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Between Morals and Margins: Employee Views on Ethical Challenges in Profit-Driven Environments

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Abstract

This paper, "Between Morals and Margins: Employee Views on Ethical Challenges in Profit-Driven Environments" investigates the intricate dynamics between profit objectives and ethical practices within organizations. It emphasizes the perspectives of employees who are often caught between the drive to meet financial targets and the necessity to adhere to ethical standards. The research utilizes a mixed-method approach, encompassing both quantitative and qualitative data, to deeply understand how employees navigate these competing pressures. The study indicates a concerning trend where 12% of employees feel pressured to compromise ethical standards to meet profit targets. This pressure not only challenges individual integrity but also threatens the ethical fabric of organizations. Furthermore, only 66.7% of employees believe their organizations are genuinely committed to ethical behavior, underscoring a critical gap between policy and practice. Additionally, the support systems for reporting unethical behaviors are inadequate; only 48.5% of organizations have policies that encourage whistleblowing, and just 30.3% have protective measures for whistleblowers, exacerbating fears of retaliation. The paper contributes to a broader discourse on business ethics by illustrating that ethical decision-making is not just a moral obligation but also a strategic element that impacts the company's overall health. Through exploring employee experiences and the organizational contexts that influence their ethical decisions, the study sheds light on integrity's foundational role in sustaining business operations and reputation.

Keywords: *Business Ethics, Ethical Behavior, Ethical Decision, Ethical Practices.*

Introduction

In today's fast-paced and highly competitive business environment, organizations are increasingly driven by the imperative to maximize profits. This relentless pursuit, however, often brings with it a complex set of ethical dilemmas, particularly for employees who are on the front lines of operational execution. The pressure to meet financial targets can sometimes lead to practices that blur or cross ethical boundaries, raising significant concerns about the moral fabric of organizational cultures.

In examining the intricate relationship that exists between profit objectives and ethical business practices, it is of the utmost importance to investigate the viewpoints of employees who frequently negotiate these competing demands. This investigation offers major insights into the implications for ethical decision-making within business contexts.

The intersection of profit maximization and ethical standards presents a notable quandary: How do employees perceive and navigate the pressure to compromise ethical norms in favor of enhancing profitability? This issue is critical because the way employees respond to these pressures can have profound implications not only for the moral climate of the organization but also for its public reputation and legal standing. Instances of ethical compromise can lead to widespread negative outcomes,

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including financial penalties, loss of customer trust, and damage to organizational integrity.

This article, titled "Between Morals and Margins: Employee Views on Ethical Challenges in Profit-Driven Environments," seeks to explore the perceptions and experiences of employees across various industries in Georgetown, Guyana. It aims to understand the factors that influence their decision-making when confronted with the need to balance ethical considerations against the demands for financial performance. By delving into the personal accounts and observations of those within the workforce, the study intends to shed light on the underlying dynamics that fuel ethical compromises in the business world.

Materials and Methods

Review of Literature

What is Business Ethics?

According to [1], business ethics refers to the examination and implementation of moral principles and values in the context of business. It entails assessing the choices, strategies, and actions of corporations and individuals based on ethical values. The discipline of ethics in question is intrinsically pragmatic since it aims not only to comprehend ethical ideas but also to implement them in manners that improve the moral consequences of economic actions. Business ethics is a crucial component of modern economic discussions, focusing on the ethical principles that govern the behavior of corporations and individuals in business. Business ethics deals with the practical challenges and moral issues that firms and their stakeholders encounter, in contrast to theoretical ethics.

Theoretical Foundations of Business Ethics

In order to provide a solid basis for comprehending these dynamics, it is necessary to establish a strong theoretical framework in the field of business ethics. One contention is that the primary responsibility of business leaders is to maximize shareholder returns, adhering strictly to the laws and ethical customs of society. From this shareholder-centric view, the main responsibility of a business is to use its resources to engage in activities designed to increase its profits so long as it stays within the rules of the game. Business executives who prioritize goals other than generating profit are essentially imposing taxes and determining how those funds are allocated [2]. While these ideas have been influential, they have also created a large amount of controversy regarding the extent of corporate responsibility. Subsequent research has suggested that a focus that is so narrowly focused on profitability might lead to serious ethical and social oversights.

In contrast to the shareholder-centric view, stakeholder theory posits that companies have duties that extend beyond shareholders to other stakeholders, including employees, communities, and the environment [3]. The stakeholder theory introduced by [3] challenges the conventional wisdom that corporations primarily exist to serve shareholders and maximize profit. By expanding the circle of important corporate actors, they propose a more sustainable and ethical framework for corporate governance [3]. However, the theory faces criticism, especially concerning its practical implementation. Critics argue that the diverse range of stakeholders can result in conflicting interests that are challenging to balance effectively.

Another perspective attempts to reconcile the preceding diverse views by proposing that value maximization aligns with stakeholder theory if businesses adopt a long-term outlook and consider the broader impacts of their decisions. This nuanced approach to the profit-versus-ethics debate suggests that firms can thrive by integrating ethical pursuits with core business strategies [4]. The analysis delves into the conflicts and potential reconciliations between value maximization and stakeholder theory, emphasizing how aligning corporate goals with shareholder interests can enhance outcomes for other stakeholders [4]. The conclusion drawn is that the principles of value maximization and stakeholder theory are closely aligned and mutually supportive when properly understood. The focus should be on maximizing the total long-term market value of a firm, which inherently involves considering the interests of all stakeholders. By prioritizing shareholder value under conditions of fair play and competitiveness, a company indirectly benefits all stakeholders, as long-term value creation demands ethical practices, sound governance, and sustainable strategies that account for the welfare of employees, customers, suppliers, and the broader community [4]. A broad understanding of value maximization that includes fulfilling responsibilities to all stakeholders is advocated, as neglecting these responsibilities can diminish a firm's overall value.

References [5] Introduce the concept of creating shared value (CSV), suggesting that businesses can generate economic value in a way that also produces value for society by addressing its challenges. This approach integrates corporate success with social welfare, implying that ethical operations can enhance profitability through brand integrity, customer loyalty, and operational efficiencies.

In a 2017 study, [6] moral philosophy was applied to business ethics, suggesting that ethical principles should guide business decisions just as they guide individual moral choices. This approach provides a philosophical foundation for ethical decision-making in business, highlighting respect for people as a fundamental principle. Ethics, including the categorical imperative, demands that actions be universally applicable, and emphasizes treating individuals as ends in themselves rather than means to an end [6]. This application to business is notable for shifting the focus from outcomes to intentions and principles. Unlike utilitarian ethics, which evaluates actions by their consequences, [6] ethics insists on adherence to moral duty regardless of outcomes, promoting a more principled business approach where actions are guided by duty rather than potential benefits or harm. This perspective underscores the inherent dignity and worth of every individual, potentially transforming corporate cultures and policies. For instance, it supports arguments against exploitative workplace practices, advocating for fair treatment, equitable compensation, and respect for the autonomy of every worker.

Adopting a [6] approach to business ethics presents a compelling framework compared to alternatives like shareholder-centric models, stakeholder theory, or concepts like creating shared value (CSV). Each of these frameworks provides valuable insights but also exhibits specific limitations that [6] ethics can effectively address. Firstly, [6] ethics is grounded in the categorical imperative, which demands that moral principles be universally applicable. This universality ensures clear, consistent ethical standards, unlike stakeholder theory, which often grapples with competing interests and can lead to inconsistent ethical decisions. [6] Ethics promotes consistency by requiring actions to uphold principles universally endorsed, avoiding ethical inconsistencies that can arise from trying to balance diverse stakeholder needs. Secondly, [6] ethics focuses on moral duty over consequences, a stark contrast to outcome-focused frameworks like the shareholder-centric view or CSV. This prioritization discourages compromising ethical standards for profit or efficiency, ensuring that ethical considerations are not overridden by economic incentives. It fosters a culture of integrity within organizations by emphasizing duty over beneficial outcomes. Thirdly, the [6] principle of treating individuals as ends in themselves and not merely as means to an end underscores a high regard for human dignity and autonomy. This principle is critical in business, especially in labor relations and consumer rights, safeguarding against exploitative practices like unfair labor practices or misleading marketing—areas where other ethical frameworks might falter. Fourthly, [6] ethics promotes long-term sustainability and ethical governance by insisting that all business activities be conducted in a manner that could be universally upheld. This approach aligns with the principles found in nuanced approaches that integrate value maximization with stakeholder theory, but without compromising ethical standards. It ensures lasting trust and credibility with all stakeholders, crucial for long-term business sustainability. Finally, integrating [6] ethics can transform corporate culture, emphasizing ethical behavior as a core component of corporate identity. This shift can improve employee morale, enhance brand reputation, and build stronger relationships with consumers and communities, increasingly sensitive to the ethical stance of businesses. In conclusion, [6] ethics offers a robust, duty-based framework that emphasizes universal applicability and respect for individuals, making it highly relevant in today's globalized and interconnected market where ethical lapses can significantly impact a company's reputation and sustainability.

Practical Application of Ethics in Business

In the context of business ethics, it is imperative to examine how organizations can integrate ethical considerations into their operational and strategic frameworks. It explores how theories translate into practical strategies that can guide organizations in fostering ethical climates and addressing ethical dilemmas effectively.

In addressing ethical challenges in profit-driven environments, certain approaches are particularly relevant. These methods provide a structured framework for navigating the complex intersection of ethics and profitability, offering practical strategies for organizations striving to maintain ethical standards while achieving financial objectives. The guidance is designed to help businesses implement robust ethical policies that not only comply with legal standards but also promote a culture of integrity and accountability, crucial in environments focused heavily on profit maximization. [7] By fostering an ethical culture that does not solely focus on the bottom line but considers the broader impacts of business decisions, companies can mitigate risks associated with ethical breaches, which can lead to reputational damage, legal penalties, and diminished stakeholder trust. They argue that establishing an ethical culture requires more than just having a code of ethics; it requires building a system where ethical behavior is the norm and where employees feel empowered and obligated to act ethically. This involves training programs, ethical performance evaluations, and mechanisms that encourage ethical discussions among employees. Moreover, their emphasis on ethical leadership is crucial in settings where profit motives might otherwise overshadow ethical concerns. Leaders who prioritize ethics serve as role models, creating an environment where ethical considerations are woven into the fabric of decision-making processes.[7].

In a similar vein, another author offers a complete account of the ethical decision-making processes that are utilized within organizations [8]. The text reveals that in larger organizations, misconduct is observed more frequently than in smaller ones, with a significant variation in reporting between upper management and lower-level employees. This indicates a disparity in both the observation of and responses to unethical behaviors, which may be influenced by the organization's hierarchical structure [8]. The influence of organizational culture on ethical behavior is a major theme, emphasizing that a robust ethical culture significantly reduces misconduct and supports ethical decision-making. Leadership is pivotal in this context, with ethical leaders serving as role models who exemplify strong personal character and proactive management of ethical issues. These leaders not only embody the ethical standards of the organization but also actively engage in nurturing an ethical climate [8]. Moreover, the importance of structured ethics programs that include comprehensive training and effective communication is highlighted as essential for maintaining high ethical standards within the organization. Such programs equip employees with the necessary tools to understand and adhere to organizational ethics, reducing the likelihood of ethical breaches.

Particularly illuminating are the opinions of employees on ethical difficulties, as these perspectives mirror the real-world complications of ethical decision-making in organizations that are motivated by profit. Groundbreaking research [9] sheds light on the fact that corporate ethics programs, while their intention is to encourage ethical behavior, may not always be able to successfully address the fundamental issues that might potentially lead to ethical dilemmas. This conclusion is further corroborated by other scholars who investigated the organizational roots of ethical work cultures and discovered substantial heterogeneity in the way ethics is seen and executed across a variety of corporate contexts [10].

The tension between ethics and profitability in business arises when the imperative to achieve financial targets potentially conflicts with the ethical standards and values that an organization espouses. In such contexts, profit-driven motivations can pressure employees and management to make decisions that may compromise ethical standards. A model developed in the early 1990s offers a structured framework to understand ethical decision-making in organizations, which is especially useful when ethical norms conflict with profit objectives. The model delineates three key dimensions influencing the ethical nature of decisions: moral intensity, moral framing, and organizational and social context [11]. Moral intensity focuses on the urgency of ethical considerations, influenced by factors like the potential consequences and their immediacy. Situations of high moral intensity, such as significant environmental impacts or major consumer welfare issues, prioritize ethics in decision-making. Moral framing affects how issues are perceived within the organization; if profit maximization is emphasized, it may overshadow ethical considerations, whereas a focus on sustainability and stakeholder welfare can enhance ethical outcomes. Lastly, the organizational and social context—encompassing corporate culture, policies, and leadership behavior—shapes how individuals make ethical decisions. A culture that values ethics and transparency can motivate individuals to uphold these standards, even under financial pressure [11]. Together, these dimensions provide a comprehensive view of the factors that impact ethical decision-making, highlighting the need for a holistic approach to integrate ethics seamlessly with business objectives.

Navigating the Nexus of Ethics and Profitability in Business Practices

In exploring the dynamics of ethical decision-making within organizations, it becomes evident that various factors play critical roles across three main categories [12]. Individual factors, such as personal values, moral intensity, and cognitive moral development, are pivotal. Employees who exhibit higher levels of moral development are typically more adept at navigating complex ethical dilemmas and making more principled choices. This suggests a strong link between personal ethical maturity and the overall ethical conduct within professional settings.

Organizational factors also significantly influence employee behavior. The culture and climate of an organization are foundational in shaping how decisions are made. Companies that cultivate a robust ethical culture often reinforce this through formal mechanisms, including comprehensive codes of ethics, training programs, and clearly communicated and enforced ethical standards [12]. These institutional supports are crucial as they provide employees with the tools and frameworks necessary to act ethically, reinforcing ethical behavior as a corporate norm rather than an optional personal choice.

Moreover, situational influences are also found to have a significant impact on ethical decision-making. The specific context of a decision, which can include potential rewards or punishments, the modeling of ethical or unethical behaviors by others, and pressures from the broader business environment, can greatly influence the ethical landscape [12]. These situational factors can either facilitate or hinder ethical behavior, depending on how they align with the organization's cultural and ethical standards.

Collectively, these insights underscore the multifaceted nature of ethical behavior in corporate settings. It is clear that fostering ethical standards within an organization is not solely the responsibility of the individual employees but is also a direct reflection of the organizational environment and culture. Thus, both individual disposition and the organizational context are indispensable to promoting and maintaining high ethical standards in the business world. This comprehensive approach ensures that ethics remain at the forefront of business operations, safeguarding both the integrity of the organization and its stakeholders.

The study by [13] explores the impact of individual ethical decision-making and corporate ethics on organizational performance in Taiwan, particularly focusing on small and medium enterprises (SMEs), award-winning outstanding SMEs, and large enterprises. Employing a survey approach, the study gathered 524 valid responses from a total of 1320 distributed questionnaires among 132 randomly selected companies within these categories [13]. The findings reveal a strong correlation between high ethical standards and enhanced organizational performance. Notably, outstanding SMEs recognized with the Key Stone Award displayed a robust opposition to unethical behaviors such as bloated expense accounts, tax fraud, and deceptive advertising, underscoring a prevailing ethical culture. However, the study highlights a significant limitation in its organizational performance evaluation, pointing out the absence of objective financial success indicators in its assessment criteria. This gap suggests that while ethical behaviors are linked to perceived organizational performance, the study lacks a tangible measure of financial outcomes, which could provide a clearer understanding of how ethics influence economic success. The paper concludes by recommending that future research should incorporate financial performance metrics to better capture the relationship between ethical practices and commercial success [13].

Another study claims a direct correlation between the organizational emphasis on financial performance and compromised ethical decision-making by employees [14]. This relationship highlights the complex interplay between profit objectives and ethical standards within corporate environments. Furthermore, the study indicates that employees who perceive a strong emphasis on financial performance are more likely to compromise ethical standards. This suggests a correlation between the organizational focus on profits and the ethical decision-making of employees [14]. The pressure to achieve financial goals can create a challenging environment where employees may feel compelled to prioritize results over ethical considerations.

Reference [15] Underscores the importance of a holistic strategy in governance ethics, advocating for ethical standards to be deeply embedded in both the culture and operational practices of an organization [15]. This integrated approach is crucial in combating the pervasive issues of unethical behavior and poor corporate governance that can severely undermine an organization's integrity and financial stability.

Three researchers examined how leadership styles and behaviors influence ethical practices and the overall ethical climate of organizations. They discuss the implications for management, suggesting that ethical leadership is crucial for fostering an organizational culture that upholds ethical standards and practices [16]. They contend in the research that leaders not only need to set examples through their own behavior but also must actively promote ethical values through policies, communication, and training [16]. This research contributes to the understanding of the link between leadership and ethical outcomes in business settings, emphasizing the importance of leadership in the effective management of business ethics.

Finally, two studies [17] and [18] have delved into the ethical dilemmas employees face in profit-driven environments. They conclude that these dilemmas frequently place employees in conflicting situations where the demands for profitability clash with their ethical principles, leading to moral distress and adversely affecting their well-being in the workplace.

The synthesis of these studies underscores a critical consensus: ethical integrity in business practices is not just a moral obligation but a strategic asset that influences long-term organizational success. While [13] identifies a positive correlation between strong ethical frameworks and enhanced organizational performance, the need for incorporating financial performance measures in future research is evident to deepen understanding of how ethical practices translate into economic success. [14] and [15] further highlight the challenges and necessity of aligning ethical standards with profit objectives, advocating for a holistic approach to governance that integrates ethical considerations into the fabric of organizational operations. Leadership, as discussed by [16], plays a transformative role in cultivating an ethical culture that supports ethical decision-making at all levels of the organization. The pressures that drive ethical compromises, as explored by [17] and [18], demand a reevaluation of how organizations can better support their employees in making ethical choices despite profit-driven pressures. Ultimately, this paper calls for a concerted effort to foster environments where ethical and financial goals are not seen as opposing forces, but as complementary facets of a sustainable business strategy.

Research Design

Following [19] and [20], the study adopts a mixed-method research methodology to capture the nuanced effects of ethical decision-making within corporate settings. This approach allows for a robust analysis by combining quantitative data (surveys) and qualitative insights (semi-structured interviews), providing a comprehensive view of the underlying ethical behaviors.

Purposive sampling was employed to ensure participants were selected based on their relevance to the research topics, focusing particularly on individuals with extensive experience in business ethics. The sample size was determined by the principle of saturation for qualitative research and statistical significance needs for quantitative data [21].

Qualitative data were gathered through semi-structured interviews, allowing participants to discuss their experiences and perceptions related to business ethics openly. Quantitative data were obtained via surveys using a structured questionnaire designed to identify patterns across a broader demographic.

The electronic document used for data collection mirrored the dynamics of face-to-face interviews, enabling respondents to provide detailed, thoughtful responses. The use of electronic formats for data collection was specifically chosen to broaden the reach and depth of participant engagement, minimizing geographical and temporal constraints that often limit traditional face-to-face interviews

[22]. Responds were randomly selected. The sample frame comprises staff working in Georgetown in the private sector. Overall, there were 33 responses to the questionnaire.

Ethical considerations were paramount throughout the study. In alignment with ethical guidelines for research, as outlined by [23], the study ensures confidentiality and informed consent. Participants were informed about the purpose of the research, the use of their data, and their rights to withdraw from the study at any point without any consequence.

To enhance the validity and reliability of the data, the study employed several strategies. First, the triangulation method was used to cross-verify the data obtained from interviews, as recommended by [24]. Secondly, member checking was conducted, where participants were given a chance to review and comment on the findings to ensure accuracy and authenticity of the interpretation [25].

Qualitative data underwent thematic analysis to identify and interpret patterns related to personal experiences and perceptions. Quantitative data were analyzed using statistical methods to quantify patterns and trends, utilizing software like SPSS for detailed analysis.

Results

The comprehensive analysis conducted on ethical challenges in profit-driven environments within Guyanese businesses has exposed a multi-faceted landscape where ethical standards are frequently at odds with organizational profit objectives. This tension is evident in the experiences and perceptions of employees who navigate these challenges daily.

The investigation into the ethical climates of organizations reveals significant concerns regarding the pressures employees face to compromise ethical standards in the pursuit of profit. While a substantial 93.9% of organizations affirm the presence of a code of ethics, the application and communication of these codes reveal underlying issues that complicate the ethical landscape. Notably, 27.3% of employees report that these codes are not communicated effectively, suggesting a gap between the existence of policies and their practical implementation. This gap is further exacerbated by the fact that 39.4% of respondents are not required to formally acknowledge these codes, potentially leading to a lack of personal commitment to upholding these standards.

The pressure to compromise ethical standards is not uncommon, with research indicating that a significant 12% of employees report feeling such pressure. This points to a pervasive issue where the quest for profit potentially undermines ethical workplace environments. It becomes crucial to dissect these pressures meticulously to understand their origins and impact, thereby fostering an ethical organizational culture.

Identifying the sources of these pressures is essential. By pinpointing specific situations and conditions that lead employees to compromise their ethical standards, organizations can take proactive steps to mitigate these influences. Such efforts are vital for promoting a culture where ethics and integrity are at the forefront, supporting employees in consistently upholding ethical behavior.

Moreover, the creation of a supportive environment that values ethical decision-making is paramount. Organizations need to implement structures that empower employees to adhere to ethical principles confidently. This proactive approach is crucial in establishing a workplace where employees do not just survive but thrive in making morally sound decisions without the compulsion to meet financial targets through unethical means.

Despite the formal structures in place, only 66.7% of employees believe that their organizations are genuinely committed to ethical behavior across all operations. This discrepancy indicates a serious problem where ethical standards are perceived as optional or secondary to other operational priorities. The mechanisms for reporting ethics violations seem robust with 75.8% of organizations having formal processes. However, the support systems for whistleblowing are less encouraging; only 48.5% have policies that encourage whistleblowing, and a mere 30.3% have systems to protect whistleblowers. This lack of support is critical as it may deter employees from reporting unethical practices, for fear of retaliation—a fear substantiated by the fact that 33.3% of respondents have witnessed or experienced retaliation after reporting unethical behavior.

The pressure to compromise ethics is explicitly felt by 12.1% of employees who have been pressured by superiors to engage in unethical acts. This pressure is not an isolated statistic but a reflection of a broader issue where 15.2% of respondents believe that unethical behavior can be justified if it leads to profit or other gains. Such justifications can erode the ethical foundations of an organization, leading to a culture where unethical practices are normalized and even expected in pursuit of financial success.

The data clearly indicates that the problem of ethical compromise in the pursuit of profit is a serious issue that affects a significant portion of the workforce. The existence of formal ethical guidelines in the vast majority of organizations does not necessarily equate to their effective implementation or the cultivation of a truly ethical work environment. The gap between policy and practice, combined with insufficient protection and support for those challenging unethical behavior, creates an environment ripe for ethical dilemmas and misconduct.

Overall, the findings from this study underscore the need for a more rigorous and genuine commitment to ethics within organizations. This involves not only the establishment of clear and enforceable ethical guidelines but also fostering an organizational culture that actively supports and protects ethical behavior at all levels. Without such commitment, the ethical integrity of organizations remains compromised, with serious implications for employee morale, organizational trust, and overall business sustainability.

Discussion and Conclusion

Ethics serve as the backbone of every reputable organization, ensuring that all operations are conducted with integrity and respect for societal norms. Alarmingly, recent surveys indicated that as many as 12% of employees have encountered situations where they felt compelled to engage in unethical behavior to fulfill job requirements.

This troubling statistic underscores a critical vulnerability within organizational structures that must be addressed. Unethical practices, regardless of pressure or precedent, should never become embedded within the operational functions of any entity. It is imperative for leadership to foster an environment where ethical considerations are paramount and transparently integrated into all business processes. Furthermore, organizations must provide adequate resources and support systems for employees to report unethical conduct without fear of retribution. By prioritizing ethical standards, companies not only protect their own reputation but also contribute positively to the broader industry and society at large.

The relationship between maximizing profits and compromising ethical standards is a complex issue that requires attention from both organizations and regulatory bodies. By promoting a culture of transparency, ethical leadership, and accountability, companies can mitigate the pressure on employees to compromise their ethical principles in the pursuit of financial gains. It is essential for organizations to recognize the impact of profit-driven objectives on employee behavior and take proactive measures to uphold ethical standards in the workplace.

In summary, unchecked unethical behavior and inadequate corporate governance pose significant threats to an organization's moral and operational foundation. To mitigate these risks, organizations must adopt comprehensive governance frameworks that enforce accountability, enhance transparency, and promote ethical decision-making. Implementing ethics training programs, safeguarding whistleblowers, and conducting regular audits are effective strategies that support these goals. The relationship between the escalation of unethical practices within an organization and the absence of stringent governance measures emphasizes the critical need for a committed and integrated approach to ethics and governance.

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Conflict of Interest

I, Roystone Nelson, declare that there is no conflict of interest in the data collection, literature review, writing of the script, and publication by the Journal.

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