

Effect of Work Ethics on Attitude to Work in Nasarawa State University, Keffi, Nigeria

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Abstract

Effective work ethics in any organization requires the knowledge of the nature of ethical dilemmas that are peculiar to the organization. Within the university system, several ethical dilemmas exist which hinge on unethical behaviour that could affect attitude to work among staff. This study examined the effect of work ethics and attitude to work in Nasarawa state university, Keffi. Survey design was employed and a population of 291 respondents were sampled and stratified into teaching and non-teaching staff. Data were collected using questionnaires and Key Informant Interview. Secondary data from Journals, books, conference reports and documents from the university were also reviewed. The data were analyzed using simple statistics with the aid of SPSS version 20 showing frequencies and percentages, while Correlation statistic was used to test relationships among variables. The KII responses transcribed and described. The study found that the ethical codes utilized in Nasarawa state university does not affect workers' attitude to work. Also found that the university ethical codes have very positive impact on the workers' attitude to work. The study recommends ethical reorientation; whistle-blowing, quality assurance and Servicom and university wide anti-corruption campaigns for effective institutionalization of work ethics. List consequences for unethical behaviours and should be placed alongside rules at strategic places in the University. Also recommends that swift disciplinary action should be taken for unprofessional conducts and should not be accommodated and irrespective of who breaks the rules and regulations of the University.

Keywords: Ethics, Work Ethics, Attitude, Work.

Introduction

The corporate world of today presents many areas of potential ethical conflicts. There are possibilities that organizational objectives may collide with employees' effort to achieve their own personal goals in the desire to achieve organizational goals successfully. Looking at ethical issues correctly is a major step in formulating and implementing effective strategies for building effective work ethics into an organization's culture and modus operandi. The modern world is characterized by globalization, information and communication technology (ICT's), business competitiveness, and limited natural resources. In this type of environment, successful corporate organizations are often conscious and proactive about ethical issues that affect their internal and external environments (Singhapakdi and Vitell, 2007). The awareness of ethical issues usually enables them to draw sound strategies for institutionalizing effective ethical codes of conduct that ensure optimum performance from their employees. Also, a higher level of performance will result to the attainment of organizational goals. Corporate ethical issues

are usually determined by the characteristics of the organization, its culture and the nature of the tasks/job performed by its employees.

Companies and organizations over the years emphasize work ethics – honesty, integrity and accountability. These ethics have rather negative impact on other people. Work ethics such as honesty, (not lying, cheating and stealing), doing a job well, valuing what one does, having a sense of purpose and feeling/being a part of a greater vision or plan is vital. Work ethics are intrinsic, they come from within. Schreiner (2019) noted that while some individuals try to get by doing as little work as possible, others possess a dedication that leads them to give it their all every day. People who possess a strong work ethic embody certain principles that guide their work behavior, leading them to produce high quality work consistently and without the prodding that some individuals require to stay on track. Furthermore, he noted that individuals with strong work ethic often want to appear dependable and proving this dependability by being reliable and performing consistently. Nasarawa state university is an organization that is public in nature, and has major interests in providing educational services that touch the lives of several layers of society. According to the former Governor of Nasarawa state, Abdullahi Adamu in 1999, specifically, Nasarawa state University is primarily concerned with the desire to put in place a sound and effective educational system that would serve as the engine room for the ultimate actualization of the dreams of those who fought for the creation of the state. Furthermore, the Nasarawa State University academic brief (2017) stated that the objective of the university is to encourage and promote scholarship and conduct research in all fields of learning and human endeavour among others.

The study examined the effect of work ethics on attitude to work of workers in Nasarawa state university, Keffi; determined the types of ethical codes that are institutionalized by management of Nasarawa State University, Keffi; assess whether the university ethical codes positively impact on work attitude of the workers of Nasarawa state university, Keffi, and determine the ethical codes that affect attitude to work in Nasarawa state university, Keffi.

Hypothesis

Ho: There is no significant relationship between ethical codes and workers' attitude in Nasarawa state University, Keffi.

Literature Review

Concepts of Work Ethic and Ethical code

According to Adeyeye, Osinbanjo & Oludayo (2015) the term ethics refers to the fundamental principles of right and wrong; it is the behaviour that is consistent with those principles. While the concept of work ethics refers to the meaning of work itself. The definition of the construct work ethic comes from the works of Max Weber (1958) in his work, "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism" (1904 and 1905) and in the article "The Protestant Sects and the Spirit of Capitalism" (1906). Work ethic refers to both the

spirit of capitalism, just like the protestant work ethics, or rather the ethics of ascetic protestatism, a doctrine that favours continuous and persistent professional occupation which assures the state of grace (Grabowski, 2015). Currently, work ethic however is associated with a process of valuing work. This ethic evaluates work both in a moral and normative sense. Work is viewed as good and virtuous in a moral sense, whereas it is a desirable, central element of life in a normative sense, but not necessarily in a moral sense. Either way, work is a cognitive category in the system of knowledge that consists of the categories of how it should be (Grabowski, 2015).

According to Reykowski (1998) from psychological point of viewpoint, work ethic primarily a system of attitudes and secondly, a system of convictions (belief system). Attitudes and convictions are similar concepts; however, attitudes may be inferred as comprising convictions. While attitudes are assumed to contain cognitive, emotional, and behavioural components, convictions refer only to the first two (cognitive and emotional ones) and emotional elements of attitudes themselves. However, Miller, et al (2002) described work ethic as a construct that consists of seven dimensions viz: Allocating value in hard work; belief in the virtue of hard (intensive) work, conviction that such work leads to reaching desired state of reality; treating work as life's centre; conviction for the great importance of work and perception of work as a central value in the life of an individual and society; Negative attitude of wasting time; conviction that time should be used effectively; Disapproval or unwillingness for free time; negative attitude to leisure and conviction for the low importance of human activities unrelated to work; Delay of gratification; orientation towards the future, patience in awaiting reward, cult of prudence; Self-reliance; praising independence in every day work; Morality/ethic; belief in a just and moral existence in the Christian sense, readiness to behave honestly towards other.

Ethical Issues in Organizations

The institutionalization of ethics has been defined as the degree to which an organization explicitly and implicitly incorporates ethics into its decision-making process (Singhapakdi and Vitell, 2008). Implicitly, incorporation of ethics occurs when ethical behaviour is implied as a crucial aspect of organization's activities. Thus, ethical behaviour may not be directly expressed but employees are made aware that their behavior would be judged according to certain ethical standards. Explicit incorporation of ethical codes, on the other hand, means that ethical behavior is formally called for without any ambiguity. What is important is that institutionalization of works ethics can lead to positive attitude to work among employees. Singhapakdi and Vitell (2008) provided empirical evidence to show that implicit institutionalization of ethical codes could have positive direct effect on job satisfaction, esprit de corps, and organizational commitment.

It is usually difficult for certain organizations to recognize specific ethical issues. However, failure to recognize the ethical issues that affect the performance of an organization will lead to a tendency to ignore important rules of fairness that pertain to an organization. This

can make people commit acts that are not only unethical but also illegal, all with a view to achieving their personal (or selfish) goals. An ethical issue presents a situation, a problem or an opportunity that requires careful analysis, investigation, discussion and decision – making. It is not easy to assess ethical behavior due to the fact that morality, or the distinction between what is good or bad (right or wrong) in human conduct is often arbitrary in nature. According to Akram and Azad (2011) there are basic guidelines that can help the worker assess whether the path he/she takes is ethical or not. Thus, ethical dilemmas or misdemeanors occur because people fail to place professional needs above personal needs. In modern corporate organizations ethical misconduct occurs when there is a strong conflict between personal interests and official responsibilities. An ethical issue arises if there is the occurrence of unethical behavior. An unethical behavior is defined as any act that violates the principle of morality, provisions of law or any other codes of conduct established by an organization, society or culture. Unethical behavior includes, but is not limited to corruption, fraud, falsification of official records/ documents, discrimination, sexual harassment, insider-trading, bribery and kickbacks, conflict of interest, improper use of organization assets, embezzlement and other forms of dishonesty and cheating. These forms of violation of ethical codes can occur in any organization that lacks effective administrative structure, awareness of ethical issues, and accountability or supervision from superior or the management officers. Given the nature of ethical dilemmas that exists in corporate organizations, both public and private organization should come up with new ways of institutionalizing ethics by formulating and enforcing codes of ethics. The University as an organization, including Nasarawa state university, Keffi is certainly an organization that contains several areas of ethical dilemmas for both the organization and its operatives. One potential area is the issue of bribery and corruption among staff who may prefer to condescend to taking bribes and gratifications from their students who are soliciting for higher grades, sexual gratification, falsification of grades and records of staff and students. Other areas may include admission racketeering, embezzlements by financial clerks and other stakeholders within the university. The formulation and institutionalization of ethical codes or work ethics are often conducted with the aim of establishing a sound moral culture by organizations. Several steps are followed in order to achieve this lofty objective by organizations. Organizations that wish to institutionalize ethical codes in their operations must create an environment that makes their employees behave or act in accordance with established ethical values and policies. Therefore, institutionalization of work ethics should be approached through effecting specific behaviors or acts. These behaviours and acts may vary according to their persistence, the number of people that behave according to the ethical codes and the degree to which the ethical standards exists as part of the organization (Koonmee et. al, 2009).

Any act that violates the principle of morality, provisions of law or any other codes of conduct established by an organization, society or culture is unethical behavior. Unethical behaviour includes, but is not limited to corruption, fraud, falsification of official records/

documents, discrimination, sexual harassment, insider-trading, bribery and kickbacks, conflict of interest, improper use of organization assets, embezzlement and other forms of dishonesty and cheating. These forms of violation of ethical codes can occur in any organization that lacks effective administrative structure, awareness of ethical issues, and accountability or supervision from superior or the management officers. It is usually difficult for certain organizations to recognize specific ethical issues, failure to recognize the ethical issues that affect the performance of an organization will lead to a tendency to ignore important rules of fairness that pertain to an organization. This can make workers act unethically that are detrimental to the organizational objectives.

An ethical issue presents a situation, a problem or an opportunity that requires careful analysis, investigation, discussion and decision – making. It is not easy to assess ethical behaviour due to the fact that morality, or the distinction between what is good or bad (right or wrong) in human conduct is often arbitrary in nature. According to Akram and Azad (2011) there are basic guidelines that can help the worker assess whether the path they take is ethical or not. Thus, ethical dilemmas or misdemeanors occur because people fail to place professional needs above personal needs. In modern corporate organizations, ethical misconduct occurs when there is a strong conflict between personal interests and official responsibilities. An ethical issue arises if there is the occurrence of unethical behaviour.

Ethical Codes

Codes of Ethics are deliberate statements that express the commitment of organizations, industries or professions to specific beliefs and value orientations that set out appropriate ethical behaviours for employees. Corporate work ethics dates back since the works of Weber (1905) "Protestant ethics and the spirit of capitalism". Weber saw business enterprise maintained ethical codes to acquire more profit. To him, industrial workers and the Calvinist admonished time wasting, laziness and encouraged self-discipline, hard work, rationality and are task oriented to acquire more wealth. This trait sets standards to organizational work ethics in complex organization because it determines worker's conduct, zeal to perform task effectively and drives productivity. The effectiveness of code of ethics depends more on how they are developed, implemented and followed up rather than what the codes says. If a code is merely imposed on employees without proper articulation and communication, it may sort to resentment. The codes may also appear meaningless if they are written, launched and then forgotten immediately. The worst types of codes are those that are introduced and then seen to be breached with impunity by senior managers or other "Sacred Cows". These types of codes simply breed cynicism among employees.

Crane and Matten (2007) argued that ethical codes involve the process of setting standards that might be done informally or formally and they are in four types:

- i) **Organizational or corporate codes of ethics:** these codes often apply only to specific organization and often referred to as codes of conduct. These codes are essentially

established to identify and encourage ethical behavior at the level of individual organization.

- ii) **Professional Codes of Ethics:** these codes are set as guidelines for the appropriate conduct for members of professional groups in different fields of industry.
- iii) **Industrial Code of Ethics:** particular industries may also have their own codes of ethics. The financial industry, for example may have their own specific codes such as dress code in banks. These codes are peculiar to particular industry(s)
- iv) **Programme or Group Codes of Ethics:** This code applies to certain programmes, coalition, or other sub-groupings of organizations. These types of codes may be established for the purpose of participating in specific programmes or collaborative activities.

From the above, this paper notes that ethical codes address issues that reflect industrial actors and other general concerns of the public. Most ethical codes are designed to achieve one or both of the following; define principles and standard that organization, profession or industry believes on and upheld; provide practical guidelines for employee behaviour, either generally or in specific situations such as accepting gifts, treating customers, keeping official secrets, and not reporting late to work. Adherence to work ethics in an organization can lead to realization of organizational goals and objectives, and at the same time makes employees feel confident to make a clean breast and deal with whatever comes their way. Emphasizing ethical standards also imply that highly ethical policies and procedures are adopted. This can reduce the cost of litigation where unethical conducts and policies might lead to legal battles between organizations and their clients (Bambale, 2003). Koonmee et.al (2009) observed that employees' work ethics can be positively influenced by different types of organizational ethical programme such as: Corporate ethical values, Proactive corporate citizenship, Ethical climate, Presence of ethics codes, Communication of ethics codes, Presence of ethics training. These ethical programs could have indirect effects on employee's job satisfaction. Ethical work environment is an essential determinant of ethical fit, which individual workers give preference to, in consideration of how fit is the organization. This therefore entails that corporate ethical values reflected in an organization's ethical culture are positively related to employee's commitment to the organization and their job satisfaction. The end result is that ethical corporate culture is associated with a better public image and reputation, greater client loyalty, a more satisfied and productive work force, and fewer regulatory or legal problems.

In order to develop and implement a more robust and effective work ethics or organizational ethics codes, some of the following suggestions adapted from Crane and Matten (2007) and Bambale (2003) are considered as important:

Participation: this will help members of the university develop and implement the ethical codes, thereby encouraging commitment and 'buy-in' of members to the principles of the codes of ethics that are institutionalized.

Discipline: the university should be willing to discipline employees that are found to have contravened the established codes. Though, issues of discipline in complex organizations must be handled with greatest concern and to avoid prejudice in their commitment discipline, so that it will not further disrupt any effort at institutionalizing work ethics in the organization.

Follow-through: Codes of ethics are supposed to be followed through with the seriousness they deserve. This could be done through detection of violations, follow-up on notification of violations and consistency between policy and action. This is found to be more influential on employee behavior because of a certainty that any violation is bound to be detected and dealt with.

Performance Evaluation: Where violations are found in the process of follow-through, it is imperative to deal with the violators so identified. Necessary proceedings should be put in place to deal with them appropriately. The codes of ethics of organization can therefore be used effectively by linking compliance to them with the performance evaluation of employees (Crane and Matten, 2007).

Support of Organization's Chief Executive: There is need for the organization's chief executive and his management team to fully support the institutionalization of ethical codes. The failure of the chief executive and his assistants to support the ethical codes so established is likely to lead to cynicism (Bambale, 2003). The organization may be worse off than when there were no formal ethical codes implemented. The chief executive should champion the development and implementation of the ethical codes in order to have a successful ethical re-orientation.

Ethical Re-orientation Committee: this is a committee purposely designed and institutionalized to oversee the implementation and operations of organization's ethical codes. The committee should be responsible for implementing and administering ethical codes within the organizations. Their duties should include communicating ethical codes, providing training on ethical behaviors, designing policies and procedure for maintaining ethical dilemma and making recommendations on disciplinary cases, investigating breaches or defaults on ethical codes and designing performance evaluation modalities for addressing breaches of ethical codes.

- i. **Whistle-blowing:** this mode of institutionalizing work ethics has the potential for assisting the organization's ethics committee to apprehend the violators of ethical codes and administer appropriate sanctions without delays. The process of whistle-blowing makes the implementation of organization's work ethics the responsibility of the entire members of the organizations. However, this strategy contains inherent danger to the realization of effective work ethics, particularly where the whistle-blower is isolated or targeted by aggrieved members who perceive him or her as a 'gadfly' deserving some form of reprisals (Crane and Matten, 2007). It is the responsibility of top management to communicate the necessity of whistle-blowing, and if found desirable, to protect and/or reward whistle-blowers.

- ii. **Anti-Corruption Campaign:** this measure is an effort to institutionalize ethical codes in a formal way by using all the necessary communication channels and publicity to reach the entire members of the organization. This strategy has the advantage of making ethics programme part of the organizations culture, which members are expected to uphold and make it part of their 'ethical fit'- that is the ethical codes of the organization should become internalized and accepted as part of the employees' ethical culture. Since 2016, Nasarawa State University has constituted anti-corruption and transparency unit.

Work and Ethical Values

According to Kuper (1996) cited in Ogunbameru and Ogunbameru (2004) work is any physical and or mental activities which transform natural materials into a more useful form, improve human knowledge and understanding of the world, and or provide or distribute goods to others. However, Armstrong & Taylor (2014) viewed work as the extension of effort and the application of knowledge and skills to achieve a purpose. Over time, work signifies social relevance, roles and values in the society (Weeks, 2000). By this people work to earn a living, while others work because of other satisfaction it brings. Long, Perumal & Ajagbe (2012) cited in Wasilu (2013) opined that since work is a necessary means for survival, people who work often seek many ways of livelihood that is meaningful and less complicated, and this new lifestyle actually has an impact on how they are motivated and managed at work. Adeyeye, et al (2015) admitted that work dominates the lives of most men and women, and the management of employees, both individually and collectively, remains a central feature of organization. They also argued that the totality of the essence of work in society is that it is the primary determinism around which human lives are ordered, organizations improved and nations are improved. Furthermore, Adeyeye et al (2015) asserted that moral principles that form the subject matter of ethics are about the way people ought to behave in terms of the commitment to their work, integrity and being self-discipline. Ethics primarily is the critical investigation of the norms of conduct to which human actions ought to conform. However, they noted that work ethics is the accepted standards in terms of personal and social welfare of employees, the work attitudes, self-discipline and commitment to their assignments. For Velasquez (2002), work ethics is the principle of conduct governing an individual or a group in the work place, which makes them, conforms to the ethical standards thus influencing organizational output level and the resultant profitability level. Various professions and organizations have developed codes of conduct set out very clear guidelines of what are considered right and wrong behaviours. The University system as an educational profession has clear sets of ethical codes to guide the behavior of the workers and workers swore to an oath to abide by the set ethical codes.

Loretto (2011) argued that a strong work ethic represents one of the values required for by employers. Employees are cherished if their work ethic enables them to understand and

possess a willingness to work hard by learning the most efficient ways to complete tasks and avoid time wasting. He further identified the following as work ethic required for organizational success:

- i. **Dependability and Responsibility:** employees who keep a punctual schedule and always come to work early are often more preferred over those who are tardy, late to work and unwilling to work hard. Dependable employees are also responsible for their actions and behaviours. Being dependable and responsible is a sign that the employee values his job and is responsible in keeping up with projects and tasks. Responsible officers always seek to work with officials who are both dependable and accountable in their duties, as this makes them more reliable and predictable.
- ii. **Possessing a Positive Attitude:** A positive attitude presupposes an enthusiasm to get the job done, and this creates an environment of goodwill that provides a positive role model for co-workers. Senior officers are usually more respected by their subordinates if they possess this type of attitude to work, while junior officers often fail to rise to higher positions if they lack a positive attitude.
- iii. **Adaptability:** this is required for maintaining flexibility in completing tasks in an ever-changing workplace. Being open to change and improvements makes the employee to complete work assignments in more efficient manner. Adaptability also implies that the employee adapts to the personality and work habits of co-workers and supervisors. Adapting one's personal behaviours to accommodate others is an essential requirement for effective work.
- iv. **Honesty and Integrity:** maintaining a sense of integrity and honesty is required for building good and lasting work ethic. Employees owe it to their organizations to use their own individual sense of moral and ethical behaviour when working with and serving others within the scope of their jobs.
- v. **Self-Motivated:** employees who require little supervision and direction to perform their tasks in a timely and professional manner are those who are self-motivated. A supportive work environment and the ability to take the initiative to be self-directive often provide employees and their supervisors with a better sense of job satisfaction and increased self-esteem.
- vi. **Motivated to grow and learn:** in an ever-changing workplace, employees are required to be interested in keeping abreast with new developments and knowledge in the field. Learning new skills, techniques, methods, and /or theories is a major requirement for keeping the organization at a competitive edge and accomplished.
- vii. **Strong Self-Confidence:** self-confidence among officers is a requirement for inspiring one's subordinates and colleagues. The self-confident person does what he/she feels is right and is willing to take risks in trying innovations. Self-confident people also have faith in themselves and their abilities which is manifested in their positive attitude and outlook in life

viii. **Professionalism:** professional behaviour involves mastering every aspect of the job and doing it to the test of one's ability. Professionals complete high-quality work and are detail oriented. They are enthusiastic about their work and optimistic about the organization and its future.

ix. **Loyalty:** employees who exhibit their loyalty to the organization are more trusted by their employers. Aligning an employee's values with the goals of the organization will foster loyalty between employer and employees. However, contradictions may occur particularly where supervisory officers feel that any loyalty should be to their personal agenda, and not the organizational goals.

The academic brief of Nasarawa state university (2017) spelt out the university values as self-discipline for actualization and positive contribution to the society; integrity by holding members of the university community to the highest level of honesty, fairness, professional and scholarly ethics; resourcefulness for focused contributions to the state and national growth and development; quality for excellence by exacting standards, appreciating high aspirations and achievements and expecting all persons associated with the university to strive for excellence; service to oneself, family, community, state, nation and the world at large, and innovativeness and creativity for high productivity.

Organizations that wish to institutionalize ethical codes in their operations must create an environment that makes their employees behave or act in accordance with established ethical values and policies. Therefore, institutionalization of work ethics should be approached through effecting specific behaviours or acts. These behaviours and acts may vary according to their persistence, the number of people that behave according to the ethical codes and the degree to which the ethical standards exit as part of the organization (Koonmee et. al, 2009). Ezigbo (2012) noted that the effectiveness of the code of ethics depends on the extent to which management supports them with sanctions and rewards. Violations of these codes are usually limited to loss of membership in the organization (through termination or expulsion). Members must be held accountable in the code in order of gravity of violation to include penalty such as reprimand, letter of censure, suspension to range from one to five years depending on the circumstances and expulsion from service after applying the aforementioned.

Attitude to Work

Aluko (2008) viewed attitude as a person's feelings about objects, activities, events and other people. Also, for him, attitudes are our affinities for and our aversions to situations, objects, persons, groups, or any other identifiable aspects of our environment, including abstract ideas and social policies. These feelings are usually learned over a period of time and a major factor in determining workers behaviour. He further stated that work attitudes refer to the general approach that people take to their work as a result of having certain values. At work, two particular job attitudes have the utmost potential to influence how we behave. These are job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Job satisfaction

connotes feelings people have toward their job; while organizational commitment is the emotional attachment people have toward the company they work for (Mba, 2017). From the forgoing, attitude to work could refer to the feelings we have toward different aspects of the work environment, which generate intentions and readiness to behave in a certain way and may predict actual behavior under certain conditions.

Mocarelli (2009) argued that perceived work content and environment determined worker's attitude to work. To him, the distinctions between creative work and ingenuity on one hand and bricklaying on the other hand, have a strong influence on the worker. He further contended that the inferiority and superiority of a job determines how workers react and perform in the organization. Adeyeye (2015) contended that the Nigerian workers have been painted with negativity attached to their attitude to work, though motivational issues are germane to these arguments. Whichever way we look at it, worker's respond to how well they perceive their work which includes both the extrinsic and intrinsic factors. Levine, Moreland & Choi (2001) as cited by Lawrence (2010) argued that an individual worker's identity with work organizations helps him find comfort and become involved in the roles concerning the generalized expectations about their behavior and the organizations. They asserted that inability of workers to meet the preferred expectations; they find the work distasteful and can easily leave. Guerreror and Sire (2000) argued that if the worker has negative attitude towards work, the consequence can create problem in applying the prescribed job design, which means there will be failure in accomplishing organizational goals. The good things in raising the level of attitude has led to a focus on identifying the range of causes that shape poor attitude as well as understanding how these causes operate to limit or enhance the performance of workers.

Theoretical Framework

The study adopted Herzberg two factor theory. Herzberg (1959) two factor theories are inherent in this study because of their readiness to unravel the character of workers' attitude to work and its applicability to the work context in Nigeria. The tenets of this theory are anchored on two basic principles or factors; the hygiene factors and the motivators. The proponent of these theories contended that workers have different attitude to their work inherent in their perception about the job content. Herzberg (1959) evaluated these factors to what prevent workers from dissatisfaction such as excellence pay, good working environment, relationship with managers and colleagues and the level of job security, which encourages their attitude to the job with consideration to a level of certainty they feel about their organization on one side, and motivators which seems latent to workers' perception and attitude such as opportunity for self-actualization, their judgment about the content and context of job and self-responsibility. Hence, the motivators are basically the latent and intrinsic function of job with which workers react to when it comes to job. Herzberg further contended that when workers feel their job contents removes dissatisfies; they do not necessary feel motivated alone but relies on the ethical codes driven by their employers.

Despite the obvious criticisms of these theories, they are applicable to the Nigerian context because people rely and work for these two factors intrinsic and extrinsic; and also rely on managerial motivation. Thus, the Nigerian workers are often painted with negativity attached to their attitude to work, though motivational issues are germane to these arguments (Adeyeye, et al, 2015). For example, Mba (2017) contended that Nigerian workers react to their work based on their feelings to the work content such as pay, environment, their affection with colleagues and employers, opportunity for self-actualization and autonomy. It is obvious workers identity with work organizations help them find comfort and become involved in the roles concerning the generalized expectations about their behavior and the organizations.

Methodology

The study adopts survey design and the population of the study is one thousand two hundred and twelve (1212) staff comprised of academic and non-teaching staff of Nasarawa state university, keffi. The study drew its sample size of 291 from the population based on 95% confidence level and 5% margin error as obtained from research advisors sample size determination (2006). See table 1.

Table 1: Study Population and Sample size

Rank	Population	Sample Size
Professors	119	$119 \div 1212 \times 291 = 29$
Associate Professors	58	$58 \div 1212 \times 291 = 14$
Senior Lecturer	90	$90 \div 1212 \times 291 = 22$
Lecturer I	110	$110 \div 1212 \times 291 = 26$
Lecturer II	75	$75 \div 1212 \times 291 = 18$
Assistant Lecturer	129	$129 \div 1212 \times 291 = 31$
Assistant Graduates	31	$31 \div 1212 \times 291 = 7$
Senior non-teaching	351	$351 \div 1212 \times 291 = 84$
Junior staff	249	$249 \div 1212 \times 291 = 60$
Total	1212	291

Source: Field survey, 2020

The sample size for each stratum was done proportionately by dividing the population with the total population and multiplied with the sample size. The population is stratified into Academic staff (Professors, Associate professors, Senior lecturers, Lecturer I, Lecturer II, Assistant Lecturers and Graduate assistants) and Non-teaching staff (senior non-teaching and junior non-teaching) as presented in table 1. Questionnaires were administered to the 291 respondents and statistical package for social sciences, version 20 used to analyze the responses presented in tables using frequencies and percentages. Key informants were selected purposively and interviewed based on their knowledge about ethical codes and as basically the enforcers of ethical code in the university. The KII includes, DVC Academics,

DVC Administration, Registrar, Bursar, and Librarian. The data obtained from the questionnaire were analyzed using frequencies and simple percentages, and correlation and contingency statistics were used to test relationships among variables in the test of hypotheses. The Key Informant Interview was described.

Data Analysis and Results

The data are presented and analyzed in tables using frequencies and percentages as follows:

Table 2: Whether the University Ethical Codes has Positive Impact on Workers' Attitude to Work

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Very positive	70	24.1
Positive	63	21.6
Neither	58	19.9
Not positive	63	21.6
Don't know	37	12.7
Total	291	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Table 2 revealed that majority of the respondents constituting 24.1 percent indicated that university ethical codes have a very positive impact on their work attitude. While, 21.6 percent of the respondents indicated the university ethical codes have positive impact on their work attitude and yet 21.6 percent also indicated that the university ethical codes have no positive impact on their work attitude. To corroborate the finding that the university ethical codes have positive impact on their work attitude, one of the key informants interviewed said: *majority of the workers are adherence to the organization's ethical codes and most of all, loyalty and adaptability are mostly utilized.*

Table 3: Response on which Ethical Codes is mostly Utilized in Nasarawa state University

Ethical codes	Frequency	Percent
Dependability	18	6.2
Positive attitude	26	8.9
Adaptability	34	11.7
Honesty and integrity	16	5.5
Self-motivated	33	11.3
Self confidence	30	10.3
Motivation to grow	37	12.7
Professionalism	54	18.6
Loyalty	43	14.8
Total	291	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Table 3 shows that 18.6 percent of the respondents who are the majority indicated that professionalism is the ethical code mostly utilized in Nasarawa state university. While 14.8 percent indicated loyalty and 12.7 percent indicated motivation to grow as the most utilized ethical codes in Nasarawa state university. The results reveal that professionalism, loyalty, self-motivation and motivation to grow constitute the major ethical codes utilized in Nasarawa state university.

Table 4: Ranking of Responses on how ethical codes affect work attitude

Ranking	Frequency	Percent
Very high	62	21.3
High	61	21.0
Moderate	46	15.8
Very low	55	18.9
Low	67	23.0
Total	291	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Table 4 shows that, 23.0 per cent of the respondents indicated that the effect of ethical codes on work attitude is low. While 21.3 per cent and 21.0 per cent of the respondents believed the ethical codes in Nasarawa State university affects their attitude to work very high and high respectively. The results reveal that the ethical codes utilized in Nasarawa State university does not affect the workers' attitude to work.

Table 5: Unethical Codes that affects Workers' Attitude to Work in Nasarawa state University

Unethical codes	Frequency	Percent
Interpersonal conflict	12	4.1
Difficulty in relating with core employees	35	12.0
Mistrust by employer	45	15.5
Favoritism	28	9.6
Ineffective implementation of promotion	28	9.6
Examination malpractice/corruption	36	12.4
Sexual harassment	22	7.6
Bribery	44	15.1
Sex for grade/favour	41	14.1
Total	291	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Table 5 shows that 15.5 per cent of the respondents indicated that mistrust by the employer (Nasarawa State University) is the unethical codes that affect workers attitude to work and 15.1 per cent of the respondents indicated that bribery affects workers attitude to work; while 14.1 per cent indicated that sex for grade/favour affects workers attitude to work. While Favoritism, ineffective implementation of promotions, sexual harassment and Interpersonal conflicts constitutes the least unethical codes that affect workers' attitude in Nasarawa state university, with 9.6 per cent, 9.6 per cent, 7.6 per cent, and 4.1 per cent, respectively. The results revealed that mistrust by the employer and sex for grades/ favour are the most unethical codes that affect the workers' attitude to work. However, one of the key informants argued that *unethical codes such as sex for grade, bribery and favoritism are among the most unethical codes that affects employee's attitude.*

Test of Hypothesis

Ho: There is no significant relationship between ethical codes and workers' attitude to work in Nasarawa State University, Keffi.

Correlation and contingency statistics were used to test relationships among variables in the test of hypotheses. The results are shown as follows.

Table 8: Symmetric Measures on the relationship between ethical codes and workers' attitude

		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Contingency Coefficient	.309	.002
N of Valid Cases		291	
a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.			
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.			

Table 8, shows that the p value is significant with .002. Based on this, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternate hypothesis is accepted.

The study further cross tabulated key variables in order to establish relationship between the variables as shown in tables 9 and 10.

Table 9: Crosstabulation of Ethical codes mostly utilized and attitude to work in Nasarawa state University, Keffi

Which of these ethical codes are mostly utilized in your organization		Attitude					Total
		Very positive	Positive	Neither	Not positive	Don't know	
Ethical Codes	Dependability	1	1	0	9	7	18
	Positive attitude	7	10	7	2	0	26
	Adaptability	5	5	6	11	7	34
	Honesty and integrity	6	5	4	1	0	16

	Self motivation	6	6	16	5	0	33
	Self confidence	0	3	13	14	0	30
	Motivated to grow	10	22	3	2	0	37
	Professionalism	31	11	1	5	6	54
	Loyalty	4	0	8	14	17	43
Total		70	63	58	63	37	291

Author's Computation, 2020

The results in table 9 shows that ethical codes that are mostly utilized in the Nasarawa state university are professionalism and motivation to grow contributes very positive and positive to the workers' attitude to work.

Table 10: Crosstabulation of Organizational ethical code impact on Attitude to work in Nasarawa State University, Keffi

Does the university ethical code has impact on your attitude?		Attitude					Total
		Very high	High	Moderate	Very low	Low	
Impact	Very positive	26	15	5	7	17	70
	Positive	12	10	19	17	5	63
	Neither	7	11	7	14	19	58
	Not positive	8	10	7	16	22	63
	Dont know	9	15	8	1	4	37
Total		62	61	46	55	67	291

Author's computation, 2020

Table 10 shows that the Nasarawa state university ethical codes have very positive impact on attitude to work of the employees.

Discussion of Findings

The study found that Nasarawa state university ethical codes have very positive impact on the workers' attitude to work. Yunus, AbdulRahim, Shabuddin and Mazlan (2011) in their work ethic of Malaysian civil servant, noted that positive work ethic among others emphasize hard work, commitment and dedication, and positive attitudes towards work are important aspect of work place dynamics. Therefore, having positive work ethic and ethical codes that encourage a commitment to the value and the importance of hard work is the essence of organizational success. Also, the finding revealed that professionalism is the most utilized ethical code in the University, though loyalty, self-motivation and motivation to grow are also utilized.

The study found that the ethical codes utilized in Nasarawa state university does not affect workers' attitude to work.

The study also found that mistrust by the employer is the most unethical code that affects the workers' attitude to work. The finding of the study revealed that there is a significant relationship between ethical codes of the university and workers' attitude to work.

Conclusion

The process of institutionalizing effective work ethics in any organization requires adequate conceptualization of the nature of ethical dilemmas that are peculiar to the organization in question. This requires that ethical codes are both implicitly and explicitly stated as part of the organization's ethics programme. All types of ethical codes must be adequately communicated, shared and institutionalized. Given the nature of ethical dilemmas that exists in corporate organizations, both public and private organization should come up with new ways of institutionalizing ethics by formulating and enforcing codes of ethics. Nasarawa state university is undoubtedly an organization that cherishes professionalism, academic excellence and detests unethical behaviours such as bribery and corruption, sex for grade and sexual harassment.

Recommendations

- i. The study recommends performance evaluation, ethical reorientation; whistle-blowing, quality assurance and Servicom as well as the university wide anti-corruption campaigns are all necessary ingredients for effective institutionalization of work ethics
- ii. The institutionalization of the work ethics should be approached scientifically, through careful measurement and follow-ups to ensure effective participation and compliance. In this effort, no party should be made a scape-goat in the effort to discipline erring parties.
- iii. List consequences for unethical behaviours and should be placed alongside rules at strategic places in the University. That way, if anyone wants to ignore the rules despite seeing them, the fear of getting punish will be stop him/her from going ahead.
- iv. Also, the study recommends that swift disciplinary action should be taken for unprofessional conducts and should not be accommodated and irrespective of who breaks the rules and regulations of the University.

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