



THE PERFORMANCE OF AUTHENTICITY AND THE COMMODIFICATION OF PARASOCIAL BONDS: TWIN PILLARS OF INFLUENCER CULTURE ON SOCIAL MEDIA

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Abstract

Workplace ethics determine organizational sustainability and stakeholder trust. This qualitative literature study examines how organizational culture shapes employee ethical behavior and professional conduct. Analysis reveals that ethical culture operates through value internalization, leadership modeling, reward systems, and group norms. Gaps between proclaimed values and actual practices create cynicism that erodes ethical foundations. Ethical leadership consistency between words and actions represents the strongest determinant of positive ethical culture. Reward systems measuring only outcomes without process consideration incentivize misconduct to achieve targets. Safe reporting mechanisms and whistleblower protection constitute critical components of mature ethical culture. Organizational justice in distribution, procedures, and interpersonal treatment builds legitimacy of ethical systems. Excessive performance pressure without adequate resources creates conditions triggering moral disengagement. New employee socialization represents a critical period for ethical value cultivation requiring dedicated attention.

Keyword: organizational culture, workplace ethics, professional conduct, value internalization, ethical leadership

Introduction

Modern organizations operate in an environment that demands high ethical standards alongside increasing public scrutiny of corporate behavior. Various cases of ethical violations by large companies have shaken public trust in business institutions. Accounting scandals, bribery practices, and labor exploitation demonstrate a gap between proclaimed values and actual behavior. Formal codes of ethics held by most organizations have proven insufficient to guarantee ethical behavior among employees. The discrepancy between written policies and daily practices indicates that other factors are at work in shaping behavior. On the other hand, clear communication patterns are essential so that every member understands what the company truly expects (Sajjapong & Irfan, 2022). Questions about what actually drives employees to act ethically or unethically are becoming increasingly relevant. Research shows that the workplace environment has a greater influence on behavior than individual character alone. Employees who personally possess high integrity can commit violations if organizational pressure drives them to do so. Conversely, individuals with less ethical tendencies can demonstrate good behavior in a supportive culture. Understanding the mechanisms of ethical behavior formation in the workplace has become an urgent need for organizations. Managers require knowledge of how to create conditions that encourage consistent ethical decision-making (Wittmer, 2016). The study of workplace ethics cannot be separated from the study of the surrounding organizational culture.

Organizational culture is a system of shared values, beliefs, and assumptions that shape how organizational members think and act (Treviño et al., 2017). Culture serves as a lens through which employees interpret situations and determine appropriate responses. Cultural elements include physical artifacts, the language used, performed rituals, and stories told repeatedly. Shared values provide guidelines on what is considered good or bad within the organization. Basic assumptions that are never questioned form the boundaries of acceptable behavior without the need for reminders. New employees quickly learn the culture through observation and imitation of more senior colleagues. This condition shows that constantly changing ways of working require employees to always learn and adapt to existing values (Kurniawan & Darmawan, 2021). A strong culture produces uniformity of behavior without the need for detailed written rules. However,

a strong culture can also become a problem if the values held conflict with universal ethics. Organizations with aggressive and competitive cultures may inadvertently encourage unethical practices to achieve targets. A culture that focuses too much on results without considering the means to achieve them creates loopholes for violations. Conversely, a culture that emphasizes integrity and transparency builds a foundation for long-term ethical behavior. The relationship between organizational culture and work ethics is dynamic and mutually influential.

The workplace socialization process functions as a mechanism for transmitting ethical values from the organization to new employees. New employees enter the organization bringing personal values formed from family, education, and previous experiences (Azami, 2022). Through interaction with coworkers, superiors, and various organizational systems, these values can change. Socialization occurs both formally through training programs and informally through daily behavioral observations. Messages conveyed through formal socialization may contradict what is practiced informally. Moreover, today, many jobs are performed through digital systems, making human interaction more limited and challenging (Mardikaningsih & Darmawan, 2022). New employees learn more from what they see being done than from what they hear being said. When leaders say that integrity is important but promote employees who achieve targets through cheating, this double message is confusing. Employees will tend to ignore formal statements and follow the behavioral patterns that lead to actual success. This process of ethical socialization is powerful because it takes place continuously and unconsciously. Every interaction in the workplace carries ethical weight that shapes the understanding of what is right and wrong. Over time, organizational values can be internalized into the employee's personal beliefs. This internalization is the most effective form of ethical control because it does not require external supervision. However, the internalization of incorrect values can result in unethical behavior carried out with full conviction that it is right.

Leadership holds a central position in shaping an organization's ethical culture through role modeling and decision-making (Enciso et al., 2017). Leaders at various levels send signals about what the organization values through their daily actions. A leader's statements regarding the importance of ethics will be ignored if their actions demonstrate otherwise.

Employees are highly sensitive to inconsistencies between their leaders' words and deeds. Often, the use of technology and data within a company can also influence individual freedoms and rights in the workplace (Rojak & Gardi, 2022). Leaders who cut ethical corners to reach targets send a message that results are more important than the process. Conversely, leaders who are willing to sacrifice short-term profits for the sake of principle build ethical credibility. Decisions about who is recruited, promoted, or terminated carry heavy ethical weight. Retaining high-performing employees who violate ethics sends a message that the rules do not apply to everyone. Leaders also play a role in designing systems that either encourage or inhibit ethical behavior. Reward systems that are too aggressive can create pressure to cheat in order to meet targets. In contrast, systems that reward integrity alongside results encourage balanced behavior. Ultimately, providing a positive work experience for everyone will greatly assist the company in maintaining its behavioral standards (Putra et al., 2022). Ethical leaders also create safe whistleblowing mechanisms for employees. The courage to report violations by superiors or colleagues requires a guarantee of protection from retaliation. Leaders who protect whistleblowers send a strong message that ethical compliance is more important than blind loyalty.

The reward and recognition systems within an organization directly influence employees' ethical behavior through the incentives offered. Employees tend to repeat behaviors that bring rewards and avoid behaviors that bring punishment (Hanson, 2017). The design of incentive systems determines what types of behavior are systematically encouraged within the organization. Therefore, companies need to continuously update how they manage the people within them to remain competitive on a broader level (Abdulah et al., 2021). Systems that overemphasize short-term quantitative results encourage the neglect of process and ethics. Employees who know that an annual bonus depends on achieving specific sales targets will tend to justify any means necessary. Scandals involving the sale of defective products or the manipulation of financial statements are often rooted in imbalanced incentive systems. Non-financial rewards such as public recognition, promotions, or attractive assignments also carry ethical messages. Employees who see a colleague promoted despite having a record of ethical violations learn that integrity is not important. Furthermore, maintaining the company's reputation in the public eye, especially on social media, becomes

an important task that must be addressed by all members of the organization (Darmawan et al., 2022). Conversely, organizations that consider ethical compliance in promotion decisions send a different message. Reward systems need to balance the measurement of what is achieved with how those achievements were attained. Performance evaluations that include ethical behavior assessments as a formal component are necessary for this balance. Employees need to know that unethical behavior will be sanctioned regardless of the results achieved. The certainty of a sanction is more important than its severity in preventing ethical violations. A well-designed reward system creates alignment between individual and organizational interests regarding ethics.

Pressure to achieve performance targets in a competitive business environment often triggers unethical behavior. Employees face ever-increasing demands from superiors who are also facing similar pressure from their own bosses (Kabeyi, 2018). In this situation, the use of more organized work methods is very helpful so that every employee can work faster and provide maximum results (Amri & Putra, 2022). When targets are perceived as unrealistic, the temptation to cut ethical corners becomes immense. This pressure is exacerbated by threatening consequences if targets are not met, such as loss of bonuses or even employment. Under stress, employees tend to use self-justification to neutralize the guilt of violations. They might think that "everyone else is doing it" or that the violation is only temporary. Such cognitive justifications allow employees to maintain a self-image as a "good person" while behaving unethically. This is also influenced by how each individual possesses the ability to use digital technology to support their daily work (Arifin & Darmawan, 2021). Organizations that set targets without considering ethical feasibility systematically create conditions for violations. The target-setting process should involve discussions on how targets will be achieved ethically. Leaders need to explicitly state that targets must not be achieved at the expense of organizational values. Employees also need to have channels to report unrealistic pressures without fear of being considered weak or incompetent. A culture that values the courage to admit limitations is healthier than one that demands perfection. Ethical pressure does not always come from high targets but can stem from unhealthy internal competition. Departments or individuals competing for limited resources may engage in sabotage or information theft. Management needs

to manage competitive dynamics so they do not evolve into destructive behavior that harms the organization as a whole.

The main problem faced is the gap between formally proclaimed values and the values actually practiced within the organization. Almost all organizations have written codes of ethics that are well-publicized to employees. However, the existence of this document does not automatically guarantee that employee behavior aligns with its content. Many organizations have values displayed on office walls that are not reflected in daily decisions. This gap between words and actions creates cynicism among employees. This highlights how crucial it is for companies to have the right strategy in creating a comfortable work environment so that all members feel tied to the organization's goals (Rojak et al., 2022). Cynical employees tend to ignore formal ethical messages because they view them as mere pretense. They learn that what matters is not what the organization says, but what is actually rewarded. This gap often stems from short-term pressures that drive management to ignore values for the sake of results. A manager who pressures a team to report inaccurate sales figures might think it is only temporary. However, every small violation that is not addressed creates a precedent for larger subsequent violations. Gaps can also occur because proclaimed values are too abstract to be translated into concrete situations. Employees might agree that integrity is important but not know what it means in the specific situations they face. Without concrete guidelines, employees will use subjective interpretations that may vary greatly between individuals. The root of the problem is the lack of mechanisms connecting abstract values to concrete behavior in daily decision-making (Sims & Brinkmann, 2003).

The second problem relates to the conflict between loyalty toward the organization and universal ethical obligations. Employees often face situations where organizational interests conflict with broader ethical principles. A superior's command to do something ethically questionable places the employee in a severe dilemma. Obeying the order might violate personal values, but defying it could threaten career continuity. Under such conditions, the role of a leader is greatly needed to adjust their leadership style so that every change within the team can proceed smoothly (Mardikaningsih & Darmawan, 2022). In these situations, hierarchical power and group pressure often override individual ethical considerations (Warren et al., 2015). The phenomenon of groupthink, where a cohesive

team ignores ethical warnings for the sake of consensus, is extremely dangerous. Team members do not want to disrupt harmony by raising ethical objections that might be seen as intrusive. Healthy loyalty to an organization can turn into blind loyalty that negates critical judgment. Furthermore, every member of the organization actually needs to have their own way of adapting to the changes occurring around them to remain resilient (Oluwatoyin & Mardikaningsih, 2022). Overly loyal employees might turn a blind eye to a colleague's violations or even become involved in a cover-up. They justify these actions by claiming to protect the organization from a bad reputation or financial loss. Ironically, this cover-up behavior causes even greater damage when it is eventually exposed. A healthy organization requires employees who have the courage to voice ethical objections. A culture that values a dissenting voice as an asset rather than a threat is more resistant to ethical failure. This issue demonstrates that an organizational culture that is too homogeneous and suppresses differences is actually at risk.

Financial losses resulting from fines, lawsuits, and declining stock values can reach billions of dollars. A damaged corporate reputation takes years to recover at a very high cost. Employees who were not involved in the violations are still affected through layoffs or the devaluation of their shares. The wider community is also harmed when companies dispose of hazardous waste or sell unsafe products. The cases of Enron, WorldCom, and Volkswagen demonstrate how devastating the impact of organizational ethical failure can be (Kaptein, 2011). Therefore, a fair performance appraisal system that aligns with employee capabilities is essential to ensure that every evaluation is conducted honestly and accurately (Putra, 2021). These failures do not happen overnight but are an accumulation of small violations that were not addressed. Understanding the role of organizational culture in preventing or encouraging unethical behavior becomes very critical. Organizations require knowledge about which cultural elements are most effective in shaping work ethics. Additionally, providing sincere support to employees in a diverse work environment will help them feel more valued and secure in their work (Hariani et al., 2021). Without this understanding, efforts to build an ethical organization will be a costly process of trial and error. This writing is necessary to synthesize scattered knowledge regarding the relationship between culture and work ethics. The resulting conceptual framework can serve as a guide for

organizations in designing effective cultural interventions. The increasing speed and complexity of the business environment demand a solid ethical foundation for safe navigation.

The purpose of this writing is to develop an understanding of the mechanisms of ethical behavior formation through organizational culture. This writing aims to identify cultural elements that function as the main determinants of work ethics. The theoretical contribution of this paper is the mapping of the relationship between various cultural dimensions and specific ethical outcomes. Practically, this writing provides a framework for organizations to assess and develop their ethical culture.

Method

This writing was conducted as a literature study using a qualitative approach to explore the relationship between organizational culture and work ethics. Literature study was chosen because of the method's ability to synthesize knowledge from various dispersed sources. As explained by Chapman, McNeill, and McNeill (2005), literature research allows researchers to map the existing landscape of knowledge regarding a topic. This research does not collect primary data through interviews, surveys, or field observations. The main data sources are academic texts in the form of journal articles, books, book chapters, and conference proceedings. Selection criteria for sources include substantial relevance to the topic, publisher credibility, and the quality of argumentation. Beins (2017) emphasizes that qualitative research aims to understand the meanings subjects give to their experiences. In a literature study, the analyzed meaning is the theoretical construction developed by the authors of various sources. The data collection process began with searching academic databases using predefined keywords. Keywords included *organizational culture*, *workplace ethics*, *ethical behavior*, *professional conduct*, and *value internalization*. Identified sources were then evaluated for feasibility based on abstracts and conclusions before being read in full. Scheurich (2014) reminds us that qualitative research must be sensitive to the assumptions underlying the research practice itself. The researcher realizes that the selection and interpretation of sources are influenced by the conceptual framework brought to the study. To reduce bias, the selection and analysis process was conducted with meticulous and transparent documentation.

Data analysis in this research uses a thematic analysis method adapted for literature materials. The initial step of the analysis was the organization of all collected sources based on the main topics discussed. Each source was read thoroughly to understand the main arguments, the evidence used, and the conclusions drawn. Beins (2017) states that critical reading in qualitative research involves identifying assumptions, weaknesses, and the strengths of arguments. Initial codes were assigned to parts of the text relevant to the formulated research questions. These codes were then grouped into larger themes based on conceptual similarities. Chapman, McNeill, and McNeill (2005) explain that the thematization process is iterative, where the researcher moves between data and concepts. The main themes emerging in this analysis include value internalization, ethical leadership, reward systems, performance pressure, and reporting mechanisms. Each theme was broken down into more specific sub-themes to deepen the understanding of relational mechanisms. Comparisons between sources were made to identify areas of consensus and differences in perspectives within the literature. Scheurich (2014) emphasizes the importance of treating differing views as valuable data rather than as a problem. The process of drawing conclusions was carried out gradually by constantly referring back to the original data. The validity of the findings was maintained through a process of triangulation between different sources and an analysis audit trail. This research does not claim statistical generalization but rather the transferability of findings to similar organizational settings.

Result and Discussion

Organizational culture refers to a system of values, beliefs, norms, and behavioral patterns shared and practiced by members of an organization in carrying out their daily work activities. This culture is formed through a continuous process of interaction and serves as an unwritten guideline that directs ways of thinking, attitudes, and actions within the organization. Furthermore, the atmosphere in the workplace and the existing habits within the company play an important role in determining how well the work results achieved by employees can be (Putra et al., 2020). In practice, organizational culture reflects a collective identity that distinguishes one organization from another, including in decision-making methods, communication patterns, and approaches to change and innovation. The

scope of organizational culture encompasses core values held, developing work norms, organizational symbols and rituals, leadership styles, and the work climate perceived by organization members. This also relates to how human relationships in today's urban environments continue to experience significant shifts in patterns (Irfan & Al Hakim, 2022). Additionally, organizational culture includes how the organization responds to external pressures, manages internal conflicts, and builds alignment between individual goals and organizational objectives (Barney, 1986).

Indicators for measuring organizational culture can be viewed through several dimensions that describe the strength and character of the developing culture. The first dimension is shared values and beliefs, which is evident from the extent to which organization members understand and internalize the organization's fundamental principles. The second dimension is behavioral consistency, reflecting the alignment between held values and daily work practices. It is also important to pay attention to how leaders behave and how the existing office culture can make employees feel more loyal to their company (Hariani & Irfan, 2022). The third dimension is communication patterns, which include openness, clarity of information, and the quality of interaction between organization members. The fourth dimension is orientation toward performance and results, showing the extent to which the culture encourages productivity, responsibility, and goal achievement. Nowadays, the use of social media has also become very commonplace, especially among young people who are very accustomed to the digital world (Kurniawan et al., 2021). The fifth dimension is adaptability, seen from the organization's flexibility in facing changes and challenges. The sixth dimension is member involvement, reflecting the level of participation, sense of ownership, and commitment to the organization. Through these indicators, organizational culture can be systematically analyzed to understand its influence on the behavior and performance of organization members (Denison, 1990).

Organizational culture functions as a social control system that is more effective than formal rules in shaping employees' ethical behavior (Tawai & Halika, 2022). Written rules always have loopholes because it is impossible to predict every situation that might be faced. Employees who only follow rules will be confused when facing new situations not covered by procedures. Therefore, the provision of bonuses or incentives as well as a

good leadership style are highly needed to strengthen employees' sense of responsibility toward the organization (Jahroni et al., 2021). A strong culture provides principled guidelines that can be applied to various situations, including those that are unanticipated. Shared values function as a compass that guides decisions even when there is no direct supervision. The process of value internalization occurs through social learning mechanisms where employees observe and imitate the behavior of models. The most influential models are top leaders, direct supervisors, and respected colleagues. Not only inside the office, the ability to utilize social media can also be a great opportunity for businesses to introduce their products more widely (Infante & Mardikaningsih, 2022). When these models consistently demonstrate ethical behavior, other employees will follow suit without coercion. Conversely, when models exhibit unethical behavior, the entire organization can be affected systemically. Research shows that a supervisor's unethical behavior is the strongest predictor of a subordinate's unethical behavior. This contagion effect of ethical or unethical behavior occurs automatically beyond the perpetrator's awareness. Employees are often unaware that they are imitating the behavior of colleagues because the process takes place implicitly. The practical implication is that organizations must be highly selective in recruiting and promoting leaders. One individual in a key position can significantly shape the ethical culture of an entire organizational unit. Investment in ethical leadership development provides a high return through the prevention of violations.

A formal code of ethics that is not backed by a supportive culture tends to become a dead document without influence on behavior. Many organizations adopt a code of ethics due to external pressure or simply as an industry best practice (Kaptein, 2011). The resulting codes of ethics are often too long, complex, and written in legal language that is not easily understood. Employees may sign a statement saying they have read the code of ethics without truly understanding it. In addition, it is important for us to realize that current technological developments also demand that everyone possesses sufficient skills so as not to be left behind in obtaining public services (Ramle & Mardikaningsih, 2022). The existence of a code of ethics can even provide a false sense of security that ethical issues have been resolved. In fact, a code of ethics without enforcement and role modeling is completely useless in changing behavior. An effective code of ethics has

certain characteristics that distinguish it from ordinary formal documents. First, the code of ethics must be specific and provide guidelines for concrete situations frequently faced by employees. Second, the code of ethics must be continuously socialized through regular training and discussions. Third, the code of ethics must be supported by safe and responsive violation reporting mechanisms. Fourth, violations of the code of ethics must be subject to consistent sanctions without discrimination. Fifth, leaders must openly refer to the code of ethics in daily decision-making. A code of ethics that meets these criteria can become a powerful cultural instrument for shaping behavior. However, a code of ethics still cannot replace the role modeling of leaders in shaping an organization's ethical culture

Ethical leadership is the most powerful determinant of an organization's ethical culture due to the leader's central position. Ethical leaders demonstrate behavior that is consistent with proclaimed values across various situations (Webley & Werner, 2008). This is closely related to a superior's responsibility in carrying out management practices that focus not only on results but also on prevailing norms (Rojak & Darmawan, 2021). They do not merely avoid unethical behavior but also actively promote ethical conduct among subordinates. Ethical leaders communicate expectations regarding ethical standards explicitly and repeatedly. They also create mechanisms for open discussion about ethical dilemmas faced by the team. Ethical leaders are willing to listen to ethical objections from subordinates without being defensive or punitive. They treat the reporting of ethical issues as valuable information rather than disruptive complaints. Ethical leaders are also consistent in imposing sanctions for violations regardless of the violator's position. This procedural justice is vital for building the credibility of the organization's ethical commitment. Leaders who protect violators because of personal relationships or performance contributions destroy the ethical culture. Employees will learn that ethical rules only apply to those without connections or power. Ethical leaders also serve as models in admitting their own mistakes and taking responsibility. The humility to admit a mistake actually increases subordinates' respect for the leader. Conversely, leaders who cover up mistakes or blame subordinates teach that reputation is more important than the truth. Ethical leadership is not an innate talent but can be developed through proper training and mentoring.

Reward and recognition systems function as behavior reinforcement mechanisms that operationally shape ethical culture. Basic principles of behavioral psychology state that behavior followed by positive consequences tends to be repeated. Organizations, consciously or unconsciously, have designed systems that reinforce certain types of behavior. If a reward system only measures quantitative results without considering the means, unethical behavior will be reinforced. Therefore, the way a company provides appreciation must be truly thought out so that employees feel valued in a correct and honest manner (Rojak & Darmawan, 2021). Employees learn that what matters are the reported figures, not how those figures were generated. Scandals involving the sale of defective products or the manipulation of financial statements are often rooted in the design of incentive systems. Conversely, organizations that integrate ethical behavior assessments into performance evaluations send a different message. Ethical behavior assessments must be based on concrete evidence rather than just the superior's subjective judgment. A 360-degree system where subordinates and peers also evaluate a person's ethical behavior is more reliable. Non-financial rewards such as public recognition of integrity also have a strong reinforcement effect. Lectures on ethics without being followed by recognition of real ethical behavior will not change the culture. Organizations need to systematically identify and celebrate exemplary ethical behavior. Rewards for courageous whistleblowing, even if it inconveniences the organization, serve as a very powerful cultural signal. However, reward systems must be carefully designed to prevent unhealthy competition for recognition. The balance between individual and team rewards also needs to be considered in the system design.

Violation reporting mechanisms or whistleblowing systems are critical components of an organization's ethical culture (Ostwal, 2017). The existence of safe and anonymous reporting channels provides opportunities for employees to report violations. However, reporting channels alone are not enough without a guarantee that reporters will be protected from retaliation. Fear of retaliation is the greatest barrier for employees to report violations they witness. Retaliation can take the form of overt actions such as dismissal or demotion. Retaliation can also manifest as subtle actions like social exclusion, unattractive assignments, or psychological harassment. In this case, easy access to sophisticated communication tools must be utilized

by everyone without exception to report incorrect matters (Ramle & Mardikaningsih, 2022). Employees who witness retaliation against other reporters will become increasingly afraid to speak up. A culture that punishes whistleblowers effectively silences the entire organization from critical information. Leaders must explicitly state that reporting violations is an obligation, not a complaint. Legal protection for whistleblowers in various countries still varies greatly and is often inadequate. Organizations can supplement legal protection with stronger internal policies. Anti-retaliation policies must include independent investigation mechanisms for allegations of retaliation. Sanctions for managers who engage in retaliation must be firm and publicized for a deterrent effect. Beyond protection, organizations also need to provide psychological support for whistleblowers. Reporting violations by superiors or colleagues is a stressful experience that can affect mental health. Counseling support and legal assistance can help whistleblowers through a difficult process. A culture that values the courage to report violations is a hallmark of an ethically mature organization.

Organizational justice affects employee perceptions regarding the legitimacy of the prevailing ethical system (Colquitt et al., 2001). Distributive justice relates to the perception that rewards are distributed fairly based on contribution. Employees who feel that rewards are unfair tend to engage in various forms of retaliatory behavior. This is very important because a person's job satisfaction and performance are indeed heavily influenced by how the company manages issues of salary and leadership within it (Mardikaningsih & Darmawan, 2012). Retaliatory behavior can take the form of decreased productivity, sabotage, or even the theft of organizational assets. Procedural justice relates to the perception that decision-making processes are fair and consistent. Fair procedures are characterized by the application of the same rules to everyone without discrimination. Procedures must also allow employees to voice their views before decisions are made. Furthermore, a supportive work environment is also very helpful so that every member of the organization can provide the best results for the company (Arifin & Mardikaningsih, 2021). Interpersonal justice relates to the quality of treatment employees receive from superiors and peers. Respectful, polite, and dignified treatment even when decisions taken are unfavorable. Informational justice relates to the availability of adequate explanations regarding decisions that affect employees (Bies &

Moag, 1986). Honest and transparent explanations about the reasons for decisions increase acceptance even of disliked decisions. When employees feel treated fairly across these four dimensions, they are more compliant with ethical rules. Conversely, perceived injustice erodes the legitimacy of the ethical system in the eyes of employees. Employees who feel the system is unfair will seek justification to violate existing rules. Building organizational justice is a fundamental investment in the long-term foundation of an ethical culture (Niehoff & Moorman, 1993).

Excessive performance pressure is one of the primary triggers of unethical behavior in the workplace. Employees facing unrealistic targets with severe consequences for failure find themselves in high-risk situations (Scott-Young, 2014). Often, the way a person behaves in the work environment can also be influenced by popular things around them, such as music and digital content frequently watched (Kurniawan & Khayru, 2021). This pressure is exacerbated when the organization does not provide adequate resources to achieve targets ethically. In situations like this, the temptation to cut ethical corners becomes immense for most people. Social psychology research shows that situational pressure can override individual character in determining behavior. Even people with high integrity can commit violations when placed within extreme pressure systems. Moreover, today, interactions on social media also contribute to shaping how someone views themselves and others in the outside world (Darmawan & Isaac, 2022). This phenomenon is known as the fundamental attribution error when we ignore the power of the situation. Organizations often blame employees who violate ethics as "problematic individuals" without looking at the systemic causes. Yet, violations committed systematically by many employees indicate a problem in the design of the work system. The target-setting process should involve discussions regarding ethical feasibility and the resources required. Employees need to have channels to report unrealistic pressures without fear of being considered incompetent. Leaders must explicitly state that targets should not be achieved by sacrificing organizational values. This statement must be followed by concrete actions such as lowering targets or adding resources. An ethically healthy organization has mechanisms to balance performance demands with ethical boundaries. This balance does not mean sacrificing competitiveness but rather building long-term sustainability.

Conflict of interest is a critical area where organizational culture directly influences employees' ethical decisions. A conflict of interest occurs when an employee's personal interests clash with the interests of the organization or the client. This situation is very common in organizations and cannot always be avoided entirely. Therefore, the way leaders manage the office culture greatly determines whether employees will remain loyal or not to their company (Hariani & Irfan, 2022). What makes the difference is how the organization manages and responds to the conflicts of interest that occur. A healthy culture encourages the transparent disclosure of conflicts of interest without fear (Thompson, 1993). Employees who disclose a conflict of interest should be praised for their responsible action rather than suspected. Conversely, a culture that encourages the concealment of conflicts of interest will magnify the risk of violations. Common examples of conflicts of interest include family relationships with suppliers, personal investments in competitors, or side jobs. In the business world, clear written agreements are indeed very necessary so that all parties understand the applicable rules (Da Silva et al., 2022). Every organization needs to have clear policies about the types of conflicts that must be disclosed and how they are managed. These policies must be socialized periodically because employee awareness regarding conflicts can change over time. Leaders must serve as role models by transparently disclosing their own conflicts of interest (Akker et al., 2009). When leaders hide conflicts of interest, they send a message that rules do not apply to the upper levels. Handling a conflict of interest often involves recusal or stepping down from related decision-making. Employees who are recused from a decision should not feel punished or embarrassed. Recusal is actually a professional act that protects the integrity of the decision-making process. An ethically mature culture understands that acknowledging a conflict of interest is a strength, not a weakness (Lo & Field, 2009).

Behavioral norms within a work team function as a very powerful social control mechanism that operates outside of conscious awareness. Norms are unwritten rules about behavior considered appropriate within a social group (Roszkowska et al., 2020). Team members who violate norms face social sanctions such as exclusion or criticism from peers. These social sanctions are often more feared than formal organizational sanctions because they involve social acceptance. The process of norm formation

within a team occurs naturally through repeated interactions between members. New members quickly learn the norms by observing reactions to various behaviors. Positive ethical norms such as honesty, openness, and shared responsibility can develop within a team. Conversely, negative ethical norms, such as remaining silent about a colleague's violation or justifying cheating, can also develop. Once norms are formed, they become highly resistant to change because they are reinforced by all team members. Team leaders have a significant influence on shaping norms during the early stages of team formation. Intervention at the beginning of team formation is far more effective than trying to change established norms. Teams with positive ethical norms show higher levels of internal violation reporting. This means team members will correct a colleague's behavior before it evolves into a serious violation. Teams with negative ethical norms tend to develop a conspiracy of silence that protects collective violations. The phenomenon of groupthink, where the desire for consensus inhibits critical decision-making, is extremely dangerous. Organizations need to pay attention to the formation of ethical norms within teams through member selection and the facilitation of discussion.

Moral disengagement is a psychological mechanism that allows individuals to commit unethical behavior without feeling guilty (Bandura, 1999). This concept explains how "good people" do "bad things" through eight mechanisms that cognitively justify unethical behavior. Moral justification is the rationalization that unethical behavior serves a better or noble purpose. Euphemistic labeling uses language to make unethical behavior sound harmless or even positive. Advantageous comparison involves comparing one's own violation with more severe violations committed by others. Displacement of responsibility states that the perpetrator was merely following orders or organizational policy. Diffusion of responsibility within a group makes each individual feel they are not fully responsible. Disregard or distortion of consequences involves turning a blind eye to the negative impacts of the behavior performed. Dehumanization of victims regards the harmed party as less than human and therefore not worthy of concern. Attribution of blame shifts the fault to the victim or the circumstances for the unethical behavior committed (Moore, 2008). Organizational culture can systematically encourage or inhibit the use of these moral disengagement mechanisms. Organizations that frequently use collective justifications for

small violations pave the way for major ones. Leaders who use euphemistic language to describe controversial actions facilitate the moral disengagement of their subordinates. Interventions to reduce moral disengagement include open discussions about self-justification mechanisms. Employees need to be trained to recognize when they are using misleading justifications for their behavior in order to maintain personal and organizational integrity (Duffy et al., 2012).

The process of socializing new employees is a critical period during which an organization's ethical values are intensively transmitted. New employees enter the organization with a high level of vulnerability because they do not yet understand the prevailing norms (Ogunfowora et al., 2020). They rely heavily on cues from coworkers and superiors to interpret situations. During this period, new employees are highly receptive to learning about what is considered right and wrong. Socialization can occur formally through structured orientation and training programs. However, informal socialization through daily observation and interaction is often more influential than formal programs. New employees learn by observing how senior colleagues handle ethical dilemmas in actual practice. When they see a discrepancy between training materials and actual behavior, the training materials will be ignored. A new employee who sees a senior colleague lying to a customer without consequence will learn that lying is acceptable. They also learn that reporting violations may not be safe if they see whistleblowers being isolated. Mentors or "buddies" assigned to new employees have a major influence on ethical socialization. A mentor committed to ethical values can serve as a positive role model who shapes the behavior of the new employee. Conversely, a cynical or even unethical mentor will transmit negative behavioral patterns. Organizations need to be selective in choosing mentors and provide specific training regarding this role. Orientation programs should include realistic ethical dilemma scenarios with open discussion. New employees need to know the violation reporting channels and the protection guarantees available. Effective ethical socialization at the beginning of a career produces employees who are more resistant to unethical pressure later on.

Ethical compliance cannot be separated from compliance with the laws and regulations applicable to the organization. However, organizations that only focus on minimal legal compliance often ignore higher ethical

standards (Coldwell et al., 2019). Behavior that is technically legal is not necessarily ethical if it harms certain stakeholders. Legal loopholes are often exploited by organizations to avoid their moral obligations. A purely compliance-based approach tends to produce a fragile, minimalist ethical culture. Employees will try to find loopholes in the rules rather than seeking the best ethical solutions. Conversely, a values-based approach encourages employees to consider the principles behind the rules. Employees who understand ethical principles can make the right decisions even in situations not covered by rules. Organizations with a values-based ethical culture have better legal compliance as a byproduct. They do not need to spend significant resources to monitor and force employee compliance. Investment in building value understanding provides a greater return than investment in surveillance systems. Even strict compliance audits cannot catch all violations if the culture is unsupportive. The most serious violations are often committed by those who know how to evade detection by compliance systems. An integrated approach that combines legal compliance and value development yields the best results. Employees need to understand that the organization's ethical standards may be higher than the minimum required by law. Competitive advantage through ethical reputation can only be built with standards that go beyond basic legal compliance.

Diversity within an organization influences ethical dynamics due to differences in personal value backgrounds. Employees from different cultures may have varying understandings of what constitutes ethical behavior. The values of individualism versus collectivism affect the priority between personal rights and group obligations. High versus low power distance influences whether subordinates feel brave enough to criticize a superior who violates ethics. These differences do not mean that ethics are entirely relative without certain universal standards. There is a cross-cultural consensus on fundamental principles such as honesty, fairness, and not harming others. However, the application of these principles in concrete situations can vary across cultures. Multinational organizations face the challenge of creating a consistent ethical culture across national borders. Global ethical standards need to be established but with the flexibility for local adjustments that do not violate fundamental principles. An ethical imperialism approach that imposes one culture's standards on another is ineffective and unfair. Conversely, a full relativism approach that accepts all

local practices risks justifying serious violations. The middle ground is a universal core values approach with implementation that is sensitive to local differences. Dialogue among employees from various backgrounds about ethical dilemmas can build a shared understanding. Organizations need to provide a safe space for discussing different ethical perspectives without judgment. Diversity can actually become a strength if managed well because various perspectives enrich ethical analysis. Culturally diverse teams tend to consider more viewpoints in ethical decisions (Donaldson & Dunfee, 1994).

The example set by leaders, or the "tone from the top," is the most decisive factor in an organization's ethical culture (Mohamad, 2010). Top leaders set priorities, allocate resources, and serve as models for the entire organization. Statements of ethical commitment by a CEO will be ignored if their actions demonstrate different priorities. When a CEO promotes a manager with a record of ethical violations because of good financial performance, the message sent is clear. The entire organization will learn that integrity can be sacrificed for results within certain limits. Conversely, a CEO who terminates a high-performing manager for ethical violations sends a powerful message. Such decisions might be unpopular in the short term but build long-term ethical credibility (Brown & Treviño, 2006). Top leaders also need to consistently communicate the importance of ethics in various forums. Communication should not be limited to annual speeches or messages on the company website. Every opportunity, such as employee meetings, internal emails, or informal conversations, must be utilized. Top leaders also need to be willing to listen to critical input regarding ethical issues from various levels. Creating mechanisms where employees can convey concerns directly to the top is invaluable, such as anonymous suggestion boxes or ethical hotlines that report directly to the board of directors' audit committee. Top leaders who show humility by admitting ignorance about certain ethical issues are actually more trusted. Claiming to know all the answers to complex ethical problems instead shows a lack of critical reflection. Ethical role modeling must begin with the board of directors before flowing to top management and beyond (Grojean et al., 2004).

The organization's internal control system functions as a support structure for the existing ethical culture. Internal controls include segregation of duties, transaction authorization, periodic reconciliation, and independent audits (Soleymanpor, 2017). These systems prevent and detect ethical

violations that are financial or operational in nature. Currently, the use of artificial intelligence technology is also starting to be widely used to help manage human resource affairs more efficiently (Darmawan, 2022). However, internal control systems will not be effective without a culture that supports compliance with procedures. Employees committed to ethical values will follow procedures even without active supervision. Conversely, uncommitted employees will try to find loopholes in the control system. Internal controls that are too tight without trust can create a culture of sham compliance. Employees will comply with procedures formally but will not internalize the values behind them. They will follow the rules when supervised but violate them when supervision is loose. The balance between control and trust is an art that every organization needs to learn. Effective controls are designed with the assumption that a small fraction of employees might act dishonestly. However, controls should not be designed with the assumption that all employees are potential criminals. Assumptions that are too negative will damage the climate of trust necessary for a positive ethical culture. Internal audits function not only to detect violations but also to test the effectiveness of controls. Audit findings must be followed up with system improvements, not just individual punishments. The cycle of auditing and continuous improvement builds a system that is increasingly resistant to ethical violations.

External environments such as government regulations, public pressure, and industry standards influence an organization's ethical culture. Strict regulations with heavy sanctions encourage organizations to build better compliance systems (Hanson, 2017). Additionally, issues of injustice occurring in the surrounding environment can also exert a significant influence on an organization's condition (Gani, 2022). However, regulation alone is insufficient because organizations may comply minimally without internalizing values. Public pressure through activists, social media, and consumers is becoming stronger in the era of information transparency. Organizations that ignore public expectations regarding ethical behavior face serious reputational risks. Ethical scandals that are uncovered can destroy brands built over decades in a matter of days. Industry standards through professional associations and certifications also shape minimal expectations for ethical behavior. Organizations that do not meet industry standards may be expelled from associations or lose certifications. However, industry standards are often the lowest common denominator agreed upon by all

members. Organizations wishing to differentiate themselves can set ethical standards higher than industry standards. Competitive advantage through an ethical reputation becomes increasingly valuable in saturated markets. Consumers are willing to pay higher prices for products from companies with good ethical reputations. Investors are also increasingly considering environmental, social, and governance criteria in investment decisions. This pressure from various external stakeholders creates business incentives for an ethical culture. However, external incentives must be complemented by internal commitment for an ethical culture to be sustainable.

The resolution of ethical dilemmas requires a systematic framework of thinking that can be learned and trained. An ethical dilemma is a situation where two positive values conflict, such that any choice sacrifices one of those values. A classic example is the conflict between honesty and loyalty when one must report a colleague's violation (Stansbury & Barry, 2007). Therefore, good communication methods are vital for maintaining high-quality relationships between all parties inside and outside the organization (Gardi et al., 2021). An ethical dilemma resolution framework typically involves identifying facts, conflicting values, and stakeholders. After identification, various alternative actions are explored along with their respective consequences. Ethical principles such as utilitarianism (the best result for the most people) or deontology (principled duty) can be used. No framework is perfect for every situation because ethical dilemmas indeed lack perfect solutions. The goal of dilemma resolution is not to find an absolutely correct answer but the best justifiable answer. Organizations need to train employees in ethical dilemma resolution through case studies and simulations. This training is more effective if it uses realistic scenarios relevant to daily work. Group discussions about ethical dilemmas build collective capability and a shared language for discussing ethical issues. Employees trained in dilemma resolution are more confident facing difficult situations in the field. They are also better able to provide convincing reasons if they must explain a controversial decision. Documentation of the dilemma resolution process is important for accountability and organizational learning. Difficult ethical decisions should be documented along with the underlying considerations. This documentation can serve as a reference for similar situations in the future and as learning material.

Changing organizational culture toward stronger ethics requires a long-term systematic approach rather than a quick fix. Culture is formed through the accumulation of repeated behaviors over a long period, making it difficult to change (Enciso et al., 2017). Everyone, whether office workers or field workers, is actually striving to achieve a balance between work life and personal matters (Eddine & Darmawan, 2021). Cultural change efforts often fail because they ignore the depth and complexity of existing systems. Changing an ethical culture must begin with a strong, consistent commitment from top leadership. This commitment must be translated into tangible changes in policies, procedures, and reward systems. Symbolic changes, such as issuing a new code of ethics without structural changes, will not bring results. The change process needs to involve employees from various levels in diagnosis and planning. Employees involved in the change will have a greater sense of ownership and commitment. This is also influenced by the values and norms prevailing within the organization and the surrounding community environment (Eddine & Darmawan, 2022). Communication regarding the change must be clear, consistent, and repeated through various channels. Early successes need to be identified and celebrated to build momentum for change. However, failures or setbacks in the change process must be openly acknowledged as lessons. Changing an ethical culture usually takes three to five years for visible results. Periodic evaluations using culture surveys and ethical behavior metrics are necessary to monitor progress. Evaluation results must be used to adjust ongoing change strategies. Sustainable change requires the integration of ethical values into all organizational processes. Recruitment, orientation, training, performance assessment, promotion, and separation must reflect ethical values. When ethical values are integrated into routine systems, the change will endure without special effort.

Conclusion

Organizational culture shapes work ethics through mechanisms of value internalization, leadership role modeling, reward systems, and group norms. The gap between proclaimed values and actual practices creates cynicism that undermines the foundation of organizational ethics. The conflict between loyalty toward the organization and universal ethical obligations places employees in a dilemma that requires systematic resolution. Ethical

leadership that is consistent between words and actions is the most powerful determinant of a positive ethical culture. Reward systems that only measure results without considering the process encourage unethical behavior to achieve targets. Secure violation reporting mechanisms and whistleblower protection are critical components of a mature ethical culture. Organizational justice in the distribution of rewards, procedures, and interpersonal treatment builds the legitimacy of the ethical system. Excessive performance pressure without adequate resources creates conditions that trigger moral disengagement and ethical violations. The socialization of new employees is a critical period for instilling ethical values that requires special attention. Changing an ethical culture requires a long-term systematic approach with consistent commitment from top leadership.

The theoretical implications of this discussion point to the need for a more integrative model regarding the mechanisms of ethical value transmission through organizational culture. Practically, organizations are advised to conduct periodic ethical culture audits using valid instruments. Performance evaluation systems should be revised to include ethical behavior assessment as a formal component with significant weight. Ethics training programs need to shift from merely conveying rules to developing dilemma resolution capacity through case studies. Violation reporting mechanisms must be guaranteed confidentiality and protection from retaliation, with firm sanctions for those who retaliate. Recruitment and promotion processes need to incorporate integrity assessments as non-negotiable selection criteria. Organizations are advised to form an independent ethics committee consisting of various functions and levels. Performance targets should be set through a participatory process, considering resource availability and ethical feasibility. Leaders at all levels should receive ethical leadership training as part of mandatory career development.

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