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Organizational Ethics: A Panacea for Employee Performance in Nigerian Institutions

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ABSTRACT

School as an institution or an organization that propels teaching and learning is an integral sector of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The federal Government spent huge amount of money towards the human resource in order to see that educational goals are actualized. In order to control the human resource (staff/employees) for an expected output, there are stipulated code of conduct and moral principles entailed to govern the employees/staff performance, this is referred to as work ethics. An organization code of ethics is a statement of corporate principles, rules of conduct, code of practice or organization philosophy regarding responsibility to employees, shareholders, consumers, the environment or any other aspects of society external to the organization. This paper is aimed at investigating work ethics and staff performance. Any behavior displayed at work by staff is not necessarily related to job specific aspects but mostly on how well someone performs at their work. A good work ethics fuels an individual's needs and goals; it is related to the initiative by a person for the objectives which are propelled applying work ethics basics like; economic efficiency, correlation and career growth. However, to have a good work ethics, the following must be considered; honest, refrains from gossip, value diversity and others. A work ethics, especially a positive work ethics, is important from a business perspective for the confidence it breeds in clients and consumers. Employee positive attitude and dedication to a client's needs or creation of a product can boost your business' reputation as a company that deals honestly and fairly. Ethics also work to build a moral compass within a business and helps discourage attitudes and business models that seek to cut corners in the name of making a profit. The paper revealed that staff who emphasize positive work ethics must be absolute in maintaining the environment for it to thrive. The study further concluded that a good ethical culture in an organization will provide direction and guidance in various areas in order to build united, harmonious and ethical employees.

Keywords: Organizational Ethics, Employee performance, Nigeria, Educational Institutions.

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INTRODUCTION

The Nigeria Institutions of learning ranges from primary, secondary to tertiary or university levels. There is an always educational policy made by the Federal Government in order to maintain and achieve educational goals. These goals and objectives can never be achieved without the performance and workforce of the staff and employees in the educational sector.

Institutions of learning in Nigeria are made of academic and non-academic staff, of which every staff performance is necessary for the actualization of educational goal. Academic staff are those that teaches and lecturers student classes. While non-academic staff are secretaries, cashiers, computer operator, yard men, security staff, etc. Performance in this context is said to be the action or process of carrying out, or discharging a task, duty or function in a work place.

For most organizations, performance appraisals are used to support decisions related to training and career development, compensation, transfers, promotions, and reductions-in-force or employment termination. Generally, the performance review process includes setting clear and specific performance expectations for each employee and providing periodic informal and/or formal feedback about employee performance relative to those stated goals. Recent trends, however, include a less formalized process focusing on more feedback and coaching, rather than a time-consuming paper trail. Performance reviews can be daunting, for employees with a necessary starting point, whereby without proper evaluation of an individual employee's performance, an organization may waste valuable time and effort implementing improvement plans that do not begin to tackle the real problem. Put simply, employee performance is how a member of staff fulfills the duties of their role, completes required tasks and behaviour in the work place.

Measurement of performance includes the quality, quantity and efficiency of work. When leaders monitor the performance of employees, they can paint a picture of how the business is running. This not only helps to highlight what companies could be doing in the present to improve their business, but this information also feeds into future growth plans. However, placing a focus on employee performance does not just benefit the business. It helps employees to reach their full potential, while also improving overall performance which can have positive effects on morale and quality of work produced. Lastly, but most importantly, when employees are underperforming, customers may be dissatisfied. As a result, the entire business may be affected by poor performance and struggle to reach goals. To take time during this stage to ensure that they get a complete and well-rounded review of the individual's performance to provide a solid foundation for improvement plans can be achieved with a function work ethics.

Ethics are one of the most critical issues in business and specifically in human resource management. The good ethical culture in an organization will provide direction and guidance in various areas in order to build united, harmonious and ethical employees. However, there is no ethics guidance or standard that is absolute, appropriate and applicable to every company. The code of ethics is a good indicator of organization commitment in accepting the need for ethical behaviors and implementing it. Purposeful actions in a proactive manner are required of contemporary organizations to achieve desired level of performance from workers with cognizance to the acceptable norms and best practices in the industry they belong, and country of operation. In the words of Altham (2002), one of such action known as ethnicism is increasing, with work ethics as one of such actions that can bring about the desired performance level of employees' job performance, irrespective of the sharp practices and unethical work practices of competitors in the business environment.

The performance management process is often linked with other organizational work ethics. Thus, work ethics can be referred to as a cultural norm that advocates people to be held accountable and responsible for the work, they do based on the belief that work has intrinsic value to the individual. A corporate code of ethics is a statement of corporate principles, ethics, rules of shareholders, consumers, the environment or any other aspects of society external to the company (Langlois & Schelegelmilch, 1990). Employees' perception of their organization's ethical climate is found to be related to job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and organizational performance (Kim & Miller, 2008; Pettijiohn et al., 2008). A performance rating by supervisor and peer is one of the methods in measuring job performance in which performance is mostly viewed from human behavior with evaluative aspects. Employee's behavior displayed at work is not necessarily related to job specific aspects but mostly on how well someone performs at their work.

This is consistent with the definition of work ethics where individual is accountable to work they have done according to the acceptable ethical behavior. However, there is perceived decline in work ethics. Evidence of this is well established in the integrity violations by many employees in our contemporary work organizations. Issues of fraud, theft, corruption, manipulation of information, misconduct, and the lies are well reported now. Notable scholars are of the opinion that to remain market leader or become industry champion, ethical behavior must be institutionalized (Schminke et al., 2007). Work ethics and job performance are closely related. Employees who have a strong work ethics typically deliver better results and overall performance are closely related. Employees who have a strong work ethics typically deliver better result and overall performance to their employers. This is why many employers consider a good work ethic to be an integral trait of a good employee.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

Work Ethics

Work ethics is a set of moral principles or values that an employee's abides by and uses in their job performance. It covers an employee's behavior and attitude towards their job, career, and the workplace. Work ethics in the workplace is even more significant as it directly impacts the job's quality or output. Work ethics is a belief that work and diligence have a moral benefit and an inherent ability, virtue or value to strengthen character and individual abilities. It is a set of values centered on importance of work and manifested by determination or desire to work hard. Social engrailment of this value is considered to enhance character through hard work that is respective to an individual's field of work (Marek et al., 2014).

A person's work ethics is a representation of his character. A strong work ethics suggests that the person places a high value on doing a good job, as well as respecting others and functioning with integrity. Work ethics is a value based on hard work and diligence. It is also a belief in the moral benefit of work and its ability to enhance character. An example would be the protestant work ethics. A work ethics may include being reliable, having initiative, or pursuing new skills. Workers exhibiting a good work ethics in theory should be selected for better positions, more responsibility and ultimately promotion. Workers who fail to exhibit a good work ethics may be regarded as failing to provide fair value for the wage the employer is paying them and should not be promoted or placed in positions of greater responsibility. Work ethics is basically the belief that work is a good moral. It's also refers to a set of value that are defined

and characterized by diligence and hard work. Work ethics can as well be defined as the inherent ability of work to strengthen character.

Proponents of a strong work ethics consider it to be important for achieving goals, that it gives strength to their orientation and the right mindset (The Ethics Centre, 2020). A work ethics is a set of moral principles a person uses in his or her job. People who possess a strong work ethics embody certain principles that guide their work behavior, to develop and process a strong work ethics will inevitably result in the production of high-quality work which is consistent. The output motivates them to stay on track (Swan, 2016). A good work ethics fuels an individual's needs and goals; it is related to the initiative by a person for the objectives. It is considered as a source of self-respect, satisfaction, and fulfillment.

Work Ethics Basics and Advantages

Ethics refers to the ability to make appropriate decisions in the midst of gray ethical dilemmas. Work ethics refer to the ability to work in a way that shows ethical commitment to your job and employer. Having good work ethics causes you to put physical, mental and emotional effort into your job to meet or exceed expectation.

Advantages

Economic Efficiency: employees with stronger work ethics than their co-workers typically are more productive. In Labor jobs, better effort increases production quality and speed, which means the company pays less per unit of production than it would be with a less dependable worker. A sales or services employee with strong work ethics generates more sales leads and completes more sales than an equally skilled colleague who puts forth less effort. Reducing costs and generating revenue are the most important bottom-line benefits of superior job performance.

Correlation: some employers consider your success and accomplishments with previous jobs to gauge your work ethics. In her article "Checking Reference is Key: Work Ethic is a Predictor of Future Performance. "Dianne Glasscoe Watterson points out that an employee's work ethics is his best predictor of success, and you can analyze past performance to determine his work ethics. If a job candidate has proven successful throughout his career, he is likely a dedicated worker who will continue to find success.

Career Growth: Work ethics cannot overcome job incompetence. If you don't have the knowledge and skills to do a certain type of work, your effort cannot overcome that. However, someone with modest abilities may outperform naturally gifted colleagues who display poor effort. An employee with a strong ethics can motivate colleagues and team members and impress supervisors. A hard worker with the ability to learn and leadership potential can advance in his career more quickly than a talented person.

Characteristics of Good Organizational Ethics

When an employee, has a good work ethics dedicated to job that he deem valuable. An employee holds themselves to high standards of responsibility. Employee also keeps themselves accountable for getting work done right and on time, and for making good business decisions

that help people and organizational success. Having a solid work ethics means employee understand that productivity, organizational skills, being reliable and possessing good character are all attributes that successful people share (McDougle, 2018):

Honest: Stealing personal property, sabotaging a coworker's client presentation, or taking someone's idea and making it your own are all ways that dishonesty creeps into the workplace. Employees with strong ethics refrain from lying or cheating to make others look bad in the hopes of making themselves appear smarter. Instead, they take responsibility for mistakes, own up to failures and keep the lines of communication open with everyone involved.

Refrains from gossip: Workplace gossip can be destructive. When employees gossip about their peers, bosses or even clients, it's considered deviant behavior. An employee with good workplace ethics refuses to engage in gossip or even listen it. This person will encourage other to mind their own business, or else address the person or situation head-on so that assumptions and badmouthing can stop. Doing so helps eliminate resentment among coworkers and helps keep morale up.

Values Diversity: People with a good work ethics understand the importance of a diverse workplace. When you value everybody's contributions regardless of ability, age, gender or race, it allows for more creativity and better problem solving. Diversity in the workplace contributes to successful client interactions. Overall, employee morale is higher.

Respects others: An employee with a strong work ethics is rarely late. An employee must respect everyone's time, from coworkers to clients to interviewees. They must also be polite, conscientious of people's feelings and considerate of workers in a shared workspace. In addition, someone with a strong work ethics uses time wisely so that deadlines are met. Employee will keep personal phone conversations quiet and not disrupt others. Out of respect, they will also hear and consider everyone's opinions.

Cooperative: Having a good work ethics means employee cooperate with others. While work may not always be satisfying or enjoyable, they see the bigger picture and do what is necessary for the team and organization. Instead of debating over issue and finding reasons why things cannot get done, they use strong conflict resolution skills to solve problems and manage the work load.

Concept of Employee Performance

Employees are the force that drives a company forward. So, it should come as no surprise that the daily performance of the workforce hugely influences the success or failure of a organization. To stay successful in today's market, organizations must find ways to maintain and bring out the best performance from their employees. Not only does this help to hire, retain and develop the best talent, but by helping staff to grow within their roles and responsibilities, the company can build a pipeline of future leaders. Working to improve employee performance is an ongoing process that involves measurement, evaluation, and planning, but it's also a vital step to achieving company goals (Tripathy, 2014).

Performance is a multi-component concept and on the fundamental level one can distinguish the process aspect of performance, that is, behavioral engagements from an expected outcome. The behavior over here denotes the action people exhibit to accomplish a work, whereas the outcome aspect states about the consequence of individual's job behavior. Apparently, in a workplace, the aspect states about the consequence of individual's job behavior. Apparently, in a workplace, the behavioral engagement and expected outcome are related to each other but the comprehensive overlap between both the constructs are not evident yet, as the expected outcome is influenced by factors such as motivation and cognitive abilities than the behavioral aspect (Pradhan & Jena, 2017). For any business, employee performance is the key to success. Every individual employee must work toward the company's vision and mission. There is no overarching mantra about employee performance. It is all about how businesses manage, up skill, and motivates their employees. Employee performance is a measurement of how well or how poorly an employee conducts his required job duties and how promptly they meet their deadlines or requirements. Measuring employee's performance can help you identify possible faults in your employees training program and guide as to how you can improve.

FACTORS INFLUENCING EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

Performance alignment occurs when actual performance matches expected performance. There are factors that influences staff performance in every organization, they include:



Performance Appraisal: The term performance appraisal refers to the regular review of an employee's job overall contribution to an institution. It is also known as annual review or performance review or evaluation, or employees' appraisal. A performance appraisal evaluates an employee skills, achievements, and growth, or lack thereof. Organization use performance appraisals to give employee big picture feedback on their work and to justify pay increases and bonuses, as well as termination decisions. They can be conducted at any given time but tend to be annual, semi-annual, or quarterly. They provide individual with feedback on their job

performance. It ensures that employees are managing and meeting the goals expected of them, giving them guidance on how to reach them if the fall short (Hayes, 2021). Performance appraisals are used to review the job performance of an employee over some period of time. These reviews are used to highlight both strengths and weakness in order to improve future performance.

Leadership: Trust in leadership is critical factor in employee performance, regardless of what style leaders adopt. Yu et al (2018) study found a strong correlation between and employee behaviors that stimulate performance, including the willingness to stay with the organization long term. Building trust with employees may be one of the best ways to boost performance (Yu et al, 2018). In fact, only 37% of employee's say they trust their leaders. Raising and maintaining high performance among your work force is an essential element to your business reaching its goals and objectives. Leadership teams of supervisor, managers and executives-play vital role in ensuring employee performance of high level. This is a challenge for many lenders; however, it is one that can be resolved. With effective leadership, employee work force can prove to be their organization's most valuable resource. In addition to improving performance, the leadership activity demonstrates what you have been vested in your employees. This can increase job satisfaction which can, in turn, raise the level of job satisfaction, among your work force.

Work life conflict: In today's growing world, the issue relating to work life and its impact on job performances has challenges. Employees face several challenges every day in their work life, which consists of shift timing, loading and informing, number of working hours, wages and salary issues, nature of work, time constrains and a lot more. People do have their own personality traits and behavior which makes them different from one another. Every Individual has the capacity to handle situations in his own different. Manner would be dealing with every single situation by himself in the manner he thinks is suitable. Moreover, the difference of gender has great role in defining what level of stress one can uphold in their life. The level of stress for woman would be different, and the level of stress for man would be different as well.

Compensation and Reward: Compensation is the reward given to employees in return for their services rendered and it is often the cornerstone of a productive workforce. The quality and performance of your company's talent pool is usually directly dependent on how well you execute your compensation planning strategies. Compensation includes expenses such as bonuses, profit sharing, overtime and rewards that include monetary and non-monetary rewards such as house rent and car facility against hired services of employees (Wright et al., 2003). The remuneration process is crucial and a source of contention in most organization. It deals with rewarding people in accordance with their value in the organization. The same process is concerned with both financial and non-financial rewards. It embraces the strategies; philosophies plans and processes employed by organization to develop and maintain reward system (Njoroge & Kwasira, 2015).

Motivation: Employee performance is actually influenced by motivation because if employees are motivated, then they will do work with more effort and by which performance will ultimately improve (Azar & Shafighi, 2013). Motivation is fundamentally meant to facilitate behavioral alteration. It is a force that enables an individual to act in the direction of a particular objective. According to the study of Grant (2008) held on employee motivation; motivation forces such

result as productivity, performance and persistence. According to the studies of (Ryan & Decias cited in Shahzadi et al., 2014); motivated employees are more oriented and freedom and are more self-driven as compared to less motivated employees which lead to availing developmental opportunities more correctly. Similarly, employees commitment with their work and job is more, if they are motivated when compared to less motivated employees (Vansteenkiste et al., 2007).

Organizational Culture: The norms and values of organization, based upon different cultures, have influence on work force, and can increase the output of the work force. In an organization, strong culture enables effective and efficient management of work force. The net profit in an organization helps in enhancing performance of employees. Organization leaders need to create a corporate or organization culture of inclusion, enjoyment and fulfillment, because it improves employee productivity and performance. Building an organization culture takes time and strategic planning, but is well worth the effort. The organization culture, often referred to as corporate culture, is the atmosphere of shared beliefs and practices in a company. A positive corporate culture has shared beliefs that align with the organization's mission, whereas a bad or toxic culture often has a large group of unhappy or self-serving employees (Leonard, 2019).

The Importance of a Good Work Ethics to Staff Performance

A work ethics, especially a positive work ethics, is important from a business perspective for the confidence it breeds in clients and consumers. Employee positive attitude and dedication to a client's needs or creation of a product can boost your business' reputation as a company that deals honestly and fairly. Ethics also work to build a moral compass within a business and helps discourage attitudes and business models that seek to cut corners in the name of making a profit (McDougle, 2018). Following are therefore considered importance of a good work ethics and discussed below:

Ethics for Successful Career: Today's business environment is not only fast-paced, but also highly competitive. In order to keep pace and stay ahead, possession of several key work ethics is a plus for achieving a successful career. Holding key traits such as attendance, character, team work, appearance, and attitude add value to both you as a person and your company. Successful careers come in many flavors, but work ethics are a main ingredient in most recipes for success. Character is how others perceive someone. Much like an actor who plays a role, the character traits that one possess portray an image in others mind. One's character develops as actions become habits. These habits reveal one's character. Eventually this role determines the outcome of one's life. Being aware of your actions and habits plus improving on faults strengthens one's character. Common sense and barbers have long known that two heads are better than one. Teamwork is worth given strength to a working force. Prejudices and stereotyping have no home in team work. Respect evicted them. Learning to cooperate with your teammates as well as being assertive is important in keeping track of things. Treat customer with genuine respect and manners. They are your friends. Team members should constantly stay up to date with new learning opportunities, but at the same time, keep confidential information private. Your trust is assumed and expected (Brownlee, 2019).

Impact for employers: Employers who emphasize a positive work ethics must be absolute in maintaining the environment for it to thrive. This means a business can allow no room for moral

ambiguity, rationalization or ego in its positive work ethics model. Otherwise, the strategy may fail. Just one rogue executive taking excessive privileges, such as private trips on a company plane, can ruin all the good will built by a positive work ethics (McDougle, 2018).

Effects around the workplace: Ethics spring from within an organization; it does not mean a positive work ethic cannot be contagious. An employee who accepts job with equal tenacity and dedication, forces co-workers to follow suit or risk being left behind, and a worker who does all these increases productivity and workers moral (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2017).

Common Problems with Employee Performance

Many of the problems commonly associated with staff performance management system are similar to those that beset any other organizational initiative, but with potentially much greater consequences.

Lack of top management support: If senior management does not send a message to managers and supervisors that the process of rating employee performance is a valuable use of their time, they are likely either to fail to commit the time or simply to fill out the forms but not engage in the important discussions with their employees. However, senior management actively participate in the process and takes primary responsibility for it, managers and employees must remain unsure of its value.

Perception of the process as time-consuming "busywork": Without an organizational to the process and a clear understanding of how it contributes strategically to the organization's successfully performance, managers will view it as "busywork" of little value and a waste of time.

Failure to communicate clear and specific goals and expectation: A manager's specific expectations must be clear for an employee to be able to implement an agreed goal. Goals can direct attention, increase persistence and motivate the development of strategies or plans to attain those goals. Clarifying and discussing the performance goals for the coming year is a valuable use of a manager's time and will help avoid miscommunication and surprises. Follow-up communications can be used to reinforce specific goals and serve as reminders to employees about their progress.

Lack of consistency: In most organization, some managers are perceived as tough and others "easy." This inconsistency may result in varied interpretations of an organization's performance rating scale as applied to employees in different groups. Therefore, Human Resource (HR) should train managers in using the rating system so that inconsistencies do not occur. Despite training and best of intentions, differences in the interpretation and application of the rating scale are almost inevitable. Accordingly, some organizations apply higher levels of review to calibrate rating across a larger group or even an entire workforce. Organization can develop a calibration system to ensure consistency between raters, between different departments and between jobs.

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that ethics are one of the most critical issues in business and specifically in human resource management. The good ethical culture in an organization such as school organization will provide direction and guidance in various areas in order to build united, harmonious and ethical employees. The performance management process is often linked with other organization work ethics. Thus, work ethics can be referred to as cultural norm that advocates people to be held accountable and responsible for the work, they have done based on the belief that work has intrinsic value to the individual in order to make an entire contribution to high employee performance. The impact on organizational performance of an interfering variable can be explained with job satisfaction. Therefore, Work ethics and job performance are closely related. Thus, the efforts on improving employee performance will no longer rely only on the various factors influencing staff performance but instead focusing on work ethics too.

Suggestions

- In order to enhance productivity in Nigerian educational the federal government through the ministry of education should ensure a proper check on unethical behaviour among staff:
- Reward should be given to ethical employee for others to emulate in order to boost their morale and improve performance;
- Leaders of organization should ensure to be fair and unbiased in their judgement;
- The culture and ethics of organization/educational institutions should be well and clearly communicated to its staff.

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