ETHICAL CONFLICTS: THE IMPLICATION FOR THE REALIZATION OF FIRMS OBJECTIVES

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ABSTRACT: *This study is based on Ethical conflicts: The Implication for the Realization of Firms objectives. Ethical conflicts occur when individuals are confronted with a clash between general belief systems about justice and morality as it affects their own personal circumstances. Ethical conflict is a process idea that cannot be eradicated in any organization. It is a process which constantly influences managers, subordinates, social life and growth of any organizations. Ethics goes beyond just making profit and economic development; it includes personal interest and systematic value integration. Ethics is concerned with individuals; manager therefore plans according to what he believes to be morally right. That means the company's ethics may eventually be the norm and projection of the managers' ethics, as a result, manager is faced with the challenge of aligning what he believed to be morally right to that of the believe of organization which he work. The objectives of this paper is to determine how ethical conflict influence the performance of firms negatively and ascertain the extent to which standard ethical behavior facilitate achievement of firms objectives. This research engaged investigative and qualitative research methods as we did not test any model in a statistical sense. Data was gathered from numerous sources, including formal interviews, internal documents, and the internet. However, there is a strong reliance on interviews because rich insights and contextual information was sought from the key informants. The paper demonstrated that the effect of ethical conflict on the realization of firms' objectives is unquantifiable as firms internal and external dealings are constrained. Members of the public would no longer have confidence and trusts in the firms as personal or corporate dealing with the firms are minimized if not completely eradicated. This is a potential threat to firm's performance. The finding also reveals that standard ethical behavior has the capacity to facilitate achievement of firm's objectives positively as the confidence of clients is guaranteed and internal and external dealing of the firms not constrained. Firms that fail to educate its members can only anticipate a bothersome future. In today's controversial civilization, we must and should be aware of the substance of our Code of ethics and the organizations should educate it members about standard behavior expected of employees during training and orientation session for effective management of ethical conflicts. If the employee's find it difficult to key into ethical standard of the firm and/or traverse the ethical boundaries, he/she should be shown a way out of the systems as the success or failure of any firm depends on her ability to initiate and as well sustain policies that will minimize if not completely eradicated conflicts arising from ethical issues in the organization. These will go a long way in sustaining the performance and growth of the organizations.*

KEYWORDS: Ethic, Conflict, Ethical Conflict, Realization, Firms Objectives

INTRODUCTION

Human being and particularly managers are controlled by at least political, social and ethical environments. The social environment deal with desires, attitudes, educational level, customs,

training, expectation and general beliefs of the society to which one belongs. Attention is basically drawn to manmade laws and various regulations of government agencies affecting individual and organizational behavior under political environment.

The ethical environment seems, more or less a subdivision of the social environment but has sufficient force to deserve distinct categorization (Umoh, 1996). It deals with how an individual morally sees and interprets his personal conduct and attitude towards what is generally accepted and practiced within his group. Ethics is concerned with individuals, manager plans according to what he believes to be right morally. The result is that the company's ethics may eventually turn to be the projection of the managers' ethics. In the long run, we become confronted with important questions, whether profit making by all means is not ethical.

Ethical conflicts result from confrontation between what is generally believed as moral standard and reasonable and individual personal believe contrary to the acceptable standards. We also face ethical issues when a manager decides to show some favour to an employee who has always been very hard-working and faithful to the company by granting him the permission to have some days off. The company policy does not allow this type of practice; as a result, the company suffered some set back because of the absence of this employee. Can the kind gesture of the manager be regarded as ethically satisfying or was the manager wrong because the company experience set back.

Ethical conflicts begin in situations where we have to decide between two or more relevant but conflicting ethical values (e.g., confidentiality and protecting a life) or when we face competing or multiple loyalties (e.g. to a client and the agency, or to multiple client systems). Our personal values influence our views of clients, and affect our willingness to take action based on the profession's value. The degree of conflict we experience will vary with the degree of personal commitment: the deeper the commitment to personal values, the greater the possibility of conflict with professional values. To facilitate identification and unbiased resolution of ethical conflicts, the interplay among environmental contexts must also be taken into account (Grosch & Olsen, 1994, p. 25).

In another instance, executive may ask or advice a fraudulent member of staff to resign instead of presenting him for a suitable authorized action, for his crime. Then with the executive acceptance of the resignation, the corrupt staff secures a better appointment in another company. Can one now regard executive behaviour as ethically satisfying because the result was good or unethical for concealing the facts? An ethical conflict involves a situation where right and wrong is not perfectly clear which may result in personal or organizational injury.

Research Objectives

The focus of this research specifically is to:

i.   Determine whether ethical conflict influence the performance of firms negatively.

ii.   Ascertain the extent to which standard ethical behavior facilitate achievement of firms objectives.

Conceptual Framework

Ethical conflicts occur when there is a question between what is right and what seem to be wrong. Ethical conflict is a complex situation that often involves an apparent disagreement

between moral values in which obeying one would result in transgressing another. Aaron (2014) argues that, an ethical conflict happen when you or a colleague makes a decision that could be seen as illegal or inappropriate to a third party. Ethical conflicts result from the list lies to decisions that can affect employees within the organization and potential investors or customers.

Umoh, (1996) maintain that, ethics is a personal conduct and moral obligation and concerns of human relations with regard/respect to right and wrong. Any disregard of civil law were to encourage corruption, lying, cheating etc. then the public would be tempted to regard all such vices as a right way of life. But what is right is based on moral principles as upheld by our social forces and experiences.

According to Michael (2012), there are a number of reasons why reasonable people of good will can differ in their ethical judgments, even when they agree on the basic principles. There can be empirical differences, that is, different readings of the facts of the case. They disagree about the facts themselves. They also differ on the implications, especially in predicting the consequences of certain policies or actions.

Ethical conflicts can be seen as the process of making a choice in the face of two convincing alternatives. Ethical conflicts arise when an important person has to make a choice between violating and enduring one or more of their honorable principles, leading to discrepancy where neither choice make the personality fulfilled.

National Academy of Engineering (NAOE, 2012) defined ethical conflict as a complex situation that involves an apparent mental conflict between moral imperatives, which to obey one would result in transgressing another ethical situation.

On the other hand, Conflicts of Professional Interest (COPI, 2011), defines ethical conflict as the conflicts that occurs when you or a colleague makes a decision that could be seen as illegal or wrong   by another person that result from smallest lies to decision that can affect employees within the company.

Ethical Conflict occurs when two ethical principles require opposite results in the same circumstances. Ethical conflict always result from a situation where the end justify the means, that is, doing what is deem morally right and standard value can as well create a negative or positive outcome depending on the result.

Theoretical Frameworks

A theory is a systematic body of thought or personal ideals that are supposed to provide good reason for particular moral judgments' but sometimes only in retrospect when full information is available. Under this sub-heading, ethical conflicts theory would be discussed.

- **Realistic Conflict Theory**

    Realistic conflict theory also known as realistic group conflict theory explains how intergroup hostility can arise as a result of conflicting goals and competition over limited resources', and it also offers an explanation for the feelings of prejudice and discrimination toward the out-group that accompany intergroup hostility (Jackson, 1993). Groups may be in competition for a real or perceived scarcity of resources such as money, political power, military protection, or social status. Feelings of resentment

can arise in the situation that the groups see the competition over resources as having a zero-sums fate, in which only one group is the winner (obtained the needed or wanted resources) and the other loses (unable to obtain the limited resource due to the "winning" group achieving the limited resource first). The length and severity of the conflict is based upon the perceived value and shortage of the given resource. According to RCT, positive relations can only be restored if super ordinate goals are in place.

RCT can also provide an explanation for why competition over limited resources in communities can present potentially harmful consequences in establishing successful organizational diversity. In the workplace, this is depicted by the concept that increased racial heterogeneity among employees is associated with job dissatisfaction among majority members. Since organizations are affixed in the communities to which their employees belong, the racial makeup of employees' communities affect attitudes toward diversity in the workplace. As racial heterogeneity increases in a white community, white employees are less accepting of workplace diversity. RCT provides an explanation of this pattern because in communities of mixed races, members of minority groups are seen as competing for economic security, power, and prestige with the majority group.

Realistic conflict theory originally only described the results of competition between two groups of equal status. Duckitt, (1994) suggests that the theory be expanded to include competition between groups of unequal status. To demonstrate this, Duckitt created a scheme of types of realistic conflict with groups of unequal status and their resulting correlation with prejudice. Duckitt concluded that there are at least two types of conflict based on in-groups competition with out-group. The first is 'competition with an equal group' and is explained by realistic conflict theory. Thus being, group-based threat that leads in-group members to feel hostile towards the out-group which can lead to conflict as the in-group focuses on acquiring the threatened resource. The second type of conflict is 'domination of the out-group by the in-group.' This occurs when the in-group and out-group do not have equal status. If domination occurs, there are two responses the subordinate group may have. One is stable oppression, in which the subordinate group accepts the dominating group's attitudes on some focal issue and sometimes, the dominant group's deeper values to avoid further conflict. The second response that may occur is unstable oppression. This occurs when the subordinate group rejects the lower status forced upon them, and sees the dominating group as oppressive. The dominant group then may view the subordinates' challenge as either justified or unjustified. If it is seen as unjustified, the dominant group will likely respond to the subordinates' rebellion with hostility. If the subordinates' rebellion is viewed as justified, the subordinates are given the power to demand change. An example of this would be the eventual recognition of the civil rights movement in the 1960s in the United States.

- **Deontology Conflict Theory**

The deontological theory states that people should adhere to their obligations and duties when analyzing an ethical dilemma (Penslar, 1995). This means that a person will follow his or her obligations to another individual or society because upholding one's duty is what is considered ethically correct. For instance, a deontologist will always keep his promises to a friend and will follow the law. A person who follows this theory

will produce very consistent decisions since they will be based on the individual's set duties.

Deontology provides a basis for special duties and obligations to specific people, such as those within one's family. For example, an older brother may have an obligation to protect his little sister when they cross a busy road together. This theory also praises those deontologists who exceed their duties and obligations, which is called "supererogation". For example, if a person hijacked a train full of students and stated that one person would have to die in order for the rest to live, the person who volunteers to die is exceeding his or her duty to the other students and performs an act of supererogation.

Although deontology contains many positive attributes, it also contains its fair number of flaws. One weakness of this theory is that there is no rationale or logical basis for an on time to meetings. Although this appears to be a noble duty we do not know why including the fact that sometimes a person's duties conflict and that deontology are not concerned with the welfare of others. For instance, if the deontologist who must be on time to meetings is running late, how is he supposed to drive? Is the deontologist supposed to speed, breaking his duty to society to uphold the law, or is the deontologist supposed to arrive at his meeting late, breaking his duty to be on time? This scenario of conflicting obligations does not lead us to a clear ethically correct resolution nor does it protect the welfare of others from the deontologist's decision. Since deontology is not based on the context of each situation, it does not provide any guidance when one enters a complex situation in which there is conflicting obligation (Penslar, 1995).

- **Utilitarianism Conflict Theory**

Penslar (1995), maintain that the utilitarian ethical theory is founded on the ability to predict the consequences of an action. To utilitarian, the choice that yields the greatest benefit to the most people is the choice that is ethically correct. One benefit of this ethical theory is that the utilitarian can compare similar predicted solutions and use a point system to determine which choice is more beneficial for more people. This point system provides a logical and rationale argument for each decision and allows a person to use it on a case-by-case context.

- **Rights Conflict Theory**

In the rights ethical theory the rights set forth by a society are protected and given the highest priority. Rights are considered to be ethically correct and valid since a large or ruling population endorses them. Individuals may also bestow rights upon others if they have the ability and resources to do so. For example, a person may say that her friend may borrow the car for the afternoon. The friend who was given the ability to borrow the car now has a right to the car in the afternoon.

A major complication of this theory on a larger scale, however, is that one must decipher what the characteristics of a right are in a society. The society has to determine what rights it wants to uphold and give to its citizens. In order for a society to determine what rights it wants to enact, it must decide what the society's goals and ethical priorities are. Therefore, in order for the rights theory to be useful, it must be used in conjunction with another ethical theory that will consistently explain the goals of the society. For

instance, in Nigeria people have the right to choose their religion because this right is upheld in the Constitution. In a related development, American government upholds freedom of religion while the Nazi government did not uphold it and, instead, chose to eradicate the Jewish religion and those who practiced it (Ridley, 1998).

Kinds of Ethics

We have two kinds of ethics. The work of Umoh (1996) presents meaningful reference.

i. **Ethics within the company**

This deals with ethics as it affects the manager and the employees of an enterprise. The manager ought to be sincere and honest first to him-self. He must regard his character as his greatest asset. The manager should be guided by the golden rule of life while dealing with his subordinates. This golden rule requires that we should do to others what we should like done to us. This call for honesty, fairness, equity and justice to all his equals and subordinates within the organization.

ii. **Ethics outside the company**

This has to do with the public outside the enterprise. Reference can be made to customers, competitors, supplies and government agencies. As managers we should treat these people equally and justly, not planning to injure their rights, persons and property. It is of course; hard to say what is right in external ethics. But this does not mean that the manager does not know them. False advertising, misleading comparisons, unproven claims and false statements in the radio, print and television are examples of unethical practices.

Code of Ethics

Umoh (1996), maintain that all over the world, there is need to establish a set of generally accepted and practiced standard of personal behaviour or conduct. For instance, we normally expect people of certain classes to behave in certain ways. Such people include lawyers, government official's church dignitaries, accountants, teachers, physicians, business managers and even the daily-paid laborers.

What may be deemed right and ethical by one may stand the chance of being vehemently condemned by another. Therefore the following serves as reasons for code of ethics:

1. To improve the confidence of public in the professionals, for e.g, in doctor-patient or lawyer-client relationships.

2. It guides the behavior of members, simplifies decision making and affords a valid defense for their action or inaction.

3. To consolidate the faith in the interrelationships of colleagues and professionals among themselves.

4. As a check list of what is expected, it facilitates detection of ethical behaviour among members, competitors and employees.

Confusion of Ethical Standards

In many countries, with special reference to Nigeria, here is a marked state of uncertainty about ethical standards. In enumerating the possible reasons for such a state of affair, Umoh (1996) point out that the following must be noted.

a. **Intermixture of cultures from scramble for Africa.**

Africa has been a land of attraction for many countries of Europe, Asia, America, china and the rest. Immigration or certain reasons, trade, religions, politics, adventure, etc has brought many nationals into the country. By the time they leave their countries of origin, they don't abound on their cultures, beliefs and norms at the border. While within the country, they mix up not only with the natives but also with other nationals of different origin. The result is foreign influence what the nationals regarded moral and ethical in their native homes may be deemed immoral and unethical by the host country, and vice versa. This is equally true of people with various ethnic backgrounds who move away ancestral origin even though they happen to be natives of the same country geographically.

In many cases, they begin to copy the practices of one another thus creating artificial changes to their natured values. This is the case when a black man imitates or copies the culture and behaviour of the white man believing blindly that whatever the white man does denotes advanced civilization.

b. **Absence of Acceptable source**

There is no acceptable source of ethical standards. Where there is no state religion, it is unthinkable to have one central source of authority for teaching ethical practices. Nigeria harbors a great number of cultures and religious sects. In the past many of these religions groups were running their own schools. The government officials have traditionally been drawn from various backgrounds irrespective of religious affiliations. In the face of these circumstances we cannot look to the government, the churches, private agencies or educational institutions as the central point from which ethical teaching should radiate.

c. **No universally acceptable theory**

There is, of course, no doubt that all good religions teach and preach morals. In the days when missionaries ran their schools in this country, students who failed examination in scripture and moral instruction were rarely allowed to be promoted into the next class. Even those, teachers of religion made no effort to develop a science of ethics. Now that the government has taken away school administration from the hands of religions bodies, the teaching of scripture and moral instructions hardly gets a place in our primary school curriculum. This implies that teachers of ethics can now be found, if ever, only in churches. Therefore the hope of developing a science of ethic which rightly should be the work of teachers of ethics is a long way from materializing.

Types of Ethical Conflict

Conflict is an inherent incompatibility between the objectives of two or more characters or forces. Conflict creates tensions and interest in a story by adding doubt as to the outcome. There

are actually a lot of ways to define conflict due to how it is used in various areas. Conflict pertains to the divergent ideas and actions of different entities, thus resulting in an antagonistic state (Omale, 2015, p.109). In one way or another, we are faced with many types of ethical conflict in our day to day lives. However, conflict should not be seen as purely negative. It can become an opportunity for better things and open up opportunities, if dealt with properly.

However, Omale (2015) state that there are types of conflict which are easily identifiable in our present-day times. There are classified into the following four types.

i) **Intra-group conflict:** Also known as "man against society" is a type of ethical conflict that happens among individuals within a team. Where man stands against a man-made institution, "man against man" conflict may shade into man against society. The incompatibilities and misunderstandings among these individuals lead to an intergroup conflict. It arises from interpersonal disagreement (e.g team members have different personalities which may lead to tension) or differences in views and ideas (e.g in a presentation, members of the team might find the notions presented by the one presiding to be erroneous due to differences in opinion). Within a team, conflict can be helpful in coming up with decisions which will eventually allow them to reach their objectives as a team.

ii) **Intergroup conflict:** intergroup conflict takes place when a misunderstanding arises among different teams within an organization. For instance, the marketing department of an organization can come in conflict with the production department. This is due to the varied sets of goals and interests of these different groups. In addition, competition also contributes for intergroup ethical conflict to arise. There are other factors which fuel this type of conflict. Some of these factors may include a rivalry in resources or the boundaries set by a group to others which established their own identity as a team.

iii) **Interpersonal conflict:** Interpersonal conflict also known as "man against man" refers to a conflict between two individuals where characters are against each other. This happens typically due to how people are different from one another. We have varied personalities which usually results to incompatible choices and opinions. Apparently, it is a natural occurrence which can eventually help in personal growth or developing your relationships with others. Coming up with adjustments is necessary for managing this type of conflict. However, when interpersonal conflict gets too destructive, calling in a mediator would help so as to have it resolved.

iv) **Intra personal conflict:** This is also known "as man against self", conflict, that is usually associated with an external conflict. A character must overcome his-own nature or make a choice between two or more paths-good and evil, logic and emotion. This type of conflict occurs within an individual. The experience takes place in the person's mind. Hence, it is a type of conflict that is psychological; resolving conflict may come in different scales, from the simpler mundane ones like deciding whether or not to go organic for lunch to ones that can affect major decisions such as choosing a career path. This type of conflict can be quite difficult to handle if you find it hard to decipher your inner struggles. It leads to restlessness and uneasiness, or can ever cause depression. In such occasions, it would be best to seek a way to let go of the anxiety through communicating with other people. Eventually, when you find yourself out of the situation, you can become more empowered as a person.

Conflict may seem to be a problem to some, but on the other hand, it is an opportunity for growth and can be an effective means of opening up among groups or individuals. However, when conflict begins to draw back productivity and gives way to more conflicts, then conflict management would be needed to come up with a resolution.

Ethical Conflict Management Styles

Considering the fact that we as individuals have different points of view, there will always be instances when misunderstands will occur among us. In dealing with ethical conflict, there are conflict management styles to be followed. The Thomas-Kilmann conflict mode instrument, which is an assessment used globally in conflict handling, specifies five strategies used to address conflict. They are as follows:

i. **Accommodating:** Accommodation involves having to deal with the problem with an element of self-sacrifice; an individual/ organization sets aside his own concerns to maintain peace in the situation. Thus, the person yields to what the other wants, by displaying a form of selflessness. It might come as an immediate solution to the issue; however, it also brings about a false manner of dealing with the problem. This can be disruptive, if there is a need to come up with a more sound, creative, and efficient way, especially if the individual is in the wrong as it can come as a form of conciliation.

ii. **Avoiding:** In this approach, there is withdrawal from the conflict. Avoiding is mostly used when the perceived negative end outweighs the positive outcome. In employing this, individuals end up ignoring the problem, thinking that the conflict will resolve itself. It might be applicable in certain situations but not in all.
Avoidance would mean that you neglect the responsibility that comes with it. The other individuals involved might think that you are neglecting the problem. Thus, it is better to confront the problem before it gets worse.

iii. **Collaborating:** Collaborating aims to find a solution to the conflict through cooperating with other parties involved. Hence, communication is an important part of this strategy. In this mechanism, effort is exerted in digging into the issue to identify the needs of the individuals concerned without removing their respective interests from the picture. Collaborating individuals aim to come up with a successful resolution creatively, without compromising their own satisfactions.

iv. **Competing:** Competition involves authoritative and assertive behaviors. In this style, the aggressive individual aims to instill pressure on the other parties to achieve a goal. It includes the use of whatever means to attain what the individual thinks is right. It may be appropriate in some situations but it should not come to a point where the aggressor becomes too unreasonable.

v. **Compromising:** Compromising is about coming up with a resolution that would be acceptable to the parties involved. Thus, one party is willing to sacrifice their own sets of beliefs as long as the others will do the same. Hence, it can be viewed as a mutual give-and-take scenario where the parties submit the same amount of investment for the problem to be solved. A disadvantage of this strategy is the fact that since these parties find an easy way around the problem, the possibility of coming up with more creative ways for a solution would be neglected.

Given the different conflict management styles, you might be thinking of the one style that would suit you the most. It is important to note that the strategy involved in coming up with a resolution is relative to the kind of the problem.

Sources of Conflict

For the purpose of this discussion, let us put into attention the three main sources of conflict as proposed by American psychologist Daniel Katz. According to him, conflict arises primarily due to these three reasons:

a) **Economic conflict:** Economic conflict is brought about by a limited amount of resources. The groups of individuals involved then come into conflict to attain the most of these resources, thus bringing forth hostile behaviours of those involved.

b) **Value conflict:** Value conflict is concerned with the varied preferences and ideologies that people have as their principles. Conflicts driven by this factor are demonstrated in wars wherein separate parties have sets of beliefs that they assert (in an aggressive manner at that).

c) **Power conflict:** Power conflict occurs when the parties involved intends to maximize what influence it has in the social setting. Such a situation can happen among individuals, groups or even nations. In other types of conflict, power is also evident as it involves an asserting of inherence to another.

Conflict comes naturally; the clashing of thoughts and ideas is a part of the human experience. It is true that it can be destructive if left uncontrolled. However, it should not be seen as something that can only cause negative things to transpire.

Ethical Conflict Model

Source: Culled by the author
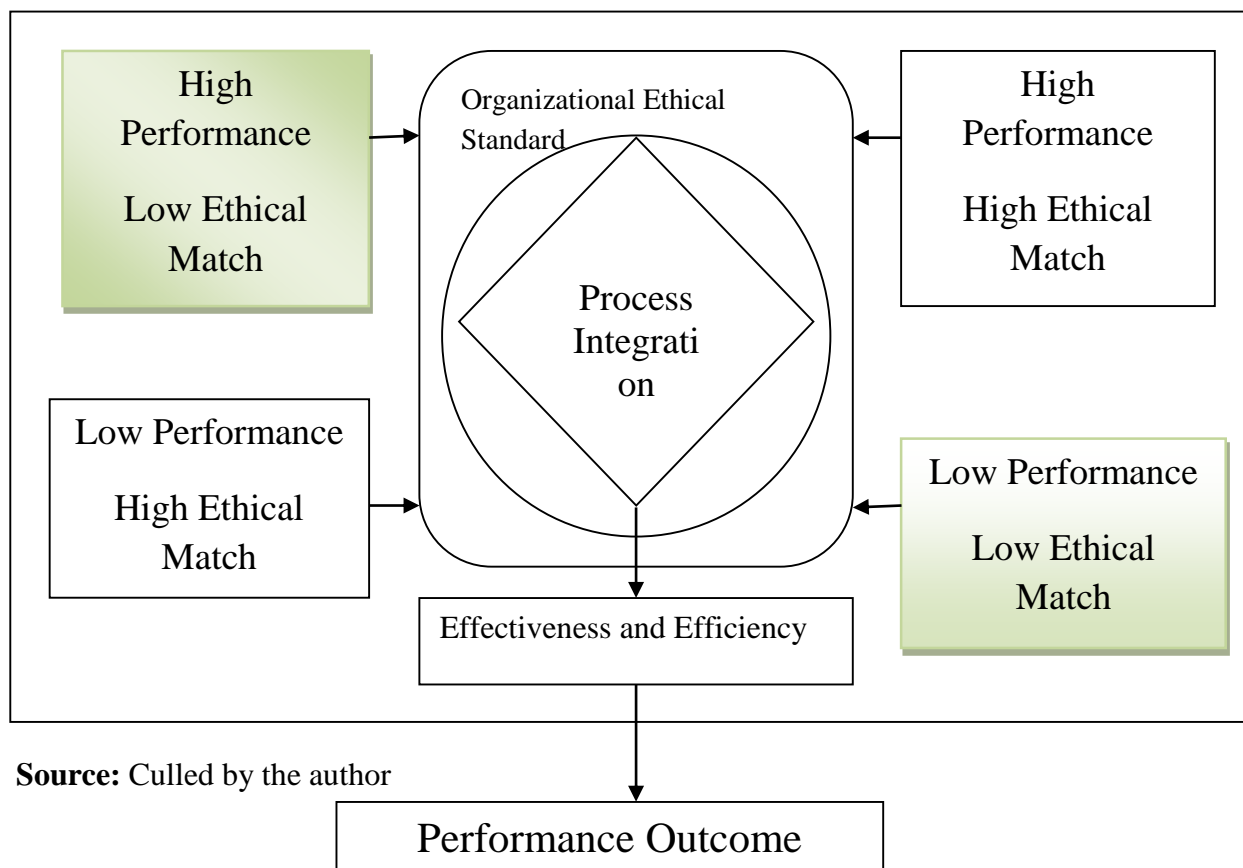
Organization's either big or small have ethical standard that guide the behavior of employees and members of the organization. These ethical standard or values in most cases are different from individual believes, values and ethical standard before joining the organization. These individuals who make up the organization or constituted the organization are therefore, from outside the organization and from different background and orientation. Their attitude and believe cannot be the same as that of the organization. Integrating them as well as eliminating any one is the responsibility of the organization to enhance effective and efficient achievement of organizational objectives.

The process integration is the stage that helps in unification between different ethical value and standard believe by movement of refugees considered to have different ethical standard, different from that of the organization into the main stream of the organization.

Those employees on the upper left of the organization as indicated in the shaded diagramed are poisonous green snake under a green grass. There are meeting up performance and possibly exceeding performance expectation, but demonstrate low ethical match. These groups have the capacity to damage the integrity and reputation of the organization; therefore there should be shown a way out before it will be too late.

The group with low performance but high ethical match in the low left side of the diagrammed should be train and develop to enhance their performance. They demonstrate good ethical standard but perform below expectation. Their performance can be improved if there are well trained, but if otherwise, the organization may consider laying them off because the firm is out to make profit and the low performance can impede that desire.

The nice place for every employee to desire to be is the upper right side, with high performance and high ethical match. There are constantly meeting up performance and still demonstrate high ethical match. This group should be seriously motivated and encourage. This will enable others to desire to be in the upper right side of the diagramed, and this can go a long way in boosting the capital base of the organization.

The worst and unimaginable place to be is low performance and low ethical match in the shaded diagrammed. This particular group does not have future in the organization and therefore should be shown a way out as any effort to improve their performance and align their value to that of the organization may prove abortive. How well the organization is able to integrate these entire elements will determine performance outcome and result desired.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research employed the qualitative research methods. We have relied on the use of key informants approach. Several key informants include senior managers who were intimately involved with the process of decision making and implementation. In addition, we have also carefully chosen some key informants who are believed to be a representative sample (not in the statistical sense) of the service industry. All key informants satisfy the criteria suggested by Campbell, (1955, p.48) in the following manner: a) they occupy roles that make them knowledgeable about ethical issues, decision making and implementation and b) they are willing to communicate and share their views with the researcher. We have analyzed and compared their opinions which are expected to represent the views of the service industry

employees concerning issues surrounding ethical conflicts and the implication for the realization of firms' objectives.

Data were gathered from multiple sources, including formal interviews, internal documents, and the internet. However, there is a strong reliance on interviews because rich insights and contextual information was sought from the key informants. In-depth interviews were sought from several key informants who include directors, managers and middle level management staff.

Summary of Major Findings.

In this section we compare our findings with our stated objectives.

Objective one is to determine how ethical conflict influences the performance of firms negatively; with a view to determine how it hinder achievement of firm's objectives. This objective has been achieved as we are able to demonstrate that the effect of ethical conflict on the realization of firms' objectives is unquantifiable as firms internal and external dealings are constrained, employees will no longer work cooperatively with each other to achieve corporate objectives and members of the public would no longer have confidence and trusts in the firms as personal or corporate dealing with the firms are minimized if not completely eradicated. This is a potential threat to firm's performance.

Objective two is to ascertain the extent to which standard ethical behavior facilitate achievement of firms objectives. This objective has been achieved as the finding also reveals that standard ethical behavior has the capacity to facilitate achievement of firm's objectives positively as the confidence of clients is guaranteed and internal and external dealing of the firms not constrained.

Findings also indicate that there is no acceptable source of ethical standards. Where there is no state religion, it is unthinkable to have one central source of authority for teaching ethical practices. Managers and government officials have traditionally been drawn from various backgrounds irrespective of religious affiliations. In the face of these circumstances we cannot look up to any central point from which ethical teaching and practice should radiate.

Finally, the result shows that code of ethics improve the confidence of public in the professionals, for instance, in doctor-patient or lawyer-client relationships and it guides the behavior of members, simplifies decision making and affords a valid defense for their action or inaction.

CONCLUSION

Conclusively, ethical conflict remains a fundamental challenge for human societies. Ethical conflicts may dissolve relationship with the said person or the organization, making future meetings awkward and/or unwanted and as well suspend achievement of firm objectives because of temporally disruption of organization plan. Numerous factors that include individual differences, opinion, cultural value, and set of belief have been identified as causes of ethical conflicts. But the fact that it can produce benefits for individuals, groups and nations leaves one to conclude that this is likely to continue and be part of our natural life.

On the other hand, the significance of ethics in the workplace cannot be over emphasized though ethical conflict is inevitable. Firm's internal and external dealings would be compromise without ethical standard. The activities of businesses depend on general ethical principles in the workplace in other to prevent a grinding halt, manipulation, dishonesty and fraud toward clients and customers of the firm. Investors and customers may be reluctant to sink money into the operation and purchase of company product if a company is viewed unethical.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the above findings, the paper recommends that's:

i. Management should educate it employees about the standard ethical values of the firm and what it considered as unethical that can create interface or collusion between individual, group or clients leading to poor organizational performance or hinder implementation of firms objectives. Employees should be trained during orientation or meetings for other important organizational matters and deliberations. Firms should not hesitate keeping any employee longer than expected in the organization if ethical standard of the firm is not adhere to strictly thereby, causing ethical conflict.

ii. Secondly, managers of a firm should address any identified ethical conflict on time and manage it effectively to enhance the confidence of the general public. They must also lead by example and have empathic consideration in their dealing with other staff so as to ensure equity and fairness. This has the capacity to eliminate or reduce ethical conflict and enhance effectiveness and efficiency.

iii. Conflict of interest should be identify on time to avoid degenerating into organizational ethical conflicts while providing guidance and support for effective resolution of the conflict and taking cue from professional organizations that have successfully manage ethical conflict in work place.

iv. ''Prevention is better than cure'' is a popular adage, firms should avoid any situation that will give rise to conflicts of interest, this can be considered as the best strategy.

v. Finally, firms should initiate and as well sustain policies that will minimize if not completely eradicated conflicts arising from ethical issues in the organization which will go a long way in sustaining the achievement of organizational objectives as the success or failure of any firm depends on her ability to implement firm policies.

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