BUSINESS ETHICS AND ORGANISATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY

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ABSTRACT

Workplace ethics supports corporate sustainable development within the goal of meeting the needs and aspirations of the organisational stakeholders. This paper examined the role of business ethics on organisational sustainability. It also sought to ascertain the effect of managing unethical behaviour on organisational performance, as well as assess the effect of social responsibility on organisational stakeholders. The study adopted the survey research design, and a target population of 100 academic and non academic staff of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka was purposively selected and sampled. Findings from the logistic regression revealed that business ethics, managing unethical practices and social responsibility positively affected organisational sustainability, performance and stakeholders respectively. Consequently, it was recommended that ethics and accountability be promoted through the enactment, improvement and effective enforcement of codes of ethics and regulations. In addition, organisational managers should maintain a balance that responds to the concerns of all stakeholders and the society in general.

Keywords: Business Ethics, Social Responsibility, Sustainability, Stakeholders, Unethical Behaviour.

INTRODUCTION

Ethics refers to the moral principles of behavior used to direct the decision making and conduct of an individual or a group of individuals. These principles direct individuals in their dealings with each other and groups and thus provide a basis for deciding the right and proper behaviour. Ethics guides people in determining the moral responses to situations for which the best course of action is unclear. Ethics also guides managers in decisions on what to do in various business situations. Ethics helps managers to decide how best to respond to various interests of organisational stakeholders. Managers experience an ethical dilemma when a situation that requires them to choose between two courses of action arises, especially if each of them is likely to favour one particular stakeholder group to the detriment of the other. In the making of appropriate decision, managers weigh the competing rights and claims of the stakeholder’s groups. There are some obvious standards, values or norm of behaviour that make decision making easy (George, 2003). Ethics is defined as the integrity measure which evaluates the values, norms and rules that constitute the bedrock for individual and social relationship. Kumar (2007) posits that ethics concerns the code of values and principles that enable a person to choose between right and wrong and also select from alternative courses of action. Erondu & Sharland (2004) establish that ethics focuses on issues of practical decision making that involve the form of values and standards, through which human actions can be judged right or wrong. Nilsson & Westerberg (1997) opine that ethics and business should go together, for doing business without concern for ethics is the way of failure.

Consequently, ethics involves the moral principles or values that determine if actions are right or wrong and if outcomes are good or bad. Ethics refers to an individual's moral judgment about right and wrong. People rely on ethical values to determine the right thing to do at all times. The development and application of ethical values depend on the individual's level of moral development. Ethical behaviour with good corporate governance would bring sustainable organisational growth. In some public and private sector organisations, there are unethical behaviour, and corrupt practices which have become pervasive and institutionalised norms of behaviour. The unethical practices prevalent in private and public organisations include: embezzlement, bribery and corruption, use of one's position for self enrichment, nepotism, patronage, bestowing of favours on relatives and friends, partiality, absenteeism, late coming to work, influence peddling, moonlighting, abuse of public property and government information (Rasheed, 1995). There is a vacuum on the effective application of codes of ethics as part of the corporate culture of business organisations in developing countries. The ethical dilemma, include human rights violation and abuse, corruption, child labour, etc (Robertson, 2005). Balga (2013) posits that corporate social responsibility (CSR) stands as a business strategy for achieving sustainable growth. This implies that organisations can perform well by doing good things in the communities around them. The study seeks to examine the role of business ethics on organisational sustainability, ascertain the effect of managing unethical behaviour on organisational performance, and assess the effect of social responsibility on organisational stakeholders.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Business Ethics and Organisational Sustainability

Business ethics involves the organisational principles, sets of values, standards and norms which influence the actions and behaviour of an individual in the organisation. Business ethics attracts customers for the firm's products and thus boosts sales and profit; business ethics reduces turnover and makes employees stay in business, thereby, increasing productivity. Business ethics attracts investors to invest in business organizations; raises the company's share price and protects the business from takeover. However, unethical behaviour may damage a firm's corporate image and reputation and make the firm less appealing to stakeholders, such that profits could fall as a result.

Business ethics refers to principles that prescribe a code of behaviour that describe what is good and right, and what is bad and wrong. Business ethics reveals standards for conduct and decision making of employees and managers. Business ethics varies from law but agrees in some situations. For example, it is both illegal and unethical to breach the contract of employment. Sometimes however, unethical conducts are not prosecuted: example, it may not be illegal to take credit in the work of somebody without acknowledging the owner but it is unethical. Sometimes, people engage in unethical tactics in order to advance their careers and businesses. Unethical behaviours involve cutting corners on quality, covering up potentially damaging incidents, abusing or lying about sickness, age and work as well as lying and deceiving customers (Gomez- mejia & Balkin, 2002).

Ethics influences how well firms operate to meet the desires and interests of their stakeholders without harming other people in the society (Choe & Min, 2011). Organisational commitment and job satisfaction can be achieved where ethical climate and ethical culture exist (Shafer et al, 2013). Ethical climate refers to knowledge of organisations' ethics while ethical culture reflects the formal and informal control systems that influence employees' ethical behaviour. Ethical culture promotes ethical behaviour (Valentine et al, 2014). Organisations can integrate ethical principles into management process (planning, organizing, directing and controlling) to ensure that ethical strategic plans are implemented (Steinmann, 2008). Organisations can implement an ethical strategy through management by using code of ethics as a guideline (De Schrijver & Maesschalck, 2015). Code of ethics presents a contractual sense of duty to all employees (McNutt & Batho, 2005). Employees should be motivated to perform their duty in accordance to the code of ethics. Stakeholders respect organisations that demonstrate ethical behaviours (Brooks & Dunn, 2012). Codes of ethics involve the standards and rules on beliefs about right or wrong which enables managers make appropriate decisions with regard to the interest of the stakeholders. A code of ethics is a written document that outlines the principles of behaviour to be used in decision making within a particular organisation. Codes of ethics should be formal, written, and communicated to the employees. Rue & Byars, (2000) recommended the following list of topics for an organisation's code of ethics : fundamental honesty and adherence to the law: product safety and quality; health and safety in the workplace; conflict of interest: employment practices; fairness in selling / marketing practices; financial reporting; supplier relationship; pricing, billing, and contracting; trading in securities; acquiring and using information from others; security; political activities; protection of the environment; and intellectual property/ proprietary information . This is a broad scope of business ethics because every action (or inaction) of a company or its employees can be done ethically or unethically. Ethical questions can therefore be viewed from different perspectives: Behaviour towards the customer, supplier, distributors and competitors, example: ethical behaviour involves fairness in buying and selling, fair competition. Treatment of employees: ethical conduct should be shown during recruitment, rewards, training, promotion, dismissal, employees and employers' rights. Treatment of other stakeholder groups: business organisations should behave ethically when relating with local communities, governments and other organisations. Effect on natural environment: ethical behaviour by a business organisation involves control of pollution and waste, recycling, and sustainability (Mulllins, 2005).

To enhance employees' ethical behaviour, managers should do the following: take actions that would make employees to trust them and emulate their behaviour; be honest and avoid lies that give false impression; treat employees equitably and avoid special treatment of favourites; show concern for others and keep confidences; show that they care for employees and recognize employees' strengths and contributions; adhere to a given standard that is reasonable so that employees should also follow (Ezigbo, 2011). Business ethics deals with activities of a firm to ensure that products and production processes do not cause harm. Ethics in production ensures that production activities are not damaging to the consumers and the society. Business ethics deals with the principles, values and / or ideas by which marketers ought to act. The ethical issues in marketing in an organisational setting involve marketing dangerous products/services, transparency about product ingredients, possible health risks, financial risks, security risks, respect for customer's privacy and autonomy, advertising truth, fullness and fairness in pricing and distribution. On the other hand, Sustainability refers to the concept of reserving organisational resources for future generations (Emas, 2015). Every organisation should build its future through effort that is geared towards sustainable development which can be achieved by ethical practices (Cerim, 2006). Business ethics supports corporate sustainable development (Liu et al, 2014). Sustainable development of firms can be achieved through corporate business ethical practices (Hahn, 2011). Boudreau & Ramstand (2005) see sustainability as achieving success today without compromising the needs of the future. Sustainable growth is seen as a business model that generates value that boosts long term preservation and enhancement of financial, environmental and social capital (Wales, 2013). Sustainability in an organizational context is the principle of enhancing the societal, environmental and economic systems within which a business operates (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD, 2012). Corporate sustainability refers to long – term organisational change process which enhances the economic, environmental and social competence of the organisation. The organisations that have sustainable development can sustain competitive advantage. Organisational ethics helps to strengthen corporate sustainability performance (Global Cities Research Institute, 2012). The establishment of organisational ethics is thereby seen as a move for achieving sustainable development goals (Fray, 2007). Payne & Raiborn (2001) affirm that firms which focus on organisational ethics are well positioned to achieve sustainable development. Thus, the following hypothesis is presented: business ethics positively affects organisational sustainability.

Managing Unethical Behaviour for Organisational Performance

Employees' unethical behaviours are predominant in organizations without organizational ethics (Schwepker & Schultz, 2013). Unethical practices by managers have led to the passage of laws to regulate behaviour. The laws that have been enacted which relate to issues of business ethics apply to areas like competitive behaviour, consumer protection, intellectual property protection and environmental protection. In academic settings for example, unethical practices involve: publishing a paper in two separate journals, failure to acknowledge the contributions of other people whose works were utilized in the study, including an individual as an author on a paper where no contribution was made, exploitation of graduate students in research collaboration, promising a student better grades for sexual favours, rejecting a manuscript for review without reading it, copying another person's data and information without permission, wasting animals in conducting research as well as other research misconduct such as fabrication, falsification and plagiarism (Ezenwakwelu & Court, 2016). Anti-trust laws are concerned with competitive practices among businesses and are intended to maintain a favourable competitive environment. The following are significant antitrust legislation which prevent unfair methods of competition or deceptive trade practices: laws which prevent mergers and acquisitions involving purchase of stock that will substantially lessen competition or create a monopoly; and laws that involve public notification of mergers (Rue & Byars, 2000). On the other hand, consumer protection involves laws that deal with unethical practices of businesses which affect consumers. For example, the National Agency for Foods and Drugs Administration and control (NAFDAC) protects consumers from adulterated, misbranded or unsafe foods, drugs and cosmetics. Consumer protection laws involve: credit protection, warranty protection, and misbranding. The Consumer Protection Council (CPC) in Nigeria has the authority to protect consumers' rights.

Finally, environmental protection involves laws designed to promote a healthy environment. Most of these laws affect the business enterprises. The National Environmental Policy Act is the key legislation in environmental protection in the United States of America. Thus, the US government being committed to preserving the country's ecology established the Council on Environmental Quality which advises the president on environment policies and reviews environmental statements (Rue & Byars, 2000). The implementation of organisational ethics is affected by the state regulations and policies (Tuan, 2012). Magil & Prybil (2004) established that ethics affected daily behaviours and decision making at all organisational levels. Previous study revealed that employee commitment was sustained by organizational ethics (Wesarat et al., 2017). Thus, this hypothesis is proposed: managing unethical practices positively affects organisational performance.

Effect of Social Responsibility on Organisational Stakeholders

Ethical business objectives could be achieved through corporate social responsibility. Corporate social responsibility is regarded by the European Commission as a concept where social and environmental concerns are considered by companies in their business operations and in the interaction with their stakeholders (Shapira- Lishchinsky & Rosenblatt, 2009). Regarding the concept of social responsibility, stakeholders are seen as groups of persons to whom the firm's business and socially responsible activities should be carried out (Sun et al, 2010). A strong relationship a company had with its stakeholders enhances its competitiveness which improves the reputation of the company. Stakeholders create opportunities and threats for growth and survival of the firm. The management should care for the needs and interests of the stakeholders through corporate social responsibility (Rosinka- Bukowska & Penc- pietrzak, 2015). Companies implement corporate social responsibility by ensuring that business operations adhere to legal regulations and economic standards within the goal of establishing quality relationship with stakeholders (Placentini, et al., 2000). Corporate social responsibility therefore refers to the concern of business firms to contribute to sustainable economic development by improving the lives of employees, their families, the local community, and society in ways which are suitable for business and for development (International Finance Corporation).

Corporate social responsibility ensures that organisations manage their businesses to maximize value for the stakeholders and make a positive impact on the society and the environment (Institute of Chartered Accountant in England and Wales). Social responsibility is the duty of a manager in making decisions that protect, nurture, enhance, and promote the welfare and well- being of stakeholders and the society. On the other hand, organisational stakeholders refer to those individuals or groups who have an interest in and/ or are affected by the goals, operations or activities of the organisation. Stakeholders include the employees, consumers, owners, government, community, competitors. Social responsibility to employees recognizes the employees as being vital to the success of the organisation and go beyond terms and conditions of the formal contract of employment. Organisations should make reasonable efforts to give security of employment and provide work designs that boost job satisfaction. Social responsibility to consumers is supported by the activities of such bodies as the Consumer Protection Council (CPC) and National Agency for Foods and Drugs Administration and Control (NAFDAC). Consumers are interested in purchasing quality products that are reasonably priced and safe to use. Social responsibilities to consumers include: providing good value for money spent on goods and services; providing durable and safe products and services; prompt and courteous attention to queries and complaints; long-term satisfaction with products and services;

adequate supply of products and services and fair standards of advertisement and trading. The owners have a financial stake in the companies they have invested their wealth in their shares. The providers of fund as well known as shareholders want a reasonable financial return on their investment. Social responsibility involves safeguarding of investments, providing opportunity for shareholders to exercise their responsibility as owners of the company, thereby participate in policy decisions and to question top management on the affairs of the company. Organisations should respect and obey the laws and regulations of the government, even where they are not comfortable with such laws and regulations. Organisations have a responsibility not to abuse the use of factors of production upon which the wealth of the country depends. Organisations should take care of pollution, noise, disposal of waste that the operation of the organisation renders to the society. Organisations should be socially responsible to competitors, by competing fairly in the market without engaging in such unethical business practices as dumping of inferior products at lower prices and receiving unfair government subsidies (Ezigbo, 2011). Previous researchers have affirmed that the stakeholders are likely to be influenced by organisational activities (Wesarat et al., 2017). Accordingly, the third hypothesis is presented: social responsibility has a positive effect on the organisational stakeholders.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Stakeholders' Theory

Stakeholders' theory states that the firm should be managed in the interests of the firm's shareholders. The purpose of the concerned firm is to release return on investment for the shareholders and thus creates economic value for the people who risk capital in the firm. The theory postulates that most companies have different sets of stakeholders to which the companies have an obligation and responsibility to satisfy. Thus, the stakeholders' theory captures the need for companies to settle the claims of shareholders along with the needs of other stakeholders (Aliyu, 2012). The stakeholders' theory affirms that sustainability and success of a business enterprise depends on its success in achieving economic and societal goals by fulfilling the needs and aspirations of the company stakeholders (Pirsch et al, 2007). Freeman (1984) sees the company's stakeholders as groups of individuals who can influence the business operations of a company. Freeman (1984) identifies the stakeholders of a company to include the employees, consumers, suppliers, financial institutions, non- government groups and government institutions.

Previous works

Aliyu (2012) examined business ethics and practice in multinational companies in Nigeria. The specific objectives were to determine the degree of relationship between employees' rights violation and employees' organisational commitment as well as to assess how code of ethics affects employees' ethical behaviour. The study had a population of 2279 while the sample derived from the population was 1200. The survey design was adopted. Findings revealed that a significant relationship existed between employees' rights violation and their commitment. There was a significant relationship between code of ethics and ethical behaviours of employees. The study concluded that due to the competitive nature of the market, firms need to adopt and maintain high ethical values to survive, since employees, customers and society assess organisations on their ethical and moral values and practices. The study further recommended that organisations should provide enabling and conducive working environment for employees to increase productivity. Ethical practices should be effectively enforced and monitored in organisations.

Ezigbo (2012) conducted a study to assess the enforcement of ethical principles in the work place. The objectives were to identify unethical practices in the work place; ascertain if employees in the public sector organisations adopted ethical principles; determine how to enforce ethical principles in the work place and ascertain the impact of gender concerning ethics in the workplace. A sample size of 334 was derived from the population of 2000 at 5% error tolerance and 95% degree of freedom. Findings revealed that lying about age and attendance to work constitute unethical practices in the workplace; employees in public sector organisations adopted ethical principles; ethical principles are enforced when managers show integrity, respect employees and treat employees equitably and that women made greater strides than men in improving their moral awareness and decision- making processes. The study recommended the following to promote ethics and accountability in the public service: there should be mass education campaigns on the cost of corruption and unethical behaviour, there should also be advancement and affirmation of sound policies on recruitment, training and public personnel management.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted the survey design. The survey primarily involves the use of a questionnaire that is administered to a sample. The questionnaire was structured on a five point Likert scale format. Secondary data were collected from books, journals, and internet sources. The target population consists of 100 employees involving academic and non academic staff of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka purposively selected and considered suitable for sampling. The hypotheses were tested with ordinal logistic regression using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, version 20.0) software. Ordinal logistic regression is a non parametric statistic that uses ordinal data from questionnaires and represents people's opinion that cannot be predicted (Table 1a-d).

Table 1a
ANALYSES OF RESPONDENTS' RESPONSES

S/N	Options	A	SA	D	SD	U	Total
1	Business Ethics and Organisational Sustainability						
A	Business ethics applied in admission of students in the university ensures sustained academic performance	50	26	14	7	3	100
B	Business ethics considered during recruitment, selection and training of employees enhances organisational productivity.	42	50	4	2	2	100
C	Business ethics applied in teaching and learning in the university promotes skill acquisition.	20	27	41	9	3	100
D	Enforcement of ethical principles in the university ensures improved employee performance.	41	51	1	2	5	100
	Grand Total/ Percentage	307(76.75%)		80(20%)		13(3.25%)	400
2	Managing unethical Practices and Organisational Growth	A	SA	D	SD	U	Total
A	Supervising employee performance curtails corrupt	48	4	5	2	1	100

	practices.		4				
B	Provision and enforcement of disciplinary measures help to minimize unethical practices.	36	61	2	1	-	100
C	Frequent training of employees enables them to acquire skills and knowledge that enhance performance .	34	62	3	-	1	100
D	Managing unethical practices speeds up goal attainment.	60	26	10	1	3	100
	Grand Total/ Percentage	371(92.75%)		24 (6%)		5(1.25%)	400
3	Effect of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) on Organisational Stakeholders	A	SA	D	SD	U	Total
A	CSR that Universities provide involve good value for money spent to train students to graduate and secure jobs.	22	12	35	15	16	100
B	CSR ensures that universities manage their programmes to maximize value for the stakeholders and make positive impact.	54	41	2	1	2	100
C	CSR is the responsibility of organisational management in making decisions that protect and enhance the welfare of stakeholders and the society.	42	51	-	1	6	100
D	CSR involves serviceability, prompt attention to complaints, full and unambiguous information to the stakeholders.	46	40	1	4	9	100
	Grand Total/ Percentage	308(77%)		59(14.75%)		33(8.25%)	400
Source: Field Survey, 2019.							

ANALYSES OF RESULTS

H_1: Business ethics positively affects organisational sustainability.

The responses obtained from the questions asked to determine the effect of business ethics on organisational sustainability reveals that 307 (76.75%) of the respondents agree that business ethics affect organisational sustainability. Thus, 80 (20%) of the respondents disagree while 13 (3.25%) of the respondents are undecided.

Table 1b: Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.705[a]	0.497	0.492	3.19147	0.497	96.861	1	98	0
a. Predictors: (Constant), Business Ethics									
b. Dependent Variable: Organisational Sustainability									

Table 1c: ANOVA[a]						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	986.573	1	986.573	96.861	.000[b]
	Residual	998.177	98	10.185		
	Total	1984.75	99			
a. Dependent Variable: Organisational Sustainability						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Business Ethics						

Table 1d: Coefficients[a]						
Model		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	5.318	0.972		5.474	0
	Business Ethics	0.713	0.072	0.705	9.842	0
a. Dependent Variable: Organisational Sustainability						

Table 1a - d show the regression result on the effect of business ethics on organisational sustainability. Tables 1a and 1c reveal that business ethics has a positive and significant effect on organisational sustainability ($P = .000$; $t = 9.842$; $\beta = .705$). Also Table 1b shows that $r = .705$, $r^2 = .497$ and adjusted $r^2 = .492$, which implies that business ethics predicts 49.2% variation in organizational sustainability. Thus, the alternative hypothesis which states that business ethics positively affects organisational sustainability is accepted.

H_2: Managing unethical behaviour positively affects organisational performance.

The responses derived from the questions asked to ascertain the effect of managing unethical behaviour on organisational performance indicates that 371(92.75%) of the respondents agree that managing unethical behaviour affects organisational performance. Thus, 24(6%) of the respondents disagree while 5(1.25%) of the respondents are undecided.

Table 2a: Model Summary[b]									
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.638[a]	0.407	0.401	3.51998	0.407	67.371	1	98	0
a. Predictors: (Constant), Managing Unethical Behaviour									
b. Dependent Variable: Organisational Performance									

Table 2b: ANOVA[a]						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	834.742	1	834.742	67.371	.000[b]
	Residual	1214.248	98	12.39		
	Total	2048.99	99			
a. Dependent Variable: Organisational Performance						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Managing Unethical Behaviour						

Table 2c: Coefficients[a]						
Model		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	16.204	1.187		13.649	0
	Managing Unethical behaviour	0.649	0.079	0.638	8.208	0
a. Dependent Variable: Organisational Performance						

Tables 2a - c show the regression result on the effect of managing unethical behaviour on organisational performance. Tables 2a and 2c reveal that managing unethical behaviour has a positive effect on organisational performance (P = .000; t = 8.208; β = .638). Also Table 2a shows that r = .638, r^2 = .407 and adjusted r^2 = .401, which implies that business ethics predicts 40. 1% variation in organisational performance. Thus, the alternative hypothesis which states that managing unethical behaviour positively affects organisational performance is accepted.

$H_{3:}$ Social responsibility has a positive effect on organisational stakeholders.

The responses obtained from the questions asked to determine the effect of social responsibility on organisational stakeholders reveals that 308 (77%) of the respondents agree that social responsibility affects organisational stakeholders. Thus, 59(14.75%) of the respondents disagree while 33 (8.25%) of the respondents are undecided.

Table 3a: Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.682[a]	0.465	0.46	3.34462	0.465	85.167	1	98	0

a. Predictors: (Constant), Social Responsibility

b. Dependent Variable: Organisational Stakeholders

Table 3b: ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	952.718	1	952.718	85.167	.000[b]
	Residual	1096.272	98	11.186		
	Total	2048.99	99			

a. Dependent Variable: Organisational Stakeholders

b. Predictors: (Constant), Social Responsibility

Table 3c: Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	13.297	1.365		9.741	0
	Social Responsibility	0.813	0.088	0.682	9.229	0

a. Dependent Variable: Organisational Stakeholders

Tables 3a - c show the regression result on the effect of social responsibility on organisational stakeholders. Tables 3a and 3c reveal that managing social responsibility has a positive effect on organisational stakeholders ($P = .000$; $t = 9.229$; $\beta = .682$). Also Table 3a shows that $r = .682$, $r^2 = .465$ and adjusted $r^2 = .460$, which indicates that 46% variation in organisational stakeholders is caused by social responsibility. Thus, the alternative hypothesis which states that social responsibility has a positively effect on organisational stakeholders is accepted.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Based on our first objective which examined the role of business ethics on organisational sustainability, the result from the ordinal logistic regression revealed that business ethics positively affects organisational sustainability. ($\beta = .705$, $p = .000 < 0.05$). Thus, the alternative hypothesis which states that business ethics positively affects organisational sustainability was accepted and the null hypothesis was rejected. This indicates that sustained business ethics is necessary for organisational sustainability. Payne & Raiborn (2001) affirmed that the firms that focused efforts on organisational ethics were more likely to achieve sustainable development.

, the study also examined the effect of managing unethical behaviour on organisational performance which is our second objective. The result revealed that managing unethical behaviour had a positive effect on organisational performance ($\beta = .638$, $p = .000 < 0.05$). Thus, the alternative hypothesis which states that managing unethical behaviour positively affects organisational performance was accepted and the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that organisational performance improves when ethical principles are maintained. Magil & Prybil, 2004) established that ethics affects daily behaviours and decision making at all oragnisational levels.

Finally, after analyzing the effect of social responsibility on organisational stakeholders, the result from the ordinal logistic regression test revealed that social responsibility had a positive effect on organisational stakeholders ($\beta = .682$, $p = .000 < 0.05$). Therefore, the alternative hypothesis which states that social responsibility has a positive effect on organisational stakeholders was accepted and the null hypothesis was rejected. Kooskora (2008) stated that the interests of organisational stakeholders: such as employees, suppliers, customers, etc, should be protected to achieve sustainable organisational success.

CONCLUSION

Ethical business objectives are achieved through corporate social responsibility that enhances peace and goodwill of the organisations. Sustainable development of the organisation is attained by promoting organisational ethics. Managing unethical behaviour boosts organisational performance. Ethics plays a role that influences how well the firms operate to meet the desires and interests of their stakeholders without harming other people in the society

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study proffers the following recommendations

1. Ethics and accountability should be promoted by enacting, improving and effectively enforcing codes of ethics and regulations.
2. Organisations in the business and academic sectors should make corporate social responsibility a priority without neglecting other important priorities, such as competing successfully in their markets.
3. Managers should maintain a balance that responds to the concerns of all stakeholders and the society in general. The interests of organisational stakeholders (employees, suppliers, customers, etc) should be protected to achieve sustainable organisational success.
4. Organisations should be socially responsible to competitors: they should compete fairly in the market without engaging in such unethical business practices as dumping of inferior products at lower prices and receiving unfair government subsidies,
5. Organisations should respect and obey the laws and regulations of the government, even where they are not comfortable with such laws and regulations. Organisations have a responsibility not to abuse the use of factors of production upon which the wealth of the country depends. Organisations should take care of pollution, noise, and the disposal of wastes which result from their operations.

LIMITATION

The study was carried out only in University of Nigeria. Perhaps if the coverage had been extended to more universities in other locations, the result would be different. Areas for future researchers include the effect of business ethics on organisational stakeholders and the challenges of managing unethical behaviour in the workplace.

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