Irena Jindrichovska, Sarka Kocmanova: Ethics at Universities – contemporary ethical dilemmas

Abstract
Ethics is a part of human behaviour in a social context. It is a factor of social behaviour that translates into economic and business activities. In the same way the ethic can be perceives in academic environment. Due to massive use of modern technologies, globalization has changed the business systems and this development has impacted on human behaviour and it is altering all: moral values, ideals and attitudes. This paper aspires to find answers to question “what aspects of ethical behaviour are currently taught at Universities and business schools.” Ethics of teaching and learning is one of the objectives of the 20th century. Violations of academic ethics on the part of researchers and teachers also assume providing an illegal design to students and novice researchers.

Keywords: Ethics, business schools, ethical dilemma, code of ethics, teaching ethics

JEL Codes: A12, A13, Z1

Ethical behaviour is permanently developing not only in business but also in education, especially at Universities. Ethics is a part of philosophy and it has been around since 2 500 years ago. At that time, the ancient philosophers were trying to find answers to questions of ethics and they highlighted mainly human virtues. Ethical behaviour can be based on the notion of maximizing benefit and minimizing damage. Ethical behaviour is also inspired by behavioural standards of duty and morality. An unethical or unfair behaviour may bring short-term gains to the enterprise, but in the long run such behaviour will damage the mutual consistency of all corporate participants (stakeholders). Ethics deals with human behaviour and with moral values, ideals and attitudes. It also analyses what is good for individual and for society. Ethical theory elaborates on a set of principles of human behaviour. The basic question of our paper is: What aspects of ethical behaviour are currently taught at Universities and business schools?

1. Introduction: The relationship between ethics and business
One of the basic questions of business ethics is the question of the compatibility of ethics and business. The central point of the definition in discussions about the relationship between business and ethics (morality) is the individual and social responsibility. On the very general level there is a consensus that it is such behaviour when one can justify own actions and stand up for them in front of himself/herself and in front of the others. In business, manager, employees and owners have to solve various often ambiguous situations, where the integral part is an ethical dilemma.

The purpose and use of learning ethics
Managers often ask a question whether it is nowadays necessary for them to deal with ethics. Managers and working practitioners often hear that ethics is useless. Managers basically have three reasons for this attitude. They simply state that their basic aim in an organization is to generate a profit. However, at the same time managers also admit that profit should be...
reached legally. But even this attitude still does not explain why managers should be concerned with the ethics. Managers are aware of the need to behave ethically. But in their understanding the ethics assumes only an obligation to generate profit in a legal way. Managers do not see the need to understand ethics in the broad sense of the word. According to them there is no need for further education in ethics. Managers need to understand finance and law and the processes how to conduct a good business.

Currently, the prevailing opinion is that business activity contains decisions on economic and technical processes (production, sales, marketing, etc.). However, almost every business decision entails also some ethical elements. Thus, when managers ask, why they should behave ethically, they are actually asking another question. What is the motivation for managers to maintain good and ethical behaviour? Is there anything positive for them? Any reward?

Regarding the motivation for ethical behaviour: good and ethical behaviour does often bring a reward, but not always. If the good has always been a commodity of high interest, we would not need to study business ethics. We could simply be selfish and forget about responsibilities. People have invented ethics precisely because human behaviour is not always associated with their own self-interest.

2. Ethical problems at University environment

In terms of academic ethics it is important to realize, that the university ethics involves management of issues by concrete human individuals. Ethical issues at university concern the terms of ethical management, finding the best sources for the university. In addition, each employee of the University is responsible for further development of the reputation of his/her particular university. An important feature that, current and previous employees have gained through their working effort and responsibilities of previous generations of scientists and teachers of the university.

Ethics of teaching and learning is one of the objectives of the 20th century. It is an academic tradition in public universities and universities to provide free education (Brown & Krager, 1985). Free education calls for a discussion of values and morals. Research on ethical responsibilities at universities covers faculties of education across all fields, e.g. Baumgarten, 1982; Brown & Krager, 1985; Callahan, 1982; Deutsch, 1979; Dill, 1982; Hook, Kurtz, & Todorov, 1977; Schurr, 1982; Scriven, 1982; Wilson, 1982.

Callahan (1982) in his research of pedagogical activities analysed a number of ethical problems at universities, such as abuse of students, tolerating cheating and plagiarism of students, irresponsibility in teaching uninterested students, consulting activities against obligations to school, teachers and students to use education to indoctrinate students with teacher's with favourite topics or failure of teachers in feeling responsibility towards the wider society. Callahan (1982) in his paper cited harsh words from former vice president of CBS Television Charles Steinberg, who in 1972 expressed the view that in the academic environment, ethics and responsibilities are perceived only academically, and that academics actually behave like in the jungle. While the academic jungle, according to Steinberg worse than the natural, because there is no killing in the interest of physical survival, but it is often and unfair completion of cruel ambitions.

Violations of academic ethics on the part of researchers and teachers also assume providing an illegal design to students and novice researchers. Such a negative example is provided also if it ignores the unethical behaviour of teachers, or if there is a gain of the scientific or pedagogical rank of someone who has behaved unethically. The media are full with encounters highlighting teachers' plagiarism and unauthorized use of degrees of public officials. On the part of students there is a relatively widespread cheating.
According Griljava, Nowell and Kerkvliet (2006) students are cheating across all cultures and disciplines. Students exploit the Internet cheating and they can be seen on both the high and secondary schools. McCabe (in Mangan (2009)) based on extensive research found that in the USA the most widespread cheating exists in schools that focus on training managers (MBA programs), of which up to 56% admitted that in the last year at least once cheated. Just behind them follow American students of communication. Cases of cheating include eg. Copying, copying from the internet and unlawful assistance to another student.
Preiss, Nohavova, Stuchlikova (2013) specialized in student cheating in the Czech Republic. The authors specialised in honesty and various types of cheating analyzing the work and related social and economic factors. A mare (2005) deals with cheating of students by electronic means, the types of cheating, explains the terminology and describes the detection possibilities of electronic cheating.

3. Causes and origin of ethical issues
Academic ethics also deals with the possibilities of emerging causes of ethical problems not only in terms of academics, but also in terms of students. Reasons for the origin of academic ethics and violations by academics arise when academics come under more pressure and should decide for some kind of behaviour as a response to these pressures (Callahan, 1982). Ethical principles should help a person in conflicting situations to decide for an ethical option. Academics are subject to complex pressures arising under the internal tensions and external expectations. Traditional mechanisms for identifying and addressing ethical issues arising under this pressure are no longer sufficient. The dilemma does not put in conflict a decision between a good and bad behaviour, but it is about should giving priority to one reasonably good option before the second one (Callahan, 1982). The example is the requirement for a teacher at the university to teach a number of students who are satisfied with his work, and at the same time to produce quality research activities and publish scholarly articles. Furthermore, the senior academic it should help colleagues at the university while working in his qualification process.
Similar problems can be seen in the academic environment. One of them is the number of evaluable results in so called RIV 19 which is an important criterion for allocating financial funds for Czech universities. This often leads to crediting colleagues as co-authors, requests for a quote, and to recycling result – self-plagiarism. Academics who decide to focus mainly on teaching and helping students to understand the problems, and who create a high quality and interesting study materials, provide individual consultations to students are in the end getting bad signals from their immediate superiors, because they do not bring to their institutions "points for scientific activity" and are therefore useless. Violations of ethics from students have multiple causes. One is that students feel that the process is less important than the result. The final degree is good no matter how it was achieved. Minor fraud can be tolerated (Mangan, 2009). A motive for cheating can also be unattractive assignment and assumption that evaluation work is unimpressive even for the teacher evaluation (McCabe, Pavela, 2004). Another instance, when student resorts to fraud is, when the student is not interested in the subject of study and he/she only wants to gain the diploma. The violation of ethical principles also lead the students if they see that cheating is tolerated in their university, and that some of their classmates have gained a good evaluation by fraud. Deception can be occurred also because students are not familiar with how to avoid cheating e.g. they do not know what plagiarism is and if they are not instructed in these matters. They are not explained, why they should not do not cheat, if their study should bring the expected benefits. Student cheating are caused by bad habits of their high school. It can be

19 The register of information on the academic results in the Czech Republic
summarized, that the causes of problems of the lack of student ethics at universities are similar in all countries.

4. **Code of Ethics at Universities**

Ethical codes of universities in the USA have a long history. In 1991 the International Center for Academic Integrity (ICAI) was founded to facilitate collaboration on the methods of combating cheating, plagiarism and academic dishonesty in higher education. The Center was involved with cultivating a culture of integrity in the academic community worldwide. One of the main topics discussed was the controversy over the importance and the form and content of ethical codes of individual universities. Opinions on the necessity of such a document are indeed different and range from necessity to uselessness.

Author Daniel Callahan (1982) has opinion is midway between supporters and opponents of the Code of Ethics for academics. The first problem was the fact that the codes almost never help solving ethical problems. They either just help to formulate the best practices for a given profession, or worse, they helped professionals to create the appropriate profession shield to the public, enabling professionals to do what they want. The second problem is to formulate a universally accepted and adequate Code of Ethics usable for the profession useable Code of Ethics. Callahan (1982) suggests only two options: The first is that the Code of Ethics will very be comprehensive and it will contain only the basic principles upon which to lead everyone to agree. Such a code will not solve anything on its own. The second possibility is that the code tries to capture all the rights and obligations of members of the academic community. Then it would result in a very complicated document that it would not be implementable.

In the 2005 the Assembly of Academic Sciences of the Czech Republic received the Government Resolution on ethical framework of research. This represents the researcher’s Code of Ethics in the Czech Republic. This sample was then followed at many universities by sample Code of Ethics for academic employees at universities, approved by the Assembly of Higher Education Council in 2007. Subsequently the Ethical codes of individual public universities were created. The approach to creation of these codes at different universities widely varies. Some universities have literally transposed the sample code of ethics in their organization whilst some universities have not adopted any code of ethics. Yet another group of institutions have developed and adopted their own codes, often inspired by foreign models. These codes are generally available on websites of individual universities. In connection with the adoption of codes of conduct at various universities there often arises a question: *Why is it beneficial to each college to formulate own Code of Ethics?*

The purpose and objective of the Code of Ethics is to express in this regard universities as attitudes towards the public, and especially to the academic community – teachers, scientific workers and students, as regards compliance with certain principles and ethical attitudes in a spiritual environment of universities.

Adopted ethical codes differ from each other by their legal meaning (Telec, 2010). Sometimes the code of ethic is a part of statute of the university. This is the most important legally because the statute is legally binding for both students and academics, elsewhere it is only a moral liability, but that would be reflected in the labour requirements for each regular output of university academic work.

5. **Ethical Dilemmas and solutions**

In ethics there exist basic principles by which it is possible to approach ethical dilemmas. Each option is based on the different traditions of philosophical framework. Each possibility is relatively easy to apply. It significantly differs in its consequences and it is managed by different principles:
a) The result is important,
b) The regulatory compliance is important,
c) The middle way compromise is the best.

a) Decisive is the result
This principle from a philosophical point of view is based on utilitarianism. According to this approach, it is an ethical decision, the result of which is the most good for the most number of people. It is however not possible in each situation to know exactly which would be such a solution. Therefore, it is necessary to consider and think about what kind of results would bring to that solution. According to this principle, if the results of this meeting are correct, then we are doing the right thing. For example, in the case of an entrepreneur who decides to give small bribes in order to continue to "give" the work of his employees.

b) Decisive are rules
This approach is based on Kant's Categorical Imperative, according to which "everyone should be held morally so that his manage could become a universal rule." 20 For Kant, the result does not important, but the motives and rules of certain practices. According to this principle would be representative of the firm Alistar announce the bribery because it contradicts the rules of honesty and morality. Also, he would have tried to avoid it, even at the cost that this action could threaten the distribution of medical supplies. Entrepreneur, according to this approach, refused to give bribe, even at the cost that would have gone bankrupt and had to lay off their employees.

c) The middle way is the best
Some businessmen, however, may seem an approach that takes into account the result of too pragmatic. On the contrary, the approach emphasizing respect for rules may be perceived as not reflecting the outcome of their discussions. This rule requires that an individual empathize with the position of someone else, which affects his decision. These three rules, however, do not represent a universal solution to all moral dilemmas. They show only the tool, how they can be accessed. Individuals have to consider themselves which of the alternatives to choose and which ethically more adequate and better conclusion to accept. Different situations require different application of principles. Business and daily life are similar in that they work with people. Therefore, as in life, even when business should ask question what we should maintain with respect to others? The decision will be always individual and depends on professional and moral behaviour of the decision makers. But the rules (formal and informal) have considerable influence on decision-making.

6. Formal and informal rules and moral attitude of managers
Decisions of managers are significantly influenced by the environment in which they work. The rules of the game, the institution in terms of institutional economics, we understand as restrict that regulate interpersonal interaction, relationships and they are give some form of economic, political, social and other phenomena and situations in society.

Formal institutions
Formal institutions have rules in the form of laws and other standards regulating, or restrict the activities of individuals and organizations. It is a formal, explicit, codified rule of behaviour. They represent "hard consensus", which is managed by the company given time unambiguous agree.

Informal institutions

Informal institutions mainly relate to the conventions and standards of personal honest. This is called. Informal rules (patterns of behaviour, respected values, customs, traditions, culture, ethics), which are based on internal understanding and acknowledgment of certain values by actors whose benefit they believe the company itself, and therefore apply and develop.

It is not always appropriate to have everything in the company "hard" regulated because it can restrict the freedom of choice of companies and it can also be quite costly system, moreover, it is very difficult to squeeze diverse economic realities in clear and unambiguous rules. Therefore it is so important to have informal rules which they act as sole regulating mechanism. If the informal rules are based on morality, it often brings economic benefits as well.

Experience shows that companies with well-developed social capital generally achieve even better economic results, because they can take advantage of the initiative, motivated individual organizations while significantly reducing transaction costs. Furthermore, it is increasing predictability management, easier to manage relationships within the so-called. Incomplete contracts (contract theory). For cooperation between companies is significant confidence, i.e. social capital.

E.g. countries with low levels of corruption can achieve greater efficiency in public procurement, as they can provide public sector workers with greater flexibility, relying on their correct behaviour. Conversely, countries where this does not apply, must have more detailed rules on public procurement in order to cover the widest possible spectrum of possible situations, but this makes the system less flexible. Such countries are working with relatively high costs, and therefore less effective.

The respect to ethical principles in business also creates fair conditions of competition, which in turn has a positive impact on the economic results achieved. E.g. if procurement firms receive the best offer and not those that are to finalize them through corrupt behaviour, are not only saving public funds, but it does mean that grow naturally firms that are more efficient.

The question here is again the moral equipment makers who decide on the contracts, because individual bid will not have the same or comparable parameters, which could easily be compared to grade and then a clear decision.

7. Conclusion

This paper we dealt with the question “what aspects of ethical behaviour are currently taught at Universities and business schools.” This question as well as "general" problem of moral dilemma may be the subject of another discussion about what should actually be taught at universities of business type. We have found that ethical dilemma can be approached from three different ways.

The requirements in academic environment put an increasing emphasis on the quality of university education. The current environment is rather complex for correct ethical behaviour and honesty of academics, because their decision depends on other activities in academic environment. It is the quality of teaching students that can be compromised, while publishing quality scholarly articles must be maintained at the same time.

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