Workplace Ethics and Organizational Sustainability in Deposit Money Banks, Bayelsa State

BY

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Abstract

This research study investigates the relationship between workplace ethics and organizational sustainability in deposit money banks located in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State. There has been a substantial surge in awareness regarding the unethical practices of the Nigerian businesses, banking, and other industrial sectors over the last decade. Consequently, this has a growing interest among researchers in the relationship between workplace ethics and organizational sustainability. The objective of this study was to determine the impact of workplace ethics, with dimensions of equity and integrity, on organizational sustainability. To accomplish this objective, a sample of 238 was selected from 16 deposit money institutions located in the Yenagoa Metropolis of Bayelsa State. The questionnaire served as the principal tool utilized to collect data. The obtained data underwent both descriptive and inferential analysis. The hypothesized statements were analyzed using the SPSS software and the Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient. The results of the analysis indicated the presence of a positive significant relationship between equity, integrity, and organizational sustainability. Additionally, from the results it was suggested that management should ensure that the policies and procedures that cover disciplinary measures to workplace deviance and should be dealt with as quickly as possible.

Keywords: Workplace Ethics, Organizational Sustainability, Ethics, Equity, Integrity.

INTRODUCTION

With the new global contextual economic and technological changes, organizations have to develop under specific environmental conditions. Due to the increased concern that businesses and consumers have for social and ecological issues when utilizing goods and services, sustainability has gained global attention. As a result, these parties are assuming greater accountability for environmental management and strategic organizational sustainability. Because it is seen as voluntary organizational sustainability, not all businesses actually execute sustainable development of an organization optimally, in terms of economy/profit, people, and the environment (Hilman & Liljab, 2021).

Depending on their differences in resources, knowledge, experience, and other factors, organizations may use different strategies to accomplish these ends and goals. In order to make decisions that promote long-term organizational and individual growth, organizations participate in the operational relationships of interactions between individuals, group organizations, and institutions at work. As a result, businesses are emphasizing ethics more since it makes financial sense. By doing this, exceptional organizational performance may be attained, which would increase the likelihood of its durability. Where there is an ethical culture and climate, organizational sustainability can be attained (Shafer, 2013). However, ethics are sets of values and principles that govern what is thought acceptable and wrong in terms of behaviour for an individual or group of individuals (Columbus et al., 2022). Lawal (2018) argues that businesses encounter ongoing environmental shifts and social challenges in developing a moral workforce, which further impedes efforts to improve sustainability. The viability of businesses thus depends critically on providing them with the people (workforce) and organizational framework they need to function effectively and ethically in the twenty-first century.

The Enron, Tyco, and WorldCom corporate scandals serve as stark reminders that workplace ethics are among the most important factors influencing not only an organization's performance and effectiveness but also its ability to survive as a business (Byoung, Hyoung & Wook, 2013). Nigeria has dedicated the majority of the last twenty years to combating the negative effects of fraud and corruption on the country's reputation and morale, which result from unethical working practices (Magali, 2017). Just as in every other country, money deposit banks handle people's money in Bayelsa State,

Nigeria. Since money is involved in this situation above all else, the strictest application of ethics is necessary. Instead, the opposite has happened, with a large number of managers and staff in this industry mismanaging customer funds in one way or another, ultimately causing several of these institutions to fail. This is a classic example of low moral standards in action, and that hampers survival of any organisation. Rigorous ethics coupled with punitive actions could possibly help preserve an organization's sustainability and reputation in today's fiercely competitive economic world, but this still yet to be verified.

Therefore, this research exercise is aimed at determining the relationship between workplace ethics and organizational sustainability in Deposit Money Banks, Bayelsa State.

AIM OF THE PAPER

The research study is to examine the relationship that exist between workplace ethics and organizational sustainability in deposit money banks in Bayelsa State. Specifically, the paper seeks;

i. To determine the relationship between equity and organizational sustainability.
ii. To ascertain the relationship between integrity and organizational sustainability.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Exchange Theory

The social exchange theory posits that people work hard to preserve fair exchanges of resources both social and financial with their organizations. Thus, people feel compelled to exact revenge on their organizations for providing them with important resources (like sufficient pay), and they may also feel compelled to exact revenge on them for providing them with insufficient resources or for treating them poorly (like abusive supervision). Benefits that are transferred can include impersonal resources like cash, goods, and information, as well as socioemotional resources like respect, like, and approval. Research has shown that when a donor provides more assistance to a receiver, the recipient is more likely to return the favor and like the donor. As a result, the requirement to return advantages in accordance with the reciprocity standard promotes interpersonal harmony. In the case of a relationship between employees and their employers, the rule of reciprocity may also be applicable, requiring workers to reimburse their employer for any extra benefits they get (Brown & Mitchell, 2010).

The impact of ethical leadership on workers is explained by social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), as workers may feel obligated or beholden to their leaders due to their fairness and reliability (Brown & Mitchell, 2010). Because of this, workers under the direction of an ethical leader exhibit fewer deviant behaviors like ignoring coworkers or stirring up conflict with them—and more positive behaviors, like being willing to assist coworkers with their assignments and modify their schedules to accommodate them (Mayer, Aquino, Greenbaum, & Kuenzi, 2012).

WORKPLACE ETHICS

Workplace ethics" refers to a cultural norm that supports the notion that employees' contributions are valuable in and of themselves and motivates people to take responsibility and accountability for their work. An ethical standard is "basically an expression of corporate principles, ethics, standards of action, code of practice, or firm values concerning obligations to workers, shareholders, customers, the environment, or any other facets of society outside the firm."(Shahrul et al., 2016). It refers to a system of moral standards or values that guide professionals' actions while they are at work. Everyone who is part of an organization is required to conduct themselves in a way that upholds the organization's stated mission and guiding values. "Workplace ethics" describes the commitment to never settling for mediocrity and to constantly strive for excellence in all parts of one's work. Thus, a set of values that prioritizes keeping a positive attitude, showing respect for coworkers, and communicating successfully with them can be considered workplace ethics (Omisore & Oyende, 2015).

Agboola et al. (2015) provides a similar definition of workplace ethics, stating that it includes the obligations of the organization and, as a result, the expected commitments of its employees. The conclusion that organizational ethics serves as a guide to assist leaders and businesses in making the best decisions makes sense. This is because our conception of organizational ethics is shaped by the norms established by business policies, operational procedures, and legal and regulatory frameworks. Even though many businesses employ many organizational ethics instruments to attain their intended aim, the viewpoints of organizational discipline, reliability, and integrity constitute the most essential organizational ethics measurements (Lawal, 2018).

Equity

Garner (2016) defines equity as "fairness; impartiality" and "the corpus of concepts establishing what is fair and right. The application of the justice concept. Consequently, equity is the idea of treating people equally in interactions, especially when it comes to their circumstances and level of work. When it comes to an employee's behavior at work, equity refers to emotions of justice regarding distribution, interaction, and process (Robbins & Sanghi, 2010). The idea of natural justice assumes that all people should be treated fairly and equally, as a fundamental premise. Man has an intrinsic sense of justice and even expects to be treated fairly; however, some ideologies argue that these traits may also be learned.

In the workplace, equity serves to unite employees from diverse backgrounds by bringing all viewpoints to the table. It encourages business networking, raises spirits, and creates unified teams that are committed to producing favorable outcomes for the organization. This stimulates innovation and fosters creativity in problem-solving. The Equity at Work scheme looks at how the socially constructed system of gender roles, identity, and expression is changing and evolving, and how that has an impact on the workplace. This covers a discussion of the rights of workers both now and in the future, the workplace environments in which they are now

practiced, and individual, organizational, and cultural initiatives that support and advance employment-related concerns of justice, fairness, and respect. Therefore, treating people equally irrespective of their gender, color, handicap, religion, nationality, sexual orientation, or age is known as equality (Eketu, 2018).

Integrity

Integrity can be characterized as the ethical attribute of consistently being upright, as demonstrated by the way enterprises and companies behave while they are not being monitored (Zarim & Zaki, 2016). Integrity is the idea of acting consistently with beliefs, values, techniques, measures, expectations, and results. It implies a strong commitment to acting morally and ethically in all situations. Integrity, according to Schlenker (2008), is a person's level of personal commitment to a morally sound philosophy. This commitment dictates how strongly a person's ethical behavior is connected to their conviction. Integrity is becoming an increasingly prominent term and topic in governance and government research, as well as in the actual formulation of policies at all levels. The excellence of the workforce is contingent upon the efficacy of integrity policies. A notion of integrity that seeks to convey the growth and application of moral principles among staff members has been generated by the formation of governance (Zarim & Zaki, 2016).

Organizational Sustainability

Organizational sustainability is defined by Varsei et al. (2014) as the dynamic system required to guarantee good performance in the short term without endangering long-term profitability. Because so many firms today mandate reporting on environmental activities, sustainability performance is unavoidable. A company's sustainability performance can have a positive impact on its reputation, relationships with stakeholders, and even employee productivity (Mustafizur et al., 2020). Sustainability for businesses primarily refers to a company's plans and practices that satisfy the needs of the organization and its stakeholders today while simultaneously safeguarding, maintaining, and modernizing its resources, both natural and human, for demands in the future (Vargas-Hernandez, 2021). The ability of commercial organizations to comprehend their host communities, clients, staff, and investors better and provide answers to their unique demands is stated to be improved by organizational sustainability, which may result in improved collaboration with the organization. According to a number of academics, sustainability performance reporting significantly increases stakeholder and organization confidence (Epstein & Buhovac, 2011).

Sustainability entails persistence. It indicates to an organization that it has everything needed to continue and improve its operations in the direction of a clear objective. As a result, it has a clearly defined mission as well as a set of goals and objectives, the accomplishment of which guarantees the mission's successful pursuit. It's not a given that sustainable organizations are financially self-sufficient. Most organizations will never be able to use their own revenue to fulfill their purposes. Nonetheless, financially independent

groups are sustainable. They are able to know what resources are available, or potentially so, how they will pursue them, and continuously seek out a variety of funding sources as they keep their mission front and center in everything they do thanks to short-, medium-, and long-term planning, competent and sufficient management and staff, visionary leadership, staff commitment to the organization's mission, skills, networking abilities, and an ongoing strategic planning process. (Epstein & Buhovac, 2011).

Workplace Ethics and Organizational Sustainability

The faith that these organizations have in their personnel is the reason for their longevity. Unethical workers have the potential to ruin an organization's hard-earned reputation in the public eye or be the cause of all legal issues for the company. Better workers for the company are those who are ethical, or top managers who ensure that the organization's policies are followed and that ethical reasoning is applied while making decisions. Employee crime is a common indicator of the company's decline (Komari & Fariastuti, 2013).

The establishment of workplace ethics requires the development of ethical standards, which serve as a guide for employees striving for excellence in their work. These standards are related to employee commitment to their jobs. When these two are coupled, employees become less lazy, have fewer intentions to quit, look for other work, and are also less likely to be absent from work. The implementation of an ethical culture has the potential to decrease unethical conduct or ethical violations while simultaneously bolstering employees' conviction that they are moral actors (Schaubroeck et al., 2016).
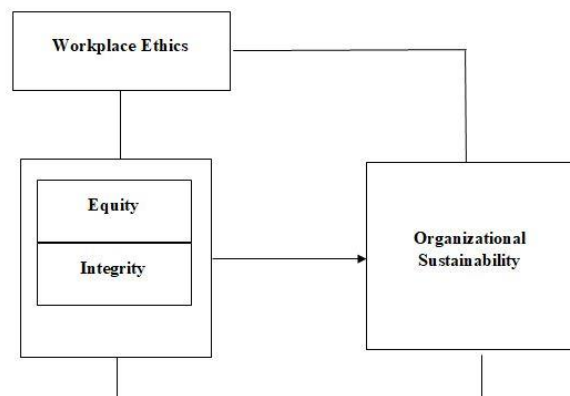

Figure 1: Operationalized framework for workplace ethics and organizational sustainability

Source: Researcher's Desk, (adapted from Adeyeye, Adeniji & Oludayo, 2015).

Equity and Organizational Sustainability

Treating everyone fairly, regardless of their gender, ethnicity, handicap, religion, nationality, sexual orientation, or age, is what is meant by equality. In the end, though, equity theory rests on perception—that is, what individuals believe to be reasonable and fair. Equity promotes staff retention as well. A worker who feels he has a promising future with the company wants to stick around and seize it. A company's expenditure in

replacing departing staff is high. Fair treatment of staff members can lower attrition and spare businesses the costs associated with recruiting and onboarding new staff (Eketu, 2018). When workers believe they are being treated unfairly or in another way, they are driven to act. Employee motivation, according to the hypothesis, is based on how much they believe they are treated properly at work. Furthermore, Gardner (2016) posits that individuals evaluate their job input and outcomes in comparison to others and subsequently take action to rectify any disparities. This process is said to increase productivity at work.

Thus, the hypothesis is drawn as follows:

HO₁: There is no significant relationship between integrity and organizational sustainability

Integrity and Organizational Sustainability
Integrity is frequently used to describe the values and choices that an individual employee or group makes, regardless of the results whether favorable or unfavorable (Menzel, 2005). Previous studies have also verified that integrity influences the majority of an individual's job conduct. This demonstrates that the primary element that will result in and raise employee quality and the organization's sustainability is integrity. Integrity concerns are associated with the morality and conduct of employees within the company. Employee morality, ethics, and misbehavior inside the company cause changes that incite employees to commit misbehavior. It is crucial to consider the organization's leadership in order to maintain the integrity of its workforce.

The reason for this is that the leader in a firm serves as an example for the employees or subordinates. Integrity encompasses all aspects of management, including the government, supplier, customer, employee, and employer. Maintaining investor relationships, customer happiness, and the relationships between financial companies all depend on this. Investors' and financial institutions' trust will be eroded if a firm is unable to maintain staff honesty. Furthermore, as integrity promotes workplace viability, it is highly valued by individuals, organizations, businesses, and society at large (McCann, Sparks, & Kohntopp, 2017).
Thus, the hypothesis is drawn as follows:

HO₂: There is no significant relationship between integrity and organizational sustainability

METHODOLOGY
The present investigation employed a cross-sectional survey research design technique. The study's sample comprises 591 employees from 16 deposit money banks located in Bayelsa State. The banks were chosen based on their Nigerian Central Bank licenses to offer mortgage loans for both residential and commercial properties in the state of Bayelsa. The sample size from the study population, calculated using the Taro-Yamene Formula, is 238. The questionnaire instrument, which was given to the respondents in person to collect the data, was also used to create data for the inquiry. The organizational sustainability survey scale consisted of 5 items, totaling 15 items altogether, whereas the dimensions of workplace ethics

were evaluated using a total of 5 items as attributes. The reliability of the study's instruments was evaluated using the Cronbach alpha test.

DATA ANALYSIS
Bivariate Analysis
This section is devoted to testing the hypotheses which was tested using the Spearman Rank Order of Correlation. The research investigations are conducted with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software

HO_1: there is no significant relationship between equity and organizational sustainability

Correlational outcome of the relationship between Equity and Organizational Sustainability

Correlations

			Equity	Organizational Sustainability
Spearman's rho	Equity	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.623**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	161	161
	Organizational Sustainability	Correlation Coefficient	.623**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	161	161

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Interpretation:
From the result in table above, with rho = 0.623, it shows a positive relationship between equity and organizational sustainability. It is also significant @ [p = 0.00 < 0.01]. This implies that the null hypothesis stated above is rejected. This means that there is a significant relationship between equity and organizational sustainability.

$H0_2$: There is no significant relationship between integrity and organizational sustainability

Correlational relationship between Integrity and organizational sustainability
Correlations

			Integrity	Organizational Sustainability
Spearman's rho	Integrity	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.570**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	161	161
	Organizational sustainability	Correlation Coefficient	.570**	1.000

	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
	N	161	161

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Interpretation:

From the result in table above, with rho = 0.570, it shows a positive relationship between integrity and organizational sustainability. It is also significant @ [p = 0.00 < 0.01]. This implies that the null hypothesis stated above is rejected. This means that there is a significant relationship between integrity and organizational sustainability.

On this basis, all previously stated hypotheses are rejected and based on the evidence, restated as:

1. There is a positive significant relationship between equity and organizational sustainability.
2. There is a positive significant relationship between integrity and organizational sustainability.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of this research have generally revealed that workplace ethics is positively related to organizational sustainability. The findings showed that there is a connection between equity and organizational sustainability. Research indicates that the degree of equity in judgment exhibited by the management team has an impact on the sustainability of a business. The outcomes also demonstrated how their focus on fairness in administrative procedures has enhanced the caliber of their workforce. The findings support the assertion made by Osibanjo et al. (2015) that staff members ought to promote moral behavior and discourage immoral behavior, as both can harm a business's standing and performance. It is imperative that businesses and employees promote ethical behavior in the workplace since strong work ethics are linked to exceptional performance on the job, based on this research.

Additionally, according to Lloyd et al. (2014), organizations maintain high ethical standards because they have put ethical interventions into place, like a code of ethics, committed leadership, legal compliance, and adherence to both internal and external governance standards. Their conclusions are pertinent to the results of this study since managers' actions encourage staff members to follow company policies. Employees in an equitable workplace are likely to be happier and more motivated, which will translate into better output. More equity would result in better working conditions, and workers would be more motivated to solve the issue of undervaluing themselves and to contribute more in order to receive a higher wage. The findings support the theory proposed by Byoung et al. (2013) and show that an organization's ethical atmosphere is a powerful indicator of its creativity and financial success. In this regard, organizations must take into account the opinions of their staff regarding the ethical atmosphere within the company. Therefore, it should come as no surprise that an increase in equity will deter workers from looking for other jobs. Workers whose contributions are duly acknowledged receive pay increases commensurate with the growth in their output.

Integrity and organizational sustainability in the examined deposit money banks have a positive and substantial relationship, according to the results of the inferential analysis of the hypotheses. The results demonstrated that employee honesty and integrity could lead to transparency, accountability, and quality service delivery. This influences workplace culture and improves sustainability over time. The results support those of Omisore (2015), who discovered that specific factors might be linked to unethical behavior in public service and that preventative measures have been implemented by the government. Non-profit organizations will find it much easier to draw in contributors, win over the public, and develop closer relationships with national governments when workplace ethics are strong, that is when honesty, respect, fairness, care, and objectivity are at their highest. This has a favorable impact on the organization's performance in terms of goal attainment, development, accountability and transparency, effectiveness, efficiency, and quality service delivery.

It was discovered that because of their manager's high degree of integrity, the staff members uphold the value of being authentic. It was discovered that investors' and financial institutions' trust will be eroded when an organization fails to maintain staff integrity. This study confirms the findings of Komari et al. (2013), who found no relationship between workplace ethics and job satisfaction; this may be due to workers' varying perceptions of employer fairness. The organization's expectations may be jeopardized by the decisions and behaviors of employees who lack work ethics. A review of the pertinent literature conducted by a range of scholars shows that an organization's and its employees' performance can be influenced by a culture of ethics at work. The majority of business executives find that leadership and business ethics are very relevant topics, and this is reflected in the literature on fostering ethical behavior in firms. Furthermore, there is growing agreement that strong ethics translate into successful company and that ethical leadership is founded on an ethical culture (Benarjea, 2010). Characteristics of ethical leaders include motivating and rewarding acts that advance moral objectives (McCann, Sparks, & Kohntopp, 2017). The discipline of workplace ethics is developing core competencies, ethical norms, and high-quality metrics for ethics case consulting at a very quick speed.

CONCLUSION

Globally, ethical issues are a phenomenon. It is a significant challenge for learning organizations, and senior management personnel need to respond proactively. People view ethical leaders as possessing a broad ethical understanding and regard for all parties involved, including employees. It's possible that beneficial employee outcomes from views of ethical leadership will only materialize if employees and supervisors alike continue to feel uneasy and guilty when faced with moral dilemmas. Supervisors and staff who are morally

"engaged" have not eliminated the essential penalties linked to their own and others' unethical behavior, which may increase the likelihood that they will really practice what they preach.

As morally disengaged workers are attuned to their supervisors' genuineness and morality, they will perceive great moral leadership and set an example for others to follow, leading to the desired results being reciprocated.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the study makes the following recommendations:

1. Employee perception on equity of their superior can increase their commitment to give their best to the organization. This commitment can only be consistent based on their view of equity of their superior. Thus, organizations as a whole should promote equitable treatment of employees at all levels. Organizational work policies, procedures, and compensation plan should be fair enough to the workforce for optimum performance amongst staffs.

2. Integrity is a very important for any firm to strive and bring the best of their employee to achieve collective goals. It important for management of Deposit money banks, not to lose the integrity and enforce a culture of integrity to their employees in their policy and objectives. It is important for financial institution like deposit money banks to organization seminar and conference on ethical conducts among top management staffs to encourage ethical behavior and aversion from any form of unethical conduct because it important for them to lead by example.

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