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***Organizational Ethics: A Practical Approach* Edited by Craig E. Johnson**

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Organizational ethics is becoming a pressing issue in today's competitive world. Ethical behavior is no longer an expected or assumed behavior in organizations and in society. I think people might be ready to forgo ethics in exchange of material benefits in terms of business deals, money, career, and so on. In such a scenario, there is a need for organizations to understand the importance and benefits of organizational ethics. Many organizations have gone through ethical dilemmas and succumbed to making unethical choices, which have hampered their reputation and affected their financial performance. Although being ethical is rather a difficult task, its benefits are unique and rewarding. Choosing between "right" and "wrong" is a complex task, yet the outcome of a "right" decision may be spiritually and ethically rewarding. The book I review orients the readers toward the significance of organizational ethics. It also discusses the interactions of various aspects and functions in the organization and its influence on organizational ethics. This review of *Organizational Ethics: A Practical Approach* is organized as follows. First, I summarize the main idea and key points in the book. Next, I put forth my overall evaluation of the book.

The book begins with a case, putting forth the rationale for studying organizational ethics. The author provides some of the evidence of unethical behaviors in the past to highlight the cost of unethical behaviors and emphasize the importance of ethics in organizations. Additionally, Johnson clarifies the most common myths about ethics and puts forth a practical approach for understanding and implementing organizational ethics. In my opinion, the book can be considered a systematic guide to ethical decision making and a guide to creating an ethical environment in the organization. According to the author, the book is developed on the premise that one can become an expert in ethics by following the knowledge and examples from experts, learning a structured way of problem solving and ethical decision making, based on Narvaez (2006). The basis of organizing the book is explanation of concept, case study, and projects and

assessments for hands-on experience on the topic. The application projects encourage students to engage in exercises, which enable them to reflect and analyze about organizational ethics. The takeaway section at the end of each chapter reviews major concepts discussed in the chapter. The book is divided into five main parts consisting of 12 chapters. Part I sets the base by providing a foundation of the theories and principles related to ethics. Part II explains how individuals practice ethics in organizations. Part III follows the interactions of individuals' ethics in organization. Part IV transcends from individuals to ethics in groups and teams in organizations and their impacts. Part V describes ethics at the organizational level. I highlight the major points discussed in the chapters under each part, in the following.

Johnson's description and evaluation of the various underlying theories behind ethics, such as utilitarianism, altruism, fairness, Confucianism, and Kant's categorical imperative, is very insightful. The author argues that using more than one approach in analyzing a problem or an issue, that is, ethical pluralism, provides insightful perspectives about the issue and better decision making. In the chapter on components of personal ethical development, the author emphasizes rediscovering oneself to assess the underlying reasons, motivations, or rationale for practicing ethical behaviors. Moving forward, the author explains how moral sensitivity and moral character enable ethical decision making. Additionally, the book provides practical checkpoints to provide a structure to ethical decision making. The author draws the nine checkpoints from Kidder (1995). Furthermore, the author puts forth the Five "I" Format as another practical approach to achieving ethical decision making.

The book further deals with various other aspects in the organization, such as interpersonal communication, power and politics, conflict, leadership, and its influence on organizational ethics. The author emphasizes the importance of mindfulness, active listening, emotional intelligence, trust building, and moral reasoning in ethical decision making. Johnson describes how the morality of power and source of power can be used to influence ethics in decision making. The author further discusses what factors are considered while plotting

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a political strategy in order to make ethical decisions with positive intentions or outcomes. Another interesting aspect of organizational ethics is in analyzing ethics in conflict management and negotiation. The author discusses different conflict management tactics and effective approaches to negotiation. In the chapter on how to improve group ethical performance, the author explains different strategies and perspectives on achieving ethical performance—considering cooperation, doing one's fair share of work (restraining from social loafing), expressing support, and so on. On the other hand, Johnson talks about relatively negative aspects like moral exclusion, excessive control, and escalation commitment in organizational ethics. Another very salient influencing factor in an organization is that of leadership. Ethics of the leader and his/her leadership can play a vital role in influencing the ethics of the organization. Johnson emphasizes the different types of leadership, with its positive and negative influence on organizational ethics. The chapter also provides suggestions to be both an effective and ethical leader. Additionally, the author describes the importance of followers and their ethics on organizational ethics. The challenges of a follower and types of followership are discussed. An interesting part of the chapter deals with how followers can meet their moral demands of playing the role of follower.

From an individual and group level, the author moves to ethics at the organizational level. In this chapter, the author describes the components of an ethical culture, the importance of formal and informal elements of culture such as core values, mission of the organization, codes of ethics, organization structure, systems and language, norms, rituals, respectively. The author also discusses the ethical drivers of the organization, including ethical diagnosis, engaged leadership, targeted socialization processes, ethics training, and continuous ethical improvement. Additionally, the author emphasizes the significance of recognizing "ethical hot spots" in the organization. According to the author, major ethical hot spots of an organization are the marketing, finance/accounting, and human resource departments. The author discusses various strategies for managing ethical dangers in these departments, which might percolate to the organization as a whole. Finally, the book reflects upon a responsible role of an organization in terms of acting as a citizen, termed as organizational citizenship. Organizational citizenship explains the role of organizations in activities such as being environment-friendly, being socially responsible, and the like. In addition, the author discusses the importance of cultural values in ethics and how it might affect the ethical or moral dilemma in situations of ethical diversity. Johnson explores the existence of an "ethical common ground" where the moral standards are similar across cultures, independent of the difference in nationality or culture. I agree that there might be an existence of some common beliefs such as love, benevolence, justice, trusts, and so on, which all communities understand and value. In my opinion, this ethical common ground might be an impetus to resolve ethical dilemmas in today's organization, where diversity is an inevitable part of organizations.

Having discussed the main points of the book, I believe the book does a good job in presenting and advocating a practical approach to understanding and implementing organizational ethics. This book can serve as a comprehensive guide for college or university students to understand the different components of organization ethics. The case studies and application projects will encourage the students and the instructors to involve in discussions and experiential learning. An interesting and thought-provoking section is on integrating workplace spirituality in analyzing ethics. Workplace spirituality is a growing area of research attempting to transform the philosophy and thinking of organizations. The author explains how enhancing one's spiritual self facilitates organization ethics by inculcating caring values in the organization culture. The discussion of the five-stage model of individual spiritual transformation (Benefiel, 2005) is very insightful. However, the author was unable to demonstrate a connection or application of this model to facilitate moral or ethics in individuals and organizations. Explaining how these stages of spiritual transformation help in the moral development of individuals, and consequently organizations, might add value to this section of the book. Nevertheless, the discussion on the dark side of organizational spirituality is relevant and integral to the core theme of the book.

The author has attempted to provide a holistic perspective by explaining the interplay of other phenomena in the organization. The interaction of conflicts, power, and leadership on ethics has been discussed in a very interesting manner. I am confident it would help readers understand how these factors within the organization affect organizational ethics. Additionally, the discussion on ethics in technology is very relevant and useful for the readers of the present generation. The author's discussion of organizational citizenship and ethical diversity is thought-provoking. The sequential organization of the book allows for a logical arrangement of chapters making it easier for readers to understand.

Despite the points already mentioned, I would like to make a few minor suggestions for the book. On page 14, in the first paragraph, the name of the book is mentioned incorrectly as *Organizational Ethics: A Practical Introduction* instead of *Organizational Ethics: A Practical Approach*. The self-assessments provided at the ends of the chapters might act as a tool to assess the concepts discussed in each chapter. In chapter 1, the author talks about altruism as a theory of ethics and provides a self-assessment based on the Organizational Citizenship Behavior Scale (OCB), adopted from Organ (1988). According to Organ (1988), this scale consists of two components of OCB, namely, altruism and general compliance. It might be beneficial for the author to mention this while suggesting the self-assessment tool for altruism.

The book focuses on the development of a holistic understanding of the practical application of ethics through examples and case studies. Although I wonder whether the book has the appeal and potential to convert a novice to a moral expert, as claimed by the author, I am confident that the book is definitely

worth reading to provoke discussion and reflection on organizational ethics. The practical approach drafted in this book uses research models and ideas from previous research to provide a reader-friendly, application-oriented way of learning. The language and tone of the author are simple and straightforward, enabling readers to understand the complex concepts in a simpler and better way.

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