

Introduction

Dignity is an extremely important to everyone in society. Whether it is the dignity of having a job or the level of dignity you are treated with at work. In this essay I will be discussing the importance of dignity and the possible effects and repercussions that getting treated with and without dignity can do to a person and even an organisation. I will also look at real life examples and apply them to my theory's on dignity. "Dignity is an aspect of the way that we relate to each other socially" (Reed 2007) This tells us that even basic interaction matters in regards to dignity. Barilan in his book "Human dignity, human rights, and responsibility: The new language of global Bioethics and Biolaw" talks about the importance of dignity to every person and discusses the sheer importance that dignity plays in someone's life. He said "Dignity is a moral property innate to all humans. Because all humans are equally human, there is no single person whose dignity is superior or inferior to any other." (Barilan 2012) This supports my argument that everyone on earth is equal and each and every person should be treated with the same level of dignity as everyone else.

The dignity of having a job.

It is the norm in modern day society for people to have jobs in order to survive. People often look down on members of society that do not work, however sometimes people may find themselves out of work and unable to find another job through no fault of their own. People without jobs may often suffer a lack of dignity. Hodson supports this statement by saying "Life demands dignity, and meaningful work is essential for dignity" (Hodson 2001) He later goes on to discuss how dignity has a direct correlation with an individual's self-worth. I fully agree with Hodson. If a person is treated without dignity, they are likely to begin resenting themselves. Such resentment can lead to a whole range of other problems such as depression and in extreme cases suicide. This was the case in 2010 when a woman committed suicide after 200 unsuccessful job applications. (Daily Mail 2010) This shows the serious implications that not having a job can be distressful to many people. This is just one example that shows how not being in work can affect a person and their dignity. Abrahamson discusses that when people stray away from the norms of society people lives can often lose meaning. I feel this is relevant to being out of work due to work playing such a large part of people's lives and society in general. "When the bonds that tie people to a society are weakened, individuals do not retain any meaningful goals" (Abrahamson 2009)

I personally have experienced losing a job and the loss of dignity that occurred when I became unemployed. In 2013 I was working in a restaurant when it fell upon financial troubles and shut down. I found this hard to handle as I have always tried to be independent especially with my finances. I felt like I had lost some dignity when this happened as I firmly believe that everyone should try their best to pay their own way through life. When I lost my job I myself felt lost. People such as Marx explain this feeling. "Marx regarded work as a central human activity" (Abrahamson 2010) This tells us that work is important to all human beings and work can give us a sense of worth. This sense of worth can help people to feel dignified, without this people can lose their dignity. I think this is why having a job is so important to people.

Issues of dignity at work

I have previously mentioned the importance of having a job and the dignity that goes along side this. CIPD call dignity "a basic human right" (CIPD 2006) So why is it organisations do not have policies in places regarding the dignity of having a job? There are a whole range of factors as to why this could be. There are also many religious views that discuss dignity. This is one quote from an