



Sustainable Development Goal 4 – Education

Transcript of interview with Dr Nceku Nyathi, lecturer in management, Leicester Castle Business School

Not everybody is an expert on ethics and integrity most people struggle to discuss and debate some of these things, but also most people don't realise how these are part of everyday activities and everyday life.

I was part of a team that was responsible for putting together modules for Education for Justice for United Nations as part of its Doha Declaration for Sustainability programme. This programme is really important for the United Nations because it takes seriously the subject of integrity and ethics and seeks to educate the youth and the next generation of people coming through schools and universities.

So some can be stand-alone activities, some can be slotted into full courses that maybe need an input about the importance of integrity and ethics in a particular profession. So this is designed in a way that's accessible and easily used by people who are not experts in ethics, you know you don't have to be philosophers to teach this.

The interest in the business school is how can we create organisations that have integrity that are ethical. Also, it's focusing, it puts emphasis on leadership, on leaders. How can leaders have integrity and ethics.

That includes the way they make decisions, the way their decisions impact the rest of the organisation but also right across their value chains, supply chains, all the stakeholders, what are the relations/interactions - are these guided by good ethics? Is there integrity in the relationships? Is there fairness? Is there fair wages? Is there equal pay?

But as much as looking at the organisation, but as people in the organisation, how certain decisions and certain situations can bring about unethical decisions. So it's also raising awareness about how

easily one can find themselves conflicted and they have to do the right thing, and why is it important to always do the right thing and avoid taking the wrong path.

This is part of the teaching, the reinforcing, building muscle memory for some of these things so that they are practising, they are rehearsing. Because sometimes we are expecting people to suddenly have integrity and ethics when they haven't had the training, the practice and we expect them to just turn it on like that. When they actually haven't been exposed to it from the outset. I think that's the most important thing about this.

It gives them the frameworks but also exposes them to scenarios that illustrate the impact and consequences of some of these situations but also how one might find themselves caught up in these kind of situations by organisations straying from values, by lack of integrity, or by leaders that don't support or push or lead from a values-driven ethical standpoint, which can push departments, or organisations or stakeholders into comprising situations that quite often, most of them end up being regrettable situations.

Most of the time we have tended to shy away from some of these things or we teach it separately in isolation from finance from marketing from operations, from law, from journalism and yet we have seen you know, in these scenarios of social media: rules about people's information, what is a fair campaign, interfering with democracy and manipulation, all those things and you wonder where is the integrity and what about ethics that should be guiding us?

So you can really see how this is so needed and so timely. I believe this is a timely intervention. But it's making the tools available, you know, to support the practitioners – academics, teachers, across the world - to say here are the tools and materials that are going to support you in this initiative and hopefully this can lead to fairer sustainability and better results.

The idea behind these modules is they are designed to be used in universities by other lecturers and other academics so they bring in really cutting-edge activities, scenarios, theories and concepts that are easy to distill – all this with the idea of sharing as widely as available right across the world to expose young people to the subject of integrity and ethics so the world can become a much better world and a just world.

The European Union Public Law has partnered 70 universities who are going to pilot this from the outset and so hopefully in a short space of time these modules will be available right across the world. Also because they have gone online as well and open access, they are going to be easily available. Slides have been prepared for them, there's materials that are downloadable.

Really for me, it's the first UN experience but also amazing to, you know, bring people from right across the world from all the continents in the world represented, coming together with expertise from your top institutions from around the world sharing materials on integrity and ethics. Very, very inspiring that such a subject can suddenly lead to such platforms but have such resources behind it.

Suddenly here we are at the heart of the United Nations cutting right across faculties, disciplines, multi-disciplinary, reaching wider sectors, societies, countries, nations, with such an important message on integrity and ethics. You couldn't ask for anything better than such an impact.