

## INSTRUCTIONS

Pick an ethical issue in business and apply a specific ethical framework to its analysis (virtue ethics, utilitarianism, deontology)

Student Name

Instructor

Course

Date

### **Health Safety Issues as a Business Ethic in Workplace and Deontology**

Observing the code of ethics is very important in a business organization as well as in the community. It is therefore advisable to implement the code of ethics throughout all the operations and aspects of a business organization. With adherence to the code of ethics, business organizations enhance their efficiency in the long run. Unfortunately, most of the organizations have drafted the code of ethics but failed to adhere to them because of inappropriate control systems and human nature. Business organizations that have adhered to their code of ethics register superior performance because of their ability to attract and retain high-quality employees, reliable customers, investors as well as suppliers. However, establishing and maintaining an ethical business organization demands time and efforts. It does not come automatically because human beings are naturally immoral. Failure to observe business code of ethics by employees, employers, customers, and suppliers prevents business organizations from realizing high integrity and superior performance. With clear application of deontology ethical

framework, this paper analyzes health and safety issues of workers in an organization as a business ethic.

Schulte et al in their article “Occupational safety and health criteria for responsible development of nanotechnology” stated that from the turn of factory working conditions in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, to the current emphasis on the diversity of training, the history code of ethics in workplaces has been an ongoing story, especially between the employers and employees. According to the research, it comes out clearly that employers were responsible for the majority of the incidences which endangered the lives of the workers in the workplaces (Schulte et al 2153). Employers have the duty to ensure that the working environment of its employees is safe. Safety in this scenario does not mean that implies working in an environment where there is no potential harm but an environment where the employees are fully informed on what is expected of them, how to use risky machinery and finally being equipped with protective measures.

In an attempt to address ethics in business organizations, the deontology ethical framework ascerts that, people should strictly adhere to their duties obligations in an organization where ethics are in play. This implies that, people are supposed to follow their individual obligations to other people or to society because upholding personal duties is what is considered ethically right. On adhering to this ethical framework, both employers are expected to come up with consistent decisions since they are on the basis of individual duties (Leonard). For instance, if employees are mandated to attend meetings on time, that should be the case whether the employer arrives in time or not. Sometimes observing the code of ethics conflict but that should not be the reason to consistently violate the code of ethics. A good example is when a business person is

rushing for a meeting after he/she is already late and they are driving, must they over speed to get in time?

Schulte et al makes it clear in their article that most of the employers do not adhere to their duties and obligations as suggested by the deontology ethical framework. And that has been the reason behind the increasing number of deaths and health complications which are reported on a daily basis. For instance, the article stipulates that employers have declined to reveal information on some of the dangerous chemicals which employers interact with every day. They fail to reveal the negative impacts of those chemicals in order to avoid scaring workers. However, according to the deontology ethical framework, it is their duty and obligation to provide the necessary information to their employees so that they can make their own decisions (Johnson and Ashley). Due to lack of information, an employee ends up interacting with some of the chemicals recklessly resulting in injuries, skin burns, and other health-related complications.

The article goes ahead to mention that employers have failed to maintain the standards of the workplaces which has resulted in permanent injuries and deaths of employees. Perceived in the shadow of deontology ethical framework, it is the duty of an employer to ensure that the working environments are safe. However, most of them usually neglect this obligation in order to avoid the costs related to repair and maintenance. This on the side of the employees has become a threat to their lives. For instance, many cases of employees being electrocuted in the workplaces have been reported time and again (Jackson, Frank, and Michael, 280). This is in consideration of the fact that companies are supplied with high current electricity which can easily cause

deaths. Deaths and injuries of this kind can be attributed to unethical behaviors of employers whose profit is their only goal and do not mind about the lives of the workers.

Schulte et al makes it clear that it is the duty and obligation of an employer to train employees on the safety measures in a workplace depending on the kind of organization they are working for. However, in an attempt to avoid the training costs most employers do not engage their employees on safety training which see employees get into their working sites without safety clothing. This exposes them to the risk of being injured or developing health complications especially in cases where an organization deals with chemical substances. The blame in such cases should be directed to the employers because according to deontology ethical framework will have failed in their duty and obligation.

In business organizations which involve the use of machines, Schulte et al in their article makes it clear that it is the duty of the employers to clarify the work of different machines. This would help in mitigating the risk of injuries on new employees who may not be in a position to differentiate the use of different machines. However, out of ignorance most employers hire new workers and grant them full responsibility to operate machines before they can be guided on the usage of such machines (Chell et al. 620). This has resulted in injuries and to some extends death. Logically, this should be blamed on the employers for failing in their duties and obligations to guide and provide information to new employees according to deontology ethical framework.

Schulte et al in their article also accuses employers for purchasing faulty machines to avoid high costs of efficient machines. Those machines are given to innocent

employees who do not have any knowledge of the quality of machines. As a result, the research reveals that employees end up getting permanent injuries and others dying after the faulty machines explode or break in the course of operation. Such cases are common because most employers are motivated by the amount of profit they realize and not the safety of employees (Van Pham, Phuc, and Achim). In such incidences, the blame goes to the employer. This is in consideration of the deontology ethical framework which states that people should adhere to their duties and obligations in the working environment. It is the duty and obligation of an employer to ensure that employees operate in a safe and secure environment and hence providing faulty machines in order to avoid high costs of efficient machines is a failure of employer's duty.

In order to acquire cheap labor, Schulte et al in their article says that employers tend to recruit unqualified employees to take roles which are mandated to be occupied by fully qualified people. Some of those roles are sensitive because they touch on the safety of other employees in an organization (Johnson and Ashley). The article gave an example of an employer who recruits cheap unqualified driver to be in charge of an organization vehicle which is mainly used to facilitate transport of organization employees from one site to another. Because the driver is unqualified, he or she ends up causing an accident which injures many employees and another die. The blame in such a case should as well be directed to the employer for failing to adhere to his duty and obligation of ensuring employee safety and security in all the aspects.

In summary, this paper has scrutinized one of the main ethical issue affecting business organizations today, employees health safety and security. In the course of scrutiny, the paper has drawn its guidelines from one of the major ethical frameworks,

deontology ethical framework. Deontology ethical framework advocates for strict adherence to their duties and obligations in an organization where ethics are in play. In many cases which have scrutinized in the paper like acquiring fault machines to avoid the high costs of new machines, hiring cheap unqualified employees and failing to train new employees on safety issues, the blame has been directed to the employer because those are some of his duties and obligations. It has, therefore, come out clearly that adherence to individual duties and obligations in business organizations will minimize the negative impacts associated with this ethical issue.

#### Works Cited

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