EVOLUTION, CREATION AND APPLICATION OF ETHICS IN TOURISM

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Abstract

The purpose of this research paper is to study the evolution of ethics, their designing and application in the organizational context and the contemporary presence of Ethics in tourism. The paper presents a view on the evolution of Ethics in general and of Tourism in particular. There is a need to analyze and evaluate the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism. The goal of the paper is to make the stakeholders of Tourism conscious toward these ethics and to identify the challenges faced in their daily application. Recommendations have been made so as to make these ethics more compliable and so that the benefits of adherence reach to every strata of the society and lead to sustainable Tourism.

Ethics are the rules, standards and practices that dictate right, good and authentic conduct among members of a society or profession (Fennell 2010). Ethics constitute the basic structure of life for sustenance. Personally or professionally ethics are applicable in every sphere. Moral values hold great importance from social and spiritual perspective. Ethics guide us to be the way we ought to be at all times thus proving our moral integrity and fiber. In this age of globalization where technological advancement has led to virtual annihilation of time and distance, Corporate Social Responsibility has emerged to be a forerunner in the league. Ethics set the code for normative behavior in any profession which eventually lead to a happy and contended society.

Theories of Ethics

Utilitarianism: The most influential consequentialist theory is known as Utilitarianism, which derives its name from Utility meaning the use or benefits to be derived from an action. This theory calls for "the greatest good for the greatest number of people". The aim is the benefit and happiness for all. The theory considers the consequences of both short and long term actions. English Philosopher, Jeremy Bentham who is acknowledged for founding Utilitarianism, believes that happiness and unhappiness are directly proportional to the amount of pleasure or pain experienced. The right or moral or ethical is the one that provides highest net quantity of pleasure. Although it is difficult to quantify pains and pleasures or to put value on them but it can be done in an approximate way in the form of cost benefit analysis. Nineteenth century Utilitarian philosopher John Stuart Mill incorporated qualitative differences between pleasures and pain. The true essence of Utilitarianism lies in maximization of human happiness and minimization of unhappiness. The Rule Utilitarianism applies not to acts but to moral rules of conduct. Moral rules should lead to greatest happiness for the greatest number. A moral rule is justified and should be followed if it is universally accepted and adherence to the rule leads to greatest happiness to the greatest number. Utilitarianism is a very powerful ethical system that fits well while making moral decisions.

Kantian Ethics: Immanuel Kant an 18th century German Philosopher stated that the consequences of an action are irrelevant to a moral evaluation of that action. Kant's Ethical theory is an example of Deontological ethical theory. Actions are moral or not moral because of their nature and not consequences. Moral actions are taken based on the motivation behind or the purpose which make it morally worth praising or condemning. Kant's categorical imperative refers to a command that must be followed universally, under all circumstances if we wish to act morally. According to Kant's the second formulation, human beings are rational creatures who have unconditional worth and value. It would be immoral to treat or use human being as a tool. Kant's theory is in sync with moral beliefs, the need to be impartial. The action of others should be judged on their intention and motives.

The Ethic of Justice: Justice encompasses many virtues, of being fair and alike, not discriminating or treating people differently. Aristotle the ancient Greek philosopher classified justice into three types: Distributive, Retributive and Compensatory. The former requires that equals should be treated like equals. The basic principles of Justice include equal liberty, fair equality of opportunity and the difference principle. Rawl's difference principle justifies inequalities but only if the least advantaged person gains from inequality. Retributive justice addresses whether it is just to impose retribution on someone who has done wrong and if the punishment is right. What is the proper penalty one should pay for the wrong? Compensatory Justice is a way to make it up to someone who has been wronged. In what way and how much should they compensated be. Ethically people should be given back what they have lost or its equivalent. Virtue Ethics go beyond principles or rules to govern our actions. They reveal the good human being we should be. A good person will engage in good actions leading to a good character. According to Aristotle, a morally virtuous person constantly acts the way a human being should. A moral virtue is the disposition or tendency to do the right thing and avoid doing the wrong.

Virtue Ethics & Morality: Virtue ethics and Morality work in coherence. A person following virtue ethics will follow the rules and moral code of conduct. Virtues of generosity and kindness are in congruence with utilitarianism while those of honesty a, justice and sincerity are compatible with Kant's theories. It takes moral courage to follow these ethics. Moral courage is the ability to take action, despite the fear of adverse consequences, doing the right thing even at the risk of inconvenience, ridicule, punishment, loss of job or social status. Moral courage requires that we rise above apathy, cynicism and fear. We should listen to our conscience failing which it would lead to guilt and diminished personal integrity. Applying moral courage to our daily lives in person and profession would lead to contentment as it would be truly ethical. According to David A. Fennel, Calculative thinking is outcome driven as is the Ethical school of utilitarianism. As recalled, the outcome is based on the most efficient option that will achieve greatest good for all. Meditative thinking or reflective thinking implies that it is not

the outcome of one's action that is the criterion for goodness but rather the principle upon which the action is based.

Organization's expression of Ethics: An organization's expression of philosophy have significant role to play in clearly and concisely conveying the purpose, direction and driving forces of an organization. A *Vision Statement* or *Credo* is a general statement of belief. This is where the company aspires to be. It conveys a larger sense of organizational purpose. A *Mission statement* is more specific, a statement of business strategy. They provide the public the unique enduring purpose, practices and core values. Christopher Hodgkinson (1983:36) suggested that "value is a concept of the desirable with a motivating force". Value urges us to take action. Hodgkinson (1996) favors the value hierarchy. The Value paradigm clearly states that there are four states. Preference (we value something simply because we like it). Consensus (when we value based on the collective preferences). Third is Consequence (when we value something based on the consequences it would have, followed by a rational and logical assessment) and the highest level of valuing is Principle (when we believe and have faith in something as it is rational and authentic). Whatever actions we take, we need to investigate how we value it. Performing a value audit for ethics will make it clear what is latent and provide an opportunity for self-reflection. Behavior is a function of what we value. Values which act as a principle, motivate us to take action. If they don't inspire us it signifies that we actually hold no value for them.

Development of the Code of Ethics: The primary objective of Code of ethics is to inspire ethical behavior in all its stakeholders. The higher the level of commitment to this Code of Ethics, the higher the probability of ethical consistency. A code is designed with the faith that implementation of these is ethical conduct. The Code development process includes: (1) information gathering (2) preliminary discussions with stakeholders (3) Creating working group (4) Initial drafting & consultation (5) Publication (6) Implementation (7) Review. Saltzman (2004) has written tips for development of the code. Once the code is created it has to be distributed through manuals, handbooks, newsletters, financial statements, brochures etc. A successful code is an integral part of the organization reflecting it's philosophy, having an impact on the behavior. The behavior is governed by how the reader values these ethics. The rationale behind this Code of Ethics should justify the ethical behavior, failing which it becomes an ineffective tool.

Organization's Implementation of Ethics: Wood & Rimmer (2003) suggested five aspects to promote adherence to these Code of Ethics instead of just fear and blind conformity as such The Code must be a part of the day to day operations. It must form part of the decision making matrix, thus acting as a catalyst; The Code must be developed by its stake holders; The organization should have a specific method for training for both old and new staff members; The Code of Ethics should be displayed externally also, to display the transparent character to the public and The organization should value audit itself and find out the rationale for having these codes. All members should be able to understand and display ethical behavior.

There are certain guidelines that can be followed for strict compliance of this Code of Ethics. 1) A readiness for being an Ethical Organization must exist. 2) Research has shown that the process of developing the Code of Ethics itself increases awareness (Adams et all 2001). The idea behind the creation of the Code of Ethics for the organization lies in trust through Ethical empowerment (Cohen 1998). The seniors simply empower their juniors to take ethical decisions. This mutual coordination helps to build team synergy. 3) The senior administration should have exemplary behavior. They should take all possible actions to support the code. The peers and juniors all get inspired and their behavior is positively impacted as they see what is happening in their environment. Fritzsche (1997) concludes that: Both peers and top management appear to influence significantly the ethical behavior of managers, with top management wielding the greatest influence. Ethical behavior can be encouraged and unethical behavior can be discouraged by the actions of top management and of peers. Unfortunately, the converse is also probably true. 4) Once framed the Code must be communicated at a grand level through a variety of media. 5) The massive publicity of the code should lead to increase in its awareness among all the stakeholders. 6) The code should be doable. A stake holder should be able to put the code into practice and use it in the daily decision making process. 7) Employees who need guidance and lack moral courage should be specially mentored and provided guidance. 8) The rationale for the Code of Ethics should be well written and clearly stated so as to ensure that all understand its necessity and the behavior expected from them. 9) The Code of Ethics should be timely reviewed with respect to the changing dynamics of the organization and its environment. It is absolutely necessary for the stakeholders to keep themselves at par with the industry and be proactive enough to anticipate the future trends. Necessary modifications should be made, updated and communicated to all for adherence. 10) Continuous assessment of the implementation should be done at regular basis to monitor its application and usage. In case of any challenges, relevant suggestions or changes should be incorporated to ensure effectiveness.

Ethics in Tourism: Tourism is an economic and social phenomenon which has experienced tremendous growth over the years. The Tourism trade value has exceeded that of other like oil export, food production and even automobiles and ranks third after fuels and chemicals. It has become the major contributor of economic prosperity leading to employment, export revenues & infrastructure development. UNWTO is the United Nation's agency established in 1975, responsible for the promotion of responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism. According to WTO, International Tourist arrivals grew by 4.6% in 2015 to 1,184 million. The International tourism generated US $ 1.5 trillion in export earnings. By 2030, forecasts the arrivals to reach 1.8 billion. Whereas Americas & Asia Pacific witnessed a growth of 6% in International Tourist Arrivals, Europe 5% in 2015, it is estimated that the market share of emerging economies will reach to 57% by 2030. An industry which is diversifying and growing in both emerging and advanced economies will definitely have a magnanimous impact on the macro and micro environment. Hence in order to promote responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism ethics will play a pivotal role in guiding the stakeholders for further

development of tourism. As a fundamental frame of reference for responsible and sustainable tourism, GCET is a comprehensive set of principles designed to guide key players in tourism development. Addressed to governments, the travel industry, communities and tourists alike, it aims to help maximize the sector's benefits while minimizing its potentially negative impact on the environment, cultural heritage and societies across the globe. These were adopted in 1999 by the General Assembly of the World Tourism Organization; its acknowledgment by the United Nations two years later expressly encouraged UNWTO to promote the effective follow up of its provisions. Although not legally binding, code features a voluntary implementation mechanism through the role of World Committee on Tourism Ethics.

The Code's 10 principles amply cover the economic, social and environmental components of travel and tourism: Article 1: Tourism's contribution to mutual understanding and respect between peoples and societies. Article 2: Tourism as a vehicle for individual and collective fulfillment. Article 3: Tourism, a factor of sustainable development. Article 4: Tourism, a user of the cultural heritage of mankind and contributor to its enhancement. Article 5: Tourism, a beneficial activity for host countries and communities. Article 6: Obligations of stakeholders in tourism development. Article 7: Right to tourism Article 8: Liberty of tourist movements Article 9: Rights of the workers and entrepreneurs in the tourism industry. Article 10: Implementation of the principles of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism

The World Committee on Tourism Ethics is the body entrusted with monitoring the implementation of the GCET. The relevant information is compiled by means of implementation surveys addressed to Member states in previous years. According to the latest survey2014/15, the UNWTO Secretariat received responses from 61 member states and territories including one non- member state. The highest responses were received from Europe, Africa and Americas.In summary, although the overall response rate is higher than in the last Implementation Survey of 2010, it is still rather surprising to see a low rate of replies from NTAs in regions such as South Asia and the Pacific and the Middle East. The voluntary nature of the Code of Ethics itself is possibly one of the decisive factors explaining the so far moderate level of application of the Ethical principles by NTAs, as well as the reluctance to report relevant implementation actions undertaken in this field. Even the private sector is making efforts to safeguard human rights and respect for the environment and society. The UNWTO secretariat initiated in 2011 a campaign geared towards the private sector by inviting tourism enterprises and their trade associations to adhere to the Private sector commitment to the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism. With the signing of the commitment, the signatories accept to the obligation to report to the World Committee on Tourism ethics on implementation measures they have taken. They are also allowed to use a logo in their communication material. Their commitment is a declaration of intentions by the enterprises.

Conclusion

The implementation of these Ethics will definitely be challenging at a global platform as organizations are established in different social context and economic backdrops in various countries. D' Sa(1999) feels that a universal global code of ethics is inappropriate because of the massive impasse between the market values(e.g., competition, profits, survival of the fittest, individualism), family and community values which focus on sharing of wealth, cooperation, support for the weakest, spirituality and harmony with nature. These GCET are perpetually unknown to smaller local communities. Fleckenstein and Huebsch (1999) have also identified main issues of bribe, political issues, government intervention, customs clearance, the questionable transfer of funds and cultural and business practice differences. Fennell & Malloy (2010) argue that making hyper norms universal is a critical step that drives the remainder of the ethical decision making process and their selection cannot be taken lightly. Code of Ethics are not just an ornamental expression but values which are based on principle and don't just exist to avoid the pain of punishment. Values that are held deeply are followed in spite of all odds. Code of Ethics should be well designed and the rationale behind be clearly defined so that the stake holders appreciate its consequences and follow them universally. An aggressive approach to spread the awareness about these GCET is needed with a deep understanding of the rationale so that these ethics become an integral part of our personal and professional lives having great value.

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