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New Insights in applied and business ethics

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New Insights in Applied and Business Ethics

EDITORIAL

Tuomo Takala, Editor in Chief

New EJBO (No 2, 2008) is in the Net. This EJBO's new number is a Special Issue.

Current EJBO considers many relevant themes around ethics, business, and leadership. The issue is also a new opening; it is made cooperation with Jyväskylä University, School of Business and Economics [with EJBO], and Queensland University of Technology (Luca Casali). The papers published are reviewed presentations from AAPAE 2008 conference on business ethics. We have here eleven good papers, which are vivid examples of actual themes of business and ethics.

Let me take some examples:

Alpaslan, Green and Mitroff write about and rhetoric and corruption. The field of rhetoric provides unique analytical frameworks for understanding the role of language in moral reasoning and tools to study and predict corruption. Aristotle's rhetorical appeals (pathos, ethos, logos) are one of several such rhetorical tools and frameworks. In this paper, they use these three rhetorical appeals to focus attention on the role and power of language and conversations in moral reasoning and corrupt behavior. In general, they advocate studying managerial conversations, focusing on how different rhetorical strategies influence moral behavior and its justifications.

J Sautter, Brown, Littway and C. Sautter investigated whether or not there is a correlation between studying business and the manifestation of personality characteristics that could lead to unethical behavior. Substantial academic literature and research has documented that business students tend to cheat more and act in a more selfish manner than the general undergraduate population. They looked at two underlying personality characteristics that would likely lead to

unethical behavior by comparing the respective rates of these variables between different undergraduate majors.

This study has shown that there is no larger difference between business and non-business students. However, it does indicate that at least among business students, finance students in particular have a strong likelihood of possessing those qualities which may lead to unethical decision making. More research is necessary to test further the notion that business school pedagogy may be altering the personality characteristics of students. Panel data tracking students over their four years of study is the most important feature that a future study must employ to arrive at a better test of the effects of business pedagogy on students. They are sure that in the sample of students, finance students manifested those personality traits which would lead them to make decisions that value individual self-interest over group-centered outcomes.

McGhee and Grant state that a review of the relevant literature recognised several characteristics that permeate discussions on spirituality. This paper's premise is that these characteristics inform an individual's choice of values – they form a type of regulative ideal. The model developed explains the link between these values and virtue and therefore ethical behaviour in the workplace. The values frameworks developed recently in the spirituality literature specify those things a spiritual person perceives as worth having, getting or doing. This paper contends that these values, particular to spiritual persons, contribute to the flourishing of individuals and therefore lead to the acquisition of virtue. Spiritual persons are likely to be ethical persons. Such individuals are likely to be of significant benefit to their organisations.