

## ОБЗОРЫ И РЕЦЕНЗИИ REVIEWS

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### Professional ethics in Russian contemporary higher education

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**Abstract.** *The article discusses the sets of skills necessary for a teacher working in an innovative, changing environment. Ethical leadership is the cornerstone of a socially responsible organization, knowledge in the field of ethics and morality is relevant for Russian higher education workers in the context of global changes. In countries where the rivalry of universities in their quest for popularity has a negative impact on the development of moral principles, and education is an exclusively paid service, the process of creating generally accepted values slows down. Hence, teachers as ethical leaders face a moral dilemma: whether to follow all laws, rules, values, and beliefs or to purposefully disobey some of these. The purpose of the article is to reveal the problems of ethical leadership and analyze higher education as “soft power”. In Russian higher educational institutions, the concept of professional ethics is regarded to be of utmost significance in achieving the desired goals and objectives. The study examines innovations and changes in higher education; identifies common challenges for all cultures; examines the ethics of higher education, which is the core of motivational activity of leaders and the importance of leadership; shows the moral problems that organizations need to solve in order to meet high academic standards. The relevance of the creation of professional ethics and the importance of common values, the importance of leadership are emphasized, measures for the improvement and successful implementation of ethical reforms in the Russian community as “soft power” in the context of higher education development are shown.*

**Keywords:** Russian higher education; ethical values; professional ethics; standards of behavior; soft power; leadership

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## **Профессиональная этика в российском современном высшем образовании**

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***Аннотация.** В статье рассматриваются наборы навыков необходимых преподавателю, работающему в инновационной, меняющейся среде. Этическое лидерство – краеугольный камень социально ответственной организации, знания в области этики и нравственности актуальны для работников высшего образования в условиях глобальных перемен. В странах, где соперничество университетов в их стремлении к популярности сказывается негативно на развитие нравственных принципов, и образование является исключительно платной услугой, процесс создания общепринятых ценностей замедляется. Целью статьи является выявление проблем этического лидерства и анализ российского высшего образования как «мягкой силы». В российских высших учебных заведениях для достижения желаемых целей и задач концепция профессиональной этики считается чрезвычайно важной. Исследование рассматривает инновации и изменения в российском высшем образовании; выявляет общие для всех культур этические задачи; рассматривает этику российского высшего образования, являющуюся стержнем мотивационной деятельности лидеров, делая особый акцент на значении лидерства; показывает нравственные проблемы, которые необходимо решить российским учебным организациям для соответствия высоким академическим стандартам. Подчёркивается актуальность создания профессиональной этики и влияние общих ценностей, значение лидерства, показаны меры по совершенствованию и успешной реализации этических реформ, как «мягкой силы» в российском сообществе в контексте развития и популяризации высшего образования.*

**Ключевые слова:** российское высшее образование; этические ценности; профессиональная этика; стандарты поведения; мягкая сила; лидерство

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*Introduction.* In higher educational institutions, the concept of professional ethics is regarded to be of utmost significance in gaining the desired goals. Research has shown that teacher knowledge and beliefs have an impact

on students' performance [1; 2; 3; 4]. Professional ethics is referred to the principles, which the individuals need to take into account on a regular basis. The relevance of the paper is connected with the changing context of education that includes a number of crucial to the success factors. A modern view of sustainability is to do with sustaining those values which underpin change and are targeted at intercultural respectful dialogue. The author discusses the significance of professional ethics; views the types of professional ethics; reveals measures to improve professional ethics in the context of teaching innovation. In higher educational institutions, the members include, heads, professors, research scholars, administrative, technical and clerical staff members and students. They are different from each other in terms of race, religion, gender, age, personality traits of character, educational qualifications and socio-economic background. Within the educational institutions, they have their own job duties to perform. It is apparent that they need to possess essential educational qualifications and competencies in terms of their job duties, but apart from job knowledge, they need to be professional in their conduct. Usually, in higher educational institutions, the individuals are well-aware in terms of all aspects and traits that are needed to depict professionalism. But within the course of implementation of job duties as well as within the course of pursuance of educational programs, they should perceive the meaning and significance of professional ethics [5]. The important aspect about higher education is more on the level of values. The message is that ethics in higher education means the staff members have to balance high knowledge and skills with high integrity. The main areas in terms of which they benefit are targeted at maintaining good terms and relationships with others, performing their job duties in a satisfactory manner, incurring the feeling of job satisfaction and retaining their jobs. It is not only essential for the members to generate awareness and augment their understanding in terms jobs' performance, but it is vital for them to generate awareness in terms of professional ethics as well.

*Research results and their discussion.* The professional ethics renders a significant contribution in enabling the individuals to become good human beings as well as in achieving personal and professional goals. The ethics course is based on two main elements: moral reasoning and ethical sensitivity. The students are supposed to be able to demonstrate knowledge of important ethical systems; to formulate clearly their ethical position on an issue; to develop the

arguments, which are based upon sound inferences and clear premises; and to conduct decent library research on a topic at the end of the course [6]. Therefore, it can be stated, meaning and significance of professional ethics is recognized, when it is implemented in an appropriate manner within as well as outside the University in the Russian Federation.

The objectives of Professional Ethics are:

- to ensure that all individuals are treated with respect and courtesy and any kind of discrimination is punishable by law.
- to ensure fair treatment to all the individuals. The individuals, particularly the ones who are in leadership positions are to take care of their subordinates.
- to ensure that all the educators are knowledgeable and competent when dealing with students, teaching them and making effective use of teaching-learning methods, instructional strategies and teaching-learning materials.
- to acquire ethical understanding in terms of job duties and responsibilities.

Professional ethics contributes to the establishment of principles and moral standards of behavior. As in order to emerge into good human beings and achieve personal and professional goals, it is vital for the individuals to inculcate principles and moral standards of behavior [7].

Types of Professional Ethics. Honesty is regarded as the greatest of all human values. Violation of academic honesty, for example plagiarism, may enable the students to experience dire consequences, which may even include expulsion from the educational institutions [8]

In higher educational institutions, all the members need to carry out their job duties in a well-organized manner and achieve personal and professional goals. Diligence facilitates in putting into practice meticulousness and persistence; resourcefulness enables the individuals to exercise creativity and ingenuity; conscientiousness enables the staff members to depict industriousness, assiduousness and regularity [9]. In higher educational institutions, it is apparent that individuals cannot work in seclusion; it is indispensable to inculcate the traits of approachability and amiability. The heads of the departments and associate professors are required to organize meetings in order to discuss various matters. The staff members need to collaborate with each other and work in order to carry out the administrative functions. The

research scholars and students need to socialize with each other to acquire the understanding of academic concepts and provide solutions to academic problems and challenges; they use verbal as well as written forms of communication [10].

Morality and ethics impart knowledge and understanding among the individuals in terms of norms, values, principles and standards. When the educators are performing their job duties, they need to ensure that they not just make use of their knowledge and competencies, but also put into operation morality and ethics. These traits enable the individuals to be professional in their conduct, achieve desired outcomes and enhance the overall system of education.

The meaning of truthfulness can be understood in terms of various ways. It is referred to representing the truth, telling the facts, corresponding with what is genuine or real and speaking the truth with sincerity. For example, when professors assign research projects to their students and underline the importance of field research, then it is vital for the students to make field visits, take notes, or collect information through surveys or interviews, which they would put in their projects. In order to achieve good grades and achieve academic goals, it is vital for the researchers and students to ensure that the information is factual [4]. On the other hand, when the directors, heads, professors or other staff members are to carry out their job duties or when they need to convey any information to their superiors or subordinates or colleagues they need to ensure that the information is truthful. Therefore, it can be stated that when individuals depict truthfulness, they are able to augment professionalism, achieve desired goals, acquire rewards and appreciation and enhance the overall system of education.

Justice and autonomy are referred to as professional ethics, which render a significant contribution in generating the feeling of contentment among the individuals. It is vital to make provision of equal opportunities to all and to prohibit any form of discrimination. In most cases, when research scholars, pursuing doctoral programs are required to submit their assignments, they are provided with autonomy to set-up their own target dates. Therefore, it can be stated, justice and autonomy need to be focused upon in the right manner and right direction.

Communication is regarded as the key aspect in generating information in terms of professional ethics and depicting them. When the individuals

communicate with their colleagues, superiors and subordinates in a polite and respectful manner, they are regarded as professional and good-natured. In order to depict professional ethics, it is vital for the individuals to take into consideration various aspects in their verbal as well as written communication [11]. Therefore, it can be stated, effective communication is the life blood in leading to proper functioning of the educational institutions.

Calmness needs to be put into operation by the members throughout their jobs. In some cases, the individuals are demanding and difficult to deal with, whereas, in other cases, when the individuals have other job duties as well and are required to complete an assignment within the limited time, they may feel stressed. When the individuals possess a calm and composed nature, they are able to develop logical thinking in terms of how to cope with stressful and difficult situations. Putting into operation time management skills and forming a schedule might be helpful. Therefore, through calmness, the individuals are able to cope with problems and stressful situations in an effective manner.

In one's personal as well as professional lives, the individuals are required to undergo various psychological problems of anger, stress, anxiety and depression. The development of abilities to cope with psychological problems is regarded as professionalism. For example, when students need to work on their assignments as well as go to their jobs, they may feel stressed. But when they are determined, diligent and conscientious, they are able to develop the abilities to cope with psychological problems.

Maintaining confidentiality in professional relationships is regarded as professional ethics. This professional ethics enables the individuals to carry out their job duties in a systematic and methodical manner. In higher educational institutions, students are different from each other in terms of learning abilities. When the students experience problems and setbacks in their academic performance, they consult their professors and supervisors and receive ideas and suggestions. When the professors are engaged in a conversation with them regarding their academic performance, they usually keep the discussion confidential. Another aspect is, when heads and professors are in a discussion meeting, they usually keep the doors closed and keep it confidential. In some cases, the students also keep their grades and other information regarding their assignments confidential and do not want to share it with their fellow students. Therefore, it can be stated that maintaining confidentiality in professional

relationships is regarded as one of the important professional ethics that enables the individuals to carry out their job duties in a systematic and well-organized manner.

*Conclusion.* It is indispensable for the individuals to formulate measures and bring about improvements in professional ethics on a continuous basis. The various measures that are focused upon bringing about improvements in professional ethics have been stated and revealed.

In making ethical performance a strategic priority, a relevant code of ethics needs to be established. In addition, clear objectives, standards, and expectations are regarded as the key requirements for ethical performance. Therefore, when ethical performance is made as a strategic priority, it leads to making of wise and productive decisions.

Leadership skills will not only enable the individuals to improve professional ethics, but will help them to carry out other tasks and activities as well. It is the job of the leaders to guide and lead others in the right direction, provide solutions to their problems, make provision of ideas and suggestions, implement conflict resolution methods in an appropriate manner, and create amiable and pleasant working environmental conditions. Furthermore, the leaders need to be aware of modern and innovative leadership strategies.

The primary objective of the educational institutions is connected with the students' activity. Participation in various activities enables the students to bring about improvements in presentation and communication skills. Therefore, in higher educational institutions, various opportunities need to be created for encouraging students' participation in seminars, workshops and international conferences [12]. Collaborative online international projects are considered to be valuable practice. Both students and instructors are able to enhance their communication abilities, trust and reciprocity while participating in international projects.

The working environment needs to include infrastructure, materials, tools, technologies, equipment, amenities and other facilities. When all these aspects are available within the working environment, the individuals will not only perform their job duties satisfactorily, but bring about improvements in professional ethics as well.

It is vital to implement rules in educational institutions, which need to be followed by all the members. The individuals need to treat each other with respect and courtesy. Furthermore, they need to depict honesty and truthfulness in the implementation of their job duties as well as in dealing with others.

It is crucial to formulate the measures to identify the effectiveness of ethics program in generating the desired outcomes. Therefore, when the individuals implement methods and approaches to measure the effectiveness of ethics program, they are able to bring about improvements in professional ethics.

Within the working environment, it is necessary for the individuals to be committed towards their job duties and professional goals. Dedication and punctuality enable the individuals to take responsibility and assume ownership of their performance [5]. In case, they experience any problems or concerns, they are required to seek help from others.

Innovation is a highly complex process, because different individuals and cultures have different attitudes towards and beliefs about innovation. Contexts for English language education vary across the globe so policy development must be responsive to the local context. Organizational cultures lead to specific organizational structures, so that to keep everything on course and to maintain the status quo, looking only to the past for ideas and solutions [7]. Integrative cultures, on the other hand, have organizational structures that use a team approach to problem solving. Integrative organizations need leaders with a specific set of skills so that they can manage innovations effectively. Success as a leader is not only based on what one knows but also on how one interacts with others. Leading for innovation requires that leaders learn skills for leadership on the job and by participating in real team meetings or discussing among colleagues with different points of view, resolving conflicts, or caring for and supporting others in the workplace. In examining the local context, policy makers need to consider teacher knowledge and beliefs, the quality and content of teacher education programmes, local perceptions about language and language learning. Policy makers need to ensure that organizations have permeable structures that allow for cross-disciplinary interaction. They need to invest in teacher education programmes that are integrative, model innovative practice, and promote innovation.

If teachers in the Russian Federation are to adopt innovative practices, they need to be supported with appropriate in-service education that develops their proficiency and their pedagogical knowledge, and addresses their beliefs about teaching. Education is to be considered as “soft power”. Policy makers need to view teaching as a complex, cognitive activity that teachers adopt and adapt through continuing reflective practice. Professional ethics is regarded as the set of



principles, which are of utmost significance. When the individuals are well-aware of their professional ethics and put them into operation in their professional lives, they are able to benefit in a number of ways. These include, performing one's job duties well, maintaining good terms and relationships with others, incurring the feelings of pleasure and contentment, and achieving personal and professional goals. Finally, it can be stated that when all the members are able to generate information and augment their understanding in terms of these measures, they are able to improve professional ethics as well as achieve educational goals in a well-organized manner. As new possibilities for the exercise of "soft power" arises, so will new demands for its control and accountability, and with these will come new pedagogical ideas and theories. Education as soft power concerns all of us, so we should all be involved in that debate.

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