PROFESSIONAL ETHICS AND MORALITY

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Introduction

"We have grasped the mystery of the atom and rejected the Sermon on the Mount. The world has achieved brilliance without wisdom, power without conscience. Ours is a world of nuclear giants and ethical infants."

— Omar Bradley (Major General of the Army, USAFR)

Meaning of Professional Ethics

- Professional Ethics is partly comprised of what a professional should or should not do in the work -place. It also encompasses a much greater part of the professional's life. If a professional is to have ethics then that person needs to adopt that conduct in all of his dealings. Another aspect of this is the enhancement of the profession and the industry within which the professional works.

Use of the word "Morality"

- The term "morality" can be used either (1) descriptively to refer to a code of conduct put forward by a society or, (a) some other group, such as a religion, or (b) accepted by an individual for his/her own behavior, (2) normatively to refer to a code of conduct that, given specified conditions, would be put forward by all rational persons.

Definition of Morality

- "Morality is an informal public system applying to all rational persons, governing behavior that affects others, and has the lessening of evil or harm as its goal."

Ethics in different Professions

- **All persons, whether in business, government, educational institutes, or any other professions are concerned with ethics. *Encyclopedia of Social Sciences* defines ethics as "the organization or criticism of conduct in terms of notions like, good, right or welfare… Ethics is the secular and critical manner of taking account of the rationalizing process in human conduct. Its temper is non-mystical, and its orientation is social rather than theological."**

Implementation of Ethical Code in Organizations

Theodore Parcel and James Weber suggest that this
can be accomplished in three ways:

- by establishing appropriate company policy or a code of ethics.
- by using a formally appointed ethics committee.
- by teaching ethics in management development programmes.

The most common way to institutionalize ethics is to establish a code of ethics; much less common is the use of ethics board committees.

Difference between Professional Ethics and Morality

- **Morals or moral values are generally associated with personal view of values. Which reflect beliefs relating to sex, drinking, gambling, etc. They can reflect the influence of religion, culture, family and friends. Ethics is concerned with how a moral person *should* behave. Ethical values are beliefs concerning what is morally right and proper as opposed to what is simply correct or effective.**

Code of Professional Ethics

- **A Code is a statement of policies, principles or rules that guide behaviour. Certainly, codes of ethics do not apply only to business enterprises, but they should guide the behaviour of persons in all organizations and in every life, so that we named it "Professional Ethics". In the present time, every profession has its own codes, to practise by their professionals.**

Example

- **For example, *The Psychological Society of Ireland* consists four overall ethical principles, in their code, which subsume a large number of specific ethical standards. These are given below:**

- *Principle 1: Respect for the rights and dignity of the person*

- *Principle 2: Competence*

- *Principle 3: Responsibility*

- *Principle 4. Integrity*

The Future of Professional Ethics

- **Computer Societies around the world such as the IEEE and national bodies in Australia, Singapore, the UK and other countries have on their websites professional codes of ethics to consider and adopt in the way professionals conduct themselves in and out of the work place. Personal ethics, morality, and integrity will strongly influence a person's professional ethical conduct. Integrity means wholeness or completeness—continuity of life in all its actions. We must not delude ourselves or the people we lead by thinking that we can practice conduct.**

Conclusion

- This paper may conclude with some ancient sayings which reflect the previous discussion of Professional Ethics and Morality in the present time: *"When one sees all beings in his own self and his own Self in all beings, one loses all fear." "When one sees this great Unity and the self has become all beings, no sorrow can afflict him." (*Isha Upanishad*)*

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