
Ethics Training As Predictor of Organizational Resilience in Tertiary Health Institutions in Bayelsa State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship ethics training as predictor of organizational resilience in tertiary health institutions in Bayelsa State. The study used a cross sectional research design involving directors and heads of departments of the Federal Medical Centre, Yenagoa and Niger Delta University Teaching Hospital, Kolobiri. The primary source of data collection was through the structured questionnaire. The sampling elements in the population consist of 113 directors and heads of department of both hospitals. The entire population elements are included in the study therefore no sample size was determined. After data cleaning, only data of 83 respondents were finally used for data analysis. Descriptive statistics and Spearman's Rank Order Correlation was used for data analysis and hypothesis testing. The study findings confirmed that there is a strong positive and significant correlation between ethics training and organizational resilience in tertiary health institutions in Bayelsa State. The study recommended that management of tertiary institutions should ensure that ethics training are carried out on all staff in order for them to have a shared situation awareness that will be useful in dealing with disturbances and emergencies.

Key Words: Ethics training, Organizational Resilience, Situation Awareness, Keystone Vulnerabilities

Introduction

The business milieu today is characterized by constant changes, occurrences, activities of individuals or groups that have the tendency of adversely affecting the ability of a business to achieve its objectives, as a result, only the tough and resilient are able to survive, hence survival of the fittest. This is why Mitroff (2005) emphasized that the constant changes in the business environmental conditions have stressed the urgency for organizations to strive to meet their corporate goal of performing at their best in all circumstances. This, according to him, may lead many managers of organizations who are obliged to deliver shareholder value and maintain their jobs resort to unethical practices.

In the same vein, Foote and Ruona (2008) admitted that in our present -day period of unpredictable terrain, managers are facing difficulties in the area of ethical business practices in decisive situations. Evidences of this behavior abound, such as the recent fuel emissions violation scandal of Volkswagen. It was discovered that the manufacturer had deliberately worked out turbocharged direct injection (TDI) diesel engines to trigger a specific energy control only at the period of laboratory energy testing to satisfy U.S. standards during regulatory testing meanwhile it was meant to produce as much as 40 times higher nitrogen output in real-world driving. This unethical practice led to the public apology of the CEO, his

resignation, and a 37% loss of their stock within 2 the weeks of the scandal.

McManus, Seville, Vargo and Brunsdon (2008) have defined resilience as the special activity of the total situational awareness, controlling of important causes of exposure to threats and the flexibility of an organization to change when necessary in a complex, dynamic and interdependent environment. According to them, for an organization to be resilient, it needs to be abreast with the totality of the environment on which it operates. Manage those key aspects that are liable to badly affect the organization should any part gets damaged in the event of a disaster and its culture must make room for free flow decision-making from top management to staff in an urgent and accurate way during business Operations as well as in crisis situations. Bouncing back is of great necessity to ensure all important services rendered to other businesses, stakeholders, government and the communities continue in the event of uncertainties.

Disasters come in different ways: there are natural disasters like flood, hurricane, storm, climatic change,. There are also human induced disasters like the Boko Haram insurgency, terrorism, suicide bombers, land, water and air pollutions, industrial and transport accidents, sharp business practices. According to Mills and Avegno (2015) a disaster is an event that suppresses the resources of the place or area on which it takes place. They defined a hospital disaster as an event that strains the receiving hospital. It is pointed out by them that hospital disaster can take place in various ways and is not confined to mass casualty incidents. A single patient who takes in a poisonous substance may exhaust the resources of the emergency department in such a way that it affects the care of other patients. High attrition and mortality rate comes as a result of severe loss of lives to disaster; low customer patronage results due to scandals, socio-psychological trauma becomes inevitable due to loss of lives, economic, social and health resources, decrepit infrastructure or equipment failure can disable business operations. (Mills et al. 2015, Bonanno, 2005; and Valastro (2011) However, Mills et al. (2015) pointed out that all medical disaster planning must include practical simple alternatives to technology that are likely to fail.

Since the beginning of the year 2000, there has been constant news of ethics scandals (Carson, 2003), not only astonishing most people in society, but also causing companies to attach importance to codes of conduct, outcomes that have given impetus to ethics education and ethics training in schools and businesses (Berrone, Surroca, & Trib'O, 2007). Codes are presumably ineffective unless distributed to employees (Weaver, Treviño, & Cochran, 1999). For the sake of ethical-behavior modeling, organizations use various channels, such as memoranda, written standards, manuals, forms, and ceremonies, to disseminate the code of conduct to employees. But even distributing a code is not sufficient because it does not guarantee that anyone reads it (Kaptein & Schwartz, 2008).

Even though most organizations have developed internal regulations, values, and policies to inculcate corporate ethical behavior in employees, a lack of ethical training would result in a failed communication of standards to employees (Bagley, 2003). Companies use a code to communicate their core values (Paine, 1994). Ethics training guarantees that employees read and are familiar with the content of the code (Kaptein & Schwartz, 2008). When a code is supported by ethics training and an ethics office, it can have a positive effect on related employee perceptions (ERC, 1994). Ethical training plays an important role in promoting and communicating the —right code of conduct (Ferrell, Fraedrich, & Ferrell, 2006). However, little empirical evidence supports the existing linkages between ethical training and organizational performance (Berrone, et al., 2007). Moreover, knowledge about how and why

ethical training leads to positive organizational outcomes remains limited at best. (Buono, 2005) argued that social outcomes, particularly employee satisfaction should be taken into account (Jose & Lee, 2007) beyond the traditional financial outcomes. To fill up the gaps, this study examined the relationship between ethical training and organizational resilience in tertiary health institutions Port Harcourt. This study was guided by the following specific objectives:

- i. To examine the relationship between ethics training and situation analysis in tertiary institutions in Bayelsa State.
- ii. To examine the relationship between ethics training and keystone vulnerabilities in tertiary institutions in Bayelsa State.

Literature Review

Ethics Training

Training is always a welcome development in all works of life; an avenue of learning the skills needed to perform a task according to expectation. According to Shuja and Abassi (2015) 'Managers engage in ethics training an important factor that will enable the organization sort out complex ethical dilemmas and prevent an organization from facing any criminal suit or involve in an unlawful activity'. In the same spirit, Bowen (2004) admitted that managers who esteem employee trainings ensure that their ethical developments are in line with the organizations objectives, operations and resilience. He further maintained that ethics training helps individuals stick to moral behaviors that can enhance resilience Bowen, 2004)

Valentine and Fleischman (2004) argued that "one of the effective approaches for increasing positive perceptions of employees' ethical decision making and ethical behavior is ethics training". Lipscomb (2015) opined that workplace ethics training is highly recommended for promoting a safe and peaceful working environment because as pointed out by Ethics resource center, (2011) many employees generally have the discretion of right and wrong but may not know the legal implications of their businesses enough to desist from unethical practices (Ethics resource center, 2011)

Ardichvili (2011) admitted that, workplace ethics enhanced through ethics training can result to the carrying out of lawful practices within the organization that are thoughtful to be an important beginning of building *resilient* organizations. Researches on ethics training implies that team workers be given regular training on ethics that will help them master productive control of crisis situation devoid of short cuts. They become able to make ethical decisions under intense pressure and challenges that arise due to external distrust (Ethical culture building, 2006)

According to Svensson and Wood, (2011) the establishment of ethical educational / training committee is very important in every organization. Ethical education will aid staff in being ethical to the expectation of the organization and may also influence the performance of ethical business practices across organizations (Svensson and Wood, 2011). Furthermore, Prieur (2013) opined that company directors, employees, people with disabilities, families and even children be given the right information and employment suitable to toughen their competence to return to normalcy or adapt without stress to distress or alterations by setting up shared attitudes of averting threats. In a nut shell, Prieur (2013) gave an ethical charter on resilience before, amidst and after disasters.

Organizational Resilience

According to Hubert (2011) Organizational resilience is the competence organizations possess to quickly resolve and react to alterations (within and outside) like disaster claims, opportunities or threats and carry-on with normal operations with reduced effect on business flow. According to Cholewa, Mamula and Smith (2009) organizational resilience is the competence of an entity to continue to function or remain in existence while making progress in emergency situations. They admitted no organization exist in isolation; and argued that the ability of an organization to bounce back greatly rely on the strength of the other organizations that it look up to it for support.

Marcos and Macaulay (2008) maintained that with purpose, whenever disaster but resilient organizations and regardless of the cause, they can recover and bounce back from trauma and quickly restore business capabilities. They opined that such organizations endeavor to be ready for any kind of situation while they remain flexible to change. Seville et al. (2008) saw organizational resilience to be "a result of the collective's situation awareness of an organization, control of keystone vulnerabilities and a flexible changing ability in a difficult, changing and mutually joined environment".

In another light, Dalzieli and McManus (2004) maintained that organizational resilience and community resilience are interdependent; explaining chat being resilient can bring about a competitive advantage. However, McManus et al (2008) argued that resilience play an important part in bringing about a quick and timely bounce back for communities. Furthermore, in the absence of essential services provided by organizations to communities, the communities will find it difficult to react quickly or return to their normal states. In the same spirit, Stephenson (2010) explained that these organizations make it possible for communities to operate. To him, organizations alongside community resilience are interdependent such that the readiness of organizations to react quickly to disaster indicates that of the readiness of the neighboring community.

Healthcare Information and Management Society (2013) maintained that Organizational Resilience Management provides tools and advances to help an Health Information Exchange Organization maintain a high level of accessibility, declaring that it puts forward some ways that can be used in pinpointing and estimating risks to the Health Information Organization, and a structure for dealing with those risks, whether by suppression or by reduction. It also promotes an organization's ability to react and regain its stand from stress and do the needful to confirm the organization's continued accomplishments.

Measures of Organizational Resilience

Situation Awareness

According to Franklin and Downing (2013), the concept "situation awareness" traces its first usage to the military in World War 1, where it was seen as an important attribute for crews in military aircraft. Mcmanus et al. (2008) maintained that situation awareness is expressed as the knowledge a corporation has of its total functional surrounding. This according to them includes the ability to anticipate opportunities and also possible disasters, disturbances and the ability to pinpoint crisis and their outcomes correctly. Nairn (2011) sees situation awareness as a degree of an organization's comprehension and appreciation of its total working milieu.

Endsley, Bolte, and Jones (2003) defined situation awareness as being abreast with happenings in the environment and to comprehend the relevance of that information now and

in time to come. They explained further that the term 'situation awareness' is mostly used in working terms.

Endsley (1995), defined team situation awareness as the extent to which all the team members have the understanding of happenings necessary to carry out required tasks, stressing that it goes to a large extent to determine the success or failure of members of a team and that a poor situation awareness on a member can negatively affect the progress of the entire team. He argued that the ability of organizations to see themselves as part of a wider network, in perfect agreement can bring about a common and shared situation awareness, even for decision makers. According to Mills, et al. (2015) when medical directors foresee a health disorder, they carry out relief efforts with the aid of available information from former crisis experiences as they simultaneously remain alert to the disaster and area presently disturbed.

First Aid as provided by the Red Cross Society stresses the need to be informed of happenings within the affected area as the first important strategy to be accepted by responders when attending to an individual in need of medical assistance (www.unicef.org). Situation awareness for First Aid responders in medical context also includes examining and understanding the event that occurred to avoid injury of responders and equally to communicate to other rescue agencies which may be interested with the information of the situation through radio services before their arrival. It is equally used to avoid further injury to already injured individuals, to medical responders as well as to inform other like-minded responders of hazardous conditions before their arrival, (www.unicef.org)

Keystone Vulnerabilities

Keystone vulnerabilities, according to McManus et. al. (2008) are the elements in the organization's system which by their loss or destruction may have the ability of adversely affecting the organization, causing terrible damage all through the system, and by which other close elements of the system depend for support. They explained further that keystone vulnerabilities can either occur violently, implying the sudden failure of a system or it may occur gradually, implying the step by step failure of a system for a longer period due to growing systematic or coincidental loss of mild important factors.

Similarly, Nairn (2011) argues that the direct effect of keystone vulnerabilities may occur either immediately and badly affect a constituent part or gradually, causing the malfunctioning of minor important element that may eventually cause a terrible damage in the future if not checked on time. However, Luers (2003) submits that vulnerability is generally defined as the weakness to damage, and is often characterized by either of the scenarios: the sensitivity of some of the people or place to threats, shocks or disturbances, also the state of the system's skill to fit in to different situation. Luers (2005) opined that pointing out those things that causes the exposure to attack and understanding what make up the basic operation may help decision makers discover the most important issues that are pressing, as they make futuristic management plans. He maintained that controlling vulnerabilities in the future needs a proper directing of the main factors as they observe the differences occurring in the organization's processes while keeping track of changes in the system that are in line with the present situation.

Ethical Decision Making and Organizational Resilience

Waples, Antes, Murphy, Connelly, and Mumford (2009) conducted a meta-analysis and found that effective ethics training required an effective course design, delivery, and

evaluation. For this reason, the present study proposes that the contents of ethics training should include managers' support for ethics training, as well as planning, implementation, content, and evaluation of ethics-training courses. Ethics training focuses on requirements of employees from organizations, the operations of a given code of conduct, and the level of importance that the organization attaches to the code of conduct (Schwartz, 2004). A comprehensive ethics-training program plays a highly effective communicative role and conveys a code of conduct for organizations, to outcomes that can go far in creating a positive ethical climate and can induce satisfaction in employees. The degree of accordance between ethical expectations and ethical standards determines employees' evaluation of organizational performance (Logsdon & Yuthas, 1997). Moreover, employees would react and express their satisfaction when organizational standards toward ethics match with employees' ethical expectations. Ethical training provides a reference or standard for employees to use in evaluating their respective organization's actions.

From the foregoing discussion, we hereby hypothesized thus:

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between ethics training and situation analysis in tertiary hospitals in Bayelsa State.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between ethics training and keystone vulnerabilities in tertiary hospitals in Bayelsa State.

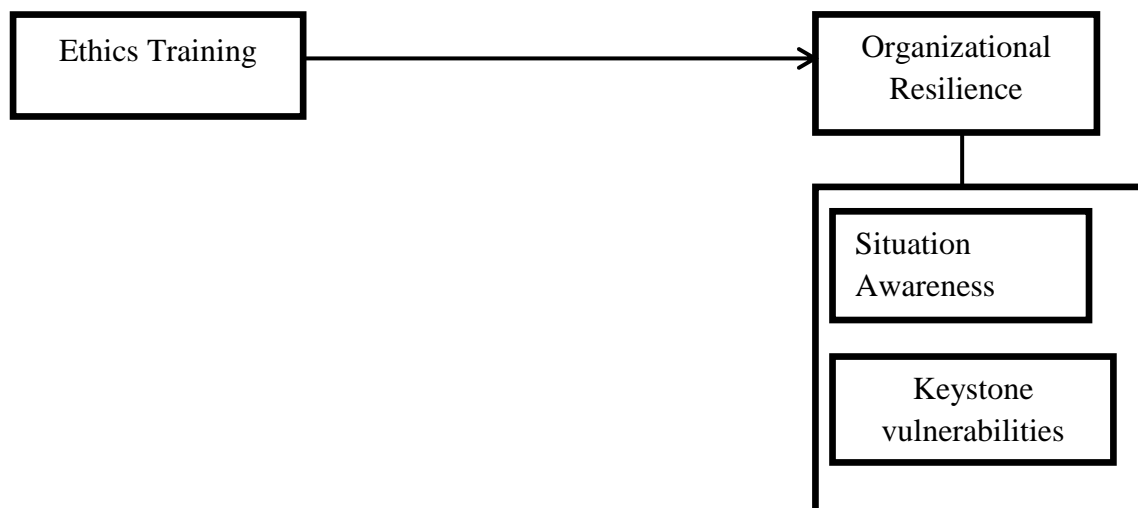


Fig.1: Operational Framework for the hypothesized relationship between ethics training and organizational resilience

Source: Desk Research, 2017

Methodology

The study used a cross sectional research design involving directors and heads of departments of the Federal Medical Centre, Yenagoa and Niger Delta University Teaching Hospital, Kolobiri. The primary source of data collection was through the structured questionnaire. The sampling elements in the population consist of 113 directors and heads of department of both hospitals. The entire population elements are included in the study therefore no sample size was determined. After data cleaning, only data of 83 respondents were finally used for data analysis. Descriptive statistics and Spearman's Rank Order Correlation was used for data analysis and hypothesis testing with the aid of the SPSS Package version 20. The internal reliability of the instrument is as shown below:

Table 1: Reliability statistics for the instruments

variables	Number of items	Cronbach's alpha
Ethics Training	4	0.947
Situation awareness	4	0.971
Keystone vulnerabilities	4	0.960

Source: Research data, 2017

The following Cronbach's alpha result shows the test of reliability of the scale. Ethics Training (0.947), Situation awareness (0.971) and Keystone vulnerabilities (0.96). Going by Nunally's (1978) alpha threshold of 0.70 should be accepted. Therefore the reliability level of the scale is acceptable.

Results and Discussions

Bivariate Analysis

The secondary data analysis was carried out using the Spearman rank order correlation tool at a 95% confidence interval. Specifically, the tests cover hypotheses H_{01} to H_{02} which were bivariate and all stated in the null form. We have relied on the Spearman Rank (*rho*) statistic to undertake the analysis. The 0.05 significance level is adopted as criterion for the probability of either accepting the null hypotheses at ($p > 0.05$) or rejecting the null hypotheses at ($p < 0.05$).

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between Ethics Training and situation awareness.

Correlation analysis showing the relationship between Ethics Training and Situation Awareness

			Ethics Training	Situation awareness
Spearman's rho	Ethics Training	Correlation Coefficient	1a.000	.887**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	83	83
	Situation awareness	Correlation Coefficient	.887**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	83	83

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Research Data ,2017 (SPSS output, version 21.0)

The relationship between ethics training and situation awareness was investigated using Spearman Rank Order. There exist a strong correlation amongst the variables with rho as = 0.887, $p < .000$. This means that the higher the ethics training, the better the situation awareness. Hence ethics training has a significant effect on situation awareness. The explanation to this finding implies that periodic ethics trainings on all staff of the institutions increase their situation awareness. This is in support of the argument of McManus et al. (2008) that trainings on situation awareness consist of an in-depth acknowledgement of those things that activate emergencies and a mindfulness of accessible support to the organization during emergencies.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between Ethics Training and Keystone Vulnerabilities.

Correlation analysis showing the relationship between Ethics Training and Keystone vulnerabilities

			Ethics Training	Keystone vulnerabilities
Spearman's rho	Ethics Training	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.895**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	83	83
	Keystone vulnerabilities	Correlation Coefficient	.895**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	83	83

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Research Data ,2017 (SPSS output, version 21.0)

The relationship between ethics training and keystone Vulnerabilities was investigated using Spearman Rank Order. A high correlation was seen, with rho as 0.900, $p < .000$. This connotes that the more ethics training is being conducted, the higher the degree of the management of Vulnerabilities. Proper utilization of the skills acquired in ethics training on the control of vulnerabilities increases the capacity of the skills utilized for control of Keystone vulnerabilities. This agrees with the finding of Prieur (2013) who maintained that Ethics training when applied by managers' aids in suppressing the threats of emergencies and assists in empowering the resilience of people when different kinds of crisis occur by attaching an ethical meaning to the strategies for alleviating threats like aversion, supporting and prevention, assistance, reducing exposures to threats etc. Hence Ethics training has a significant effect on Keystone Vulnerabilities.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study thus concludes that the utilization of ethics training and situation awareness when properly adhered to will drive the organization to become stronger and better competitive in the business world. It will enhance long term benefits of sustainable growth and productivity for the organization. Health Institution engagement in Ethics training and the effective control of keystone vulnerabilities will enhance long term benefit of survival and competitiveness in the organization.

Based on this the following, recommendations are here proffered:

- i.** Management should ensure that ethics training are carried out on all staff in order for them to have a shared situation awareness that will be useful in dealing with disturbances and emergencies.
- ii.** Management should consistently embark on ethics training to develop employees' skills on the control of vulnerabilities and to enhance the organization's ability to withstand shocks.

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