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ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTION

FACTORS AFFECTING ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR OF EMPLOYEES IN DIFFERENT HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN WEST BENGAL AND ITS RELEVANCE: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

In view of the contemporary global ethical issues in higher education institutions, the concept of ethical behaviour has emerged as a vital concept. Ethical behaviour is important in institutes not only to ensure actions which would be right and proper, but it is necessary as it boosts morale, help make the best use of resources and manage to do work effectively and harmoniously. Today the overall scenario of higher education institutes is in a state of disrepair characterized by a politicized environment led by corruption. In order to sustain the system in an effective manner and to continue its best deliverance, ethical conduct of employees in such institute should stand as a beacon to guide students and lead the organization to operate ethically and consistently even in difficult times. The paper delves deep into the factors that affect the ethical behaviour of employees in higher education sectors. Four factors have been identified and their relevance is tested to find out the impact on the ethical aspect of an employee in such institutes.

KEYWORDS— Ethical behaviour, politicized corruption

1. INTRODUCTION

Ethical and behavioural guidelines in organizations, particularly in higher education institutions place a high degree of commitment, teamwork, accountability, integrity, dignity, fairness, equity and honesty in the workplace which is crucial for strengthening its sustainability. We instinctively know that we need to work with morality and integrity but at times this behaviour becomes submerged. Thus it creates workplace conflict, erodes trust and one becomes misfit in the institute. Today in every sphere ethical behaviour has emerged as an important concept. Ethical behaviour is not a sole entity. With this comes up the relevance of ethical leadership and ethical

values which together fosters an ethical behaviour in man. In an educational institute, the growing importance and concern for ethical behaviour has been deeply felt. An ethical environment is essentially required in every institution. To obtain such an ambience every employee should possess such an ethical behaviour which would help in taking judicious decisions, focus more on duties and obligations in a given situation, goal of performing correct action, being morally inclined, having confidence in whatever he does. Such behaviour in due course, becomes a competitive advantage for the institution which would unlock potential for success. Even numerous studies show that ethical

behaviour has an impact on the employee performance. Rashid Saeed, Merium Shakeel and Rab Nawaz Lodhi in their research article have found a positive relation between ethical behaviour and job performance in education sector where they emphasized on ethical value. It states 'ethical values can be well thought out the weapon of the institute which is used for the enrolment and choice of the workers on ethical foundation to get the organizational goals and objectives' (Saeed, Shakeel & Lodhi, 2013). An ethical behaviour is hooked on ethical leadership. As we know that leadership is the ability to inspire and motivate goals. The five ethical leadership behaviour as mentioned by Nandita Mishra and Gulnar Sharma - honesty and integrity in dealing with others, striving to treat fairly all stakeholders, building community, respecting the individual and accomplishing silent victories not only helps to achieve sustainable competitive advantage or performance but also helps to ingrain ethical behaviour and its merit among fellowmen (Mishra & Sharma, 2010).

There are various factors that affect a person's ethical behaviour such as knowledge, morale, personal goals and personality. These factors have a significant contribution in shaping one's ethical perspective. Here we would discuss on four essential factors – Social intelligence, politics handling capability, sincerity and network building capacity.

Present Scenario of Higher Education System and the ethical factor

The rapid development in science and technology and the challenges of globalization are posing additional challenges to the education system in the country. Gross consumerism has distorted the outlook of persons into one of equating possessions with richness. Exploitation of natural resources is proceeding without reference to sustainability. The hiatus between the rich and the poor is getting wider. While the education system needs to keep pace with the scientific and technological developments in

terms of building the skills and knowledge, it also needs to address the more fundamental issues of the social and moral consequences of such unregulated activities. Hence now there is a growing need to lay emphasis on education to inculcate, nurture and develop values (University Grants Commission Report, 2003). The situation is still the same. We need to focus more on the ethical aspect of employees, students of the institutes so that the core human values are not destroyed. In due course, lot of evidence shows that the ethical part of education sector is characterized by micro politics of self interested individuals (Cacciattolo, K, 2013). Today the employees in education sector are seen to have least concern for human development and lay more emphasis on materialism. We now see rampant corruption and decrease in ethical values, unlawful activities, inhuman behaviour and immoral consumption (Shelly & Jain, 2012) in the structure of higher education system in India. Thus in spite of the expansion of the education system in India, there has been a greater decline in the characters, moral values of employees in such sectors. In this context the role of ethical behaviour is significant amidst all unethical and perpetual problems.

Objective of the Study:

- i) To identify the factors influencing the ethical behaviours of employees in different Higher Educational Institutions
- ii) To find out the relationship between the influencing factors & ethical behaviours of employees in different Higher Educational Institutions
- iii) To study the issues & challenges that can affect the future development of different Higher Educational Institutions in India

Hypothesis:

H1: There is no significant influence of Social Intelligence on Ethical Behaviours of Employees in Higher Educational Institutions

H2: There is no significant influence of Sincerity on Ethical Behaviours of Employees in Higher Educational Institutions

H3: There is no significant influence of Politics handling Capability on Ethical Behaviours of Employees in Higher Educational Institutions

H4: There is no significant influence of Network Ability on Ethical Behaviours of Employees in Higher Educational Institutions

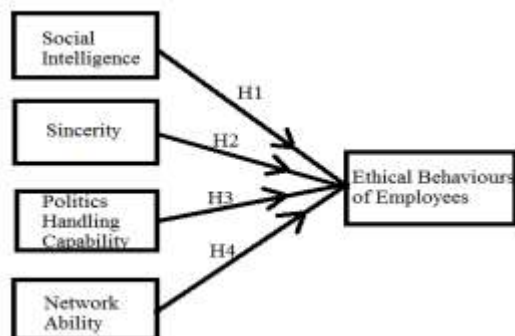


Figure 1: Hypothesized Research Model

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The population was defined as a group of people who are the employees of higher educational institution. Here, we have chosen different colleges & universities in West Bengal as the place for conducting this study. Secondary data played a vital role for this research. For the primary data collection a questionnaire method was applied which is a structured form of data collection and 25 statements were specially constructed for this analysis. In this study survey period was 5th December, 2015 to 20th June 2016. The questionnaire was administered on a sample of 200. Out of circulated 200 questionnaires, 183 completely filled questionnaires were received. The responses of the respondents on the Questionnaire were scored by assigning the following weights (Strongly Agree – 5, Agree -4, Neither Agree nor Disagree- 3, Disagree-2, Strongly Disagree -1) depending upon the respondents’ favorableness towards the given point of view.

3. ANALYSIS AND RESULT

Table 1: Overall Reliability Statistics

Cronbach Alpha	Number of Items
0.8691	25

Total Cases: 183

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.758
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	3521.582
	Df	300
	Sig.	<0.001

Here **KMO Test** (0.758) indicates factor analysis is apt with the data. **Bartlett’s test of sphericity** tests explains that Significance level is <0.05(.001) means variables are related under one construct. So it shows the Convergent validity of our data. The following table shows the rotated factor loading with their respective Variance explained (%) and Cronbach alpha. The variables with loading of more than 0.5 are creating different factors which itself proves convergent & discriminate validity. From Rotated Component Matrix 5 factors has been extracted which describes total 70.388 % of the variance which is more than the recommended variance of 60%. All Cronbach alpha greater than 0.70 means the reliability is good between various items of multiple item scale. In the case of construct validity (convergent & discriminate validity) has been already proved by **KMO and Bartlett's Test**.

Rotated Component Matrix (a)

	Component				
	Network Ability	Social Intelligence	Sincerity	Ethical Behaviour of Employees	Politics Handling Capability
q4	0.883	0.043	0.021	0.233	0.062
q1	0.857	0.053	-0.002	0.29	0.066
q2	0.847	-0.053	0.085	0.158	-0.021
q5	0.792	0.001	0.047	0.078	-0.014
q3	0.777	0.121	-0.013	0.266	0.048
q13	0.071	0.883	-0.081	0.105	0.073
q12	0.028	0.864	-0.081	0.094	0.123
q15	-0.045	0.783	-0.013	0.185	0.15
q14	0.066	0.775	-0.026	-0.02	0.034
q11	0.016	0.747	-0.082	0.215	0.096
q9	0.057	-0.001	0.937	0.024	-0.029
q6	0.068	0.044	0.856	-0.019	-0.05
q7	0.081	-0.044	0.821	0.006	0.101
q10	-0.098	-0.118	0.747	0.116	-0.075
q8	0.011	-0.15	0.717	0.139	0.075
qg1	0.312	0.198	0.065	0.829	0.141
qg2	0.322	0.177	0.065	0.775	0.183
qg5	0.074	0.117	0.127	0.773	0.073
qg3	0.317	0.154	0.067	0.723	0.133
qg4	0.296	0.111	0.098	0.682	-0.044
q18	0.114	0.165	-0.027	0.088	0.883
q17	-0.021	0.072	-0.036	0.24	0.83
q19	0.079	0.085	0.117	-0.078	0.771
q20	-0.108	0.014	-0.001	0.067	0.759
q16	0.099	0.208	0.005	0.113	0.716
Variance Explained (%)	15.739	14.254	13.762	13.351	13.282
Cronbach alpha	0.912	0.887	0.867	0.894	0.864

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a Rotation converged in 15 iterations.

Model Summary (Regression)

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	F	Sig.
.413(a)	.171	.152	.824	9.161	<.001 (a)

a Predictors: (Constant), social Intelligence, Sincerity, Politics handling Capability, Network Ability

b Dependent Variable: Ethical Behaviours of Employees

Model Coefficients (a)

	Non standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig. (P)
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.577	.529		1.091	.277
Network Ability	-.004	.072	-.005	-.058	.954 (NS)
Politics handling Capability	.195	.076	.181	2.562	.011 **(S)
Sincerity	.261	.093	.193	2.796	.006 *(S)
Social Intelligence	.331	.090	.296	3.663	.000 *(S)

a Dependent Variable: Ethical Behaviours of Employees

** (S): Significant at 5% level

* (S): Significant at 1% level

Model Specification:

The Multiple linear regression model is specified below:

$$Y (\text{Ethical Behaviours of Employees}) = .577 + 0.331 * (\text{Social Intelligence}) + 0.261 * (\text{Sincerity}) + 0.195 * (\text{Politics handling Capability}) - 0.004 * (\text{Network Ability})$$

Hypotheses Testing & Findings:

H1: There is no significant influence of Social Intelligence on Ethical Behaviours of Employees in Higher Educational Institutions

From the t (3.663) and P (<0.001) values, it is observed that Social Intelligence is significant explanatory variable for Ethical Behaviours of Employees in Higher Educational Institutions. Also it has positive coefficient (+0.331) in the regression. Thus,

Social Intelligence positively influences the Ethical Behaviours of Employees. All organizations are comprised of individuals with different personality, attitudes, values, perception, motives, aspirations and abilities. It is very crucial to understand such behaviours in an organization. Thus by understanding people well, knowing the right things to say and motivating others, supporting co-workers for following code of

conduct is an important factor that influences ethical behaviour of an employee.

H2: There is no significant influence of Sincerity on Ethical Behaviours of Employees in Higher Educational Institutions

From the t (2.796) and P (0.006) values, it is observed that Sincerity is significant explanatory variable for Ethical Behaviours of Employees in Higher Educational Institutions. Also it has positive coefficient (+0.261) in the regression. Thus, Sincerity positively influences the Ethical Behaviours of Employees. No other formula exists for sincerity than to be sincere by being genuine having faith and trust in oneself and just being rather than trying to project what we are not (Bermillo, 2016). Sincerity is a personal commitment to consistency between what is professed and what is done (Bosede, 2010). Confidence about one's own ethical behaviour in organization, giving time and efforts in work, standing by authorities at difficult times possesses a deep impact on the ethical behaviour of a person.

H3: There is no significant influence of Politics handling Capability on Ethical Behaviours of Employees in Higher Educational Institutions

From the t (2.562) and P (0.011) values, it is observed that Politics handling Capability is significant explanatory variable for Ethical Behaviours of Employees in Higher Educational Institutions. Also it has positive coefficient (+0.195) in the regression. Thus, Politics handling Capability positively influences the Ethical Behaviours of Employees. Political skill is characterized as a comprehensive pattern of social competencies, with cognitive, affective and behavioural manifestations that have both direct effects on outcomes and moderating effects on predictor-outcome relationships (Ferris, G. R. & Treadway, Darren. C., 2007). Thus, being genuine while communicating, making genuine interest in one's work, being

stable at one's own decision do have a strong influence on ethical behaviour of an employee.

H4: There is no significant influence of Network Ability on Ethical Behaviours of Employees in Higher Educational Institutions

From the t (-0.058) and P (0.954) values, it is observed that Network Ability is not a significant explanatory variable for Ethical Behaviours of Employees in Higher Educational Institutions. Thus, Network Ability has no influences on the Ethical Behaviours of Employees, so it can be said that by building good rapport with people, communicating effectively and making people feel comfortable and at ease basically do not have any impact on an employee's ethical behaviour.

4. CONCLUSION

It is to be remembered that success of an organization is beyond the scope of financial statements alone. Ethical; behaviour among employees ensures that they work with integrity and honesty, following standards, rules and policies of the institute thereby contributing to the enhancement, enrichment, sustainability and success of the educational sector. There are factors which crucially and critically affect the ethical behaviour of employees in an organization. After the analysis being done, validated and tested, it has been found that three important factors identified, social intelligence, politics handling capacity and sincerity has a positive and profound influence on the ethical behaviour of employees in higher education institutions. On the other hand, network building ability, taken as a factor, has no such prominent influence on the ethical behaviour of the employees. Thus the three factors need to be nurtured so that behaviour of employees in institutes can be ethical and show compliance with the organizational norms and practices.

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