Ethics in the Profession

Ethics in the Content of Home Economics

Complementary Uses of Quantitative and Qualitative Methodologies and Paradigms in Home Economics

Living with Professional Codes of Ethics

Anne MacCleave

Codes of ethics may serve disciplinary, educative, or inspirational purposes. Home economists need to explore issues associated with adopting and implementing professional codes. They also need to consider the extent to which different types of codes may enhance or inhibit professional development and complement the mission of home economics.

A review of current professional development literature within the home economics profession reveals heightened activity in the realm of professional ethics (for example, Arcus, 1987; MacCleave, 1988; Quilling, 1988). The Canadian Home Economics Association voted to adopt a Code of Ethics at its Annual Meeting in Quelph in 1988. A recent article in *AHEA Action* (1990, March) outlined the Ethics Committee's plans to further develop the AHEA Code of Ethics to add "clearly defined principles and standards of conduct" (p. 12).

Adopting or revising a code of ethics is a serious step for the home economics profession. Living with a code is equally serious and involves a whole series of attendant issues. The purpose of this paper is to explore possible implications of living with different types of ethical codes. The following questions will be addressed: What purposes are served by professional codes of ethics? What issues are associated with implementing codes of ethics? To what extent might the professional development of home economists be enhanced or inhibited by different types of ethical codes? To what extent might different types of ethical codes be compatible with the mission of the field?

Purposes of Codes of Ethics

Professional codes of ethics may serve disciplinary, educative, or

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inspirational purposes. They may be required also for certification or registration. Deciding which type of ethical code to adopt and how best to implement and monitor or evaluate its effectiveness depends to a great extent on the purposes a particular code was designed to serve.

Codes frequently serve a regulatory or disciplinary purpose within professional organizations. That is, they prescribe appropriate conduct in an attempt to regulate or control the behavior of professional members (Arcus, 1986; East, 1980; Ladd, 1980; Kieren, Vaines, & Badir, 1984). Sometimes referred to as codes of professional conduct, Arcus (1983) described codes of this nature as based on rules of conduct rather than ethical principles. She maintained that

> Both may be useful as guides to conduct for professionals, but rules of conduct tend to be more narrowly defined and specific, while statements of ethical principles are broader and indicate the underlying reasons for rules of conduct (p. 15)

Also related to this regulatory purpose is protection of the public from unscrupulous professional practices or from harm that might result from unqualified practitioners, misinformation, or nonavailability of service (Arcus, 1983; The Canada Council, 1977; Myers, 1983). Codes may also prescribe the rights and responsibilities of professionals and clients (Myers, 1983). Not only may codes communicate to the public what can be reasonably expected from professional service but they may also protect the professional from the

improper and inappropriate demands from employers or clients (Ladd, 1980). When rights and responsibilities are prescribed and clearly specified, there may be legal or quasi-legal connotations (Arcus, 1983; Ladd, 1980). Thus, questions of enforcement become major concerns when a code serves regulatory purposes; that is, once professional behaviors have been prescribed, the organization must determine how to enforce members' compliance to these regulations (Kieren, Vaines, & Badir, 1984).

Codes of ethics may serve educative purposes for the membership and the public. A number of more specific purposes, broadly classified as educative, are outlined as follows: (a) provide guidance for professional practice, (b) heighten professionals' awareness of the ethical dimensions of practice, (c) encourage members to engage in the processes of ethical inquiry, (d) communicate the nature and focus of professional practice to the public, and (e) heighten public awareness of the ethical dimensions of services rendered (Arcus, 1980, 1983, 1986; Coombs, 1975; MacCleave, Norris, Ellison, & Dickson, 1987; Peters, 1967).

The guidance provided by codes which serve predominantly educative purposes tends *not* to be narrowly defined or prescriptive. Rather, guidance is in the form of helping professionals identify the principles underlying ethical problems encountered in practice (Arcus, 1983, 1986). Frequently, several principles are involved in an ethical dilemma such as the counselor who must choose between maintaining confidentiality versus life-threatening

consequences for the client who confides plans to commit suicide (Farmer, 1987). When dealing with conflicts among ethical values or principles, Arcus noted that

> The problem does not lie in the choices between a "good" and a "bad" option, but in the priorities that must be established when two "goods" (or even two "bads") are the options. If we leave the decision making open to individual interpretation, then we are not providing any guidelines to individuals and we cannot fault (censure) the decisions they make (1987).

At a more general level, codes may help professionals become more cognizant of the ethical ideals and values held by the profession and ethical dimensions of practice (Arcus, 1986). In other words, they "might serve to sensitize them or to raise their consciousness" (Ladd, 1980, 157). If further interest in ethical inquiry is to be developed among professionals, this would be a necessary first step.

According to Ladd (1980), the processes of ethical inquiry involve examining, discussing, deliberating, and arguing about issues. Arcus (1983) outlined the following steps as central to ethical inquiry: clarifying ones' use of language which includes differentiating value claims from factual and other sorts of claims, understanding the processes of reasoning and the justification of reasoning, detecting and clarifying errors in reasoning, and clarifying concepts used in home economics.

From the public's perspective, codes may be educative in the sense that they communicate the nature and focus of the profession. The public ought to get a sense of what a profession does by reading its code of ethics (MacCleave & Norris, 1989). Arcus (1986) claimed that "codes are meaningless outside of the context of

the specific roles, functions, and beliefs of a profession" (p. 67). Further, just as the professional's awareness of ethical dimensions of practice is heightened through the publication of a formal code, so too is that of the public.

An additional purpose of codes of ethics is inspirational. That is, codes may "inspire members to act according to some specified ethical ideals" (Arcus, 1986, p. 66). Ladd (1980) refers to codes of this nature as "exhortatory" codes as distinguished from "disciplinary" codes. Inspirational codes may also encourage professionals to remain committed to ideals of practice when external pressures and growing cynicism conspire to undermine professional efforts.

From the public's perspective, the existence of a code of ethics may inspire confidence in the good intentions of the profession. The code may convince the public of the profession's concern with accountability.

Codes of ethics may be required by law for purposes of certification, registration, or licensing. In this case, the mere existence of a code regardless of its style, content, or purposes would meet the requirements for certification or registration since Arcus (1986) noted that "there are no regulations about what must or must not be included in such codes" (p. 67).

It should be noted that the purposes served by codes are not mutually exclusive. For example, it is possible for a code to meet the requirements for certification or registration and also serve simultaneously as a disciplinary code. Although there are educative dimensions to all ethical codes, the decisions involved in implementing a code designed for predominantly educative purposes would differ from those required for a disciplinary code.

Non-ethical purposes may also be served by professional codes. Formal

documents may be designed to impart status or enhance the image of a profession. That is, they may provide the "appearance" of respectability and prestige. Professions may also be interested in creating or protecting a monopoly for their services and use codes to assist in this end (Ladd, 1980). The home economics profession is concerned with image, credibility, and status. These concerns are understandable given the years spent struggling to offset stereotypical views and misperceptions of the field. Ladd's insight might suggest, however, that adopting a code may not be the best medium for dealing with image problems.

Issues Associated with Implementing Codes of Ethics

Implementing a code of ethics is a complex undertaking. The only guidelines available to assist with this task are the experiences of other professional organizations. In recent years, these experiences have not been free of difficulties. For example, in Canada, Stearman and Beaumont (1981) reported the revision or elimination of codes in the professions of architecture, law, and psychology. Similarly, Brunk (1987) reported that "the codes of ethics of the various professions have undergone more amending in the past ten years since Watergate than they had in the entire previous history of the professions . . ." (p. 63). Thus, it is important to consider some of the issues associated with implementing a code of ethics before addressing implications of living with codes designed to serve different purposes.

The Knowledge Explosion and Rapid Change

Wallace (1989) warned of new moral, ethical, psychological, and political dilemmas inherent in technological development. Ethical

dilemmas surrounding embryo transfer, in vitro fertilization, and genetic engineering stem from advances in medical technology while issues such as access to information, invasion of privacy, and unemployment or underemployment are associated with the growth of communication technologies. The knowledge explosion, rapid change, and the necessity of dealing with ethical issues previously unknown have created a desire among some members of the profession for clearly articulated standards.

Not only are there demands for help and guidance from professionals, but Brunk (1987) claimed that professions within Western society are faced with a "crisis of confidence" in the face of technological and social changes, not to mention infamous scandals in business and governments. Demands for public accountability have escalated, and professions no longer enjoy the unqualified public support they had in past eras.

Ragsdale (1989) offers further insight into these problems. He notes the paradox of the loss of values within society and the demands for more disciplined behavior imposed by technology:

> The result is a tendency to challenge and/or reject all discipline, while at the same time, increased use of technology is making the demands for discipline more severe (p. 455).

From a psychological perspective, demands for guidance from within professions and the public may reflect needs for certainty, control, and protection in the midst of ambiguity and perceived chaos. One response is to develop more and more elaborate systems of rules to address issues. Byrd (1990) predicted that the future would be characterized by rules for life, leisure, labor, and success "dominated by proprietors of

information" (p. 43). We need to question whether an overreliance on rules is appropriate. For example, Ellul (1980) depicted modern persons as so engaged and distracted by the web of procedure and technique created by technical or instrumental values that they have failed to examine or realize their own fundamental values. If the system of rules devised to address ethical issues is too specific or rigid, a profession's ability to adapt to changing circumstances may be inhibited. There may be also a tendency to panic in the face of uncertainty or to rush in with premature and ill-advised plans or schemes. A response of this nature could create more problems than it eliminates.

Subspecialty Differences

Not only must the home economics profession deal with rapid change, the knowledge explosion, and ethical issues previously unknown, but there are issues unique to the profession which affect decisions concerning how best to implement a code of ethics. The home economics profession has been described as a unified but interdisciplinary field consisting of many subspecialties (East, 1980; Green, 1990). Although the field's diversity is one of its greatest strengths, when it comes to devising a code of ethics appropriate for the home economics profession, diversity becomes problematic. It is difficult to devise a code of ethics broad enough to apply to the variety of home economics subspecialties and, at the same time, specific enough to provide substantive guidance for practice in the diverse areas such as dietetics, education, business, and family counseling (MacCleave & Norris, 1987).

A related issue is that home economists practice in areas subject to other professional codes. Home economics researchers must submit research proposals to the ethics

committees of their respective institutions. Similarly, home economists practicing as dietitians in hospital settings usually come under the jurisdiction of the codes of ethics of hospital boards. A code of ethics developed for the home economics profession should be compatible with other professional codes. Yet, there is always the possibility that a conflict could arise among alternate ethical codes. In such an eventuality, which code should take precedence for the practicing professional?

While dialogue across subspecialties within the profession could address and possibly resolve some of these issues, differences in professional socialization may inhibit dialogue. For example, some home economists have more exposure to philosophical and critical analysis and are thus better prepared to engage in ethical inquiry. Others have worked almost exclusively in areas which emphasize technical or procedural solutions to problems and may be unprepared or uncomfortable with the ambiguity characteristic of ethical discussion. This issue is not exclusive to the home economics profession. In reference to medical professionals addressing the legal and ethical dimensions of assessing mental competence, Morantz (1990) commented that "ethics is not done by formula . . . something that physicians who make diagnosis by formula have difficulty appreciating" (p. 43).

Competing Ethical Theories

There is a variety of ethical viewpoints in society. For example, Touliatos and Compton (1988) suggest that ethics may be considered from a deontological, skeptical, or teleological philosophical perspective.

Extreme deontologists view ethical issues in concrete "black and white" terms while extreme skeptics endorse the notion that "anything goes." Teleologists emphasize reasoning

from ethical principles and consideration of potential consequences for all persons affected by decisions and actions. While it may not be necessary for home economists to acquire in-depth knowledge of ethical theories, basic knowledge of competing views could help reduce contradictions and inconsistencies when discussing ethical issues.

Gender and Cultural Considerations

Among competing views of ethics, feminist scholars criticize current ethical perspectives and moral education for placing too much emphasis on rights and not enough emphasis on care. They claim that many ethical perspectives are too abstract, hierarchical, individualistic, and universal. Ignored is the formation of caring relationships and concerns for human development within specific contexts (Kazemek, 1989).

Culture may also influence ethical viewpoints. For example, Shafer (1990) contrasted British and Canadian views on the issue of euthanasia. He noticed that Canadians were more likely to espouse fundamentalist views compared to their British counterparts who more frequently mentioned the "slippery slope argument" or the slide from compassion to brutality by killing those considered burdens to society. Given these observations, the following question may be raised: To what extent are professional codes of ethics sensitive to ethical perspectives associated with gender and cultural differences?

At this point, many home economists may be *paralyzed* by all the complexity associated with the topic of ethics and may long for simple answers. Yet, the home economics profession already has many strengths including a knowledge base and modes of inquiry

to help address ethical issues. Further, some home economists view ethics as integral to home economics content. Consider Brown and Paolucci (1979) who described the mission of home economics as one of helping families optimize the quality of their lives through the self-formation of family members and the encouragement of social participation. Enlightened participation of families in the "critique and formulation of social goals" (Brown & Paolucci, 1979, p. 23) would involve reasoned judgment in relation to decision and action. Brown and Paolucci maintained that such action should be initiated on the basis of its moral and intellectual justifiability and that this process would strengthen the family's position in society. The emphasis on reasoning, critical reflection, and the active participation of all those affected by decisions is compatible with the process of ethical inquiry.

With these ideas in mind, the implications of living with codes of ethics serving differing purposes will be explored.

Living with a Disciplinary Code

Compared to ethical codes serving predominantly educative or inspirational purposes, disciplinary codes usually provide more substantive guidance for professional practice. The extent to which disciplinary codes may enhance or inhibit professional development is addressed in Table 1.

As an additional limitation, disciplinary codes may be vulnerable to social and technological changes. Taper (1989) noted that "many of these codes do not even touch on the complex ethical dilemmas arising out of new knowledge, new technology, and new social attitudes that individuals and professionals must face" (p. 54). Disciplinary codes may also place power in the hands of a select few and discourage full

participation of professionals and the clients they serve. Ladd (1980) was particularly negative about disciplinary codes claiming that it was pretentious, sanctimonious, and even misleading to suggest that a profession had "the authority or special competence to create an ethics" (p. 156).

Living With an Educative Code

Some professionals support models of moral education and promote a more educative or developmental approach as the basis for adopting a professional code. The extent to which educative codes may enhance or inhibit professional development is addressed in Table 2.

An additional advantage of educative codes is freedom from legalities and problems of policing and enforcement sometimes associated with disciplinary codes.

Living with an Inspirational Code

While inspirational codes encourage members to uphold ethical ideals, they offer little in the way of substantive guidance for practice. In terms of promoting professional development, Ladd (1980) questioned whether inspirational codes were taken seriously:

. . . for those to whom it is addressed and who need it the most will not adhere to it anyway, and the rest of the good people in the profession will not need it because they already know what they ought to do (p. 157).

Ladd may have overstated his case, however, when one considers the unprecedented social and technological changes with which home economics professionals and the families they serve must deal. It may not be as easy as it once was to "know what ought to be done." Fortunately, the home economics

Table 1. Disciplinary Codes and Professional Development

Enhance professional development	Inhibit professional development
A disciplinary code may:	A disciplinary code may:
increase professionals' sensitivity to ethical issues.	discourage critical reflection.
help professionals address questions of responsibility.	substitute for learning processes of ethical inquiry.
protect the professional from improper demands.	divert attention from major issues with broad consequences.
help resolve conflicts which occur within the profession and in professional outreach by providing standards for choosing alternate courses of action.	prove inadequate for addressing complex issues.
provide a sense of psychological security in the midst of complexity and rapid change.	provide a false sense of complacency. That is, professional action may be considered automatically ethical by virtue of a code's mere existence.
	introduce complex procedures for regulation and enforcement.
	divert attention from issues of gender and culture.
	discourage the dissenter, innovator, or critic.

Adapted from Ladd (1980); MacCleave & Norris, (1989).

Table 2. Educative Codes and Professional Development

Enhance professional development	Inhibit professional development
An educative code may:	An educative code may:
increase members' sensitivity to ethical issues.	require extensive study and considerable time investment.
provide guidance for identifying ethical principles and for choosing or establishing priorities among them.	appear too abstract and, thus, frustrating to those professionals socialized to address problems using technical or procedural approaches.
encourage professionals to discuss questions of responsibility.	*paralyze* some professionals into inaction because immediate and concrete answers are seldom provided.
heighten awareness of ideals and values held by the profession.	
promote ongoing professional growth and development.	
encourage dialogue and discussion among professionals.	
assist members in learning processes of ethical inquiry.	

Adapted from Ladd (1980); MacCleave & Norris, (1989).

profession has a mission statement which may provide some guidance.

Compatibility with the Mission

To be compatible with the mission of home economics advanced by Brown and Paolucci (1979), decisions concerning the type of ethical code to adopt and how best to implement and evaluate its effectiveness need to meet the following criteria:

1. encourage both professionals and clients to engage in dialogue concerning ethical dilemmas associated with professional practice. In other words, the active participation of all parties affected by professional decisions would be supported.

2. support continuous growth and development of professionals and the clients they serve.

3. encourage the development of reflective and analytical modes of thought.

4. assist professionals and clients to learn appropriate processes of ethical inquiry.

5. encourage continuous reflection and evaluation of professional practice in terms of consequences for the professionals themselves, the individuals and families served, and quality of life considerations.

From this discussion, it appears that ethical codes designed to serve educative purposes are most compatible with Brown and Paolucci's mission statement for home economics. That is, educative codes encourage the active participation of all those affected by professional decisions and support a developmental approach to learning. Brown (1980) acknowledged the developmental dimensions of moral behavior by noting that

Interpreting and internalizing principles of conduct require years of changes in modes of thinking

and interacting with others; they are not "mastered" in ten easy lessons by techniques X, Y, and Z (p. 72).

Learning these processes would require extensive study combined with active reasoning. An in-depth conceptual analysis would support comprehensive understanding and meaningfulness of abstract concepts. Technical or procedural approaches to learning would not suffice (Brown, 1980, 1982, 1984).

But what of the young professional who is asking for more immediate and substantive guidance for practice situations? And what of the mature professional perplexed by ethical dilemmas never before encountered in years of practice? And what of professionals whose socialization makes them uncomfortable with reflective and analytical modes of thinking? These professionals and many of their clients are attracted to codes providing clearly defined standards, and disciplinary codes frequently attempt to provide guidance of this nature. Yet, disciplinary codes are plagued with many limitations.

A further question that needs to be raised is whether ethical codes should be based on principles or standards? Ethical principles are usually abstract and require interpretation for appropriate application in particular contexts. On the other hand, when standards are adopted, professionals are always faced with philosophical questions: Whose values shall be supreme, or who shall judge? (Winn, 1990). Ethical standards may be derived initially from ethical principles. Once codified, however, these standards may be applied as rules without further reflection or interpretation. While standards could supply stability in the midst of rapid change, they may inadvertently inhibit active reasoning.

Although there are no perfect solutions to these problems, there are many possibilities for the home economics profession to consider. For example, an educative code might be developed for the profession as a whole. If more specific guidance is desired, subspecialties could be given the option of developing subcodes to relate more specifically to their respective practice situations. Yet another alternative is to develop subcodes for specific areas of professional concern such as consumerism, counseling, and research. Regardless of the type of code adopted, ongoing educational efforts should be developed through undergraduate and graduate course work and professional development seminars. Discussion of ethical principles may be more relevant and comprehensible if they occur within the context of issues and problems professionals encounter in everyday practice.

Summary

The home economics profession is in the early stages of deciding whether to develop and adopt a code of ethics or how best to live with a professional code. At this stage, it is more appropriate to raise critical questions than to offer premature or prescriptive answers. However, recommendations of a more general nature may prove helpful. In deciding the most appropriate course of action concerning the adoption, implementation, and monitoring or evaluation of a code of ethics, the home economics profession should:

1. Be prepared to deal with complexity and shun easy answers or deceptively simple formulas. Ethical dilemmas are characterized by complexity and there is seldom "one correct answer."

2. Learn from the experiences of other professions. We have much to learn from their successes as well as their failures.

3. Work from our own strengths which include the valued ends inherent in our mission statement and well-established modes for reflective and critical analysis developed within the profession.

4. Support involvement at all levels of the profession in decisions concerning the adoption, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of a professional code of ethics.

5. Be responsive to the ethical concerns of individuals and families we serve and encourage their participation in addressing ethical dilemmas. To the extent that our efforts actually serve the needs of individuals and families, help them deal with the ethical dilemmas they face, and optimize the quality of their lives, then we will have proved to be a valued profession worthy of our mission.

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Editor's Corner

As I contemplate the contribution of this issue, I am saddened that it is necessary to focus on this theme for the home economics profession. Let me explain!

Because a profession is by definition a moral enterprise, our practice should respond to a fundamental human need or social good. I agree with Thomas Green (1987) that the need to teach ethics implies the failure to teach the point of the profession. "Since the problem does not arise from our failure to teach ethics, it will not go away because of our success in teaching ethics" (p. 108).

I support the teaching of ethical reasoning, but the greater challenge is to determine (and then to teach) the point of home economics. Although that seems to be an elusive quest, we must redouble our efforts to agree on the core concepts and mission. When these have been incorporated into the preparation of every professional, the problem of ethics will find its rightful *home* in the curriculum.

Now to another subject. *Home Economics FORUM* by its very name implies a conversation, debate, dialogue, discourse, discussion, or exchange. Therefore, I invite you to share your ideas (and feelings) in **Speaking Out**, a new section to begin in this publication. You may wish to respond to an author, open dialogue about a professional issue, or challenge your peers to action. For the privilege of this medium, you must meet the criteria of intellectual rigor and clarity and economy of message. **I look forward to hearing from you.**

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Student Interactions with Professionals on Ethics: An Interview Approach

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There is an acknowledged need to strengthen the ethics component of the undergraduate curriculum for students preparing for home economics-related occupations. This article describes the context for and implementation of an interview approach to student understanding of ethical aspects of professional practice. The interview assignment and the benefits to students and professor are discussed.

The rising expectations for accountability in the practice of a profession have prompted widespread interest in professional ethics. Consumers voicing their concerns about the lack of trustworthiness of professionals has resulted in a variety of responses. For example, some professional organizations have developed standards of professional conduct which did not previously exist; others have revised their existing codes of ethics. Many corporations have turned to the Ethics Resource Center in Washington, DC, for assistance in developing codes of ethics for their corporate culture. Some colleges and universities have revamped their professional programs of study to include ethics courses and/or units in the curriculum. An increasing number of textbooks and other books dealing with ethics have become available. In recent years home economics professionals have also focused their commitment to professional ethics by sponsoring conferences and holding discussions on this topic at annual professional meetings.

Research in the profession acknowledges the need to strengthen the ethics component of the undergraduate curriculum for students preparing for home economics-related occupations (Mitstifer, 1989;

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Quilling, 1988; Taper, 1989). This article describes an interview approach to increasing student understanding of the role and meaning of professional ethics for home economists—whether generalists or specialists.

Background and Context

Professional Issues in Home Economics, a senior level core course at Oregon State University, focuses on roles and responsibilities of professionals in home economics-related occupations. A five-session unit on professional ethics was developed with the broad objectives of helping students to analyze and evaluate ethical aspects of professional practice and to understand the role of codes of ethics for professionals.

Students were introduced to the unit on professional ethics through readings and discussions to develop the context for ethical responsibility in professional practice. Course activities focused on the characteristics of a profession and of a professional, definitions of ethics and ethical values, origins and integration of ethical values into standards of conduct, analysis of professional codes of ethics and/or standards of professional conduct, and ways of dealing with ethical dilemmas.

The discussion of home economics as a profession emphasized the characteristics that identify any profession. Among the commonly

agreed-upon characteristics are accountability and autonomy in exercising judgment when knowledge is applied to everyday problems in professional practice (Bayles, 1981; Brown, 1971; Green, 1990). The characteristics common to a professional include the expectation of accountability to the profession. A professional works under the discipline of an ethic developed and enforced by a group of peers. Service is rendered to clients in the context of a professional's commitment to a moral standard of conduct (Callahan, 1988; Mitstifer, 1989; Reeck, 1982).

Ethics were defined and discussed with an emphasis on ethics as a field of study which deals with human conduct and character. Three major ethical questions, outlined by Arcus (1987), were considered for their relevancy to the practice of home economics professionals: (a) What is good (or bad) for human beings? (b) What constitutes right (or wrong) conduct? (c) How ought we to live and to treat others? These questions set the stage for identifying ethical values that regulate behavior. The ethical values discussion included value of life, goodness or rightness, justice or fairness, truth-telling or honesty, individual freedom, equality, beneficence, responsibility, and respect (Arcus, 1987; Callahan, 1988; Mitstifer, 1989).

East (1982) provided a framework for examining the origin and integration of ethical values into standards of conduct. She emphasized four sources of standards that could

impact professional practice:
(a) *personal* codes of right and wrong which have been developed from religious beliefs, parents, education, and other experience; (b) *professional* codes of right and wrong which are learned from education, colleagues, and other experience; (c) *employer* demands which may reflect managerial, corporate and/or organizational values, such as profit or local reputation; and (d) *public* interest, sometimes called the common good, where one tries to gain the greatest good for the greatest number for the longest time.

Codes of ethics from several professional organizations were critiqued for concepts basic to a code of ethics, including reference to professional competence, relationship to clients, relationship to peers and/or colleagues, legal responsibility, and responsibility to society. The code of ethics for the members of the American Home Economics Association (AHEA, 1984) was reviewed and compared to others, such as the Code of Ethics for the American Marketing Association (Clapp, 1974), the Code of Ethics for the Profession of Dietetics (ADA, 1989), and Principles of Medical Ethics (Callahan, 1988).

The problem of ethical dilemmas in professional practice was addressed through an analysis of case situations. For example, vignettes from work situations were presented for small group study and discussion in class. Questions were given to guide the students in their assessment of the ethical values involved and alternative solutions to the problem (Mitstifer, 1989). In addition, a discussion of ethical dilemmas in family decision making helped to focus the relationship of the professional to individual and family decisions. For example, discussion of medical decisions related to euthanasia, abortion, or organ transplants brought a sense of reality to the nature of the interactions of the professional with families and individuals when faced with life-threatening situations challenging the sanctity of life value. Other ethical values, such as honesty and confidentiality, were also discussed and illustrated.

Interview Assignment

Following the classroom discussions, each student was assigned to select two professionals for interviews. One was to represent the student's home economics specialization, and the other one was to represent any other professional orientation. The students used a questionnaire to guide them in the interview. The questionnaire, designed by the author, was explained in class so that students had opportunity to clarify any part that was not understood before they conducted the interviews. Suggestions were made on how to maintain objectivity during the interview process. One way to help students understand the interview process and gain some insights into ethical issues was to interview a panel of professionals in the class. One such panel included a librarian, dietitian, child care specialist, a Cooperative Extension Service specialist in apparel, and an educator. They all explained the accountability aspects of their profession and their professional organizations, the ethical challenges or dilemmas common to their professional specialization, and ways of dealing with those dilemmas. The open and frank approach of the panelists encouraged students to participate with questions.

Each interview began with solicitation of factual information about the professional's role, current position, type of employment, educational background, and years of experience in the profession. The interview then focused on information about the kinds of ethical problems faced in the professional's field, examples of ethical problems and how they were resolved, the interviewee's membership in professional organizations, and the interviewee's knowledge about the organization's code of ethics. The inquiry about a code of ethics included a request for information about the code. If the professionals did not have or did not share a copy of the code of ethics suitable for their profession, the student then searched for a code of ethics that might be applicable to the profession represented.

The interview continued with several more questions about the role of codes of ethics in job performance, about the compatibility of personal ethics with professional ethics for resolving conflicts that occur on the job, and about how personal ethics are developed. The questions were stated as follows: In your opinion, does a professional code of ethics help in job performance? If "yes" or "sometimes," how does it help? Do your personal ethics differ from your profession's code of ethics? If they differ, how do they differ? What do you do when your personal ethics conflict with your profession's code of ethics? What helped you the most in developing your personal ethics? What suggestions would you have that would help me and my peers develop personal ethics?

After conducting the interviews, each student wrote an integrated summary of observations, comparisons, surprises, disappointments, and whatever insights were gained about ethical issues and the role of codes of ethics in professional life. These responses were then shared in a class session through small group discussions and open discussions with the entire class.

Benefits to Students

Inquiry is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for integration of new knowledge into a personal and professional world view. Hence, a large part of the value of this project

to students was gained in the reflective and analytic activity of writing the post-interview essay and in sharing their conclusions with others in the classroom setting. Based on these essays, several observations can be made.

The interview experience was positive for most students. They frequently selected professionals whom they knew, such as family members (parents, siblings, other relatives), long standing family friends, former teachers, persons they admired, or former and current employers. This process contributed to the student's ability to gather information in a more candid manner. As a group, the interviewees represented a wide variety of types of professions and types of roles. They included health and legal professions, education and social services professions, business and industry professions, and public services professions.

Many students expressed the opinion that the interviews were most helpful in understanding the role and importance of codes of ethics for the professional. For example, in one class the students reported that they learned that a professional code of ethics is a guide that complements personal ethics but does not substitute for them. They found a wide range of awareness among professionals of the availability of suitable codes of ethics for their particular employment. Some students expressed their disappointment when professionals were not aware of their profession's code of ethics and when codes were not readily available. A few students expressed interest in having codes developed for their occupational roles when there were no apparent codes of ethics in existence. After interviewing persons who could not recall a codeÂ of ethics for their field, students frequently asked why these professionals were unaware of their profession's code of ethics. They also expressed a concern about the value

of a professional code of ethics if the practitioners were unaware of such a code. Some students reported that the professionals they contacted had expressed interest in knowing more about their profession's codes of ethics. The students felt rewarded when the interviewees expressed interest in knowing more about an appropriate code of ethics for their professional endeavors.

Almost all of the students reported that they gained insights into ethical issues and ethical behavior expected of them as professionals in a work situation. They became aware of similarities of ethical problems in many different professions and of the types of ethical dilemmas they will likely face. For example, issues of confidentiality, honesty, protecting company interests, and fairness were mentioned most frequently by the interviewees and were identified by professionals in a variety of occupations. The students also noted similarities and differences in the way professionals dealt with ethical dilemmas. For example, when asked about the possible conflict of personal professional ethics in solving ethical dilemmas, some interviewees reported that their personal and professional ethics did not conflict, some gave priority to personal ethics, and some gave priority to professional ethics. Others reported that they made compromises of personal and professional ethics. A few interviewees did not respond to this question.

For a few students the interview process was seen as an unnecessary exercise. These persons believed that personal ethics were developed in childhood and that they would not be changed much, if at all, by studying about the subject. For them, professional ethics were an extension of personal ethics. Some students took the view that personal ethics were the only ethics necessary for adequate performance as a professional. One student explained

the belief that ethics take years to think through and develop. Therefore, by the time students took this course their ethics were strong and personal.

Other students viewed the assignment more positively. One student expressed what many others also wrote, "The ethics assignment was very worthwhile. It made me think about how I might handle some situations when I get out into the working world. I enjoyed talking with professionals and seeing how they work and deal with the everyday perils of the job." Another student observed that effort must be made to engage in discussions about ethics. She expressed the belief that ethics were the "backbone" of the workplace but not a frequent topic of workplace conversation. This same student expressed the belief that the best code of ethics is the one developed by oneself. Some students appreciated the interviewees' emphasis on the significance of personal ethics as a base for building professional ethics and on the role of family in forming personal ethics as children. These observations enhanced the students' awareness of the importance of being well grounded in one's personal ethics.

Contrasts in attitudes were observed in the interviews. One student noted that "ethics, whether personal or professional, play an important part in many professions." The student further observed that codes of ethics give guidelines and assistance when needed, and "provide resources for the professionals to . . . do their job." Students also observed differing responses to involvement in professional organizations. One student expressed her disappointment that neither of the two professionals she had interviewed belonged to professional organizations, although both had a strong ethics orientation. These professionals used observation and experience to determine right from wrong. They then applied these

determinations to their business practices.

For several students, the interview was a significant highlight in their college experience. One wrote, "This assignment was one of the best assignments I have had . . . in college. I am glad I had the opportunity, personally and professionally, to learn about . . . how (the interviewees) became the ethical professionals that they are. Now, my challenge is to take this information and become as ethical . . . as they are. Big shoes to fill." Another student said, "I found this assignment an especially rewarding one." She further suggested that everyone should be required to complete the assignment because it offered the student the opportunity to examine the consequences of both unethical and ethical conduct by professionals. She appreciated the chance to examine her own ethics to see how she would react to the situations described in the interviews. Another student wrote, "Both of these professionals helped me to realize why a professional code of ethics is so important. It gives one something to turn to when there is a problem or question dealing with ethics at work. . . . My eyes were opened a bit about some of the ethical dilemmas I will undoubtedly face in the future."

Benefits to the Professor

The most basic and positive benefits of teaching come when a student has a positive and worthwhile learning experience. In this assignment, the majority of students concluded that they gained some benefits from the assignment. The many viewpoints expressed by the students in reporting and analyzing their findings helped to broaden and clarify the professor's understanding of student thinking and insights. The interview reports gave an indication of the students' resourcefulness in gathering information. The reports also contributed to the professor's information base of professional ethics in a wide variety of professions.

Summary

One student's response illustrated both the sum and substance of the interview approach to learning about professional ethics. She said, "I found talking with both of these professionals to be a very interesting learning experience. Personal and professional ethics seem to be subjects that professional people are very eager to talk about, because these issues are so relevant and the ethical codes upheld by each professional are so strongly felt . . . I better understand the need for professional ethics, and I understand better the way in which my own personal ethics will develop. . . . It obviously takes time, experience, and self confidence, but acquiring these ethical beliefs will make me a stronger professional in the future."

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Dimensions of Ethics: The Work Ethic

Joan Quilling

The work ethic is influenced by individual development and the surrounding social and economic climate. Through processes of inquiry such as value analysis, educators have a role in enabling students to examine and, if warranted, restructure their core values in response to changed work settings.

Introduction

The work ethic has changed over time and will continue to change as economic settings shift priorities. When individuals are clear about the core values comprising the work ethic, they are better prepared to interpret ethical actions within work and professional settings. Value analysis clarifies the ethical dimensions of decision making and enables those who employ it to analyze the hierarchy of values influencing their decisions. In addition, this process provides the basis for restructuring that hierarchy based on value premises clarified through critical questioning of individual and group behaviors and examination of conditions in society such as shifting economic realities.

Conceptual Interpretations

To better understand the term work ethic, it is helpful if each part of the term is critically examined. Work according to Super (1982) is the foundation of the Protestant work ethic. The work ethic is critical to an economic structure of "Lutheranism and Calvinism" and was fundamental to the industrial revolution. Super also points out that people work for various reasons, i.e.:

. . . to sustain life, to maintain contact with reality, to be part of a community, to serve God, to attain

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status, to provide goods and services, to structure time, and as self-fulfillment in the improvement of society, as well as viewing it as a curse or a divine punishment (p. 95).

Work, as interpreted in the United States, functions within a capitalistic economy based upon exchange theory. Work is exchanged for pay (Boulding, 1970). In order to sustain an adequate or desired lifestyle, it may be necessary to exchange long work hours for greater remuneration.

Ethics is a branch of philosophy providing individuals with "guidelines for making choices which make possible our continued growth as human persons" (Grisez & Shaw, 1980, p. 217). When the term is combined with work, it then includes, according to Norris City (1986):

. . . an integrated system of attitudes, values, and beliefs empowering workers to resolve ethical conflict within self and between self and others . . . to promote individual job satisfaction and continuous and productive employment over time (p. 4).

When individuals formulate and adhere to a coherent work ethic, they feel strongly about their careers. They organize their thoughts and feelings into a hierarchy of values. Their beliefs reflect the degree of significance they attach to their values. The hierarchy they develop serves as a set of standards by which to judge their own performance and that of others as they carry out their work role. Few individuals possess a

coherent work ethic because most people tend to live unexamined lives. Fischoff, Slovic, and Lichtenstein (1980) point out that the majority functions with incoherent beliefs. No one asks us a number of questions at one time enabling us to formulate a coherent belief system.

The Shifting Work Ethic

Historically, interpretations of the work ethic have changed as the American culture has changed. As America emerged as a nation with shifting populations resulting from urbanization, immigration, and industrialization, the emphasis on a unified work ethic declined. Perceptions of the work ethic also shifted focus. For example, during World War II, the need for mobilization and commitment from people became synonymous with the work ethic. With Sputnik in the late 50s, the country was shocked into supporting the sciences and engineering, thus sustaining a national commitment to a unified but narrowly focused work ethic based on achieving a competitive edge (Parker, 1983). In the 60s, dropping out, doing your own thing, and rebelling against authority again reduced emphasis on the work ethic. In the 70s and 80s, crime and drug use increased, leveraged buyouts along with security and banking scandals occurred, congressional misconduct was conspicuous, and severe health problems occurred among the poor (Children's Defense Fund, 1990). With declining numbers of youth available to enter the work force, due to the "baby bust" generation,

America will depend more heavily on immigration than ever to sustain its work force (Morrison, 1990).

As individuals move away from their country of origin to take up residence in a new country, their ability to formulate a coherent work ethic declines due to a loss of contact with former frames of reference. If their work ethic corresponds with Western ideals, their absorption into the larger society may be easier than if they hold a radically different view. Culture is not the only factor influencing perceptions of the work ethic. The work environment is also a factor.

The work ethic is an integral part of economic productivity. Productivity is the measurement of product or service output in relation to capital invested (Radvany, 1986). Productivity is influenced by the values, beliefs, and standards operating in a given work environment. In some work environments, the owner sets productivity standards. In others, workers set such standards. Ethics enters the work setting when employers seek out employees who are honest, dependable, and cooperative and who set high standards of performance (Miller & Coady, 1986). Individuals exhibiting these characteristics are viewed as more productive than those lacking such qualities.

The productivity behaviors of the Japanese people are frequently held up as an example for United States workers to follow. A study by Engel (1985) found that Japanese men placed greater emphasis on effort than did American men. If the work ethic is based on hard work, the Japanese appear to be willing to work harder to achieve a reward than do Americans. Also, the environments in which Japanese males work tend to possess a more uniform commitment to the work ethic. In the United States, however, work environments tend to

be significantly differentiated. As a result, interpretations of the work ethic within the culture are not uniform, and productivity can be highly variable among industries.

The way the work ethic is perceived, then, is a product of history, culture, and environment. Spence (1985) speculated that the United States possesses its own unique perception of the work ethic; therefore, its cultural interpretation cannot be universally applied to other cultures.

Core Values

What are the critical values influencing behavior reflecting the work ethic? To more clearly understand how individuals formulate a hierarchy of values influencing their interpretations of the work ethic, it is necessary to examine the importance of work to individuals, the current economic environment, and core values associated with the work ethic.

Some professionals believe that the work ethic is declining (Tang & Tung, 1988; Yankelovich & Immerwahr, 1984; Grant, 1982). However, surveys indicate the work ethic is alive and well. For example Yankelovich and Immerwahr (1984) point out that historically the work ethic was strongest prior to the industrial revolution when individuals were largely self-employed. The changing economy, coupled with highly educated workers is bringing about a resurgence and commitment to the work ethic. LaMarre and Hopkins (1984) found that new professionals seem to want meaningful work and to work hard. In the past, the work ethic hinged on survival and taking care of one's family. Today individuals expect their work to contribute to self-development (Yankelovich & Immerwahr, 1984).

Unemployment can significantly influence self-concept. Feather and

O'Brien (1986) found that unemployment lowers the self-concept, and Shamir (1986) has observed that when individuals possessed a high commitment to work, they tend to suffer more from unemployment. In today's economy, the role of the work ethic in individual lives has changed from commitment based on personal and family survival to commitment based on individual development. The work ethic remains a strong value in the lives of large sectors of the population.

The economic environment influences the value individuals place upon the work ethic. Paulter and Lewko (1985) suggest that the status of the economy influences the degree to which one ascribes to the traditional work ethic. According to Boulding (1970), a culture cannot exist without core values. But, rapid change confuses people and reduces their ability to structure their values (Grant, 1982). Individuals with a strong commitment to the work ethic explain the behaviors of others based on their personal perceptions. For example, they view the unemployed as personal failures or as individuals who lack the initiative to be employed. They also tend to be less willing to assist the unemployed (Ho & Lloyd, 1984). Williams (1983) points out that the economy is going to experience greater unemployment due to change and automation. If that occurs, employed individuals may become less caring of those without work or in marginal work settings.

As the economy shifts from an industrialized to an information and service base, many individuals may be left behind with little assistance to help them become effective contributors to the economy. If we are unclear about our values, change will occur and we will be unable to interpret that change because our values remain stable as economic realities shift. Should we become

unemployed, the self-concept suffers significantly. Individuals blame themselves for lack of employment, but changed perceptions of work may be necessary in order to survive in a transitional economy.

In addition to understanding that individual as well as economic development are integral parts of the work ethic, we also need to be more aware of the core values which make up the concept. A number of studies have examined core values. When individuals adhere to a strong work ethic, they appear to be more conservative, to resist social change, and to be rigid (Furnham, 1987; Tang & Tung, 1988). They also tend to be polite and responsible. Values which are important to those with a strong work ethic include: predictability, discipline, and order (Feather, 1984). Furnham (1987) analyzed values and their degree of influence on the work ethic. He studied the work ethic in terms of instrumental (modes of conduct) and terminal (end states of existence) values and found that the work ethic was more closely related to instrumental values. In other words, work is a means to an end versus an end in itself. Therefore, those with a strong work ethic have a greater commitment to facilitating their self-development through work versus valuing work for its own sake.

To review, the work ethic is fundamental to individual development, interpretation of economic environments, and assessment of core values. The work ethic continues to be an important part of an individual's self-expression and this perspective will strengthen as more individuals become self-employed. Adhering to a strong work ethic may tend to reduce the individual's ability to interpret personal directions flexibly as jobs are eliminated or employment settings redesigned. Adherence to a strong work ethic may even create a lack of caring for those having difficulty

finding employment in a shifting economy.

Finally, the core values which are a part of the work ethic are not easily identified. Few studies have clarified what they are, how they are structured, or where and when they develop. A great deal remains to be done if we are to have a better understanding of the core values influencing perceptions of the work ethic and the behaviors which reflect specific value structures. The problem is compounded by an economy which is in a state of change and may not remain stable long enough to quantify and qualify those core values which are critical for achieving quality of life for individuals and families.

The Role of Education

Educators are entrusted with the responsibility of helping individuals interpret the work ethic within the culture. Ultimately, schools are expected to assist (along with families) in producing solid, taxpaying, productive citizens. If students leave school with a strong work ethic, they should become more productive workers. Both Bishop(1989) and Futrell (1989) point out that many school children never make the connection between effort expended in school and the degree of effort needed on the job. Bishop has indicated that neither schools nor employers are rewarding effort. Schools allow students to just get by, and employers place little emphasis on student accomplishments in school. Students with a poor record are just as likely to get hired as students with an excellent record. As a result many students see little reason to excel in school (Bishop, 1989).

How can individuals be helped to develop a productive work ethic? First of all, some sense of desired behaviors supporting a strong work ethic must be established. Educators

tend to shy away from putting such desired behaviors into words for fear of being labeled as preaching, imposing personal values, or brainwashing students. The work ethic does not lend itself easily to scientific inquiry. Therefore, specifying principles of behavior tends to be more subjective. Coles (1986) struggled with trying to define abstract concepts when he asked teachers to define "character." Groups he surveyed identified such traits as: (a) self-discipline, (b) ability to rebound from setbacks, (c) ability to strive for community ideas, and (d) ability to accept individual differences. Lankard (1987) further supported Cole's work when she promoted a list similar to his along with several additions including: (a) a positive self-image, (b) ethical behavior, (c) effective communication, and (d) cooperation with others. In both cases, although research was limited to the personal insights of respondents, a variety of groups tended to agree on universal qualities that enable individuals to live effective lives in our society. Hanson and Ginsburg (1985) completed a study of traditional American values and found them to be significant indicators of student success in school. These values were significantly more important than a student's socioeconomic status. Students who possessed traditional values used their time both in and outside of school to reinforce their learning and achievement. Qualities inherent within the work ethic enable individuals to reap the rewards of hard work and exhibit productivity in work settings. If we hope individuals will assimilate qualities such as those identified by Coles and Lankard, how can they be helped to experience attainment?

According to Miller and Coady (1986), there are two ways to help individuals understand the work ethic—through indirect and overt

actions. The indirect approach emphasizes authority and tells people what to do. In this approach, individuals confront problems and use behaviors that will make them feel comfortable. If one behavior does not work, another is tried until the desired reduction in tension is achieved. The behavior then becomes part of an internalized pattern of action.

Overt instruction, on the other hand, brings individual values, beliefs, and actions into consciousness. Individuals study the intent behind their behavior. They respond to given situations involving ethical conduct and use value assessment strategies to help them choose the most appropriate action. Through this process, they are helped to recognize ethical problems, use reasoning skills, resolve ethical conflicts, and carry out ethical decisions. Ethical conduct is analyzed when individuals are asked to interpret personal actions as reflected in the following case example:

Adrian recently became a certified member of a professional organiza-tion. Recertification requires that professionals accumulate 92 units within three years through attendance and involvement in professional activities. A record of units earned must be submitted each year and a tally is maintained by the organization. Submission of units is based on the honor system. The organization has established an accounting system whereby members are selected at random to verify their submissions. Adrian feels the organization is unlikely to select him; therefore, if he adds a few units here and there to his tally, it will not be a problem and he can accumulate the 92 units in rapid order.

Using this case as an example, analysis of this individual's decision

might involve addressing the following questions:

a. "Reciprocity": If you switched places with the individual in this example, would the decision of choice still be appropriate for you?
b. "Consistency": Does the choice improve the well-being of the group/organization of which you are a part?
c. "Comprehensiveness": In similar situations is this a choice everyone would make?
d. "Adequacy": Does the choice solve a problem in the short term?
e. "Duration": Does the choice solve a problem for the long term? (Miller & Coady, 1986, p. 11)

Value assessments enter the picture when individuals are asked to evaluate the extent to which their decisions: (a) valued human life, (b) limited harm to others, (c) treated others fairly, (d) obeyed laws, (e) guarded the privacy of others, (f) were truthful, (g) did their part, and (h) kept promises (Thomas, 1987). Applying value analysis to the case study would also involve determining which of the questions are most applicable and important to the particular case.

Summary

The work ethic is based on what some would call "old fashioned values" as identified by Coles (1986), Lankard (1987), Thomas (1987), and Feather (1984). Developing a supportive work ethic is a product of what we think is important. It does not emerge full-blown from one's imagination. Rather, it evolves from critical self-examination, history, culture, economic development, and core values. Helping youth and adults to develop a coherent work ethic calls for educational practices which enable individuals to critically examine their decisions in light of value

assessments. When we are clear about our interpretations of the work ethic, we will then be better able to make decisions and, if warranted, restructure our core values to mesh with the reality of rapidly changing work environments.

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Perceptions of Business Ethics: Home Economics Students' Machiavellian and Achievement Orientations

Leslie L. Davis and Cheryl L. Jordan

Using Trevino's (1986) interactionist model of ethical decision making as a framework, the present study investigated individual factors (Machiavellian and achievement orientations) and situational mediators (demographic characteristics) that may be related to home economics students' perceptions of ethics in business practices. Subjects (101 undergraduate students in home economics, business, and liberal arts) completed a questionnaire that included scales to measure Machiavellian and achievement orientations, demographic characteristics, and perceptions of business ethics. Results indicated that perceptions of business ethics were related to subjects' Machiavellian orientation and major in college. Implications for home economics curriculum are discussed.

Numerous mass media reports of unethical conduct within government and corporate settings have generated a renewed focus on the teaching of professional ethics. Academic response to the recent public debate over declining morality and increasing allegations of corporate fraud has been to add business ethics courses to the professional curriculum. In the 1980s many professional schools across the country incorporated ethics courses in their undergraduate curriculum (Winkler, 1988).

The profession of home economics has long been concerned with ethical issues. Whereas the development of personal values and responsibility are often the focus of discussion within the profession, as more students from home economics programs enter business-oriented occupations, there is also a need to address ethical issues faced by home economists in the business setting.

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine home economics students' perceptions of business ethics. Specifically, the perceptions of business ethics held by students

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enrolled in the home economics programs of apparel design and merchandising management were investigated. These two majors were selected for examination because the researchers of the present study, who also teach in these undergraduate programs, needed empirical evidence as a basis for examining the relevancy of addressing ethical issues in the current curriculum. In addition, apparel design and merchandising management are often among the largest undergraduate programs in a home economics unit. The curriculum in these programs tends to be business oriented, and graduates typically seek employment in business settings.

Trevino's (1986) interactionist model of ethical decision making in organizations was used as a framework for the present study. This model posits that ethical behavior is explained by the interaction among individual moral development, individual characteristics (i.e., personality, perceived needs), and situational moderators (i.e., job context, organizational culture, type of work). The main objective of the present study was to examine the relationships among student Machiavellian and achievement orientations (individual characteristics), demographic variables (situational moderators), and perceptions of the ethics of various business practices.

One of the individual characteristics investigated was Machiavellianism, an orientation named for political writer Niccolo Machiavelli. Machiavellianism is defined as "an amoral (if not immoral) way of manipulating others to accomplish one's objectives" (Hunt & Chonko, 1984, p. 30). Previous research has found that Machiavellianism is related to attitudes regarding business ethics for a variety of samples (see Hunt & Chonko, 1984, for a review of this literature). Individuals who display high Machiavellian orientations tend to perceive questionable practices as more ethical than do those displaying low Machiavellian orientations.

The second individual characteristic investigated was achievement orientation. Although the relationship between achievement orientation and attitudes toward business ethics had not been previously examined, it was thought that individuals who indicated a high need for achievement in their work would show greater ethical leniency in order to fulfill their achievement needs.

Several demographic variables were investigated as situational factors that may influence ethical decision making. Previous researchers have investigated characteristics of the work environment as situational moderators of professionals' ethical decision-making strategies (Trevino, 1986). When investigating students,

professionals of the future, characteristics of students' backgrounds and education may also serve as situational factors. For example, there is empirical evidence that students' major areas of study are related to their perceptions of ethical behavior. Business students have been found to be more tolerant in their evaluation of questionable business practices than non-business majors (Hawkins & Cocanougher, 1972; Reichel & Neumann, 1988; Shuptrine, 1979). Therefore, the present study examined the relationship between perceptions of business ethics and students' age, sex, ethnic identity, major in school, size of hometown, and class standing.

Method

Subjects - Data were collected from a non-probability sample of 101 undergraduate students enrolled in an introductory home economics course. Data were collected from 44 students (43.6%) majoring in apparel design or merchandising management (home economics majors), 30 students (29.7%) majoring in business, and 27 students (26.7%) majoring in liberal arts programs. Age of the subjects ranged from 17 to 43 years with an average age of 21 years.

Questionnaire - The self-administered questionnaire consisted of three scales, previously developed and tested in a variety of organizational settings, and questions concerning demographic characteristics (age, major and minor, class standing, sex, ethnic identity, and size of hometown) of the respondent. To control for order effects, the order in which the scales were given varied across subjects. The Mach V scale (Christie & Geis, 1970) was used to measure the degree to which an individual exhibits Machiavellian tendencies. The Mach V scale consists of twenty sets of statements.

In an attempt to make it difficult for the subject to answer in a perceived socially *correct* manner, each set includes three statements: one worded in either a pro-Machiavellian (i.e., The best way to handle people is to tell them what they want to hear) or anti-Machiavellian direction (i.e., Most people are basically good and kind), one matched in social desirability to the Mach item but known to be unrelated to Machiavellianism (i.e., People are getting so lazy and self-indulgent that it is bad for our country), and one serving as a buffer item (i.e., It would be a good thing if people were kinder to others less fortunate than themselves). The buffer item is high in social desirability if the Mach and matched items are low, or low in social desirability if the Mach and matched items are high. For each set of statements, the respondents mark the statement that they perceive to be most like them and least like them. Responses to each set of statements are scored from one to seven in terms of agreement or disagreement with the Machiavellian and matched items. For example, when the Mach item is worded in the pro direction, subjects would be given a score of seven if they rated the Mach item as most like them and the matched item as least like them. Scores on each set of statements are added together for a total score on the scale. Scores on the total scale can range from 40 to 160. A low score indicates weak Machiavellian tendencies and a high score indicates strong Machiavellian tendencies. Christie and Geis (1970) reported that for most samples the internal consistency for the scale is in the .60s (see Christie & Geis, 1970, for a complete description of reliability and validity measures).

For measurement of an individual's need for achievement in a work situation, the Individual Growth Need Strength Scale (Hackman & Oldham, 1980) was used. The scale consists of

two sections. In the first section, respondents are asked to indicate on a 7-point scale the degree to which they would like to have each of six work situation characteristics present in their job. The second section includes twelve comparisons of characteristics of two jobs. For each item, respondents indicate on a 7-point scale whether they would prefer Job A or Job B, each described as having opposing characteristics. Composite scores for each subject are averages of the two sections of the scale. Scores range from 1 (low achievement need) to 7 (high achievement need). Hackman and Oldham (1980) reported the reliability of the scale, in terms of internal consistency using Spearman-Brown procedures. Estimates of reliability for section A "would like" format were .88; for section B "job choice" format, .71. Those indicating high growth need are posited to have high internal motivation and to seek opportunities for personal accomplishment and achievement in their work. It was believed that those indicating high growth need may be more manipulative in order to meet this growth need than those indicating low growth need.

The Business Practice Questionnaire (Shuptrine, 1979) consists of descriptions of twenty situations concerning business practices varying in degree of ethical questionability. Subjects evaluated each situation on a 7-point scale with end words "ethical" and "unethical." The responses were assigned a value of 1 for the scale point nearest "ethical" and 7 for the scale point nearest "unethical." The values were summed to create a composite score for each subject. Scores could range from 20 to 140. Low scores on this scale indicate high tolerance of ethically questionable business practices, the opposite is indicated by high scores. Estimates of reliability for this scale were not reported in

previous research. Therefore, reliability, in terms of internal consistency, was estimated using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. For this sample Cronbach's alpha coefficient equaled .75.

Results - Comparison of the sample mean for each scale to reported norms for the scales indicated that students' perceptions of business ethics in the present sample ($M = 79.69$, $SD = 13.11$) were similar to those reported in other studies (Hawkins & Cocanougher, 1972; Shuptrine, 1979). However, subjects' scores on the Mach V scale (males $M = 106.10$, $SD = 10.35$; females $M = 99.35$, $SD = 9.35$) exceeded established norms for Caucasian college students (males $M = 99.27$, $SD = 11.17$; females $M = 95.60$, $SD = 10.09$; Christie & Geis, 1970). Subjects' scores on the Individual Growth Need Strength scale ($M = 5.09$, $SD = .7$) were lower than established norms for those in managerial positions ($M = 5.3$, $SD = .54$; Oldham, Hackman, & Stepina, 1979). Students in the present study tended to be more manipulative (Machiavellian) and less achievement oriented than other

Table 1

Mean Scores on Business Practice Questionnaire by Major

Major	Mean	SD	n
Home Economics[a]	78.34	10.95	44
Business	77.43	11.41	30
Liberal Arts	85.00	15.92	26

[a] Apparel design and merchandising management majors only.

Note. $F (2, 97) = 3.65, p < .05$.

samples investigated. Pearson product-moment correlation analysis of perceptions of business ethics with Machiavellian and achievement ratings were not significant.

One-way analysis of variance, used to test for differences in perceptions of business ethics among subgroups within each demographic variable (sex, major, ethnic identity, size of hometown), indicated significant differences by major ($F (2, 97) = 3.65, p < .05$). Students in home economics programs of apparel design and merchandising management and business majors perceived business practices as significantly more ethical than did those in other majors (see Table 1). No significant differences were found for other demographic characteristics.

The sample was subsequently divided into "high Machs" (those indicating strong Machiavellian tendencies) and "low Machs" (those indicating weak Machiavellian tendencies). All scores one standard deviation above the mean were designated as high Machs ($n = 17$); those one standard deviation below the mean were denoted low Machs ($n = 18$). Results of a one-way analysis of variance indicated that high Machs perceived business practices as significantly more ethical than did the low machs ($F (1,33) = 7.14, p < .02$; see Table 2).

Conclusions - Past research on business ethics has been concentrated in both theoretical and applied areas. The present study adds to the body of literature from both perspectives. The first area of research has focused on conceptual and theoretical models of ethical decision making (Ferrell & Gresham, 1985; Trevino, 1986). The results of the present study support several of the postulates of Trevino's (1986) interactionist model of ethical decision making, in that for the present sample perceptions of business ethics were indeed related to

individual characteristics (high and low Machiavellian orientations) and situational factors (major in college). However, for the present sample, individuals' need for achievement was

Table 2

Mean Scores of Business Practice Questionnaire by Machiavellianism

Machiavellianism	Mean	SD	n
High Machs	72.06	9.03	17
Low Machs	81.61	11.84	18

Note. $F (1, 33) = 7.14, p < .02$.

not related to perceptions of business ethics. With this initial understanding of factors that contribute to students' ethical decision making, future research could examine additional individual factors such as moral growth development or cognitive level. Other situational moderators that may be examined include parents' occupations or students' work experiences.

The second area of research on business ethics has focused on investigations of prevailing ethical standards by examining current ethical behavior, perceptions and attitudes of the general public, practicing professionals, and college students, who are considered professionals of the future. The present study investigated perceptions of business ethics of college students in several majors. It appears that for the present sample, students in business-oriented majors may have a more tolerant frame of reference when evaluating ethics of business practices than those in non-business oriented majors.

The results of the present study also have implications for home economics curriculum. To foster an

understanding of business ethics among students, there may be a need to address issues of ethical decision making within business organizations in the home economics professional curriculum. This could be accomplished through theoretical discussion as well as applied analysis of case studies in professional courses. As home economics graduates enter the work force, this increased understanding of and ability to analyze ethical implications of work situations will provide them with necessary tools for success in their chosen professions.

Additional research is also needed in order to supplement the teaching of ethics for future professionals. The empirical evidence suggests that students in different major areas of study may vary in tolerance when evaluating ethical issues. However, little is known about how individuals develop personal and professional standards or what criteria professionals use in evaluating ethical situations. Additional research in these areas is needed before ethics education can be expanded from a focus on analysis of ethical implications of decisions in various situations to an examination of the overall *process* of ethical decision making.

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Ethical Paradigms Within Qualitative Research

Joan Quilling

Quantitative research functions within legislative guidelines encouraging ethical research behaviors. Qualitative researchers follow a less restrictive code. When ethics is not an inherent part of a qualitative design, the validity of outcomes is called into question. Ethical strategies should be employed throughout qualitative designs. Their use strengthens the reliability of the knowledge base produced.

The purpose of research is to actualize a way of knowing. Categories of knowing can be divided quantitatively and qualitatively, but research involves the use of the scientific method to validate each approach. To know something quantitatively involves attaching numbers to objects or people in an effort to determine amount, strength, or degree. Qualitative knowing involves using words versus numbers (Miles and Huberman, 1984). Voluminous amounts of information are gathered regarding a specific subject. These data are then condensed and structured into comprehensible theoretical frameworks. Ethical concerns enter each framework. Ethical research practices have been defined for quantitative research. However, they are less well defined for qualitative research.

Ethical Ways of Knowing

Ethical ways of knowing have long been excluded from the research process. According to Brown (1985), science broke away from moral philosophy in the 1880s. Researchers were called upon to develop an objective frame of reference in their work. That frame of reference excluded value positions and moral questions. In the 1970s, ethical concerns began to reenter the research

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framework. During that time period, the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act, the National Research Act, and the Privacy Act were passed (Borg and Gall, 1989). These legislative mandates significantly influenced the conduct of quantitative research. Researchers are now subject to review processes within their respective disciplines that limit exploitation of human subjects. These guidelines are having considerable impact on animal research as well, subjecting such research to a high degree of external scrutiny. At the close of the 1980s, normative judgments are again reentering scientific domains (Garrison, 1986). The bulk of the discussion, however, has focused on quantitative versus qualitative research. With the expansion of qualitative research in a number of professions, particularly those involving human development and interactions, it becomes important to examine also how ethical questions impact upon the research process used in this framework.

Definitions

In order to conduct a discussion of the role of ethics in qualitative research, terminology needs to be clarified. Qualitative research, in this instance, is defined as follows: a form of research which "seeks to explain the *causes* of changes in social facts primarily through objective measurement and quantitative analysis" (Firestone, 1987, p. 16). Ethics is a field of philosophical inquiry which can be subdivided into several categories. The category of

concern in this discussion is applied ethics. This category deals with moral concerns in concrete cases. Reasoning ethically in qualitative research involves examining the quality of judgments made when carrying out such research and determining guiding principles which explain actions (Callahan, 1988). When conducting qualitative research, the practitioner should be concerned as greatly with the manner in which qualitative research is conducted as is the quantitative researcher.

Qualitative Research

Just as quantitative research can be divided into categories such as historical, causal-comparative, correlational, and experimental, so too is qualitative research. Jacob (1987) described five types of qualitative research: (a) Ecological psychology - research which focuses on "psychological habitat" and "goal-directed behaviors of individuals" along with behavior settings; (b) Holistic ethnography - research which focuses on "culture bounded groups, i.e., tribes, ethnic groups," and sectors of society, i.e., "economics and education"; (c) Ethnography in communication - research which focuses on the "rules of social interaction" and how its outcomes are produced; (d) Cognitive anthropology - research which focuses on "the complete and accurate description of organization of particular cognitive systems"; and, (e) Symbolic interactionism - research which focuses on "covert behavior" (pp. 5, 12, 19, 23). Those who

conduct such research should be steeped in the strategies used with each approach. Just as there is poorly and well conducted quantitative research, the same holds true for qualitative research.

Scientific methodology overlaps both research forms. The procedures for designing problems in each form of research are somewhat similar. Both forms are attempting to quantify data and draw conclusions and inferences. Quantitative research depends on statistics to lend credence to outcomes. Qualitative research depends on conceptual frameworks to produce similar outcomes. Whereas quantitative research approaches have had critical acceptance over time, qualitative research has frequently been rejected by quantitative scientists as too value laden and subjective. With the work of Miles and Huberman (1984), Lincoln and Guba (1985), and others, the differences between the two research frameworks have become blurred. Miles and Huberman (1984) contended that qualitative research is as rigorous as quantitative research. A researcher using this framework may, however, have to expend greater effort convincing the reader that qualitative data are creditable. Firestone (1987) pointed out that qualitative researchers must detail their procedures so that studies can be replicated thereby increasing their credibility.

Replicability is not the sole hallmark of reputable research, however. Concern for the ethical behavior of the researcher is also of significance. The judgments to be made and principles which guide quantitative researchers are quite evident in the majority of research texts. Considerable work has been done to guide researchers in the quantitative area, including the establishment of review boards which supervise the researcher's conduct.

In qualitative research, ethical conduct is of greater concern. It is in this form of research that the researcher is immersed within a framework gathering voluminous material as opposed to observing conduct from an outside vantage point or collecting data after an event has occurred. Borman, Lecompte, and Goetz (1986) reviewed the scientific method used in quantitative research and identified how qualitative researchers need to carry out each step in order to produce a creditable study. The framework establishes guiding principles for carrying out such research. It does not as clearly respond to Callahan's (1988) call for determining how to make quality judgments at each step of the process. Where do ethical judgments fit within the research process? Answering this question requires analyzing each phase of the research process.

Statement of the Problem/Hypothesis Development

Quantitative researchers are asked to select researchable problems from an existing theoretical base validated by past research studies. Qualitative researchers, on the other hand, may study an area for some times until they can generate theories which apply to a setting. The theories generated are subject to ethical considerations. This means that as qualitative researchers develop theories about the environment in which they work, the theories are checked not only by previous qualitative and quantitative research but by those who function in the setting being analyzed. Garrison (1986) pointed out that those who will be affected by judgments need to be included in evaluating the research in process. Judgments must be made regarding the degree of participant involvement built into the study. Detailing these judgments lends greater clarity to this particular phase.

Literature Review

In quantitative research, the literature review consists of extensively analyzing past research and related documents for an extended time period. The researcher is expected to use creditable resources which means that they are research based, written by professionals in the field, and reported in accepted journals or produced by respected publishers of academic literature. Qualitative researchers are expected to be more diverse in their exploration of resources. Their resource materials evolve from on-site observations over extended time periods and may be supplemented by other research studies carried out in the same area. What ethical judgments must be made by the researcher when carrying out this segment of the study? Norris City (1986) pointed out that qualitative researchers must be able to judge "the relevance, completeness, and importance of information . . ." (p. 20). This is done according to Miles and Huberman (1984) by "contrasting, comparing, explicating, cataloging, and classifying the object of one's study" (p. 37).

The literature review of the qualitative researcher demands more than simply conducting a library review of previous related materials. In qualitative research, the practitioner must provide the reader with information which substantiates the quality of resources reviewed or developed. This means that the role of information providers should be documented somewhere within the research study in order to enhance its credibility.

Research Design

In quantitative designs, the researcher uses reputable statistics and sampling procedures to establish quality control in the study. In

qualitative studies, ethical researchers must be more aware of their own role in the context of a study. While amassing data within a setting, researchers need to account for personal perceptions and interpret how they may influence the character of collected data. Pandry and Jha (1984) found that an individual's frustration level can distort observation. Peshkin (1988) gave an excellent example of the judgments a researcher makes when collecting data within settings. He advocated the "formal, systematic monitoring of self" while conducting a qualitative study (p. 20). In this way, biases are revealed and those wishing to replicate a study are made aware of factors which could influence changes in outcomes.

Conclusions

Quantitative researchers draw conclusions based on statistical inference. Qualitative researchers attend to conceptions, details, and processes occurring within settings. Validating their conclusions involves: (a) checking current results with like results in qualitative and quantitative data bases, (b) substantiating data sets and determining which are weak data sets and which are strong data sets, (c) comparing or contrasting the current site used with that of previous sites used in past research studies of a similar vein, d) checking the conclusions drawn with those who are concerned with the results but may not have played a significant role in the data set analyzed, and (e) checking results obtained with explanations given by others in similar settings (Miles and Huberman, 1984). These are some of the steps ethical qualitative researchers take to validate conclusions. Qualitative researchers make every effort to refute their own findings prior to presenting conclusions. This analysis may be an

integral part of the finished research study or appended to the document. Others wishing to replicate the study can then cross-check researcher claims and continue the process of theory validation.

Summary

Ethical judgments are critical in qualitative research. Quality research depends upon maintaining standards throughout the conduct of a study. In quantitative research, legislation and review boards are in place to govern researcher conduct. This structure is also applicable to qualitative research. Those conducting qualitative research must fully understand how each approach is carried out. To conduct such research lacking insight into the critical processes governing its conduct is similar to experimental design researchers eliminating the control groups which support the validity of their studies. Similarly, the qualitative researcher must employ ethical judgments within each portion of the study. This involves cross-checking sources of ideas and conclusions, substantiating the quality of resources used upon which the judgments are based, and analyzing one's personal degree of subjectivity in conducting the study. Finally, the qualitative researcher establishes frameworks within which to explain the procedures followed while carrying out the study. These materials are included in the final document to lend credence to the researcher's methodology and results. Through the incorporation of a systematic set of ethical judgments implemented throughout the total research process, qualitative research becomes a reliable contributor to the knowledge bases of a discipline.

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President's Message

As Fall 1990 unfolds, we are reminded of the constancy of change. And we are excited at the potential that our new organization holds for our members and for the entire profession.
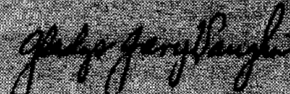
Fashioning a new honor society while holding fast the traditions and protocol of the predecessor societies has been an awesome task, but one we have accepted willingly. The result is Kappa Omicron Nu—a dynamic new society that has rekindled a sense of pride and honor in our members and has sparked inquiry from more than fifteen prospective chapters. This is progress of the best kind!

This issue of *Home Economics FORUM* demonstrates the kind of impact the Society can have on the profession. Using the thematic umbrella of ethics, the five articles appearing herein focus on relationships between ethics and employment, professional practice, the development of preprofessionals, and research design and techniques. We think you will enjoy this issue—as you have enjoyed the other eight.

We envision that in time *FORUM* will be issued more times per year, perhaps even quarterly. We conceive of it becoming the standard bearer for unadulterated philosophical thought and debate and opportunity for the hard questions about the profession to be raised and effectively debated. Elsewhere the Editor calls your attention to a new feature. The profession needs your scholarship and leadership! Won't you speak out?

Join with us in this quest for excellence.

Enjoy . . . Happy Holidays!

Gladys Gary Vaughn

Gladys Gary Vaughn