further developing their character. One might think that these particular processes should have already been finalized. That's right; they should. Some more things which have been found are:

- There is inadequate focus on research in higher education institutes.
- There are insufficient resources and facilities, as well as limited numbers of quality faculty to advise students.
- Most of the research scholars are without fellowships or not getting their fellowships on time which directly or indirectly affects their research. Moreover, Indian Higher education institutions are poorly connected to research centers and industries. Management of Indian education faces challenges of over-centralization, bureaucratic structures, and lack of accountability, transparency, and professionalism. As a result of the increase in the number of affiliated colleges and students, the burden of administrative functions of universities has significantly increased and the core focus on academics and research is diluted. More over poor infrastructure is another challenge to the higher education system of India; particularly the institutes run by the public sector suffer from poor physical facilities and infrastructure. Faculty shortages and the inability of the state educational system to attract and retain well-qualified teachers have been posing challenges to quality education for many years. Large numbers of NET/Ph.D. candidates are unemployed even though there are a lot of vacancies in higher education.

**Literature Review:**

There is sufficient evidence in the literature to suggest that enforcement and sustenance of any approach to limiting academic dishonesty thrive only when all key players in the system (administration, academic staff, and students) have a high degree of sensitivity (in terms of attitude and participation) to the instituted approach (Dufresne, 2004; Olasehinde-Williams, 2005). Research of Dordrecht (1992) has indicated that unethical practices of teachers & students have been increasingly recognized as a critical factor in the downfall of universities or any educational institution. The unethical practices & behavior of employees are supported by top management & the entire organization. According to Hellreigel et al (1989), ethical problems in an organization have great concern with society, organizational culture & individuals. Baucus and Near (1991) found that when an organization commits unethical practices its employees got the confidence of doing that they did not differentiate between ethical & unethical practices. Jansen and Von Glinow, (1985) pointed out that Organizations establish counter norms & practices which are the fundamentals to promote ethical behaviors in organizations. Drake and Drake (1988) 14 concluded that Organizations conduct ethics training programs for all employees. These programs should explain the organizational ethical and legal principles and present practical aspects of carrying our procedural guidelines. National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (2002)
Introduced four model components for Teacher' ethical training, which include moral sensitivity, moral judgments, moral motivation, and moral character. This model is helpful for the implementation of codes of Ethics. Bebeau, Rest & Narvaez (1999) pointed out that moral motivation training might include profession-specific service activities and the study of professional moral exemplary; and moral character training might include strategies for problem-solving and conflict resolution among and between children and adults. Roediger (2009) explored satisfactory and unsatisfactory classroom (student-lecturer) encounters in higher education from a student's perspective. The critical incident technique (CIT) is used to categorize positive and negative student-lecturer interactions, to reveal quality dimensions of the lecturer, and to reconsider which attributes of the lecturer are likely to cause satisfaction and which dimensions mainly lead to dissatisfaction. The results of the CIT study manifested nine quality dimensions of lecturer behavior, confirming previous research in this area. Quality dimensions that were mainly mentioned in the negative incidents were classified as “dissatisfies” (“expertise”, “communication skills”, “fairness”, “assertiveness”, and “enthusiasm”), attributes that appeared in the positive incidents were labeled “satisfiers” (“flexibility”), and dimensions with a high score for both positive and incidents were described as “critical” (“teaching skills”, “empathy”, “friendliness”)

3.1. PATTERNS OF MALPRACTICE IN THE UNIVERSITIES
1. Top Management involvement in sporting unethical behavior of Employees
2. At the Point of Admission
3. Taking Class without prior preparation
4. Plagiarism Malpractices are perpetrated at these levels for the usual reasons: intellectual deficiency, money; materials; sexual intercourse; or due to certain parochial considerations.
5. Biasedness towards Employees working in the Universities

As faculty are the heart and soul of higher education and research (Enders 2006 19). Gunter and Fitzgerald (200720) argued that: “The professor”s commitment needs to be recognized and uncovered. Consequently, the challenge for the field is to ensure that these emerging researchers are acknowledged and their work celebrated because, importantly, it is with and through these colleagues that the field will be stimulated, nurtured, and sustained. A basic element in the university is that work planning and execution are decentralized to individual members (i.e. faculty) who maintain considerable control over low-level goals and the use of particular procedures (Whitley, 198421). The work of university faculty has long been devoted to teaching, research, and service, although the extent and ratio of each role function vary from one university to another and from one discipline to another (Cardozier, 1987; Coser, 1971 as cited by Izhar (2010)22 ). Broadly, academics are expected to conduct research, publish the results of such, and then convey their knowledge to students through the design of new courses and participation in curricular innovations (Boyer, 1982; Veblen, 1971 as cited by Izhar (2010). Through their research professors create knowledge; through teaching and publishing, they disseminate knowledge.
According to the Collins Dictionary of the English Language (Hanks 1979 as cited by C. Park 2003), “plagiarism is „the act of plagiarising”, which means „to appropriate (ideas, passages, etc) from (another work or author)“. Plagiarism involves literary theft, stealing (by copying) the words or ideas of someone else and passing them off as one’s own without crediting the source”. The term plagiarism is usually used to refer to the theft of words or ideas, beyond what would normally be regarded as general knowledge. This is the spirit of defining plagiarism adopted by the Association of American Historians, who describes it as „the misuse of the writings of another author including the limited borrowing, without attribution, of another distinctive and significant research finding, hypotheses, theories … or interpretations“ (Fialkoff, 1993 as cited by C. Park 2003).

**Findings**

The role of ethical values within Indian higher education and society is declining and requires a new way of thinking—i.e. based on Indian ethos. Education opens the doors of the mind, cleanses the soul, and helps in self-realization. Colleges and Universities are the custodians of knowledge. These Institutions create and disseminate knowledge within a particular society and they are also the gateway to power, significantly affecting the quality of economic and social life throughout the world. Therefore, these Institutions have moral responsibilities to maintain the wellbeing of that society. In the majority of educational institutions, there is a significant lapse in the concept of human development and the nation-building process. This lapse has resulted in the decline of values among students. It is, therefore, required to identify the major causes of this decline in ethical values i.e. corruption, bribery, murder, rape, scams, etc. The best way to address this issue is to impart value-based ethical education incorporated in the academic curriculum, just the way it was being practiced in the ancient times when the education system was value-based and education would help in the improvement of human character and recognition of their inner purity. The research is carried out to explore and investigate the Top management, Students, Teachers & Examination staff’s malpractices in the promotion of unethical practices in universities. Research study on unethical practices has been conducted by different researchers. This research article is based on a general analysis of all malpractices taking place in the universities environment. It has been found from the study that there is Biasedness among employees. Employees who are working for the past two years in educational institutions more preferences have been given to them and they keep on taking unfair advantages from senior employees. Less few classes were given to them and they were not doing any professional activity and Academic activity in the organization, Because these employees who are doing more work have been given more responsibilities and have not been given any recognition in the university also not promoting them to a higher post also and not increasing their salary. Examination work is an important job but employees do not listen to the queries of students related to examination and they blame students for not doing their fees part but on the other hand, it is the mistake of the university that they are not solving students’ problem. It has been noticed that unnecessary Supplementary was given to the students in the examination so that the university can generate unnecessary money by conducting the ‘Special
Back’ Examination. This is an Unethical activity being conducted in the university. Some universities have not provided better infrastructural facilities. The interior of the university does not look like it is a university. In Private University proper staff room has not been provided to the Professor, Assistant Professor. Some universities do have not a good infrastructure which affects the overall performance of the university. Some Universities are not following proper norms that should be followed this is the reason they are going in a downfall direction. If certain measures have not been taken then the future of such universities will be in dearth.

Conclusion
Education without goodness i.e. without ethics is arrogant and dangerous. Unethical behavior thrives in darkness and can only exist when ethical leaders remain bystanders in the face of evil. If we who are in the business of educating the young want to measure and assess our efforts we need to look at how our institutions nurture human freedom in the service of humanity. Success today is all too often defined by the power of the wealth that one holds. Proper education process is a passport to good, comfortable and secure life. The process is transmitted through commitment and sharing of Teacher-Pupil relationship. The love and joy, values and respect, the basic ethics are getting either eliminated or getting deteriorated to the rock bottom. In these days the educational institutions of all kinds of higher education neither cared for the community nor respect for others. No importance is given to human relations who are much pertinent matter required for an effective education. There is no encouragement or appreciation of virtues of responsibilities and self-discipline. Therefore is no projection of the college as the servant of the society Some of the unethical practices being followed by most of our higher education institutes are being listed below, though, it is not the exhaustive list:

• How far college education has succeeded in helping students to become integral part of society. How far has the college culture changed the life of the students?

• Why college have failed to bring in the expected standards in values and beliefs.

• There is no education which can enrich human life, which is to ensure the quality and standard of values maintained. Is it the only principal or the teachers or some other actors of higher education?

• Universities are awarding degrees and certificates to students without ensuring anything related to quality which is affecting the Education system in an adverse manner.

• People purse a degree for the status it carries.

• Teachers deliver lectures without employing proper teaching methodologies. Many a time teachers do not have time to the inclination to ensure whether the student could follow lecture. Teacher often merely dictates notes, reading out of the text book or the guide of the subject.
• Evaluation and testing gives more stress upon rote memory. There is no genuine comprehension or critical evaluation. Curriculum design is mere a collection of topics and subjects.

• The accumulation and presentation of data alone cannot become the criteria for quality education. Does higher education cater for or include acquisition of habit or skills?

• The colleges are plain enrolment centers and examination bodies. They are not bothered about quality of teaching and the ethical considerations. Neither there is any procedure to check the kind of teaching that is imparted at the college.

It has been quoted that the true philosophy of education lies in the combination of Virtues, Values and Validity of human life. It implies that there is need to understand the criteria that can help in development of human beings. Education is not merely imparting knowledge in a particular faculty or subject or making one fit for securing jobs or fare well in exams, it should be training in logical thinking and should help the coming generations adjust to the available changing environment. The big Missions, Aims and Objectives of many educational institutions with bold letters interspersed with high flown jargons remains only on the walls of these institutions in their chairmen/Directors’/Principles’ offices and are seldom preached, practices or implemented in true spirits. This is true not only in case govt. aided institutions but also in case of privately owned self-financial institutions as well. The institution should enable students to become contributing member of the society by providing knowledge, skills and character development opportunities.

References


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