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Ethics Situation

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Ethics Situation

The ethics situation selected is based on the Cable News Network (CNN) host Chris Cuomo who had been involved in unethical behavior coaching his brother Governor Andrew Cuomo of New York. Chris advised Governor Andrew on how to respond to sexual harassment accusations (Grynbaum, 2021). Therefore, the news-based organization was involved in unethical behavior through the conflict of interest, allowing Chris to escape disciplinary action regardless of advising his brother. Chris Cuomo held the prime-time show on CNN and provided public relations advice to Governor Andrew because the sexual accusation could interfere with the governor's political career. Although the media organization stated that the conversations were unsuitable, the host would be refrained from having the same debates with the governors' workers. The network emphasized that it will not take disciplinary actions against Chris, and his program was already rated well by the time the situation happened.

The issue of not providing discipline to Chris resulted in increased criticism among the present and past employees. Nevertheless, the retired network ethics director, Steve Holmes, claimed that the absence of strong policies is liable because there are no rules engraved in the paper to allow a violation to be a crime (Grynbaum, 2021). Moreover, other network workers had several concerns on why the network did not sanction Chris despite the president accepting that he had overlapped the ethical line. Besides, the company momentarily suspended Chris, which was considered not a required punishment because it was done to punish. Similarly, the chief executive officer of Radio Television Digital News, Dan Shelley, had a different view because new networks have to ensure those committing mistakes are held responsible (Grynbaum, 2021). Nonetheless, it is vital for the network to make the policies clear and discuss them with the employees, then expect them to follow and enforce the rules.

The theory that explains the ethics situation is deontological ethics because they focus on what individuals do and not their activities. Deontological ethics has several rules that it must follow. For instance, individuals are required to do the right thing, thus based on Chris's case, he was doing the right thing to help in coaching his brother on how he can navigate through the sexual accusations. The second rule is to do something because it is the right thing to do; in the case of Chris, he thought that the sexual accusations made to his brother Andrew could affect his political career. Therefore, helping him pass through the issues would help him win. This made the action to be the right thing to do. The third rule is not to do wrong things; the network did not have written policies for helping other individuals on certain issues. This made Chris not to be involved in doing the wrong things.

Moreover, the deontological theory does not validate an action by indicating that it generated the best consequences. Deontological ethics informs individuals that some activities are right or wrong because of their issues. Thus, individuals are responsible for acting consequently irrespective of good or bad outcomes that may be generated. In this ethical situation, the actions of Chris helping his problem can be bad because it is wrong by itself, and it is right because it is right by itself. The theory stresses the value of every individual by providing respect to all people hence promoting human rights. However, deontology theory claims that individuals should not do some things despite them producing the best outcome. the questions to be asked in the ethics situation is: Why did Chris Cuomo apologize to CNN? And why did the network organization not provide disciplinary actions similar to other hosts that committed a mistake?

Reference

Grynbaum, M., M. (2021). Chris Cuomo of CNN Advised Gov. Cuomo, Raising Ethics Questions. *The New York Times*.
<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/20/business/media/chris-cuomo-governor-brothers-cnn.html>

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