



Ethical Research in Business Ethics

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Abstract

In this paper, we expand the concept of care to encompass the researcher’s reflexivity regarding their own positionality and privilege, along with the aims of the research, by embracing ethics as the bedrock of the entire research process. During the research, we have examined the ways in which the methodological approaches of the authors can be shaped with reflexivity, care and purpose, drawing on examples from published research. Historically, research ethics have often centered on the methodological aspects of scholarship. The prevailing standard has been to view ethical requirements as aspirations rather than mere obstacles. An ethical researcher not only adheres to guidelines but also demonstrates genuine concern. In order to exercise concern, an ethical researchers must actively consider and assume accountability for their ethical conduct and research objectives, situating these activities reflexively within a broader, more comprehensive scholarly inquiry process.

Keywords: Ethical Business Practices, Ethical Decision Making, Ethical Research, Corporate Social Responsibility.

Introduction

The study of Business Ethics involves implementation of suitable business practices and policies based on a framework of values [1]there is minimal discussion about the ethical treatment of the research subject in these publication processes. In contrast, the ethical scrutiny of management research processes within research institutions is often highly formalized and very focused on the protection of research participants. Hence, the question arises of how management publication processes should best account for the interests of the research subject, both in the narrow sense of specific research participants and in the broader understanding of the subject of the research. This question is particularly pertinent in light of significant codification of research ethics within academic institutions, and increasing self-reflection within the management discipline about the “good” of management research and education. Findings from a survey and interviews with management journal editors (and others involved in journal publication. This paradigm defines employee behavior in their connections

with each other and outsiders. It also outlines the principles and function of a company in a community.

When considering potentially controversial subjects such as corporate social responsibility, bribery, fiduciary duties, insider trading, discrimination, corporate governance and much more, business ethics refers to the study of appropriate business rules and practices. Although the law has frequently dictated business ethics, it occasionally offers a fundamental norm which the companies can follow in order to win the public’s approval.

The basic instance of Business Ethics can be- to avoid partiality during quarterly assessments, a corporation can, forbid direct reports from employees who are dating one another [2]necessitating a (re.

Hence, corporate ethics are intended to maintain a lawful, just, productive and efficient workplace.

Figure 1. Meaning of Business Ethics



Review of Literature

Goduscheit¹² (2022) utilizes qualitative interviews, program materials, and observations in his study investigating the influence of external funding on research independence. His aim is to understand how funding organizations shape research outcomes. He illustrates how expectations from funding bodies can impact the topics explored, the methodologies employed to address research questions, and the types of research outputs produced. Rather than merely labeling these effects as unethical, he examines both the positive and negative aspects of the evolving relationships between researchers and funding sources, along with their implications for advancing scholarship.

Allen et al.² (2019) delve into the importance of reflexivity in sustainability research, highlighting how ecological responsibility stems from acknowledging the diverse

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relationships between humans and the environment. They underscore the significance of recognizing relationships, albeit on a distinct issue. The authors advocate for techniques such as participatory action research and arts-based methods to identify organizational actors entrenched in ecological relationships, promoting an “ecocentric radical-reflexivity” approach. Similar to the previous example, this study also underscores that research transcends mere adherence to rules. Instead, ethical research hinges on fostering awareness of the intricate economic and ecological relationships that frame the study.

Business Ethics’ Principles

Comprehending the fundamental moral principles that underlie ethical conduct is crucial. If an individual lack any of these values, it may lead to not only the downfall of the individual’s talent but also the organizations they represent.

The twelve principles of business ethics are as follows:

Leadership

Intentionally striving to embrace, integrate, and embody the other eleven principles is essential for guiding behaviour in all areas of both professional and personal life.

Accountability

Ensuring that you, as well as others, are held responsible for your actions. Commitment to upholding moral principles and ensuring that others do the same.

Integrity

Embraces the values of reliability, honesty, and trustworthiness. An individual with integrity consistently acts honourably and strives to maintain a superior benchmark.

Respecting others

In order to create ethical behaviour and surroundings at the workplace, giving respect to others is a very essential. Everybody needs to be treated with respect, privacy, equality, opportunity, and empathy.

Honesty

Creating an ethical climate hinges on always telling the truth. Inaccuracies, omissions, and exaggerations do not contribute to improved company performance. Both good and bad news should be delivered and received with equal openness to foster effective solutions.

Respect for laws

As part of ethical leadership, all local, state, and federal laws should be upheld. Leaders should prioritize legality over exploiting loopholes in situations where there is a legal grey area.

Responsibility

The management should encourage the employees to take greater accountability for their tasks, and hold themselves responsible for their actions and work in order to promote ownership within an organization.

Transparency

A stakeholder is a person who has an interest in an organisation, such as a shareholder, an employee, the community where the company works, or an employee’s family. Companies ought to make sure that details regarding their financials, price adjustments, employment procedures, Compensation and advancement opportunities are readily accessible to anyone interested in the success of the entity, while safeguarding trade secrets.

Compassion

All parties involved in a business relationship should be handled equally with consideration for their needs, including customers, partners in company and employees.

Fairness

Everyone should be treated equally and afforded the same opportunities. A practice or behaviour which causes discomfort or prioritizes personal or corporate gain over principles of equality, politeness, and respect is unfair.

Loyalty

Leaders should show loyalty to their team members and the business by keeping information private. Loyalty among management and staff ensures their dedication to optimal practises.

Environmental concern

Amidst a global landscape, it is vital to recognize and be concerned about the environmental impact of business operations, where resources are scarce, ecosystems have been depleted by previous practices, and the climate is undergoing significant shifts. Every employee ought to be inspired to identify and provide solutions to problematic practices that could exacerbate existing harm.

Importance of Business Ethics

Business Ethics is paramount for success in modern business for several reasons [9]. The foremost advantage of established ethics programs is the development of a code of conduct that shapes behaviour across all employee levels, from top executives to middle management to newcomers. When each employee behaves ethically, the business cultivates a reputation for moral integrity. With an elevated reputation, the organization begins to reap the benefits associated with ethical practices:

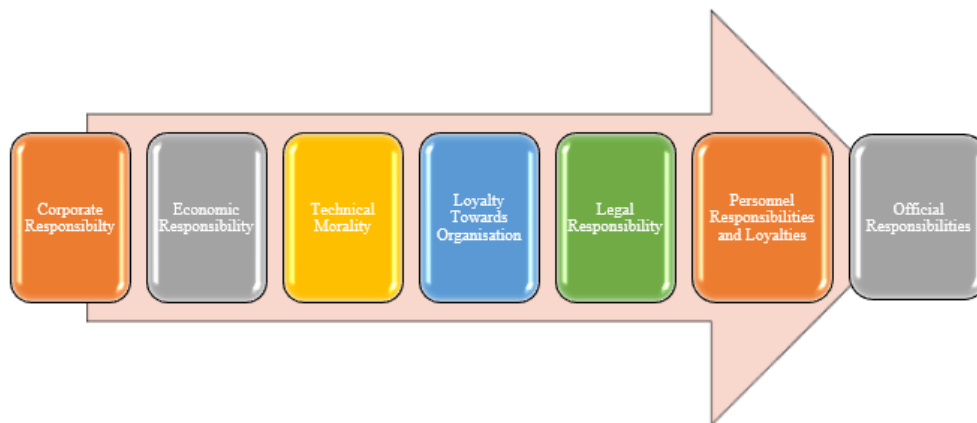
- Client retention and growth;
- Brand recognition and growth;
- Improved negotiating skills;
- Greater trust in goods and services
- Draws in talent and investment

All of these elements together have an impact on an organisation's revenue. People who fail to uphold moral standards will soon find themselves in their company.

Types of Business Ethics

Although there are numerous theories and varieties of business ethics, behaviours in corporate social responsibility, openness and dependability, fairness, and technical innovation set businesses apart.

Figure 2. Types of Business Ethics



Corporate Social Responsibility

Meeting stakeholder demands while taking into account the effects that doing so has on employees, the environment, society, and the neighbourhood in which the business works is known as corporate social responsibility (CSR). Finances and profits are essential, but they should come after the wellbeing of society, clients, and staff because, according to research, good corporate governance and ethical behaviour boost financial success [10]–[12]. Companies should be accountable and responsible for their effects on the environment, philanthropy, ethics, and the economy.

Transparency and Trustworthiness

It is crucial for businesses to make sure they are transparently disclosing their financial performance. This holds true for all reports in general, not just obligatory financial reports. For instance, many businesses distribute yearly reports to shareholders. The majority of these reports include information on the decisions that were made, whether objectives were fulfilled, and variables that affected performance in addition to the reports that were given to regulators. CEOs summarise the business's yearly performance and provide their projections in writing.

Technological Practices and Ethics

As technology of various kinds is increasingly used in corporate operations, it is necessary for a company to guarantee that the technology and data it collects are handled responsibly and ethically. Also, it should make sure that the technology is as safe as possible, especially since many

companies retain consumer information and gather data that might be used by people with bad intents.

Fairness

Regardless of ethnicity, religion, beliefs, age, or identity, a workplace should be welcoming, diverse, and equitable for all of its employees. Every employee can advance, receive a promotion, and find success in their own right in a fair workplace.

Therefore, we argue that research in business ethics should be mindful of the ethical implications of its methodological choices, implications that extend beyond simply adhering to established ethical norms. Methodological decisions should be made with consideration of their broader societal impact, both within and beyond academic circles. Researchers who acknowledge these implications move beyond safeguarding the integrity of their methods to more comprehensively address the ethics of their methodologies as knowledge practices with broader institutional consequences

Guide on Ethical Research in Business Ethics

When research ethics decisions intersect with the relationship between specific ethical practices and the evaluative objectives of societal advancement, they become increasingly intricate. This compels researchers, reviewers, and editors to confront genuine ethical dilemmas that cannot be resolved through straightforward compliance practices alone. Recognizing this complexity is beneficial. It underscores that the review

process is merely one component of a broader framework of evaluative practices, encompassing institutional ethics approval procedures preceding submission, ethical and legal considerations of publishing entities and scholarly societies overseeing academic output, and the reception of research post-publication.

Each of these instances highlights various ethical issues, and we view our editorial job as an essential but not conclusive evaluative stage. Our responsibility is to facilitate a discussion that has the best chance of fostering scholarly generativity and advancement rather than to set up a barrier that can only be cleared by the most perfect study. This turns our objective into a shared one, and we assess research based on its potential to advance the field, as well as its rigour, interest, reflexivity, or some combination of these epistemic virtues.

Relationship Between Broader Purpose of the Study and Methodological Design

By explicitly stated research questions and hypotheses, business ethics scholarship should describe its aim. Furthermore, the methodology should elucidate why specific research procedures are essential for a broader purpose and why that purpose holds ethical significance in its own right. The discussion of methods should explicitly demonstrate how the study's ethically tied objective aligns with the methodological approach employed, encompassing both the overall design and specific practices. Research that is ethically sensitive, in a nutshell, integrates methodologies with the overall goal of the study and aligns the two.

Every step in the research process involves a number of players who work together to define what scholarship means. Even if it might not be able to fully reveal this network, having the option to do so boosts the openness and worth of a scholarly investigation.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we argue that business ethics research must consider the ethical implications of its methodological choices, extending beyond mere adherence to established norms. Methodological decisions should be made with an understanding of their broader societal impact, both within and beyond academic settings. Researchers who recognize these implications move beyond safeguarding methodological integrity to deeply address the ethics of their research practices, considering wider institutional consequences.

We encourage academics to explore new forms of ethical empirical research, where connections between research conduct and objectives are actively developed. This serves as a counterbalance to ethical theorizing reliant on traditional empirical methodologies. Our editorial aims to assist authors in integrating meaningful and introspective narratives about moral behavior and research objectives throughout their publications. By placing greater emphasis on research ethics, with the support of editors, reviewers, and authors, business ethics research can be more effectively centered.

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