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Abstract
Human Resource Management Practices have been defined as systems that are intended to give assurance to the successful administration of the human capital within an organization. It expected to motivate, attract and retain those employees with competencies to enable the organization to stand tall among its competitors. This competitive advantage has been affected by the employee’s behavior individually and collectively. Employees are expected to behave in an ethical manner to win the trust of customers and stakeholders. This ethical behavior which has been described as those employee behaviors which are consistent with the requirements or expectations of stakeholders. Employee behavior can also be affected by the work climate available to them. This work climate if ethical can shape the ethicality of individual and collective employees conduct within the organization. Ethical work climate have been defined as those social environment which are consciously perceived by the employees and stakeholders of the organization. Organizations have attempted to use so many ways to manage the behavior of their employees. These practices include paying attention to values that can change the beliefs and actions of employees such as developing codes of ethics for compliance. However developing an ethical work climate which can change or shape employee ethical behaviors and subsequently result in improved employee performance is a key concern HRM and therefore need to take an active role developing ethical work climate which every member of the organization may view to be promoting the ethical values required by the organization.

Key words: Human Resource Management Practices, Ethical Work Climate, Ethical Behavior

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES
Scholars have attempted to give meaning to HRM practices in so many ways. Schuler and Jackson (1987) defined HRM practices as those systems that motivates, engages, retains and develops employees, guaranteeing the successful administration of the organization and its members ensuring the organization’s survival. Besides Delery and Doty (1996) defined HRM practices as those internal and regular practices and policies aimed at implementing and ensuring that a firm’s human capital promote the realization of its business objectives. Human resource management practices according to Minbaeva (2005) are practices used by organizations to manage their human resources by developing specific competencies of their employees that are specific to the firm, which produce group relation and generate organizational knowledge that sustains competitive advantage. From these definitions, we can describe Human Resource Management practices as those activities that relate to specific practices and formal policies that are aimed at developing, motivating, attracting, and retaining employees who secure the successful running and support of the organization. HR should be responsible for creating an organization’s ethical direction by fostering and promoting the development of such ethical behaviors and those activities which individual organizations need from their employees in order to achieve its objectives with integrity and honesty Minbaeva (2005).

Scholars have developed a number of approaches to handle Human Resource Management issues. These approaches include best practices or the universal approach (for example Huselid, 1995); Strategic HRM practices approach (for example Delery & Doty, 1996); configuration approach (Wright & McMahan, 1992). Contingency approach (Dyer, 1985; Schuler, 1989). Studies have indicated that Human Resource Management practices which were linked to organizational ethical behavior focused on best practice approach since most ethical practices as addressed by most ethical theories like utilitarianism, virtue theories and deontological theories are easy to generalize to a larger population. A review of the Human
Resource Management Practices literature suggested five key standard practices consistently associated with employee behavioral management, these include recruitment, reward system, performance appraisal, career management and training which when done properly can paint a picture of fairness within the organization and subsequently bring an ethical climate within the organization which is capable of influencing employee behaviors (Gupta & Singhal, 1993). The concept of Human resource management practices can be said to be those activities within an organizations whose focus is the management of a pool of HR and directing the resources towards the achievement of organizational objectives.

**ETHICAL WORK CLIMATE**

To understand the concepts of ethical organizational work climate and employee ethical behavior, it is imperative to appreciate the concept of work ethics upon which it is based. The term “work ethic” is agreed to have been coined centuries ago by post-reformist researchers. A lot of work on work ethic is seen to have originated from the essay of Max Weber (1904 and 1905) entitled “the protestant work ethic” and the spirit of capitalism which gave birth to the term protestant work ethic. Protestant work ethic has been described as a belief that hard work is important. Morrow (1983) posited that protestant work ethics can be used to gauge one’s willingness to work hard and should give a picture that hard work is good as an end in itself and can reflect a person’s personal worth and morale stature. According to Morrow and McElroy (2003), work ethic simply means that work is a good moral which is characterized by diligence and hard work which can improve an individual’s living condition and reduce poverty in a society. Work ethic exhibits itself in employees who work hard and shows pride in their work by going beyond minimum expectations and striving for excellence in every aspect of the labor. These type of employees are self-motivated, tend to be more dependable, and satisfied. What makes these employees to work hard is the belief that they have a duty to work hard in order to earn fairly and contribute to the economy of their organization and society. Work ethic is generally comprised of professionalism, positive attitude, reliability, respect, initiative, integrity and gratitude.

The concept of work ethics as opposed to ‘work ethic’ means a slightly different thing. Employees work at a place and are likely to subscribe to a trade or professional body. Work ethics therefore refers to a set of moral standards for each profession or trade or workplace practices (Phau and Keah, 2017). Every trade, profession or job has a definite agreed level of quality of ethical practices that most employees in that occupation agree on. These standards form workplace ethics, for example a Medical Doctor and client confidentiality. Employers are institutions who are supposed to make rules of conduct within their organizations and also to consider that their actions meet the requirements of the rule of right and wrong. They are required to provide work environment that do not violate employees right to natural justice hence not to do what employees may perceive as wrong leading to unethical practices like subjecting employees to discriminative practices at the workplace.

Work Climate as defined by Denison (1996) describes an organizations social environment as consciously perceived by the organizational members which are established in the firm’s value system representing the institution’s collective environment in terms of established and predominantly relevant set of dimensions. Organizational members in this case may represent both employees and owners of the organization. To the employees, this environment will define the value system of the organization. The ethical climate literature provides an agreement that firm specific factors like individual organization compensation systems, rules and regulations influence ethical decision making when they are combined with individual employee characteristics (Jones, 1991; Trevino, 1986). Since managers can control individual work environment, contextual factors can be used to promote ethical initiatives than individual characteristics since managers have little control over individual moral values or development (Trevino et al., 1998)

As stated by Victor and Cullen(1988) ethical climate are those organizational actions and approaches that have ethical content that can dictate what constitutes moral behavior at work situation. Therefore ethical climate is expected to predict the behavior of employees at work. Victor and Cullen (1988) observed that ethical work climate has capacity to effect employee behavior and attitude since they...
provide information about the organization and guide employees in regard to appropriate conduct. Organization culture serves as a mental map for navigating within an organization providing values and standards for what is considered appropriate work behavior; for example decision making, interacting with colleagues, supervisors, subordinates or customers (Stanusch, 2010). Some organizations attempts to foster an ethical culture or climate by paying attention on favorable values that can define the moral beliefs and behaviors of employees (Trevino and Nelson, 2004).

**EMPLOYEE ETHICAL BEHAVIOR**

Ethical behavior is majorly anchored on ethics which broadly involves ethical issues and choices which is mainly concerned with the rightness and wrongness of the behavior. Velasquez, (2014) described Ethics as branch of philosophy concerned with values associated with human management of the rightness and wrongness of definite actions and goodness and badness of thinking and ends of such actions. Muler et al., (2014) viewed ethics as the application of moral standards depending on the situation and majorly comes from the values, traditions, and beliefs that an individual obtained from learning in societies concerning right and wrong conduct (Muler et al., 2014). Warren (2011) while acknowledging the value of ethics in business posited that ethics is not limited to conduct of individuals and therefore it applies both to the business and individual employee within the business organization. Since the business activity is done by its employees, (Alzola, 2015; Enderle, 2015; Muller et al., 2014; Vranceany, 2014) concurred that a business that is deemed to be at odds with non-economic social values is reflected by the selection and amount of its moral matters and they categorized ethics as both normative and descriptive. Descriptive ethics involves describing people’s behavior and the moral standards they follow while normative ethics involves practice mostly employee career specialization.

The virtue of ethics is usually given meaning by referring to people and their attributes. Ethical matters arise when people at individual level face issues involving individual responsibility such as accepting a bribe, being honest, using organization’s or public resources for personal purposes. At the organizational level, ethical issues are associated with the principles of conduct within organizations that guide decision making and behavior (Rizvi et al., 2012).

According to Beauchamp and Bowie (2008), ethics is majorly concerned with good and evil, right and wrong, and therefore what people are assumed to do or not. Lewis (1985) after analyzing 38 different definitions of business ethics, concluded that ethics is comprised of the standards, regulations, principles or codes, guiding ethically acceptable behavior. Ethical behavior means compliance to these ethical norms, while un-ethical behavior means the contrary. Behavior that is not accepted by the larger society is always regarded as un-ethical (Jones, 1991). An outstanding face of unethical behavior is that it deals with misbehaviors whenever basic interests are at stake and ethics is in play. As opposed to breaking of rules, criminal behavior and non-compliance, unethical behavior is not restricted only to breach of formal and clear regulations or standards but also contravention of indirect norms.

Both the organization and its employees bear ethical responsibilities to their various stakeholders. These responsibilities are grounded in stakeholder theory. Developed by Freeman (1984), stakeholder theory assumes that business organizations have encountered different forms of association with different types of people and organizations who enter an association with the business organizations to safeguard and advance their interests. Since an organization and stakeholders grow to be interdependent, reciprocal expectations between the parties demands that they engage others’ interests in a moral manner. According to Kaptein (2008) different stakeholders may experience different un-ethical behavior because of the existence of various moral responsibilities within the organization. Going by the observations of Kaptein (2008), it is possible to describe ethical behavior as those employee behaviors that are consistent with the requirements of the stakeholders of the organization. Valentine and Barnett (2004) noted that some firms formulate and use codes of ethics to outline behavioral and moral requirements appropriate to their organization’s while others provide specialized employee training to guide ethics. The primary reason for these strategies and actions is to ensure that employees perform their work roles in an ethical manner (Valentine and Fleichman, 2004).
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