

Emphasizing Ethical Values in Office Information and Management Professional Conduct in Organisation in Bayelsa State Nigeria

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Abstract: *The primary goal of this research is to highlight the moral principles of office technology and professional management behavior in businesses. In order to collect data, this study used a descriptive survey research design, employing both in-person interviews and questionnaires. The study was directed by two research questions. The study population comprises 158 office technology managers who were randomly selected from five (5) firms located in Yenegoa, Bayelsa State, Nigeria. This is the sample size. Using the test-retest procedure, the questionnaire's reliability was established. A dependability coefficient of 0.78 was found after the data were examined using the Pearson Products Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC). As a result, the outcome demonstrated that in order for the organization to grow and be sustainable, it is necessary to uphold certain business ethics or standards that encourage diligence, openness and transparency, faithfulness, sincerity, accountability, and the production of high-quality output. Therefore, among other recommendations, it was suggested that office technology managers have a well-organized ethical orientation; additionally, that business practitioners should receive standard corporate ethics awareness from the government in order to improve their ethical standards. Government regulations about the repercussions of unethical activity should also be established.*

Keywords: ethical value, technology and management, professional conduct.

INTRODUCTION

The term "ethics" has been defined in a variety of ways and applied to promote justice in our commercial transactions. It has shaped how individuals and institutions should behave and operate

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in a fair and morally respectable way. Since most people act or display certain characteristics without knowing if they are right or bad, the government has taken extraordinary measures to control the moral behavior of public servants and politicians in an effort to promote moral behavior. According to Ohankwe in Esene (2014), ethics, also referred to as ethical philosophy, is a subfield of philosophy that addresses issues related to good and evil, virtue and vice, and right and wrong. He continued by saying that standards or codes of conduct established by members of a specific profession constitute professional ethics. Professionals in a wide range of occupations are expected to adhere to certain standards of ethics. Business ethics, sometimes referred to as corporate ethics or professional ethics, is a subset of applied ethics that addresses the values and tenets that guide managerial choices.

Many firms nowadays face numerous difficulties, including unethical and unlawful commercial practices in a variety of business transactions. Organizations have created codes of ethics that address the ethical issues they face in an effort to stop the threat. Ethics, according to Eze & Iweka (2010), is a phrase used to describe efforts to specify or ascertain what constitutes a person's rights in particular and the rights of society in general. Ethics is "the science of morality," according to Eze and Iweka (2010)'s Chambers Dictionary. It is a subfield of philosophy that addresses ethical treatises, rule systems, and human behavior. In an organizational context, ethics, according to Esene (2014), entails "just decency," which encompasses qualities like integrity, honesty, and justice. Maintaining moral behavior is considered to be an element of an organization's ethical obligations. A profession, according to Bayles in Esene (2014), emerges when any occupation changes and becomes formalized through educational programs, apprenticeships, exams, and the establishment of regulatory bodies with the authority to admit members, discipline them, and grant some degree of monopoly rights. One definition of a professional is someone who has completed a particular training program and is using a particular expertise. A professional is a person who has mastered a certain training program and is using it for the good of society at large as well as for their own advantage.

The field of office technology and management (OTM) is well recognized for its significant impact on organizational business practices, mostly attributable to the training that its members get. Office technology and management (OTM) specialists have completed coursework, received training in all facets of their field, and are required to have taken part in short-, medium-, and long-term training programs that will enable them to carry out their duties with efficiency and effectiveness. All other professionals were subject to a similar training program. The legitimacy of management decisions inside an organization is based on a variety of factors, including information and communication technology, accounting, business and commercial law, secretarial and vocational skills, and administrative procedure. These factors are all addressed by office technology professionals.

The field of office technology and management (OTM), according to Ferguson in Ezeonwurie (2019), has emerged as one of the few that is actively contributing to the expansion and advancement of management and organizations globally. With its origins in Britain, where job opportunities for women are rapidly expanding to other European nations as well as Africa, OTM has its roots. No matter where it is located, very few offices do not employ an office technology manager to supervise their operations. Since office technology managers are widely recognized as having a significant impact on both the public and commercial sectors of the economy, they must strictly adhere to the moral standards and ethics that govern their field in order to see the necessary advancements.

Statement of the Problem

Due to the ethical problems that organizations and business owners face, as shown in numerous established and developing nations, employers and business managers are becoming more and more aware of the importance of ethical values. The attainment of organizational goals will be impeded in the absence of a standard business ethics framework to govern business operations. This study is being conducted with that in mind.

Purpose of the Study

This study aims to highlight the importance of professional conduct in management and ethical standards in office technology. In particular, the research aimed to investigate:

1. The moral challenges that organizations face while implementing business ethics for effectiveness and efficiency.
2. Organizations demand ethical values in order to provide services.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

1. What moral issues does an organization face when implementing business ethics to improve productivity and effectiveness?
2. What moral principles must an organization uphold in order to provide services?

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Frameworks of Ethics (Ethical Principles)

As a field of philosophy, ethics tends to reveal moral concerns. The professional ethics of office technology and management are fundamental to the business ethic subgroup. Every discipline and profession has its own set of standards for behavior, rules for conduct, and ethical codes. Major organizations now hire business ethics experts and establish ethics committees in light of their ethical duty to fulfill social duties and demand moral behavior in the pursuit of financial goals (Eze & Iweka, 2010).

Ethics, in the words of Esene (2014), is the science of moral codes or principles. Ethos, which meaning behavior, customer, or character, is the Latin root of the word ethics. Ethics are the fundamental beliefs and concepts that a person applies to guide her actions and make decisions, according to Akpanobong (2018). According to Chienweike (2019), managers' moral principles should motivate them to uphold a high standard of transparency in the discharge of their duties. This is how corporate governance comes into play. Knowing what is beneficial or harmful for the organization and what is right or wrong is the foundation of business ethics. Amahi and Ama (2019). According to Katarzyna's hypothesis in Olupayimo (2015), individuals with varying ages, social, educational, and professional backgrounds are engaging in commercial activities. Since they reflect various standards of morality and ethics, it follows that their ethical value hierarchy differs. According to Ahmed in Gridado (2019), the optimum course of action in business transactions is ethics.

Types of Ethics

In business, there are three categories of ethics. The three fields of ethics in analytical philosophy are as follows:

1. Meta-ethics: This field of research examines the idea of ethics' genesis and significance.
2. Normative ethics is the process of establishing moral guidelines that govern members' behavior. It is a concept search used as a yardstick for appropriate behavior.
3. Applied ethics is the study of ethical issues pertaining to a particular professional, disciplinary, or practical subject.

Ethical Issue in Business

It is defined that unethical activity will increase local, community, national, and organizational policies as well as their administration. While it is convenient to state that unethical behavior differs from location to location and from organization to organization, the majority of companies share a few common problems. Kaur in the 2019 Ezeonwurie identified unethical business issues, such as employee harassment and discrimination, social media difficulties, health and safety issues, and technology issues involving hacking into the personal information of others.

The following, according to Esene (2014), are signs of unethical behavior in an organization:

1. Resistance to change: An employee who is wary of technological advancements will put up a fight.
2. Absenteeism: When employees attempt to escape work, they make up lame excuses.
3. Sincerity and Trustworthiness: Even in an organizational context, people can no longer be trusted.
4. Laziness: employees routinely arrive late for work and don't show up.
5. Corrupt practices are a cankerworm that have permeated many aspects of modern society. Brides are still collected even after you receive salary.
6. Discrimination: There are a variety of reasons why employees discriminate against one another.
7. Indecent Dressing: teenage ladies try to attract guys by dressing sexily.
8. Private practice: employees prioritize their personal wealth over the organization's needs, putting minimal time and effort into their legal work while devoting a large amount of time to the growth of their private businesses.

Ethical Principles

Widely acknowledged guidelines known as ethical principles govern and equally impact individuals' behavior throughout organizations and professions. Fraud, treachery, animosity, dishonesty, favoritism, and other negative behaviors occur in organizations when these values are not upheld and are widely accepted. Ensuring that those who violate these principles face consequences is a good way to formalize them as enforceable agreements between the organization and its partners. As stated by Esene (2014)

Elegodo, referenced in Esene (2014), enumerated the subsequent guidelines for ethics:

1. Using equal standards to evaluate or accept employees within a company is known as the principle of fairness or impartiality.
2. Solidarity is a principle that is highly valued in the advancement of human welfare.

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3. The principle of rephrasing one's thoughts to avoid wishing harm upon another person is to refrain from doing so.
4. Principle of Rationality: In any action inside an organization, acting in a responsible, logical, or rational manner should be the first consideration.

Josephson (2015), enumerated some ethical principles for business, which are:

1. Fairness: One should always make an effort to act justly and fairly when conducting business.
2. Accountability: One should exhibit a high degree of accountability in all business dealings.
3. One of the fundamental tenets of ethics is honesty. It is assumed that honesty will always be the most important factor in all business and communication interactions.
4. Promise-Keeping: It is anticipated that every commercial transaction would involve the unwavering keeping of any promises made. Trust is built on dedication and keeping your word.
5. Integrity: As a fundamental ethical precept, one should uphold a high degree of integrity.
6. Caring: Show empathy and sincere concern for other people's welfare.
7. Respect the Law: It is crucial for any organization to abide by the laws that have been put in place.
8. Respect for Others: Show a great deal of respect to everyone. To put it another way, act toward others as you would like to be treated.
9. Morality and reputation: These are the qualities that the public looks for in an office bearer. Integrity and morality shouldn't be sacrificed.
10. Dedication to Excellence: The best results come from doing things correctly the first time. You ought to strive for perfection in everything, at all times.
11. Leadership: Exhibit dignity and ethics as a model of leadership.
12. Loyalty: Show loyalty while adhering to other moral standards.

METHOD

Descriptive survey research design was used in the study. A questionnaire and firsthand observations served as the data collection tool. The sample size for the study consisted of one hundred fifty-eight (158) office managers who were randomly recruited from organizations in Yenegoa, Bayelsa State. At Delta State University in Ozoro, two (2) specialists confirmed the device. Using a test-retest methodology, the reliability was established. The dependability coefficient of 0.76 was established, and the data was correlated using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC). The two study assistants and the researcher distributed and collected the questionnaires. To analyze the research topics, means and standard deviation were employed. Descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation (SD) were used to examine the acquired data. Based on the 2.50 criterion means, the research questions' decision rules were determined.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION OF FINDING

Research Question 1: What are the ethical problem being encountered by organization in assimilating business ethics for efficiency and effectiveness?

Table 1: Means score and standard deviation of respondents on the problems being encountered by organization in assimilating business ethic for efficiency and effectiveness

N = 158

S/N	Item Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	STD	Decision
1.	Greed	60	83	6	9	3.23	0.77	Agree
2.	Prevailing Economic Condition	63	83	10	3	3.30	0.67	Agree
3.	Corporate Influence on Management	54	70	16	14	3.08	0.90	Agree
4.	Materialism	22	20	48	68	1.96	1.05	Disagree
5.	Home Influence	26	34	52	46	2.25	1.05	Disagree
6.	Worship of Money	70	80	5	0	3.41	0.55	Agree
7.	Social Decay	90	62	6	2	3.53	0.61	Agree
8.	High Desire for Gain	19	21	60	58	2.02	0.96	Agree
9.	Pressure from Superior	20	20	60	58	2.82	0.98	Agree
10.	Competition	60	84	10	3	3.20	0.66	Agree
Grand Mean and Standard Derivation						2.90	1.00	

Source: Research Data, 2024

The article noted that business instructors are bringing organizations' ethical issues to light. Enhancing ethical principles in an organization can be achieved by providing quality service with civility, while also maintaining a clean and hygienic work atmosphere.

Research Question 2: What are the ethical value required by an organization for service delivery?
Table 2: Means score and standard derivation of respondents on the ethical values required by organization for service delivery.

N158

S/N	Item Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	STD	Decision
1.	Self-Discipline	62	81	6	9	3.22	0.76	Agree
2.	Rendering of Quality Service at Reasonable Prices	60	82	8	5	3.30	0.66	Agree
3.	Fair Treatment to Every Customer	59	81	9	9	3.20	0.79	Agree
4.	Respect for Customer and Visitors	64	75	8	11	3.22	0.83	Agree
5.	Keeping Clean and Hygienic the Environment of Business	70	72	9	7	3.30	0.77	Agree
6.	Integrity	58	80	9	9	3.20	0.71	Agree
7.	Faithfulness	88	60	7	3	3.46	0.66	Agree
8.	Charity/Kindness	65	83	4	6	3.11	0.70	Disagree
9.	Meeting Societal Needs	26	32	54	46	2.25	1.05	Disagree
10.	Use of Standard Measurement	19	21	64	54	2.02	0.96	Disagree
Grand Mean and Standardization						3.00	0.98	

Source: Research Data, 2024

effectiveness and efficiency. There are several advantages to upholding ethical principles, such as increased revenue, sustained growth and patronage, low levels of animosity from the majority of the community, minimal labor turnover, etc (Ikegwuani, 2011). According to Gana's perspective in (Olupayimo 2019), it is therefore essential for the government and management of institutions to raise public knowledge of the ethical principles that office managers need in order to face these issues to the end. On the other hand, Amahi & Ama (2019) proposed that efforts are being made to build and reinforce origination capacities for a good ethical value. According to Sraboni & Sharmitha in Ezeonwurie (2019), the notorious failures of major organizations like as ENRON, TYLO, and World Corn have compelled businesses all around the world to adhere to extremely tight standards for ethical corporate conduct.

Furthermore, the results of this study's second research question confirmed the advantages of ethical ideals for organizations. This study demonstrated the characteristics of ethical values in an organization, such as self-control, loyalty, maintaining a clean and hygienic workplace, providing quality services, treating every customer fairly, integrity, etc. The claim was supported by Esene (2014), who proposed that qualities like self-control, openness to change, honesty and reliability,

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quality, mindedness, and politeness will improve the quality of services provided. According to Asolo (2014), an organization's ability to grow is impeded by the absence of fundamental ethical principles. In other words, achieving organizational goals requires the application of sound ethical principles.

CONCLUSION

The study's conclusions lead to the conclusion that an organization's office managers' ethical values are one of its characteristics. Therefore, it is crucial that the government and institutions' management raise public knowledge of the moral principles that office managers must uphold in order to successfully address these issues. These qualities also include self-control, loyalty, maintaining a clean and hygienic workplace, providing excellent services, treating each client fairly, integrity, and other qualities that define ethical ideals inside a company. Office managers should make a concerted effort to abstain from immoral organizational ideals in order to maximize productivity and effectiveness.

Recommendations

1. To instill ethical principles in young people, curriculum designers and academic planners should include ethical values in business as part of the educational curriculum at every level.
2. Businesses should avoid using unethical tactics in any of their commercial interactions.
3. To instill ethical standards in areas of operation, the organization in charge of business issues should implement a credibility rating system.
4. Consumers and visitors should actively oppose unethical company practices in all their dealings.
5. Establishing realistic ethical relationships inside a business will help to promote ethical behavior among office managers.
6. To support office managers' personal ethical beliefs, organizations should make an effort to offer ethical values training.

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