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Conceptualising, Implementing, and Teaching Ethical Leadership for Nigerian Public Officials

Stella Benaiah Georgeson-Agege
Walden University

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Stella Benaiah Georgeson-Agege

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Walden University

2020

Abstract

Conceptualizing, Implementing, and Teaching Ethical Leadership for Nigerian Public

Officials

by

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MS, University of Liverpool, 2012

MA, University of Lagos, 2008

BS, University of Port Harcourt , 1992

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Management

Walden University

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Abstract

Unethical behavior of some Nigerian public officials has resulted in poverty of citizens and a lack of infrastructure such as shelter, electricity, and roads in the country.

Researchers have noted that ethical leadership frameworks could address these issues. In Nigeria, there are no such frameworks. The aim of this study was to explore the views of experts on conceptualizing, implementing, and teaching ethical leadership for Nigerian Public officials. Using the Brown et al. ethical leadership theory as a conceptual framework, and the Delphi method, 3 rounds of questionnaires and interviews were administered to 20 experts. The research question included curriculum development for ethical leadership praxis and best practices for teaching ethical behavior. Thematic analysis was the method for data analysis. Triangulation and member checking were the methods for validation. The results highlighted 10 themes for conceptualizing, implementing and teaching ethical leadership as follows: law, norms and values, governance, effective communication, responsibility of the executives, responsibility of ethics agencies, instrument for implementing ethical leadership, education and training programs. The themes highlight various elements, and behaviors that may be useful to nurture and sustain ethical leadership in Nigerian public agencies. Nigerian public officials may use these elements and behaviors to promote positive social change through appropriate disbursement of funds for provision of electricity, water, roads, schools, hospitals for Nigerian citizens.

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Dedication

For Good Governance and A Positive Social Change in Nigeria.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

The Transparency International (2015) Corruption Perception Index shows experts' opinions on the corruption displayed by public officials in countries. In 1999, the Index reported that Nigeria was the second most corrupt nation out of 98 states examined. This stimulated the Federal government to create the 2000 Nigerian Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Act and the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC, 2020). The goal of the Act and the Commission is to curb corrupt practices by appointed and elected officials.

Despite the Act and Commission's activities, officials continue to engage in misappropriation of funds resulting in a lack of electricity, schools, hospitals, roads, and housing (Ocheje, 2017). These unethical practices indicate weak governance structures for the appropriation of funds. In many public agencies, officials disburse funds without following due process, circumventing monies for their personal use instead of citizens' welfare (Felix, Ahmad, & Arshad, 2016). Holding executives answerable for such behavior is elusive. These actions indicate clearly that the anticorruption institutions are ineffective, and public servants are not accountable for the consequences of their behavior (Igiebor, 2019).

My goal for this study was to explore alternative ways for officials to address these problems. In Chapter 1, I establish why the topic was worthy of investigation, justify the study, identify gap in the literature, and confirm that the subject is amenable to scientific research. I developed a purpose statement and research question as foundations for data collection and data analysis. In the section on the nature of the research, I

describe the methodology. Following these sections are the theoretical framework to ground the work, definition of terms, assumptions and limitations, and scope and delimitations. Finally, the chapter concludes with the study's significance in creating positive social change by providing a premise for officials to develop ethical leadership behavior in their fiduciary roles.

Background of the Study

Frisch and Happenbauer (2014) described ethical leadership as ethics enhancing behaviors, which include altruism, honesty, moral awareness, and practices like transparency and accountability in organizations. Such attributes are synonymous with responsible leadership, promoting citizens' well being. In public agencies, this leadership style fosters the proper allocation of funds. Eisenbeiss and Brodbeck (2014) and Menzel (2015) noted that ethical leaders show concern for citizens and society by allocating funds responsibly.

Hassan, Wright, and Yulk (2014) also argued that leaders have failed to set an ethical climate and achieve desired accountability and transparency. Leaders may be aloof from showing ethical behaviors in their roles and responsibilities. Many leaders do not perceive leadership as a way of service to the people and society, but as an authority to exercise power. As a result, some engage in unethical practices, resulting in circumvention of procurement processes and misappropriation of funds (Ifejika, 2015). When monies are misappropriated, there are fewer resources to advance the public good.

Many incomplete infrastructural projects such as hospitals, roads, and schools abound in Nigeria because of the misuse of funds. There is also a plethora of unethical

practices in all tiers of Nigerian government, federal, state, and local (Ameh, 2016). These practices have thwarted poverty eradication, and sustainable development programs in Nigeria (World Bank, 2015). It is also important to note that in Nigeria, many civil servants display wealthy lifestyles, which stem from misappropriated funds, with impunity. These practices indicate that the Nigerian anticorruption institution efforts have not yielded positive results in enforcing ethical practices (Ogbonnaya, 2018).

The Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission in Nigeria has not been successful for several reasons. Ameh (2016) noted that the Commission lacks funds to investigate and prosecute culpable officials. Without adequate resources, it would be difficult for the agency to probe and arraign liable officials. Another challenge is the Commission's lack of technology to scrutinize unethical practices expeditiously (Odunsi, 2016). Robust technology would also enhance data collection and data analysis of offenders, and manage pending cases.

Another reason is Nigerian government's non-commitment to the bureau's successful operation. Since the agency's inception in 2002, successive governments have not taken initiatives to allocate robust funds to empower the Commission (Ameh, 2016). The government has not defined the agency's role aptly. A clash of power and duplication of functions exist between the agency and the judiciary (Bazuaye & Oriakhogba, 2016). Processes for prosecuting errant officials are unclear. The Anticorruption Act empowers the Commission to persecute erring officials and confers equal powers on the judiciary (Bazuaye & Oriakhogba, 2016).

Administrator job insecurity and undue interference from the government also exist (Nwozor, Olanrewaju, Oshewolo, & Ake, 2018). The Commission is not empowered to operate independently without recourse to the government. For example, Osifo (2014) observed that although the Anticorruption Act stipulates a 5-year tenure for the Commission's administrator, successive governments have terminated their appointment before the expiration of the incumbency. Because of the discontinuity, many cases of officials' unethical practices are inconclusive and liable officials are not tried in court.

The Anticorruption Commission has restructured and adopted several strategies to achieve efficiency: Increased prosecution of those who violate ethical principles and misappropriate funds, and the release of the list of these officials to the citizenry (Uguanyi, 2016). By involving citizens, the agency has been able to access more information on officials' unethical misconduct and achieve adequate evidence to prosecute officials. Additional measures include sharing of information on unethical practices with other security departments (Odunsi, 2016), engaging the public to supply information on ethical misconduct, and encouraging the Senate to amend grey areas in the Anticorruption Act (Ameh, 2016). Yet, these strategies are insufficient to curb executives' unethical actions.

In 2015, a new government headed by Mohammadu Buhari provided funds to empower the Commission to persecute culpable civil servants and recover stolen funds. The aim was to interdict misappropriation of funds and direct monies to eradicate poverty and provide basic infrastructure and security (World Bank, 2015). The renewed efforts

have produced some results as former culpable ministers, governors, agency heads have been arrested and persecuted. A high point was the arrest and persecution of a former Chief of Defense Staff, who misappropriated funds amounting to 2.1 billion U.S. Dollars (Ekeanyanwu, 2016). However, these efforts are inadequate due to officials' continued misappropriation of funds, creating the need for further strategies to stem unethical practices.

Weinberg (2014) suggested that officials could learn ethical behavior and use moral judgment to address these practices through ethics training programs. These programs require frameworks to conceptualize, implement, and teach ethical behavior. Nnabuike (2010) proposed the development of a conceptual framework for ethical leadership to guide policies for employee behavior. Hassan et al. (2014) also called for research to investigate conceptualizing and implementing training programs on ethical leadership. Practicable concepts, which are in alignment with ethical policies and are easy to teach, would suffice.

Eisenbeiss (2012) asserted there are specific behaviors that promote ethical leadership and suggested research to identify the type of behaviors that are appropriate to conceptualize, implement, and teach ethical leadership. Because of the wide range of ethical behaviors, it is difficult to incorporate all in a particular teaching framework. Weinberg (2014) also recommended the development of ethical leadership training using the experiences of public servants from diverse backgrounds. This approach would provide first-hand knowledge of appropriate behaviors for the framework.

Hassan et al. (2014) noted the absence of frameworks for teaching ethics and ethical leadership in public administration and the absence of policies for implementing training. Public agencies require ethics training policies and guidelines for executives. Hendrikz and Engelbrecht (2019) noted such training programs are key to nurturing ethical behavior and achieving ethical leadership.

Administrators require particular abilities to play their roles effectively. Such offices rely on highly bureaucratic structures, with several hierarchies and processes in the administration of funds. For the reason that many officials are political appointees, the executives may be inexperienced in executing administrative procedures in public agencies. The tenure of most officials is short, making it difficult to comprehend the workings of public offices extensively.

Executives may learn behaviors that are suitable for public office administration through consistent and sustained coaching (Hope, 2018). Public officials require training to address complex issues related to public office administration. As Menzel (2015) noted, the training programs may enable public officials to acquire skills and qualities for ethical competency, which is knowledge of codes of ethics and ability to use ethical reasoning to address decision-making during dilemmas (Menzel, 2015).

Bowman, West, and Beck (2014) noted public organizations operate in a complex and turbulent environment, making governance challenging to administer. The authors asserted leaders need technical and ethical competencies, which include skills and individual traits to make effective decisions and to achieve the common good. When leaders make decisions, there are consequences. Ethically competent leaders consider the

long-term implications and consequences of their decisions and actions in promoting the greater good (Knights, Grant, & Young, 2020). These executives promote positive social change through ethical behavior.

Problem Statement

Nigeria has made some progress in the Transparency Index, moving from the second worst out of 78 countries surveyed in 1999 to 27 out of 175 countries (Transparency International, 2015). The general problem is the Anticorruption Commission has not completely met its goal to curb misappropriation of funds by appointed and elected officials (Awopeju, Olowu, & Jegede, 2018), resulting in a lack of basic infrastructure and hardship for citizens. The specific problem is there is a shortfall in the practice of ethical behaviors among some Nigerian officials. Osifo (2014) emphasized this issue, noting a need to explore conceptualizing, implementing, and teaching frameworks for ethical leadership and ethics training program for public officials in Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

In this qualitative exploratory Delphi study, I explored conceptualization, implementation, and teaching frameworks for ethical leadership and ethics training programs for public officials in Nigeria. Specifically, I explored the antecedents, outcomes, and behavioral elements related to ethical leadership to develop an understanding of a practical curriculum for government agencies. Based on a qualitative Delphi approach, the process involved an administration of questionnaires to experts to develop a framework. This strategy is in line with Weinberg's (2014) argument that

experts' experiences and opinions are useful for conceptualizing ethical leadership, as well as Hassan et al.'s (2014) call for research to explore leadership behaviors to enhance ethical conduct. The research provided a framework to explore ethical leadership concepts and elements for Nigerian public officials.

Research Question

I used the following question to develop a framework for conceptualizing, implementing, and teaching ethics and leadership. This question was my basis for data collection, data analysis, and results to address the research problem: What are the views of experts for conceptualizing, implementing, and teaching frameworks for ethical leadership and ethics training program for public officials in Nigeria?

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework that I used for this study was Brown, Treviño, and Harrison's (2005) theory on ethical leadership. The authors noted how leaders' traits, principles, and values guide their behavior and actions in decision-making and influence followers. The approach emphasizes that concepts such as altruism, honesty, moral awareness, trustworthiness, and selflessness provide a basis for developing ethics and ethical leadership (Brown et al., 2005). Leaders are responsible to nurture an ethical climate by communicating these concepts to followers and serve as role models for subordinates to follow (Pucic, 2015).

Brown et al.'s ethical leadership theory encircles elements for conceptualizing, implementing, and teaching ethical leadership. The theory encompasses normatively appropriate actions and behaviors that leaders use to relate, communicate, and implement

ethical leadership to followers. The theory highlights leaders ethical conduct, reinforced through organizational ethical policies, reward systems, and training programs to spur followers into behavior and action. It is pertinent to explore normatively appropriate behavior for conceptualizing ethical leadership, and creating processes for implementing and teaching ethical leadership that may guide leaders and followers (Ciulla, Knights, Mabey, & Tomkins, 2018).

Nature of the Study

This section includes: (a) discussion of qualitative and quantitative approaches, (b) reasons for selecting a Delphi qualitative approach and the research design, (c) reasons for rejecting other qualitative approaches, (d) description of the key concepts, and (e) description of the research methodology including questionnaire development, data collection, analysis, reliability, and validity.

Yilmaz (2013) noted that a qualitative approach provides a basis to capture and describe the meanings and experiences individuals attach to phenomena through observation and interviews. The strategy explores in-depth exploration by considering the context that influences people's actions and the meaning that people ascribe to their experiences (Balkin, 2014). Because there is the possibility that people understand events differently depending on the situation, it is important to capture the circumstances precisely. A quantitative approach was inadequate for this study, as it requires the collection of data from controlled variables, and uses statistical methods to establish logical and cause-effect relationships to understand a phenomenon.

Because my intention was to explore the views of experts for conceptualizing, implementing, and teaching ethical leadership for Nigerian public officials, I applied the Delphi method. This method is useful for the investigation of social phenomena where knowledge is incomplete (Rowe & Wright, 2011). It involves multiple series of questions and data aggregation from experts in a field as a basis for forecasting future conditions (Davidson, 2013). Knowledgeable professionals have the capacity to provide substantive information about the phenomenon from their experiences. Rich data is key to achieving a credible research outcome.

Grounded theory methodology was unsuitable for this study because it aims to build theory from the perception of individuals by utilizing data from complex social interactions to understand a social phenomenon. My goal for the study was not to build theory but to expound on existing theory. Case study methodology was not suitable for this study because its objective is to test theories or develop new theories related to a complex phenomenon by investigating the in-depth perception of people who directly experience the problem in a given context. The objective of this research was not to test the theory but to investigate and apply principles for a practical framework and curricular for ethical leadership.

Key concepts that may be useful for exploring the research question are altruism, honesty, moral awareness, selflessness, and trustworthiness, which are characteristic of the Brown et al.'s (2005) theory on ethical leadership. According to the theory, leaders can use actions and behaviors to reinforce ethical practices in decision-making and relationships with followers. The leaders display of ethical behavior serves as role model

for followers. These concepts are useful for questionnaire development, which I used as a basis for collecting data to conceptualize, implement, and teach ethical leadership for executives.

Twenty experts participated in the study. The respondents were leadership officials from the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (n=5), Code of Conduct Bureau (n=5), Ministry of Education (n=5), and one nongovernmental organization, Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Center, a representative of Transparency International (n=5). I conducted data collection through three rounds of questionnaires, and one round of semistructured interview with open-ended questions. Conducting one round of interviews with executives using semistructured questions provided additional data. Using these strategies, I captured the feelings and experiences of experts in detail.

I used thematic analysis to identify common themes and patterns in the data. I used these themes as a basis to extrapolate results. I used member checking to address reliability and validity. My goal was to ensure that findings were in agreement with participants' views. Because the method relied on subjects' perceptions of the phenomenon, a thick description of the data was key. I used a thick description of the data that contained a detailed narration of the setting, the participants, and the themes to ensure a deeper understanding of the research.

Because perceptions vary, the data must be a true representation of the different judgments about the phenomenon, to produce a credible and reliable study (Morse, 2015). I used a robust sampling criterion to engage knowledgeable experts from different

ethics organizations, who provided substantive information to enrich the data. Subsequent interviews with participants and entries from my field note enriched the data. My goal was to achieve credible data so that the themes that emerged truly represented what participants perceived about the phenomenon.

Definitions

The following are definitions of key terms in this work:

Code of Conduct: A statement of principles and values that establishes a set of expectations and standards for how an organization, government body, company, affiliated group or individual will behave, including minimum levels of compliance and disciplinary actions for the organization, its staff, and volunteers (Transparency International, 2016a).

Code of Ethics: A general statement of “core values” which define the professional role of the civil service (Whitton, 2001).

Corruption: Public officials’ misuse of public funds for private purposes (Lundgreen, 2004).

Ethical leadership: "The demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making" (Brown et al., 2005, p.4).

Governance: The processes by which leaders make and implement decisions in public institutions to provide services for citizens and society (Transparency International, 2016b).

Assumptions

The study includes several assumptions. I assumed that participants used their experiences to answer the questionnaires honestly and truthfully. I also assumed that subjects had experience in accountability, due process, transparency, trustworthiness, maintaining ethical standards in decision-making, and appropriation of funds. These practices are useful for conceptualizing ethics and ethical leadership framework. I assumed that subjects considered and used ethical leadership in their role; therefore, the respondents gave information that appropriately represented this leadership style. Finally, I assumed that since participants work in, or are very familiar with public organizations, the respondents are aware of, and understand, the codes of ethics applicable to these agencies.

Scope and Delimitations

The study was exploratory, exploring experts' views for conceptualizing, implementing, and teaching frameworks for Nigeria public officials. The approach involves 20 experts from three government agencies, and one nongovernmental agency, with five participants from each entity. All participants were from the highest echelon and are responsible for decision-making. As a result, the respondents had appropriate experience in ethics and ethical leadership to answer the questionnaires and interviews.

The nongovernmental organizations added the perceptions of individuals apart from public officials to enrich the data for the framework. As noted, the study's scope included the examination of concepts such as accountability, altruism, honesty, moral

awareness, transparency, and trustworthiness, which may be relevant to conceptualize, implement, and teach ethical leadership for public officials.

Limitations

Achieving reliability and validity of results in the study was a challenge because the data was from the experiences and perception of participants. As perceptions differ and change under different circumstances, it may be difficult to ascertain their efficacy. Validity addresses whether the result was a true representation of the data, and reliability addresses whether the same result was achievable if the study is repeated (Morse, 2015). My goal was to convince the reader that the study's result was credible.

I achieved validity through member checking, in which participants reviewed the accuracy of the data. I also achieved reliability through a thick description of the data. Whereas the purpose of validity and reliability was to ascertain the credibility of the data, methods, and results, there was also the issue of transferability. Transferability involves applying the result in a similar setting, which was difficult because of differences in understanding and judgment. I addressed transferability in this study through a thick description of the research context, and a detailed delineation of the assumptions used in this work.

Another limitation in the study was that there was paucity of information from previous researchers to help enrich the study. Finally, there was the issue of the researcher's bias. As the research instrument, it was imperative that I established and maintained a good relationship with participants to gain respondents' trust. There was also a possibility that I may become familiar and sympathize with some of the

participants, and my ideology about the topic may influence data collection, interpretation, and analysis.

There could be bias in answers to the questionnaires, during interpretation and analysis of themes in the data. Individuals tend to use past experiences to make judgments about a phenomenon. Therefore, it was imperative that I continually question my assumptions to remain neutral to participants' responses to the questions. In line with the suggestion of Roulston and Shelton (2015), I used member checking and member interpretation of the data as the methods for addressing this concern. My goal was to ensure that the answers provided aligned with the questions and the interpretations were a correct depiction of participants' opinions.

Significance of the Study

This section addressed the significance of the study in (a) advancing ethical leadership practices, (b) ways in which the topic contributes to advance theory, and (c) the topic's contribution to social change.

Significance to Practice

Officials' persistent unethical practices necessitate a training policy on ethical leadership. Laws and ethical guidelines are insufficient to address the challenges of unethical practices because of the ineffectiveness of the anticorruption agencies. Ademu (2013) and Patsztor (2015) recommended developing training policies for ethical leadership to address these challenges. Such training would keep executives abreast of ethical guidelines and the behaviors pertinent for leadership roles.

Uwak and Udofia (2016) also called for educational policy to infuse ethical leadership studies in the primary, secondary, and tertiary educational curriculums, to enable students to develop ethical behaviors for future leadership roles. However, none of these authors detailed the content needed to form a new approach. In line with these arguments, my goal in this study is to create a framework for implementing a training policy on ethical leadership for officials. It may be that those who receive such training will use new behaviors to guide their conduct.

Significance to Theory

Ethical leadership requires new approaches for its implementation. Ethical laws and guidelines are inadequate to address officials' malfeasance. The anticorruption agency's inefficiency in persecuting culpable executives also highlights new approaches to address officials' unethical behaviors. These points indicate the need to explore alternative means to implement ethics in leadership. Voegtlin, Patzer, and Scherer (2012) posited that such an approach should include moral concepts. The authors also identified a lack of conceptual frameworks for addressing the outcome and challenges of ethical leadership.

As there is a wide range of methods for construing ethical leadership, frameworks that are easy to implement would suffice. It is also important to use schemas that are plausible in Nigeria. Therefore, my intention in this research is to advance knowledge by developing a new framework for conceptualizing, implementing, and teaching ethical leadership. The expectation is that the result would be effective for officials to nurture ethical behavior and guide appropriate conduct in their fiduciary responsibilities.

Significance to Social Change

Finally, because unethical practices lead to a lack of basic infrastructure, it is imperative to reposition leadership practice to make society thrive. As Lakshmi (2014) suggested, contemporary ethical leadership approaches should move from philosophical premises to moral practices to create positive social change in societies. Likewise, McCann and Sweet (2014) posited the repositioning of ethical leadership approaches from the short-term sustainability of organizations to the long-term sustainability of society.

These arguments show that a new ethical leadership framework should include positive social change by addressing poverty and social injustice. When officials are morally aware and display ethical conduct, funds would be available to provide basic infrastructure for citizens and the poverty level would decline. In concurrence with these authors, my goal in this research is to explore the opinions of experts on conceptualizing, implementing, and teaching frameworks for ethical leadership for Nigerian public officials. Those trained may use these behaviors in their leadership role and contribute to effective governance and positive social change.

Summary and Transition

Chapter 1 encompasses the problem statement, the purpose statement, research questions, and theoretical framework. The problem statement highlighted the gap in the literature and the need to explore new insights for understanding ethical leadership. The purpose of this study was to explore the views of experts for conceptualizing, implementing, and teaching ethical leadership frameworks for Nigerian public officials.

The theoretical framework served as a basis for data collection to address the research questions. Finally, the chapter concluded with the significance of the research in advancing ethical leadership practice and theory and creating positive social change. The next chapter analyzed and synthesized the literature, and demonstrated a gap existing in the literature that this study attempted to fill.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Despite the Anticorruption Commission's efforts, appointed and elected officials continue to misappropriate funds for personal gains in Nigeria (Bamidele, Olaniyan, & Ayodele, 2016). As a result, Nigerian citizens suffer hardship including lack of basic infrastructures such as electricity, roads, hospitals, and schools (Suleiman, Yahaya, & Abba, 2018). These outcomes indicate the absence of ethical behaviors among officials, which is also partly due to a lack of formal standards or frameworks for conceptualizing, implementing, and teaching ethical leadership (Monahan, 2012).

The purpose of this study was to examine conceptualization, implementation, and teaching frameworks for ethical leadership training programs for public officials in Nigeria. I explored different perspectives and outcomes of leadership to develop an understanding of a pragmatic curriculum to teach ethical leadership to public servants. I expected that the research outcome would inform theory by identifying elements for conceptualizing, implementing, and teaching ethical leadership for public officials in Nigeria.

In this chapter, I describe the literature review strategy, including the databases and key terms, and the theoretical foundation that grounded the work. I provide analysis and synthesis of ethical leadership literature, to delineate evidence, reveal gaps, and furnish a rationale for the choice of key concepts to ground the study. Lastly, the chapter includes a summary and transition to the next chapter.

Literature Search Strategy

A researcher needs a literature search strategy to delineate the rationale and iterative process employed to access databases to establish the trustworthiness and integrity of the search. I used keywords in the topic as search terms to identify and search the literature. As there is a plethora of ethical leadership literature, I used a conceptual map of various ethical leadership concepts to narrow and to align the search to address the problem statement and research questions specifically. The map included different concepts such as ethical leadership definition, ethical leaders' attributes, and ethical leadership practices that connected logically to produce ideas in the study. I searched for literature from several databases such as Thoreau, Business Management. Science Direct, Sage Premier, and Pro-Quest Central.

In these databases, I accessed articles from journals such as the *Academy of Management Journal*, *Journal of Business Ethics*, *Business Ethics Quarterly*, and *Harvard Business Review*. Literature from these sources provided insights about various aspects of ethical leadership and evidence. I used criteria such as full text, peer review, and publication date to access specific articles. For example, Sage Premier and Science Direct provided access to peer-reviewed articles. I also used EBSCO and PROQUEST because the databases have default full-text limiters.

Finally, I used the Thoreau database to gain access to literature from several databases. Examples of keywords and combinations of search terms were: *Ethical leadership*, *ethical leadership concepts*, *ethical leadership perspectives*, *conceptualizing ethical leadership*, *ethical leadership in a public organization*, *teaching ethical*

leadership, implementing ethical leadership, ethical leadership in a private organization, culture and ethical leadership, code of ethics, ethical leader behavior, altruism, moral awareness, integrity, transparency, utilitarianism ethical leadership, and positive social change.

I started from a broad platform to search for characteristics of ethical leadership and narrowed the search to normative and descriptive perspectives of ethical leadership, the role of context in ethical leadership, ethical leadership behavior in public organizations, ethical leadership in Nigeria, the relationship between culture and ethical leadership, as well as ethical leadership and positive social change. As an illustration, I searched for *ethical leadership in public organizations* from the Thoreau database to link the relationship between ethical leadership and public organizations. Because cultural and organizational differences influence ethical leadership, I focused the search on ethical leadership practices in Nigerian public organizations.

Specifically, I searched for ethical leadership concepts in Nigerian public organizations. I reviewed ethical leadership concepts that are peculiar to South Africa, to delineate the phenomenon from another African country. I also included ethical leadership concepts from Korea to create an understanding of leadership behavior from an Asian culture. Next, I identified gaps in normative and descriptive ethical leadership perspectives, and based on these gaps I garnered ideas as evidence to establish why the topic is worthy of investigation. Finally, I used these ideas to establish the need to conceptualize a framework for Nigerian culture.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for the study was Brown et al. s' (2005) theory on ethical leadership. The theory defined ethical leadership as “the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making” (p. 120). According to the theory, ethical leadership is a social learning process where followers see leaders who exhibit normatively appropriate conduct such as fairness, honesty, trustworthiness, integrity, care for others as role models for their conduct.

The normative perspective focuses on the leaders' traits and actions which the superiors use to influence followers. The authors identified four components in the definition. First is “demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships...” (Brown et al., 2005, p. 120). The authors asserted that executives should use ethical behaviors such as honesty, trustworthiness, fairness, and care for others during decision making and relationship with followers. Followers view such leaders as credible and trustworthy and a model for subordinates to emulate.

Second is “promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication...” (Brown et al., 2005, p. 120). The authors noted that the leaders' role is to provide effective means to communicate ethical goals to followers and allow followers to voice their expectations of ethical goals. Third is “reinforcement” (Brown et al., p. 120). The authors asserted that executives are responsible for setting ethical

standards by rewarding followers who behave ethically and disciplining those who violate ethical standards. Fourth is “decision making” (Brown et al., p. 120). The authors emphasized that leaders are to consider and make fair and transparent decisions for better outcomes.

In summary, the four elements emphasized that officials are responsible for using and promoting ethical conduct by communicating the ideas to followers, reinforcing ethical behaviors by setting standards for reward and punishment, and considering the outcomes of their decisions (Brown et al., 2005). Consistent with this definition, Resick, Hargis, Shao, and Dust (2013) viewed ethical leadership as a social learning and sense-making process where leaders communicate and delineate ethically appropriate behaviors to followers so that subordinates too can develop ethical belief and ethical judgment capability.

Followers learn appropriate behaviors when superiors consistently reiterate these behaviors when relating to them. Greenbaum, Quade, and Bonner (2014) remarked that a leader might have ethical values but refrain from using them when relating to followers or in decision-making. Leaders are susceptible to behaving unethically due to the dilemmas on the job, which sets a tone for followers to behave likewise. Subordinates cannot perceive and emulate ethical values unless leaders display ethical conduct. Demonstrating and communicating ethical values is key in defining ethical leadership.

Schaubroeck et al. (2012) extended the Brown et al. social learning perspective to develop a multilevel model of ethical leadership. The authors opined that leaders possess authority and power to influence followers into ethical conduct. Because followers look

to leaders to address their concerns, subordinates readily emulate the leaders' behavior. This means that leaders are key to nurturing an ethical culture. Brown et al. (2005) and Lawton and Paez (2015) emphasized that leaders' *normatively appropriate behavior* is imprecise, occurring in a specific context, such as culture.

Ardichvili, Jondle, Kowske, Cornachione, and Thakadipuram (2012) stated that the culture of a particular society influences a leader's normatively appropriate behavior, and ethical practices differ in societies. Leaders display normatively suitable behavior based on societal practices. Since norms are shared beliefs, it is necessary to identify specific behaviors that people consider as appropriate. Dion (2012) suggested conceptualizing ethical leadership using a cross-cultural approach by considering what is normatively germane to a particular society. Frisch and Huppenbauer (2014) identified the need to clarify appropriate behavior from different stakeholders to enable leaders to understand their characteristics.

Brown et al.'s (2005) theory presupposes a leader's normatively appropriate behavior under a specific context is key to understanding ethical leadership. Therefore, it was necessary to identify these behaviors, which are also tenable for conceptualizing ethical leadership in a particular society. As my goal in this study was to explore components for conceptualizing, teaching, and implementing best practices for ethical leadership, it was imperative to explore the views of experts among different stakeholders in Nigeria to inform the study. I intended to extend the Brown et al. (2005) theory by identifying specific behaviors and practices suitable to develop a framework for

conceptualizing, implementing, and teaching ethical leadership for public officials in Nigeria

Literature Review

What is Ethical Leadership?

Ethical leadership is a complex phenomenon. Monahan (2012) examined 38 articles on ethical leadership and identified four major topics describing it: Definition, the leader's integrity, the leader's influence on followers' ethical behavior, and the challenges ethical leaders are facing in contemporary society. Brown et al. (2005) defined ethical leadership as, "the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making." (p. 120).

In this definition, ethical leadership encircles a normative perspective, requiring norms and rules to guide the leader's behavior and actions. In another study, Brown and Mitchell (2010) described ethical leadership as a combination of characteristics and behaviors, such as integrity, fairness, compassion, used to relate to subordinates thereby setting standards to guide and reinforce followers' conduct. Leaders use honesty and integrity to communicate and enforce standards, fairness in decision-making, rewards, kindness, compassion, and concern for others. Leaders are responsible for enforcing ethical behaviors.

Yammarino (2013) observed that leadership encompasses several processes and interrelationships between a leader and followers (individuals, dyad, groups, collective)

in a particular context in which the leaders share a purpose with subordinates so that together, leaders and followers could achieve set goals. The observation has multiple implications for prescribing ethical practices. First, at the individual level, where leaders create strategies to inspire followers; second, at the dyad level, where leaders provide resources to encourage performance; third, at the group level, where leaders empower followers; and finally, at the collective level, in which leaders use ethical values to drive the vision, mission, and goals for followers to copy.

Brown and Mitchell (2010) noted that when leaders display appropriate conduct, the leaders influence subordinates to behave in the same manner. These arguments ratify ethical leadership's normative perspective, which emphasizes the need for executives to nurture an ethical climate by displaying such behavior for followers to emulate. Trevino, Hartman, and Brown (2000) identified two aspects of ethical leadership traits: The moral person and the moral manager. The moral person shows the leader's consistent personal characteristics such as honesty, trustworthiness, and integrity, which followers use as a reference.

The moral manager shows how the leader articulates, and communicates, ethical principles in a transparent manner, and uses rewards or punishments to influence followers (Belschak, Den Hartog, & De Hoogh, 2018; Trevino et al., 2000). The leaders' moral attributes are insufficient to conceptualize ethical leadership; leadership also involves taking the responsibility to inculcate these behaviors into subordinates. As subordinates rely on their leaders to direct performance, a leader's ethical behavior is a prerequisite for subordinates' ethical conduct. Leaders elicit proper conduct in followers

when superiors discharge their duties responsibly, focus on achieving tasks by clarifying and communicating roles for subordinate, and managing performance to achieve goals (Kalshoven, Den Hartog, & De Hoogh, 2011a).

In the following sections I delineate the topic by examining different ethical leadership perspectives to identify their merits and gaps. Next, I analyze and synthesize the literature to address the gaps by examining the followers' role, positive social change, the leaders' values, and behavior in ethical leadership. I also examine the relationship between ethical leadership and organizational structures, context, specifically, culture and training programs ethical leadership. I use these arguments to show why the topic is worthy of investigation. Lastly, I provide a summary and conclusion of the chapter.

Normative Ethical Leadership Perspective

The normative perspective circumscribes how leaders should behave (Brown & Trevino, 2006; Walumba, Morrison, & Christensen, 2012). Because executives occupy leadership positions, the leaders have a responsibility to behave appropriately. Leaders must take deliberate steps to use morally appropriate behavior when relating to followers. However, leaders cannot use these behaviors if the superiors do not hold them as personal values. As Stouten, Van Dijke, and De Cremer (2012) opined that leaders nurture moral norms from their values, which motivates them to behave ethically. A leader would display espoused values.

Poff (2010) also asserted that values are central to the leaders' cognition, motivation, judgments, and actions. For this reason, values play a critical role in directing and influencing followers' behavior, because subordinates use the leaders' values and

behavior as normative schemas for their actions (Stouten et al., 2012). As followers always look up to their leaders for direction, the leaders' behavior influences them significantly. Consistent with this view, Brown and Trevino (2006) suggested that future researchers should investigate and develop ethical leadership using normatively appropriate behavior in decision making and interpersonal relationships with followers.

Wilson and McCalman (2017) noted because leaders face dilemmas and paradoxes during decision-making, considering ethical leadership from a normative perspective is inadequate. Such perspective emanates from the leaders' moral attributes and traits rather than the purpose of the leaders' ethical actions. Ethical leadership from the perspective of the ethical decisions and actions leaders make is plausible to address the limitations associated with the normative perspective. A leader might behave ethically, yet make unethical decisions in a complex situation.

Savaya and Gardner (2012) identified differences between the values leaders hold, *espoused theory*, and the values that show in their actions, *theory-in-use*. The authors noted that leaders could close the gap by critical reflection, questioning their values to develop appropriate behaviors to address ethical dilemmas. A leader may display ethical behavior in a particular instance and fail to behave appropriately in another situation. The leaders' ethical behavior may depend on the prevailing context or circumstance.

People from a particular culture behave according to the norms and values in the society. Normative approaches are unclear and insufficient to address the way people respond to ethical issues in complex situations. Eisenbess (2012) argued that normatively

appropriate behavior used to define ethical leadership is unsuitable to address the variation of moral norms across cultures. The author cited the financial crisis to show how many banks followed norms, which focused on short-term profit by violating stakeholders' rights and organizational sustainability. The author also noted that it is difficult to ascertain whether a particular behavior is *normatively appropriate* without using a minimum set of normative concepts as a reference.

As norms are culturally specific, achieving a minimum set of appropriate normative concepts is difficult to achieve (Fehr, Yam, & Dang, 2014). There are universally accepted normative behaviors in all society, such as honesty. Martin, Resick, Keating, and Dickson (2009) posited that the cultural value system of a particular society relates closely to the moral values people hold and follower expectations of leaders' moral behavior. As such a peculiarity in moral values exists in different societies. For example, Martin et al. (2009) noted that ethical leadership in the United States encompasses leaders' actions while in Germany, the concept encompasses the characteristics of the social system.

Eisenbeiß and Brodbeck (2014) asserted society vary in the perception of ethical leadership and ethics. Citizens' perceptions of a leader's ethical attributes and behavior differ across cultures. In Nigeria, Agbiboa (2012) identified leaders' corrupt and unethical practices including misappropriation of funds for private use, and violation of due processes in funds appropriation. The author observed that these practices are normatively and culturally accepted in Nigerian society. Such practices are unacceptable

in many society. Ethical leadership practices also vary in organizations because of differences in societal norms, rules, and guidelines.

An organization's vision also guides its ethical principles. For example, Martin et al. (2009) observed that in the United States, ethical leadership in organizations hinges on a utilitarian concept and moral responsibility in decision-making, while in Germany the approach is on a social partnership between the organization and the society. The authors opined that in the US organizations ethical leadership circumscribes on codes of conduct in business practices, while in Germany it transcends beyond compliance and strives for a balance between ethics and morals (Martin et al., 2009). Differences exist in the manner managers of public and private organizations perceive ethical leadership.

Grover, Nadisc, and Patient (2012) asserted that public managers viewed ethical leadership on the premises of altruism, concern for the common good, responsiveness, transparency, and accountability while private managers viewed ethical leadership based on honesty. Frisch and Happenbauer (2014) called for an investigation of normatively appropriate behaviors for leadership across a wide range of stakeholders. This approach is of particular importance because leaders may not understand specific behaviors that stakeholders view as being appropriate. Stakeholders have different goals and values, and therefore, different expectations of the leaders' behavior and action.

Because of globalization, many countries are promulgating local content laws to control their natural resources; which has also increased the number of stakeholders. Global nongovernmental organizations are advocating for ethics in governance to address social injustices and citizens' welfare. Therefore, it is expedient that leaders address these

concerns. These arguments indicate gaps in the moral perspective, which becomes inadequate to conceptualize ethical leadership giving grounds to explore another perspective.

Descriptive Ethical Leadership Perspective

A descriptive ethical leadership perspective also exists. Lee and Cheng (2011) emphasized that this perspective encompasses the leaders' characteristics, interpersonal behavior with followers, and the manner articulate standards in the organization. Stouten et al. (2012) asserted that descriptive perspective is a new and emerging paradigm that increases insights based on antecedents, processes, and consequences of the leaders' actions. The authors noted that because ethical leadership is a socially constructed process involving the leader and followers, descriptive accounts should involve the processes that motivate leaders to act ethically and the followers' perception of the action.

Brown et al. (2005) suggested that a descriptive account for conceptualizing ethical leadership, which focuses on the leaders' actions, interpersonal relationships with followers, and ethical behavior in decision making. Although most leaders occupy their positions based on their character, it is inadequate to substantiate leadership by leaders' attributes. A leader may believe in a particular ideology but act in a manner that portrays a different ideology. Therefore, it is pertinent to consider the leaders' actions in describing ethical leadership. The descriptive perspective focuses on what officials do. Considering that leader behavior influence followers, the leaders' ethical actions influence followers much more than their behavior.

Followers perceive their superiors to be ethical when the leaders overtly display normatively appropriate behaviors, by communicating ethical issues and goals to them (Resick, Hargis, Shao, & Dust, 2013). Subordinates consider such leaders as credible, honest, fair, considerate in decision making, and caring (Resick et al., 2013). Such leaders consider and fulfill expectations by using ethical norms and values in their actions. Followers internalize these examples by aligning their behaviors and actions with those of the leader. Zhu, Treviño, and Zheng (2016) remarked because these leaders are caring, the executives coach and mentor followers to develop and use ethical behaviors.

Leaders guide ethical conduct, especially during periods of change. Fehr et al. (2014) noted a gap in descriptive accounts by considering the consequences of ethical leadership at the employee and organizational levels. Although leaders sustain the reputation of their organizations by ensuring organizational goals align with social responsibility, equally important is the leaders' behavior towards the environment. For example, Kalshoven and colleagues (2013) used the term *environmental orientation* to show how leaders through actions, support sustainable environment development. Such leaders allocate resources to protect the environment and ensure the sustainability of natural resources during the production of goods and services.

As many society face the challenge of pollution and degradation of natural resources, ethical leadership attributes should also include those that address environmental issues. Frisch and Huppenbauer (2014) noted ethical leadership includes enhancement and wellbeing of society, in addition to the success and growth of the organization. Because organizations cannot thrive without sustainable development, the

ethical leadership descriptive perspective should include the leader's actions that support such initiatives.

Fehr et al. (2014) used a broader domain, at both organizational and societal level, which shows how followers perceive and normalize the actions of their leaders to guide their conduct. Societies thrive when both leaders and followers use ethical behavior to guide their actions. There are specific leaders' actions that enhance societal wellbeing. Frisch and Happenbauer (2014) identified such actions as role modeling, making a profit on an ethical basis, long-term instead of short-term business strategy, and integration of stakeholders' influence in the manufacturing of goods and services. Thus, ethical leaders consider the consequences of their decisions and actions on followers, the organization, and the society.

Burnes and By (2012) also used a consequentialism perspective on leaders' ethical action, presupposing the value of a leader's action is proportional to the value of its consequences; those actions that create good consequences and minimize bad consequences for the society is the right course. In this manner, a leader's ethical action hinges on consequences instead of intentions. A leader may have good intentions in making decisions but the outcome may result in unethical consequences. Levine and Boaks (2014) noted that leaders could achieve ethical goals through unethical means. The leader may address this dilemma by focusing on the impact of the decision on followers and society.

Leaders ought to consider the consequences of their decisions on the citizenry. Burnes and By (2012) identified *individual consequentialism*, which corresponds to the outcome of the leader's ethical actions that seek to meet the needs of the leader, and *utilitarian consequentialism*, which creates outcomes for the greatest good. This means that the leaders have to align their ethical needs with those of stakeholders for the wellbeing of society. Leaders by their position, have the power to allocate resources for the benefit of society.

Leaders who use principles to guide their actions invariably support the sustainability of the environment and the flourishing of societies. Martins et al. (2009) identified concepts that support sustainability and flourishing of society: integrity (the ability of the leader to use ethically appropriate behaviors in a situation despite external pressure not to do so), and altruism (serving the greatest good for all instead of self). Other concepts are collective motivation (to inspire and motivate followers towards collective efforts), and encouraging and empowering (supporting followers to develop their competences and self-efficacy).

The authors noted nuances of these dimensions occurring in different cultures, which is consistent with Brown and colleagues' (2005) argument that normatively appropriate behaviors are context-specific. A leader's action may deem ethical in a particular situation, yet, viewed as unethical in another setting. These variations ostensibly indicate that gaps exist in the descriptive ethical leadership perspective such as the followers' views and outcomes of the leader's actions. Such perspectives show that

the complexities in conceptualizing ethical leadership. In the next section, there are insights to close the gap and reposition ethical leadership from another perspective.

Combining Normative and Descriptive Ethical Leadership Perspectives

Both the normative and descriptive perspectives alone are insufficient in conceptualizing ethical leadership, creating the need to explore a more comprehensive framework. Grover et al. (2012) suggested the development of a new framework by incorporating multiple perspectives. Because individuals perceive ethics differently, there are nuances in ethical behavior. These arguments show the challenges in identifying ethical concepts that are tenable to a framework and a teaching curriculum. Kalshoven, Den Hartog, and De Hoogh (2011b) asserted that ethical leadership encompasses different leaders' antecedents and actions. These dimensions make the phenomenon more complex.

Therefore, it seems pertinent, as per Grover and colleagues' argument above, to integrate concepts from the normative and descriptive perspectives to address the challenges in understanding ethical leadership. Eisenbess (2012) addressed the gaps between normative and descriptive perspectives using an interdisciplinary approach involving a:

- Humane orientation, which focuses on concern about people's well being
- Justice orientation, which is non-discriminatory for decision making, fairness
- Responsibility and sustainability, which is leadership based on long-term concern for the environment and the society

- Moderation orientation, which is using temperance, humility, and self-control to create a balance between organizational objectives and stakeholders' interests

The author noted that contemporary approaches to ethical leadership focus on humane and justice orientations rather than on responsibility, sustainability, and moderation. On this basis, he integrated the normative and descriptive perspectives as a coherent review of contemporary approaches to ethical leadership. Eisenbess (2012) suggested the integration of normative and descriptive perspectives to achieve a more comprehensive framework to address the gaps between the two such as followers' ethical conduct and ethicality of leaders' actions. In this manner, a broader, more encompassing approach to ethical leadership is achievable.

Lawton and Páez (2015) also addressed the divergent views by drawing from different dimensions of *who*, *how*, *what*, and *why* of ethical leadership. *Who* focuses on the characteristics of ethical leaders, *how* focuses on the relationship of the leaders with others, *what* is the context in which ethical leadership takes place, and, *why* focuses on the consequences of ethical leadership towards the society. These views would provide a holistic perspective of leadership, which extends beyond the leaders' attributes to the way he or she engages followers. It also encompasses consideration of different circumstances in decision-making and, the consequences on society.

The essence of leadership is to make societies thrive through ethical decisions and appropriate conduct in the administration of resources. Eisenbeiss and Brodbeck (2014) linked the leadership perspectives using two aspects, *compliance-oriented*, and *value-oriented* ethical leadership. According to the authors, compliance-oriented leadership is

based on adherence to ethical norms, rules, and laws, external to the leaders' self; value-oriented is the internalized moral values used to guide personal conduct in leadership roles or decision making. Societies and organizations vary in the perception of ethical leadership.

Because of divergence in values, people perceive their leaders' conduct differently. A leader may have positive intension for making certain decisions; the citizenry may perceive it negatively. For example, Levine and Boaks (2014) suggested a caution in connecting morality to leadership because certain leader attributes, such as fairness and justice can clash with issues of economic, political, and social wellbeing of people, and society. This argument shows the complexity involved in conceptualizing ethical leadership, and the dilemmas leaders face in displaying ethical behaviors under certain context. As such, ethical leadership should encircle objectives that will benefit people and society.

Grover et al. (2012) posited that ethical leadership is a multidimensional concept that contains behavioral and moral standards as well as a greater focus on society. The bottom line of ethical leadership is to achieve results that will support the flourishing of societies. Brown (2007) noted that researchers viewed ethical leadership based on how executives perceive it, their behavior, and the antecedents, and outcomes of such behavior. Considering ethical leadership on the basis of the leaders' behavior is insufficient. Because leaders have biases, the executives may have a distorted perception of leadership.

For the majority of leaders, leadership centers on self and accomplishment. Executives seem to aspire for leadership roles to outplay their ideology. Few leaders focus on followers' expectations. Therefore, Levine and Boaks (2014) suggested differentiating leadership from ethical character and combining the normative and descriptive concepts as people differ on accounts of ethical ideology. The authors argued that both concepts focus on the leaders' behavior, whereas leadership is a multi-level phenomenon that involves the leader and followers. Followers' perception of ethical behavior also matters.

Followers expect leaders to make ethical decisions in allocating funds, provide infrastructure, and cater for their welfare. Meeting these expectations would invariably make the society to flourish. Therefore, it is important to incorporate the perception of others to address the leaders' bias (Brown, 2007). This means that followers' behavior, perception, and experience count in describing ethical leadership. Because followers are the majority in societies, their ethical behavior is very crucial in developing and maintaining an ethical culture in societies.

Followers and Ethical Leadership

Whereas normative and descriptive models clearly illustrate the importance of the leader's action in developing ethical leadership, followers' actions are not clear. In many societies, democratic governance exists. Apart from the fact that citizens elect executives, governance lies in the hands of leaders only. Citizens do not make decisions about the allocation of funds for infrastructural development and welfare services. However, ethical

leadership is a socially constructed phenomenon that involves leaders and followers, as well as the context (Brown, 2007).

According to Heres and Lasthuizen (2012), ethical leadership is a highly context-dependent phenomenon, context influences the way leadership characteristics, and behaviors influence followers. Followers play a critical role in ethical leadership conceptualization because subordinates emulate and promote the leaders' ethical actions. Stouten et al. (2012) also remarked that future research on ethical leadership should evolve from followers' dependence on ethical leadership and focus on the perception of followers on ethical awareness, responsiveness to others, and justice. The authors opined that followers share in leaders' values and behavior as normative schemas for their behavior.

The focus on the perception of followers will create insight into the effectiveness of leadership behavior because leaders influence followers through their behaviors and actions (Trevino et al., 2000). Leaders and followers perceive, act, and behave differently. Followers must have an accurate perception of the leaders' ethical actions to enable them to use behaviors in congruence with what leaders expect (Keck, Giessner, Van Quaquebeke, & Kruijff, 2020). When the followers' ethical actions synchronize with those of their leaders, the measures produce positive outcomes for society. In such cases, leaders are accountable to the citizens; executives allocate funds transparently and appropriately.

Consistent with the Brown and Treviño's (2006) social learning theory, followers view leaders who use ethical behaviors as credible role models, attracting and influencing

followers to use the same behavior in their roles. Followers' ethical behavior is synonymous with their leaders' ethical conduct. Lee and Cheng (2011) also used the social learning theory to throw further light on leadership by understanding the way individuals learn from others' behavior, actions, and the corresponding consequences that occur. The theory proposes that followers observe, internalize, and apply the leaders' conduct, values, attitudes, and behavior in the organization (Lee & Cheng, 2011). That is why leaders must show appropriate conduct in their duty.

Executives' consistent display of morally pertinent behavior would create an ethical culture for citizens to emulate. Yukl, Mahsud, Hassan, and Prussia (2013) emphasized that leaders have the responsibility to use ethical behaviors to influence followers' performance and achieve organizational objectives. The leaders' ethical conduct serves as an incentive for employees to nurture creative and innovative ideas that could add value to the growth of the organization. Trevino et al. (2000) conceptualized ethical leadership on the premises of a moral person and moral manager, who uses ethical behavior and promotes the right conduct to followers. These assumptions indicate that a leader's character and a leader's action are two different actualities, each one having its merit.

Considering ethical leadership in such perspectives is also important because a leader may have ethical attributes, yet engage in unethical actions. Subordinates see leaders in public organizations as role models for normative behavior because of their beliefs, principles, and values that reflect in their actions (Smith, 2014). Therefore, it is important that leaders consider, display, and encourage ethical actions. Consistent with

the Trevino et al. (2000) concept of the moral manager, Smith (2014) remarked, leaders could use reward and punishment to influence employees to behave in their responsibilities. When leaders and followers' ethical behavior are reciprocal, an ethical culture ensues in society (Stouten et al., 2012; Fairholm, 2015). These arguments indicate that followers also play a pivotal role in establishing an ethical culture in organizations and society.

Ethical Leadership and Social Change

The foregoing arguments indicate ethical leadership encompasses the leader's behavior and outcome of the behavior on organizations, society, and followers. For followers, the outcome is role modeling; for the society, it involves human rights and cultural values of responsibility, justice, humanity, and transparency; for organizations, it involves addressing environmental complexity, organizational strategies, and meeting stakeholders' expectations (Midgen, 2015). Citizens have complex goals and expectations as a result of technological advancement.

Because of climate change natural resources are depleting, making governance is becoming difficult. Societies are in dire need of leaders who are morally aware and are willing to use ethical conduct in their responsibilities. Morally responsible leaders ensure proper allocation of resources to address societal problems. For example, Gallagher and Tschudin (2010) asserted ethical leadership demonstrates ways in which leaders use behaviors that create positive social change and develop good ends that contribute to the flourishing of society. An ethical leader ensures pertinent use of resources for the wellbeing of citizens.

Wilson and McCalman (2017) also proposed repositioning ethical leadership in a wider perspective to address the limitations posed by normative by using the concept of the greater good. The focus of this viewpoint is on actions that promote the thriving of the society, including the sustainability of natural resources, provision of services to citizens, and social justice. Parmar, Freeman, Harrison, Wicks, de Colle, and Purnell (2010) used stakeholder theory to argue officials have a fiduciary role to play in managing resources to meet the needs of stakeholders and achieve the common good.

Leaders are responsible for the welfare of people and the development of societies. However, as leaders make a profit for the organization and uphold sustainable goals, the superiors face ethical dilemmas and have a propensity to engage in unethical practices. One such dilemma is to choose between meeting their fiduciary responsibility to shareholders versus meeting the ethical expectations of the public (Schwartz, 2013). The goal of shareholders is to make a profit and achieve a return on their investment, which runs contrary to the goal of stakeholders, which is to ensure that resources are sustainable.

As stakeholders make the majority, their concerns are important aspects of positive social change. Midgen (2015) remarked leaders could address dilemmas in decision-making by considering the potential impact the decisions have on the environment and stakeholders, striving to uphold stakeholders' interests. This is important because stakeholders share the same environment with organizations, organizations may infringe on their rights during the production of goods and services. Many environmental degradations stem from the activities of businesses.

Gallagher and Tschudin (2006) suggested a framework that address this dilemma by developing ethical skills using critical observation, practice, and feedback. Knowledge of ethical codes, environmental policies during decision making are excellent ways of addressing ethical challenges. Several factors enable ethical leadership practices including (1) the leaders' values, (2) the leaders' ethical behavior, (3) organizational structure, (4) ethical climate, (5) code of ethics (6) whistleblowing policy, and (7) training programs.

The Leader's Values

Values are rudimentary and plausible approaches to understand how a leader behaves or takes actions (Marcus, MacDonald, & Sulsky, 2015). It a given that leaders would pay attention to their espoused values, which often show in their behaviors and actions. Poff (2010) emphasized that values are central to human cognition, motivation, judgments, and actions. Leaders use their principles as a cue for making decisions and taking actions.

Materialistic leaders have egocentric and sybaritic values that hinge on wealth, possessions, image, and status (Kasser, 2016). Avaricious leaders are prone to behave unethically in their fiduciary roles. Such values conflict with utilitarian principles, which subjugate materialism to values that seek the wellbeing of society and the greatest good for the greatest number of people (Burnes & By, 2012). Leaders who seek a positive social change espouse utilitarian principles. These arguments show that leaders take actions according to espoused values.

Marcus et al. (2015) investigated how individuals' economic, social, and environmental values influence the propensity to engage in a wide spectrum of positive to negative corporate actions. The results showed that individuals who have strong economic values are more likely to engage in dubious corporate actions. Individuals who exhibit a balance of values have the propensity to engage in actions for positive economic outcomes but less likely to engage in negative economic outcomes (Marcus et al., 2015).

A leader with a strong economic value is susceptible to circumvent codes, guidelines, and policies to achieve financial goals. Such executives partake in unscrupulous activities despite awareness of the consequences. Kasser (2016) also observed the more leaders place a priority on possessing material goods, the more the executives engage in actions that lower the quality of interpersonal relationships with followers, and the wellbeing of society. The leader's values serve as a motivation to engage in unethical behavior and practices.

Lichtenstein (2012) noted values influence the leaders in at least two ways: as a perceived influence that shapes decision-making, and create values. The author used the term *value dynamic* to show the interconnection between the leader's values and those of followers. In other words, the leader's values culminate in attributes and behaviors. Mayer, Kuenzi, Greenbaum, Bards, and Salvador (2009) noted that the leaders' traits and behavior trickle down to followers through socialization.

As followers look to their leaders to guide them, subordinates emulate the leaders' values. The authority the leader has on followers also reinforces this notion. Without the leader's ethical values, the organization cannot map out strategies to sustain the

environment and wellbeing of society. Organizations inextricably link sustainability goals to the values their leaders hold and to the organizational culture (Stouten, van Dijke, Mayer, De Cremer, & Euwema, 2013)

Personal values are the essence of the leaders' idiosyncrasies, which evolves into behavior and actions. In accordance, Bagozzi, Sekerka, Hill, and Sguera (2013) emphasized that personal values are both cognitive and emotional concepts. The authors noted that these values resonate as behaviors such as care and concern for followers, self-respect, seeking the greater good. Leaders have a wide spectrum of responsibilities, which may expose them to circumstances that border on unethical practices. However, even in such instances, leaders have the onus to take proper actions.

Executives could do by focusing on the consequences of the decision on followers and society. Crossann, Mazutis, Seijts and Gandz (2013) asserted that leaders could also reflect, critically analyze, and choose values that portray ethical behavior such as open-mindedness, compassion, and humility; and balance their values by giving equal attention to economic, social, and environmental sustainability goals. It means that executives should use principles that support ethical outcomes for people.

The Leader's Behavior

The leader's behavior is also important in enabling ethical leadership. A leaders' behavior serves as a moral compass that guides their ethical actions. Several management practitioners and scholars have argued that the leaders' character plays a key role in leadership (Brown, 2007). In research to develop and validate ethical leadership measurement, Kalshoven et al. (2011b) identified seven specific ethical leaders'

behaviors: fairness, a people orientation, role clarification, ethical guidance, environment orientation, power sharing, and integrity.

Leaders who display such behaviors achieve organizational goals in a socially responsible manner by caring for employees, supporting environmental sustainability goals, and striving for the greater good. Similarly, Resick and colleagues (2013) defined ethically appropriate behavior (such as moral awareness, fairness in decision making, considerate, and respect for employees), which serve as a model for employees to understand such behavior. Both leaders and followers nurture and use ethical behavior for the sustainability of the organization.

Brown et al. (2005) remarked followers consider leaders' ethical behaviors such as honesty, trustworthiness, fairness, and consideration of others in their actions as attractive, appropriate, credible, and legitimate norms. Leaders influence ethical behaviors in followers through leadership position. Executives do so by infusing ethics in decision-making and actions, using rewards to encourage ethical behaviors and punishment to discourage unethical ones (Mayer et al., 2009). When a leaders' behavior aligns with ethical guidelines, followers who violate ethical codes respond to their punishment positively.

The preceding arguments delineate several ethical leadership behaviors. For present purposes, it is pertinent to identify specific ones that may be useful to conceptualize, implement, and teach ethical leadership. Therefore, in agreement with the Brown et al. (2005) theory, the theoretical premise of this study, the literature review involves examining the leaders' ethical behavior to ascertain whether such concepts are

amenable to answer the research question: Moral awareness, altruism, integrity, honesty, transparency, and trustworthiness. Kalshoven and colleagues (2011b) have previously identified these behaviors as morally appropriate.

Altruism. The fundamental role of leadership is to provide for the welfare of the citizenry. As such, followers' wellbeing should be the primary focus of every leader. However, leaders cannot do so effectively without being altruistic. Altruism comes from a great concern for follower's welfare even at a cost to the leader (Kanungo, 2009). The leader subjugates his welfare for those of others. Ciulla (2009) argued that although altruism encompasses putting the interest of others above one's interest, it is not a key aspect of moral values.

Because a leaders' role is to care for others, the focus of altruism should be on how the leaders achieve the care and the morality of their actions (Ciulla, 2009). The emphasis here is that a leader may take unethical actions in a bid to provide welfare for subjects. Therefore, the focus is the kind of action and the consequences that ensue. Even in cases where the leaders' action is justifiable and morally pertinent, the number of people that benefits from it matter. Many people in society are living below the average poverty line. A morally appropriate decision should be on the premises of how its outcome produces the greatest good for the greatest number of persons.

Ciulla also asserted although leaders who do not care for others are unethical; she argued morality is not acting in the interest of others or self but doing just what is right. However, the caution is to define "what is right" appropriately. As previously mentioned, such a definition is difficult because of differences in perceptions. For instance, Van Zyl

(2015) defined ethical behavior as doing what is right but also remarked that it is difficult to define what is right because individuals, cultures, and religions view what is right differently.

Moral Awareness. Moral awareness shows how the leader makes sense of moral values, which serves as a basis for their behavior (Shadnam, 2020); and understands and upholds moral values in decision-making (Zhu, Norman, Peng, Riggio, & Sosik, 2012). Such individuals strive to align decision-making with espoused moral philosophy. Executives that are morally aware understand and evaluate situations that impinge on ethics, and guide their actions to address ethical issues (Skubbin & Herzog, 2016). However, the leaders' awareness of moral values is insufficient to address unethical conduct.

In every society, ethical institutions provide the foundation to build and uphold ethical principles. In organizations, rules, guidelines, and policies guide ethics. To emphasize, for ethics to thrive leaders must provide resources to build institutions and provide enabling structures. However, executives have a responsibility to behave and act in accordance with the working of ethical institutions. For example, it is given that ethical officials follow due process in the allocation of funds. By doing so, leaders set the tone for followers to learn moral values. Otherwise, it would count as morally inappropriate; followers would behave likewise, creating an unethical society.

Leaders are responsible to uphold ethical principles, guidelines, and provide resources to train followers into moral conduct. Chuang and Chiu (2018) argued although a leader's unethical decisions originate from a lack of moral awareness, the mere fact that

a leader is morally aware does not guarantee that he or she would make ethical decisions. For the fact that leaders face ethical dilemmas, the situation may be challenging in decision-making. Miller, Rodgers, and Bingham (2014) emphasized that a leader who is morally aware may be mindful of ethical dilemmas, but may still behave unethically.

Therefore, it behooves on officials to appraise and act in accordance with ethical principles. In spite of these arguments, the leaders' moral behavior fosters an ethical climate and serves as a role model for followers (Schaubroeck et al., 2012). Although there are complexities and challenges in the business environment, executives by their position, have the power and influence to create an ethical culture in their organizations. Leaders inadvertently nurture a high moral awareness in the organization by infusing moral principles in the organization's vision,

However, it would also require promulgating ethics into organizational rules, guidelines, and policies. In an environment high in moral awareness, the leader and followers understand and make ethical choices even when faced with ethical dilemmas (Kalshoven et al., 2011a). The assertion is important, considering the bad public image and huge penalties companies that contravene ethical laws face. Many organizations caught in ethical misconduct eventually either wound up their operations or lose their customers. For others, share prices drop leading to huge financial losses.

Integrity. Integrity shows how leaders act in agreement with their moral identity, beliefs, and values (Noelliste, 2013). It means that the leaders' actions are in consonance with what he or she says. A leader may have a moral ideology, yet fail to display it when relating with others. These values are both cognitive and emotional concepts that resonate

with behaviors such as care and concern for followers, self-respect, and seeking the greater good (Bagozzi et al., 2013). The leader's attention is on supporting people and society to flourish.

Leaders face challenges such as addressing poverty, diversity, climate change, and social injustice. Yet, executives are responsible for making decisions to mitigate these problems. However, in doing so, the requirement is to use the right behaviors and propriety. Eisenbeiß and Brodbeck (2014) remarked that integrity is the ability to use appropriate behaviors in a given situation despite external pressure not to do so. In this case, the focus of integrity is not whether there are ethical challenges, but on how the leader responds to the challenges.

Integrity encompasses the way the leaders consistently display personal beliefs and values in their role, decision-making, and relationship with followers (Engelbrecht, Van Aswegen, & Theron, 2009). When citizens see that their leaders consistently show respect and commitment to ethical guidelines, such conduct elicits similar behaviors in society and eradicate many ethical dilemmas. Integrity also means showing humility and consideration in dealings with people. Public office is not a place for self-aggrandizement but of leadership, but service to the people. It requires the highest form of responsibility in leadership.

Individuals occupying such places ought to possess the right attributes and conduct. The leader strives to understand the needs of the community by humbly relating to them. Lawton and Paez (2015) also opined that leaders use integrity to moderate their behaviors and achieve praiseworthy outcomes by relating to followers based on trust and

responsibility. These superiors d behave inline with espoused values, gaining the trust of followers to embrace the values. Without followers' support, leaders are unable to achieve ethical goals. Followers' compliance with ethical laws is important because followers make up the majority in society.

As mentioned previously, leaders have the responsibility to guide followers into ethical conduct through rewards and punishment. The process involves recognizing and appreciating individuals who keep ethical rules in the community as well as penalizing those who violate these rules. Leaders also inspire followers to ethical conduct by maintaining the highest level of ethical standards in their behavior (Engelbrecht et al., 2009). The leaders display of morally appropriate conduct during ethical dilemmas serves as an example for citizens to emulate.

Honesty. Honesty shows how a leader tells the truth and acts in a manner consistent with his or her moral values (Thaler & Helmig, 2016). Subordinates trust that such leaders would be truthful even in challenging situations. The leader's honesty in such cases is a good example for others to follow. An honest leader upholds due process in the allocation of monies in a transparent manner. The leader is accountable for decisions related to funds disbursement. This is particularly important because resources are few and fewer monies are available to cater to citizens. It is therefore pertinent that leaders play their role in an honest and just manner.

Many executives fail to tell the truth in ethical dilemmas for fear of losing their respect. It is only after an exposition of unethical deeds that such leaders narrate the true situation of what transpired. At this time, the leaders lose the trust and respect from the

community. Because of the obligations and responsibilities of public office, executives need to act in line with the workings of these offices and encourage subordinates to do so. Consistent with Trevino et al.'s (2000) moral person and manager, the leaders communicate proper values to followers and display these values in their decision-making and actions.

Apart from communicating these standards, the leader also provides incentives to encourage followers to behave appropriately. It entails allocating funds for training on ethics, displaying ethical rules in notable public places, arranging town hall meetings to exchange ideas that support ethical conduct. Other methods include seeking the opinion of subordinates in decision making and appointing change agents to encourage colleagues to use ethical behavior in their role. Communicating ethical principles is key to indoctrinating followers into ethical behavior.

Transparency. Transparency is also important to ethical behavior. Public offices are hierarchical and bureaucratic. Information and communication pass through several steps before becoming public. It is also a place for disbursement of funds for public infrastructure and services for citizens. Therefore, there is a high premium on the transparency of the processes to ensure accountability. Ethical laws require that executives adhere to due process in expending monies.

There are public domains and electronic means for disbursing funds. It beseems on leaders to strictly follow and keep records of all expenditure transparently. Also, transparent executives ensure proper accountability of funds, and information about expenditure is readily available for audit purposes. Such leaders regularly engage

citizens, sharing information about disbursement of funds. A transparent leader gains the trust and respect of subordinates.

Those who are transparent also communicate role expectations to subordinates in a clear manner, provide support, manage subordinates' performance, and gain subordinates trust (Kalshoven et al., 2011a). Such executives ensure proper management of employees works in line with set objectives. The executives also provide feedback to subordinates regularly. Subordinates view their leaders to be considerate and fair when the superiors manage performances transparently. These behaviors elicit a commitment to work and duty to the vision of the organization.

Trustworthiness. Because resources are few, societies need leaders to use resources judiciously. Leaders who are trustworthy act responsibly, thereby setting high standards for followers (Walumba et al., 2012). Trustworthy leaders make appropriate decisions and ensure that the outcome aligns with ethical expectations. If the results do not meet expected outcomes, the leaders communicate challenges to subordinates. Therefore, followers trust that leaders would take appropriate actions to address and mitigate decision issues accordingly.

Trustworthy leaders also consider and consistently meet the expectation of subordinates. Followers anticipate that leaders would use funds appropriately and make good decisions for their welfare. The leaders' trustworthiness elicits similar behavior in followers. However, most leaders expect subordinates to act according to the leaders instruction. However, the leader may not act likewise. Consistent with the social learning

framework of ethical leadership, followers observe and imitate the leaders' behavior as a form of identification with the leader (Brown et al., 2005).

A trustworthy leader nurtures trustworthy followers. When both the leader and followers are trustworthy, an ethical culture ensues. There is a peaceful and progressive coexistence in society when leaders and followers are dependable. Leaders and followers relate with each other based on trust, creating an environment conducive for governance. Trustworthiness also elicits accountability. When leaders understand that subordinates trust them, the executives are accountable to citizens. Leaders understand that their credibility and reputation would be at stake through inappropriate behaviors. The executives ensure that their actions align with the level of trust citizens endow on the leaders.

Organizational Structure and Ethical Leadership

Apart from the leader's behavior, the structure of an organization also influences ethical leadership practices. For example, in Nigeria, public organizations are highly bureaucratic, with several hierarchies and a complex system of guidelines, norms, and rules. Information sharing between the hierarchies is slow and inefficient, which runs contrary to what obtains in private organizations. Private organizations have more flexible structures; therefore, the trickle-down effect of the leaders' ethical conduct is faster.

Grover et al. (2012) analyzed different perspectives on ethical leadership in public and private organizations and noted that managers of public organizations viewed ethical leadership based on altruism, concern for the common good, responsiveness,

transparency, and accountability while private managers viewed ethical leadership on the basis of honesty. It may be that the differences exist because of goal dissimilarity; public organization's focus is on the provision of welfare and services for citizens, while private organization's goal is to make a profit.

Babalola, Bligh, Ogunfowora, Guo, and Garba (2019) emphasized, the organizational context has a role in leadership practices. Because context matters in leadership, executives are responsible for creating ethical standards and principles that are conducive. Inherent in the organizational structure is the ethical policies that guide work processes. Although ethical guidelines exist in public agencies, executives' predisposition to these guidelines is key to achieving ethical leadership. The manner in which leaders view and uphold ethical principles influences moral conduct in the organization.

Hassan et al. (2014) called for research to investigate ways to facilitate leadership in public organizations by investigating specific leaders' behavior that enhances subordinate ethical behavior, and how ethical climate influences both leaders and subordinates. Other areas are training programs to enhance ethical practices, whistleblowing policies for reporting conduct, how unethical practice affects different types of public organizations, and the effect of culture on ethical and unethical behavior. Because public offices exist for citizen's welfare, both leaders and subordinates must adhere to ethical policies and display morally appropriate behavior. Leaders are facilitators of an ethical organization.

Ethical Climate

An ethical climate is pertinent to foster ethical leadership in an organization. According to Shin (2012), the ethical climate is the policies, guidelines, practices, procedures, and values that support the ethical behavior of employees. Management has the onus to create and maintain a strong ethical climate for their organization. Leaders could use methods such as change management, and knowledge management to nurture a morally conducive environment. In a positive climate, employees uphold and share the perception that decision-making involves ethical reasoning and ethical standards (Cullen, Praveen Parboteeah, & Victor, 2003).

Workers believe that management follows due process and maintain ethical principles during decision-making. Management must display behaviors that are consistent with ethical policies. Otherwise, subordinates would be discouraged from using ethical behavior in their roles. Tanner, Tanner, and Wakefield (2015) emphasized, a strong ethical climate moderate the tendency of individuals to develop selfish and opportunistic behaviors that violate standards. This is particularly important because many leaders in their bid to make a profit for their organization have the propensity to circumvent the due process in businesses.

Executives nurture an ethical climate by making efforts to influence and establish the boundaries for conduct (Schaubroeck et al., 2012). Leaders must create an enabling environment that supports positive normatively appropriate behaviors. It means ensuring that ethical policies and behavior align. Another method is consistently assessing information on ethics and restructuring organizational processes to meet ethical

standards. Several factors influence ethical climate including the chief executive officer's behavior, code of ethics and whistleblowing policies.

The Chief Executive Officer's Behavior. In every organization, the role of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is to direct and guide employees to achieve the organizations' vision and goals. Therefore, the CEO must display morally appropriate behaviors to protect the image of their company and guide subordinates to use the same behavior in achieving work objectives. Shin (2012) asserted that the CEO's ethical behavior serves as a role model for employees. Superiors influence subordinates, and subordinates look up to their leaders for direction.

Demirtas and Akdogan (2015) observed that leaders play a key role in fostering ethical leadership by displaying appropriate behaviors, which serves as role models for personnel, and invariably, shaping of ethical climate in the organization. The leader's role is to provide ethical guidance and enact supporting ethical policies for followers to practice morally appropriate conduct. Lee and Cheng (2011) remarked that leaders have the power and authority to make ethical decisions and define ethical climate for followers by organizing goals, and evaluating and rewarding performance to nudge employees toward ethical conduct.

For ethical leadership to thrive, leaders must create an organizational ethical climate. It also encompasses due consideration of ethical dilemmas in decision-making, making ethical rules and guidelines. The role of the CEO is also maintaining a healthy relationship with stakeholders by incorporating their views in organizational goals, being

considerate and respectful when relating to them. The CEO is the chief image-maker of the organization.

Another duty of the CEO is to address social injustices by upholding employees' rights, treating subordinates in a just and right manner. Others are providing equal opportunities for employees, addressing diversity in employment, treating workers with respect, and managing and employees' performance transparently. These behaviors elicit a high level of employees' commitment to organizational goals resulting in the performance, growth, and sustainability of the organization.

Code of Ethics. Codes also foster an ethical climate. Beerli, Dayan, Vigoda-Gadot, and Werner (2013) emphasized employee awareness of codes, ethical leadership, and ethical decisions relate to ethical climate. Achieving such awareness is through training. It entails creating a training policy and setting aside funds to implement it. Raile (2013) also noted that employees' perception of a positive climate elicits behavior and attitudes in line with the codes of conduct. The author noted that these behavior influences outcomes such as the reputation and credibility of a government agency. Executives also have the responsibility to communicate ethical codes to employees.

Although Six and Lawton (2013) opined that codes exist in many countries to enhance the integrity of public offices, their effectiveness is not clear. For example, most government agencies in Nigeria have their code of ethics displayed in conspicuous places, yet executives continue to act inappropriately. Thaler and Helmig (2016) found out that a code of ethics alone is ineffective in influencing conduct; and Weinberg (2014) asserted a code of ethics is inadequate for public officials to nurture judgment and

decision-making when faced with ethical dilemmas. The reason being that an individual's ability to make ethical judgment depends more on their values. Adherence to codes is possible if the leader's espoused principles align with it.

Thaler and Helmig (2016) also observed that although codes are simple methods of guidelines for ethical behavior, complex organizational context and system could whittle their effectiveness. The leaders' behavior becomes the bona fide ethical guidance because followers would perceive it more than the code of ethics. Downe, Cowell, and Morgan (2016) observed that there are two ethical leadership perspectives: (1) the leaders' behavior and actions that serve as a role model for followers and (2) the systems and practices that the leaders create to regulate ethical conduct in the organization. Ethical codes and behaviors must align for an ethical climate to prevail. The nexus is that while codes are guidelines for moral conduct, behaviors support workings of the policies.

Whistle-Blowing Policies. Like a code of ethics, whistle-blowing policies may also foster an ethical climate. Cho and Song (2015) asserted that whistle-blowing is a major avenue to prevent unethical behavior, and investigated how individual and situational factors (such as personal cost and public service motivation) affect whistleblowing. The authors observed that when individuals perceive personal cost (which is the perception that the individual would suffer intimidation and retaliation from supervisors or colleagues by reporting unethical practices), the perception decreases the intention to report unethical practices.

Leaders must ensure that employees who report such violations do not suffer in any manner. Management must provide measures of reward to build confidence and

support to the policies. When leaders provide support and protection to whistle-blowers, it decreases their perceived personal cost and motivates them to report an ethical violation (Hechanova & Manaois, 2020). The challenge is in designing a whistle-blowing policy and attracting employees to partake. Because executives are the major culprits in ethical violations, reporting their unethical practices becomes difficult for subordinates.

There is a general notion that leaders are not culpable to offenses, therefore exposing superiors' infringements will not incur any consequence. In such cases, government has to address the misconception by punishing leaders who violate ethical policies through demotion or transfer to a less sensitive role. Peng and Cheng (2016) remarked that when leaders make whistle-blowing a priority and provide education on whistleblowing for employees who report ethical violations; it increases employees' motivation to report problems. The authors noted in public organizations, subordinates do not believe officials would address report on misconduct. This perception discourages employees from disclosing ethical violations.

Hassan et al. (2014) asserted that leaders of public agencies have failed to set an ethical climate and ethical standards and called for research to explore the leadership behaviors that would enhance conduct. The authors emphasized that leaders could nurture a positive ethical climate by encouraging employees to report ethical violations without fear of intimidation. As employees make up the majority, organizations cannot achieve an effective whistle-blowing policy without the workers' support.

Executives must provide incentives and support employees who report ethical misconduct. Leaders should also display ethically appropriate behaviors in conjunction

with whistle-blowing policy. Executives must behave and act in line with the code of ethics' stipulations. The leaders' goal is to achieve employees' engagement with ethical goals to nurture an ethical organization.

Context and Ethical Leadership

Despite the existence of codes of conduct and whistle-blowing policies, ethical leadership depends on a particular context in which it occurs. Accordingly, Vroom and Jago (2007) observed that ethical leadership, like other leadership styles, involves both the study of leaders and the situations in which leadership transpires. Leaders use different styles when relating to subordinates depending on the circumstances. Downe et al. (2016) reiterated this point by remarking that leadership is a socially constructed phenomenon that occurs under specific, cultural, organizational, or social context; therefore, frameworks must include the context in which it happens.

It means that careful consideration of the premise for construing leadership to identify concepts that best describes it. Because of the complex interrelationships that exist in society, understanding the various contexts and appropriate leadership styles is important. Ardichvili et al. (2012) also stated ethical leaders' behavior in business organizations is a function of both individual characteristics and contextual factors. By identifying the nature and context of the leaders' behavior, it is possible to design training programs for executives to learn ethical conduct.

Understanding leadership contexts may also provide insights into avoiding ethical dilemmas. Brown et al. (2005) theory presuppose that context matters in ethical leadership. Also, the authors suggested consideration of normatively appropriate

behaviors in defining ethical leadership because of cultural differences that could affect leadership behavior and practices. Accordingly, the focus of this study is to understand peculiar culturally accepted concepts useful to conceptualize, implement, and teach ethical leadership for public officials in Nigeria..

Culture and Ethical Leadership

Culture, which is the shared norms, values, and beliefs of the people in a particular society, influences ethical leadership. As previously mentioned, what is ethical in one society may have an unethical perception in another society. Even in a given community, there are nuances in peoples' expectations of ethics. Differences in religious beliefs also affect ethical viewpoints and practices. As a result, defining and practicing ethical leadership could be difficult.

Eisenbeiß and Brodbeck (2014) identified culturally specific patterns in Eastern cultures, from modesty, openness to others' ideas, and detachment from material possession. Ethical approaches in these cultures tend towards achieving spirituality and communal living. Ethical leadership in the Western world was more often associated with transactional performance management such as setting clear objectives, monitoring behavior, giving feedback, and contingent reward (Eisenbeiß, & Brodbeck, 2014). The authors observed that the US business ethics basis is on utilitarianism, with emphasis on the moral responsibility of the individual leader or ethical decision-making, and conduct of the leader. In Germany, the approach is on a social partnership between the organization and society.

Defining ethical leadership on the promises of socialism would suffice in Germany, while in the United States it would be implausible. The expectation is to enact a code of ethics on the capitalistic ideologies in the United States. Thus, culture influences leadership because of differences in beliefs, norms, values, followers' expectations, and the leaders' demeanor in a particular situation (Brown et al., 2005). Because people's approach to occurrence differs, there are differences in the way individuals understand and respond to ethical issues. That is why identification of behaviors that people in a particular society perceive as ethical is key.

Ethical Leadership Perspectives

Consistent with Wilson and McCalman (2017) suggestion, the aforementioned arguments indicate it is pertinent to examine and reposition ethical leadership in a specific cultural context to create deeper understanding. Because the aim is to explore leadership behavior that is tenable to conceptualize, implement, and teach ethical leadership in Nigeria, it is important to understand different perspectives. In particular, insights from culturally specific approaches to leadership would enrich the study.

Therefore, the literature review includes ethical leadership practices in South Africa and Korea to identify specific, appropriate leader behavior that exist there. Reason being that South Africa, which has cultural similarity with Nigeria already has a framework for leadership that could enrich this study. Korea was also included to extend the literature by examining leadership behavior and practices in a non-African culture. It may be that the Korean perspective could also add value to the study.

South African Perspective. Ncube (2010) observed that most leadership philosophies address Western cultures, their practices in other cultures could be challenging, creating the need to explore and includes indigenous perspectives to leadership theories. For instance, in South Africa, *Ubuntu* is a key leadership concept that supports human dignity through consensus, tolerance, mutual respect, peaceful coexistence, and the common good (Ujomudike, 2015). Leaders do not live in isolation but with followers in communities, sharing responsibilities for the betterment of the community.

In most African cultures, there is consensual decision-making and sharing of values between the leader and followers. It shows that leaders are responsible to demonstrate ethical behavior, values, and pave the way for others to do the same. In *Ubuntu*, the leader strives to create a vision of the future and inspires followers to believe in the vision (Ncube, 2010). Without followers' support, a leader's ethical behavior is ineffective and futile. After all, supporters make the majority in the community. Therefore, the leaders create various incentives to engage people in their domain to use appropriate behavior.

This view is consistent with the moral manager concept of Trevino et al. (2000), which emphasizes nurturing followers' ethical conduct. Communicating ethical behaviors to followers is key to nurturing such behavior. Ujomudike (2015) asserted that *Ubuntu's* ideals encircle developing viable human relationships by addressing unethical behavior and practices that beset the common good. Society only flourish when citizens are thriving. Therefore, leadership practices should focus on the interest of all.

Mangaliso (2001) also asserted that Ubuntu embodies humaneness, where people exist in communities to support one another, leaving in harmony, caring, concern for one another, and consideration for a viable future. Society is becoming individualistic due to the spread of western ideologies. People are more concerned about their goals instead of pursuing collective goals for improving society. Therefore, *Ubuntu* could address this problem. A basic saying that depicts Ubuntu is *umntu ungumntu ngabaye*, which means a person is a person through others (Mangaliso, 2001).

In this perspective to be humane means that the leader has a genuine concern for the welfare of followers, considers their perception in decision-making, and displays appropriate behaviors as a role model. However, Ncube (2011) opined that conceptualizing leadership on the leader's behavior, values, and traits is a misconception. She noted that *Ubuntu* addresses this issue by focusing on the leaders' nature with which he or she relates with followers. After all, a leader main responsibility is to cater to the needs of the community.

Considering the Brown et al. (2005) definition of ethical leadership, the focus should also be on the leaders. Leaders cannot build, maintain, and influence followers into ethical conduct if the executives do not hold such values. The leaders' values must align with followers' values and expectations so that there are consensus and agreement in goals and decision-making. As previously stated, demonstrating ethical behavior is much more important because display of ethical conduct serves as a role model for followers to emulate.

In African society, demonstrating ethical behavior is important because people live in communities, and as such, the community needs take preeminence over an individual's needs. It is a reciprocal norm for leaders to collaborate with followers. Metz and Gaie (2010) also observed that in African society, followers consider leader actions morally appropriate if it produces harmonious coexistence and builds relationships within the community. Building relationships is a fundamental aspect of the African culture and a leader must strive to maintain it.

Also, a major aspect of *Ubuntu* is building and maintaining relationships with others because leaders and followers are interconnected and interdependent, existing together, based on trust, collaboration, and mutual respect for one another (Ncube, 2010). *Ubuntu* proposes that followers contribute to the progress of society; therefore, leaders should mentor and empower followers to develop their best potential. Societies flourish when leaders and followers thrive together.

Considering that despite Anticorruption Commission activities, officials continue to misappropriate funds, it may be that the continued unethical behavior of public officials is because the executives may have imbibed Western, individualistic cultures. Such leaders may become selfish and greedy, subjugating the needs of the community for their personal needs. Still, *Ubuntu* has several merits. First, *Ubuntu* is apropos of Ciulla (1995) assertion to explore alternative avenues to extend contemporary normative leadership approaches, because it views morality on consensual values, and focuses on the relationship between superiors and followers.

Ubuntu provides an alternative framework for leaders to reexamine self, reconnect with followers to understand and meet their need. Second, *Ubuntu* is consistent with Brown et al. (2005) assertion regarding culturally appropriate behavior because it offers an approach to leadership that addresses culture. Another high point is that *Ubuntu* is achievable through training (Ncube, 2010). Training would create an opportunity for leaders to learn and use ethical behavior in their roles.

Korean Perspective. Because ethical leadership is a broad concept, literature from other cultural approaches would create additional insights to inform the study. Hence, the literature includes analysis of leadership from Eastern cultural viewpoints. Kim, Ko, and Kim (2015) identified two aspects of ethical leadership from a Korean perspective: The context of leadership and the components, which vary according to the stage of leadership. The authors also identified four components of ethical leadership: Leader, followers, team, and community.

According to this notion, leaders could use their personal development and competences to develop self, impact on the family, organization, and the greater good. Ethical leadership encircles core values and competencies the leader uses to develop self, build and sustain the relationship with followers, and develop organizations and community. In this perspective, the prerequisite of ethical leadership is *Sugi* or self-cultivation, which focuses on the way leaders develop self and core values. *Zhixin-Chijing* shows how the leader develops a sound mind through godliness and devotion.

It also includes two competencies, *Ipzhi*, which shows how the leader articulates a clear vision for himself, which transcends to organization and society and *Silsim*, how

the leader comprehends and embraces changes in the real world (Kim et al., 2015). *Sugi*, *Zhixin-Chijing*, and *Ipzi* focus on the leaders' morally appropriate attribute that makes the leaders better individuals and adds value to relationship with followers. In line with these concepts, Lee and Cheng (2011) asserted leaders have core values and capabilities with which the leaders develop self, relate with others, groups, and society.

Leaders only use behaviors that align with and espoused values; therefore, it is important that elected and appointed leaders are those whose personal ideology align with the principles of public office. Schwartz (2013) noted because there are differences in ethical values, there is a necessity to choose principles that are universal in concept and practice. Therefore, it is imperative that leaders must identify and use moral values to guide actions, behaviors, and policies common with a large number of individuals and groups, irrespective of their religion, culture, time, and context (Schwartz, 2013). Leaders could learn universal normative behaviors through training programs.

Ethical Leadership Training Programs

Concerning ethics, Speers (2016) identified a range of attitudes in public officials: (1) officials that understand the fiduciary obligations of public office, ethical codes, and behave consistency to guidelines, (2) a small number who regard their offices as an avenue for self-aggrandizement, and (3) executives that are teachable, and readily influenced by role models. These nuances in behavior show that individuals differ in their perception of ethics. Downe et al. (2016) also remarked the fact that codes are ineffective in promoting ethical behavior; codes require internalization and adaptation into actions by individuals.

Leaders possess power to translate codes into actions and nudge employees to comply. Speers (2016) suggested engaging practitioners to provide information about what constitutes officials' ethical behavior and engage ethics enforcement agency to interpret codes and prescribe ethical behavior. Experts peradventure may identify and clarify areas in the codes that are impracticable.

Weinberg (2014) also emphasized using officials with diverse experiences on leadership to develop a framework and to take a cue from the ethics program of government agencies. Aligning training programs with expectations of ethics agency would make the curriculum substantive and credible. Training programs could increase officials' understanding of ethical decision-making and show more commitment to the ethical goals of their agencies. There is the tendency that officials would desist from or reduce the tendency to engage in unethical practices if the executives understand the consequences of such conduct.

Teaching the officials standards will keep them abreast of rules, policies, and regulations related to public office administration. Most leaders of agencies are inexperienced and may not be knowledgeable about the workings of ethical codes and ethical behavior. Dzurainin, Toppe Shortridge, and Smith (2013) also emphasized that education programs improved awareness of ethical dilemmas and the ability to make appropriate decisions. Because businesses exist in a complex, and chaotic environment, ethical violations could occur.

As such, executives need special knowledge of ethical conduct in business practices. Sekerka (2009) opined that officials could learn and use moral judgment to

guide their actions through ethics training programs. The benefits of training programs cannot be over-emphasized. Apart from increasing moral awareness, it elicits people's commitment to ethical guidelines.

Kaptein (2015) remarked that individuals from organizations with an ethics-training program are less likely to behave unethically. He identified key components of the program as (1) designing a code of ethics, (2) ethics training and communication, (3) accountability guidelines and policies, (4) monitoring and auditing guidelines, and (5) investigation and correction policies (6) establishing an ethics office, (7) designing ethics report line, and (8) developing incentives policies. In practice, incorporating these elements into a curriculum may not be feasible due to budgetary constraints.

Eisenbess and Giessner (2012) also noted that such training programs should focus on normatively appropriate behavior and principles, to address ethical dilemmas. Considering that public offices exist to provide services for society, officials must learn how to be transparent, honest, and accountable in the appropriation of funds. Kuenzi et al., 2009 and Poff (2010) asserted that training programs are plausible avenues to improve leaders' ethical behavior. These activities require robust government funding. Even when monies are available, articulating the program is a challenge.

Crossann et al. (2013) observed there is a paucity of literature and gaps in identifying and delineating specific behavior to develop the training programs. Another challenge is to engage and collaborate with the anticorruption agencies to organize the training programs. As previously mentioned, the complex bureaucracies existing in public agencies could make the collaboration cumbersome. Nevertheless, it is plausible to

close the training gap on the precinct of responsibility, accountability, ethical decision-making, trust, and concern for others. These are universally accepted ethical behaviors for leaders.

A New Ethical Leadership Framework

Even though many leaders are morally aware, executives continue to exhibit unethical actions. Pless, Maak, and De Jongh (2011) suggested contemporary approaches to leadership should focus on ethical values by critically analyzing the moral and social implications of the leaders' decisions instead of the leaders' attributes and skills. The authors also suggested the development of a new framework of practices and rules applicable for engaging community stakeholders and strive to achieve greater collaboration between people in societies. The framework encompasses repositioning leadership on the precincts of the leader's actions, and the consequences on citizens and stakeholders.

Because leadership involves the leaders' values, traits, ethical decision-making, and outcomes for communities; therefore, there is need to address societal concerns and practices that influence the phenomenon (Burnes & By, 2012). A leaders' ethical action is valuable if the conduct meets the expectation of people in society. Therefore, leaders have to consider followers' perspectives during decision-making and the impact of decisions on citizens.

As previously argued by Brown and Trevino (2006), the culture of a particular society influences leadership behavior and practices. Culture, which is a shared perception, affects citizens' expectations of their leader. Brown and Trevino (2006) also

noted leadership literature is complex, fragmented, and underdeveloped; describing it would entail clarifying, and investigating the leaders' normatively appropriate behavior in a particular culture.

Lee and Cheng (2011) suggested that focus on ethical leadership should move from formal or structural approaches to transferring knowledge through training programs. Consistent with Nnabuife (2010), Lee and Cheng (2011), and Weinberg (2014) suggestions, and considering that there are no formal frameworks in Nigeria, this study aims to explore experts' views for a framework to conceptualize, teach, and implement ethical leadership for public officials. Experts could use their experience and knowledge to provide valuable information for the research. The answers the respondents provided to the research questions may bridge the gap between theory and practice and advance knowledge in the field.

Summary and Conclusions

This chapter encircles a comprehensive analysis and synthesis of the literature to gather an understanding of elements for conceptualizing, implementing, and teaching ethical leadership for public officials in Nigeria. The literature reviewed highlights that ethical leadership encompasses normative and descriptive perspectives, including merits, differences, and gaps.

A study conducted by Lawton and Páez (2015) revealed the gaps in both perspectives, indicating that ethical leadership conceptualization, implementation and teaching is on the premises of the leaders' behavior, antecedents, actions, and practices. A further study by Burnes and By (2012) shows that there is less emphasis on the

ethicality of the leaders' actions, followers' perception, the context, and consequences of the leaders' actions in conceptualizing ethical leadership.

The chapter also shows studies on a comprehensive understanding of ethical leadership on the premises of the leaders' behavior that motivate followers into ethical conduct, create an ethical climate in organizations, seeks the common good, and positive social change (Stouten et al., 2012; Fairholm, 2015; Midgen, 2015; McCalman, 2017). Specifically, the chapter encompasses discussion on ethical leadership traits, and behaviors (such as altruism, moral awareness, integrity, transparency, honesty) to achieve the common good (Bagozzi et al., 2013).

As suggested by Hassan et al. (2014), ethical leadership also requires an enabling environment to support the leaders' conduct, including ethical climate, followers' conduct, role modeling, codes of conduct, whistle-blowing policies, and training programs. Another study by Eisenbeiß and Brodbeck (2014) also emphasized cultural influences in the leaders' ethical behavior.

These arguments provided a basis to conduct this study and to add to the literature by filling the gap in ethical leadership conceptualization, implementation, and teaching, specifically for public officials in the Nigerian cultural context. The intention is to expand the literature by exploring a deeper understanding of ethical leadership theory and practices that may be useful for public officials in Nigeria to promote a positive social change. In the next chapter, I delineate the research methodology, including the method for data collection and data analysis, used to explore a framework for conceptualizing, implementing, and teaching ethical leadership for public officials in Nigeria.

Chapter 3: Research Method

The purpose of this study was to develop conceptualization, implementation, and teaching frameworks for ethical leadership and ethics training programs for public officials in Nigeria. Specifically, I explored the antecedents, outcomes, and behavioral elements related to ethical leadership to create an understanding of a practical curriculum in government agencies. In this chapter, I provide details of the research approach by describing (a) the research design and the rationale for choosing the design; (b) the researcher's role; (c) the methodology, including participant selection criteria, the method for data collection, data analysis, the validity of results, and ethical procedures; and (e) summary.

Research Design and Rationale

The research question that provided a basis for the study was: What are the views of experts for conceptualization, implementation, and teaching frameworks for ethical leadership for public officials in Nigeria?

The question delineates ethical leadership concept, defined as:

“The demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making” (Brown et al., 2005, p. 120).

The researcher has the responsibility to articulate the research question appropriately because the question determines the research design, which in turn determines the method for data collection and analysis. Answers to the research question

is a basis for understanding concepts in the phenomenon. Kozleski (2017) suggested grounding the questions in a specific context, with careful considerations for data collection methods, including sample size, time and participant. My objective in the study was to acquire a deeper understanding of leaders' behavior and practices that influence subordinate ethical conduct and achieve the common good.

Researchers approach their study with a specific worldview, which is their cognitive orientation to and interpretation of social realities. Regarding worldview, Houghton, Hunter, and Meskell (2012) identified four basic philosophical viewpoints. First is postpositivism, encompassing a cause-effect relationship between variables using experiments, surveys, and variables to test hypothesis and verify theories. Second is social constructivism, interpreting the way others understand the world and using open-ended questions to understand how different participants experience social realities in a particular context. Third is advocacy or an interpretive worldview, addressing reforms and social issues such as empowerment, and oppression in the lives of marginalized individuals. Fourth is pragmatism, identifying multiple ways to understand social realities, using different methods and strategies (Houghton et al., 2012, pp. 6-9).

Britten (2011) identified three approaches to investigating social realities stem from these worldviews, based on epistemological and ontological assumptions: Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods. The choice of an approach depends on the objective of the study. Park and Park (2016) asserted that while the aim of some studies is to justify phenomenon, by explaining cause-effect relationships, others discover phenomenon, by exploring, describing meanings, and perceptions in social realities.

A quantitative approach or postpositivist worldview uses data from experiments and surveys to test hypotheses and verify theories and variables. The assumption is that knowledge or human experience is objective, controlled by cause-effect relationships between variables, and therefore can be verified statistically using experiments or surveys. The approach confirms rationality by asking “why” or close-ended questions to investigate social realities (Barnham, 2015), to predict, reduce, or control phenomena (Erlingsson & Brysiewicz, 2012).

The number of participants is a key aspect of a research. The quantitative approach uses a large number of randomly selected respondents to represent the population of the study; rigor is created by the objectivity of the researcher’s stance and the integrity of the collected data (Erlingsson & Brysiewicz, 2012). A random selection of participants addresses bias and adds to the study’s objectivity. Rigor is easily achievable because the method uses standardized means to confirm results.

A qualitative approach, or social constructivism worldview encompasses an exploration of the way individuals construct and interpret social realities. Differences exist in the way people perceive and make meanings of their experiences with occurrences; the qualitative approach seeks to understand complex relationships. A major attribute of this approach is the assumption that phenomena exist as a system of interacting patterns from which individuals construct diverse meanings, understanding, and accounts; the greatest number of accounts for each pattern best explains the structure and interactions of the phenomenon (Park & Park, 2016).

The approach focuses on how individuals understand the world. The method encircles an exploration of the meaning people give to a phenomenon by collecting data from participants through observation or open-ended questions (Astin & Long, 2014). Other methods include semistructured interviews, focus groups, video recording, and audio recording (Britten, 2011). An important aspect of qualitative research is emergence, adapting different designs and methods to suit the data. A challenge is to establish trustworthiness because there is no standard way to understand people's experiences. However, trustworthiness is achievable by a thick description of the design and method (Erlingsson & Brysiewicz, 2012), and a robust description of the data (Park & Park, 2016).

A mixed-method research design includes a combination of both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The method addresses simultaneously, quantitative-based questions (such as those describing relationships, correlations, cause-effect relationships) and qualitative-based questions by describing processes, experiences, and perceptions (Frels & Onwuegbuzie, 2013).

In this study, I employed a qualitative Delphi design for several reasons. First, the method is used to describe phenomena from an in-depth account of individuals' experiences, using interviews and observation (Astin & Long, 2014) and to delineate the context of the experience in detail (Yilmaz, 2013). Second, because the purpose was to explore the meanings experts give to conceptualizing, teaching, and implementing frameworks for ethical leadership for public officials, a qualitative design sufficed. The method is useful for gathering in-depth understanding of concepts, practices, and context

to expand ethical leadership theory. Third, the design is in line with Brown et al.'s (2005) ethical leadership theory, which presupposes context is key in defining ethical leadership. Because of differences in norms and values, it is important to investigate normatively appropriate leader behavior in a particular context.

The research design encompasses the plan for conducting the study. Mittwede (2012) noted that the choice of a design is dependent on the theoretical basis of the topic, the objective of the study, and methods for evaluation. The research theory provides a premise for choosing the plan. Maxwell (2013) used an integrated approach to describe a qualitative design with five, interconnecting and flexible components: the research goal, conceptual framework, methods, research questions, and validity. The author identified the research question as an integral component that influences and connects the other components cohesively.

The questions must align with the purpose, the method, conceptual framework, and validity. Bengtsson (2016) stated that there are five basic issues in research design: What the research aims to achieve, the type of sample to use and the unit of analysis, the method for collecting data, the method of analyzing data and the practical application of the result. The main point is to achieve alignment between the elements, which adds credibility to the research.

The researchers' theoretical lens influences the design. Houghton et al. (2012) noted that the methodology that aligns with the worldview and the method determines the design. The researchers' experiences also influence the worldview, and invariably the

design. From this perspective, Christ (2013) advised researchers to be pragmatic in choosing the design because a specific approach is germane to the research questions. It is pertinent that the design and the research question align to make the result valid.

Malagon-Maldonado (2014) also noted that differences in design exist, based on the research purpose, previous literature on the topic, and the data. The goal is to choose a design that is plausible to achieve the research goals. Maxwell (2013) identified five qualitative research designs: Narrative research, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography and case study. The only prerequisite is to use substantive methods to justify and validate the design (Helskog, 2014). Consistent with these assertions, I considered the following qualitative designs to address the research questions: Narrative research, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, and case study.

Narrative study was unsuitable as my plan was not to understand and capture the meaning individuals give to social realities through stories from their lived experiences (Hays & Wood, 2011; Peden-McAlpine, Liaschenko, Traudt, & Gilmore-Szott, 2015). Phenomenology was also unsuitable because the purpose was not to explore the common meanings groups of individuals attach to phenomena from lived experiences (Hays & Wood, 2011). This methodology is useful to investigate the phenomenon in communities to achieve a better understanding of cultural practices and customs.

Grounded theory was unsuitable because the method is for generating a new theory to inform practice by collecting common themes or concepts from data (Hays, & Wood, 2011; Warnick, Wilt, & McAdams, 2016). The approach encompasses using unstructured interviews to collect, code, and categorize data into themes to form a new

theory or modify an existing one (Malagon-Maldonado, 2014). My objective in this study was not to build a theory. Additionally, I considered employing a case study methodology for the research. Case study involves using interviews or observation to describe and achieve a deep understanding of an enclosed system to address a problem or a challenge (Malagon-Maldonado, 2014). I found the method unsuitable because my goal for this study is not to explore the perception of people about a problem in a close system.

I also explored the utility of a qualitative, Delphi method and found it suitable. Consistent with the purpose of this study and the research question, the method is useful to explore experts opinion to conceptualize or re-conceptualize concepts to improve understanding of the practice of phenomenon theory. Helskog (2014) noted that the overall goal of the method is to identify appropriate behaviors and practices that produce outcomes that will benefit humankind and achieve positive social change.

The Delphi method also integrates practice, people, and context by engaging experts to collaborate and develop a deeper understanding of a theory or concept in a specific context to transform the practice of a phenomenon (Varndell, Fry, Lutze, & Elliot, 2020). Two key aspects of the Delphi method are the employment of unanimous, diverse experts and a consensus of opinion about the phenomenon (San-Jose & Retolaza, 2016).

Within the scope of a method is the possibility of using different approaches for data collection and analysis, for instance, a narrative approach for data collection and grounded study for data analysis (Warnick et al., 2016). However, a basic issue is to ensure that both approaches align. The aim was to establish that the strategy is

substantive and rigorous enough to achieve a credible result. Helskog (2014) used the term *Phronesis* to reiterate the importance of using wisdom, prudence, and pragmatism to choose and justify the methodology and methods for a study. It means that the researcher should show how each aspect of the process contributes to the overall result.

Role of the Researcher

The researcher's worldview influences the topic and the research questions. It also guides the type of participants, the research methodology, and the methods and interpretations of the themes that emerge from the data. The researcher, as the research instrument, facilitates the method in a manner that produces a credible result. This is important so that there is axiological and methodological alignment in order to achieve rigor. Qualitative researchers strive throughout the research process to ensure methodological alignment by thinking about the relationship between the theoretical position, selected methods, and data analysis (Kramer-Kile, 2012).

Without alignment it is impossible to garner credible arguments to ground the study. Credibility depends on how skillful, competent, and rigorous the researcher is at obtaining in-depth meanings from participants so that the result indicates a true representation of the phenomenon (Cleary, Horsfall, & Harter, 2014). The researcher has to be in close contact with subjects to capture their perspectives fully. However, realizing that the researcher's relationship with participants during data collection may distort the data and create bias, Patton (2002) advised researchers to question their cognitive and emotional viewpoints.

Patton used the term *empathic neutrality* to describe that researchers are emotionally and cognitively detached from the participants' experiences. It means the researcher strives to be aloof and objective when relating to subjects. Against these backdrops, my role was to ensure that there is alignment between the theoretical foundation, methods, and data analysis. One of my responsibilities in this study was to ensure that the chosen method for data collection and data analysis complemented the theoretical underpinnings of the study.

My role also included data collection through documents, observation, and interviews. Multiple methods for data collection added rigor to the process. My strategy for data collection was to achieve a deep-seated understanding of the meanings participants give to their lived experiences. The use of multiple sources for data collection gave me the opportunity to collect credible data for the study.

Another characteristic of qualitative research is a thick description of the way participants experience and give meaning to the phenomenon by describing in detail events, happenings, culture, and people (Malagon-Maldonado, 2014). I had a responsibility to gather and describe rich information to delineate the phenomenon. I captured the feelings and meanings people gave to their experiences during data collection.

Because context matter in occurrences, I had a duty to delineate the environment encircling participants' experiences. I used a journal to record a detailed description of the participants, location, setting, events, and the exact words respondents used to answer the interview questions. My responsibility was to provide a basis for selecting the specific

data collection method, and the capacity of the approach to address the research question. I collected data by administering three rounds of questionnaires to participants and conducting one round of interview with respondents. I reported all stages in the research process in a clear manner.

The process also involved spending quality time at the agencies to build a rapport with participants. It was also my duty to respect participants' privacy and to treat all information from subjects confidentially. Because subjects are humans, I considered their rights and eschewed activities that infringed on their privacies. I ensured that the respondents did not suffer any harm because of their participation. I shared the data and clarified the interpretations with participants. Like any human activity, unintentional errors, such as misconduct and bias could occur.

I controlled bias by internal and external means (Formosinho & Formosinho, 2012). I addressed bias through internal means by clarifying my beliefs, commitments, and interest; and to address ethical concerns through self-awareness, self-regulation or self-control. I identified and addressed assumptions and biases that may distort interpretations through reflexivity. I also controlled bias through external means by engaging participants to clarify the information I captured as answers respondents provided to the interview questions (Formosinho & Formosinho, 2012).

Methodology

This section delineates the approach for the research design, including (a) participant selection logic; (b) data collection instruments; (c), procedure for recruiting and engaging participants, data analysis plan, which also include data management and

data storage; (e), addressing issues of trustworthiness, including credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability, and ethical procedure, and (f) a summary.

Participant Selection Logic

As the Delphi method depends on data from interviews and observation, using an iterative process of data collection and analysis to identify emergent themes, the sampling process is critical (Gentles, Charles, Ploeg, & McKibbin, 2015). Sampling provides a platform for collecting substantive information to enrich the study. Therefore, the key to achieving credible research is the method for selecting data sources, including accessing sites and participants, data collection and data management (Gentles et al., 2015). Credibility also involves ascertaining whether participants are knowledgeable about the phenomenon.

Boddy (2016) stated that the sample size is appropriate if the researcher can justify the number in the research context and tradition. The author also emphasized that whatever the size, a major criterion is to achieve data saturation and provide justification for the saturation (Boddy, 2016). Saturation is the point during the data collection process where additional data does not supply any other information different from what already exists, indicating that sufficient data has been collected (Cleary et al., 2014; Gentles et al., 2015).

I also explored purposive, heterogeneous sampling, which is selecting diverse individuals who have experiences to capture key themes that best describe the phenomenon (Patton, 2002, p. 237). I used a sample size of 20 experts with the following inclusion criteria: (1) Experts and stakeholders from various ethics institutions in Nigeria,

(2) Participants occupy top leadership positions in the agencies, (3) Participants have continuously occupied the position for at least three years and (4) Subjects are leaders from ethics-related governmental and nongovernmental organizations.

The assumption was that these experts have rich information on key concepts that best describe frameworks for conceptualizing, teaching, and implementing ethical leadership for public officials. Such supposition was key because as previously mentioned, there are no frameworks that could serve as a guide to conceptualize, implement, and teach ethical leadership.

Devers and Frankel (2000) noted that an important aspect is to understand participants' characteristics and the sites where respondents are located. The authors noted that identifying appropriate sites is crucial, as the locations demystify the context where participants experience the phenomenon. One advantage is that all the involved in this study are located in Abuja, Nigeria's capital city, where I also reside. Because I live and work in Abuja, I had proximity and easy access to the site, saved time and transportation costs. Abuja as Nigeria's capital city harbors the headquarters of all governmental agencies.

I envisaged some challenges in gaining access to the respondents. Participants are busy officials and the agencies are highly bureaucratic. It took a lot of time to access and inform gatekeepers about the study. Because I had acquired skills in accessing government agencies while performing my job, I was able to use the experience to address the challenges. I also employed the rapport I had established with the workers in the agencies to gain access. In the next section, I discuss the data collection instruments.

Instrumentation

Data may provide evidence to substantiate a preexisting theory and/or to develop a new theory (Holloway & Galvin, 2016; Malagon-Maldonado, 2014). As stated previously, because differences exist in the manner individuals experience occurrences, it is important to collect the right information that best describes their encounter. A key aspect is collecting information from participants in the exact way the respondents recount their experiences.

Another important aspect in the process is to allow participants to describe the meanings given to experiences with the phenomenon in their own words (Malagon-Maldonado, 2014). Therefore, data collecting tools should not affect respondents' accounts. Otherwise, false data would occur, which inadvertently produces a faulty result. Gibbs, Kealy, Willis and Green (2007) also asserted that instrument for collecting data depends on the research objective, the context, and participants' characteristics.

I developed questionnaires and semistructured interview for collecting data (see Appendix A and B). I employed observation and reflexive journal to clarify the responses participants provided. Questionnaires are appropriate for studies having a goal to describe phenomena by exploring and identifying patterns (Rowley, 2014); it is efficient, cost-effective (Enosh, Tzafir, & Stolovy, 2015), and easily administered through emails (Nowack, Endrikat, & Guenther, 2011). My Chair and Committee Member reviewed and verified the tenacity of the questionnaires and interview protocol to garner answers for the research question.

Taking a cue from Bowden and Gonzalez (2015), I created a personal website to facilitate the emails, which included the consent form and the questionnaires. The consent form detailed the purpose of the study and information on confidentiality and privacy. Constructing the questionnaires was challenging. I employed clear language with keywords that best describe the phenomena and simple sentences that represent the research questions (Houghton et al., 2012).

The questions in the questionnaire aligned with the research objective and data analysis method (Rowley, 2014), as well as the semistructured interview questions (Enosh et al., 2015). Although email was proposed as the method for administering the questionnaires, I resorted to administering them manually. This was because participants informed me of inability to respond to the emails due to busy schedule. I administered three rounds of questionnaires to the participants at their offices.

I also conducted a round of semi structured face-to-face interviews with participants. I used an interview protocol or a list of questions that address the topic's key areas, but also accommodates other questions to substantiate the given answers (Edwards & Holland, 2013; Dowling, Lloyd, & Suchet-Pearson, 2016). The face-to-face approach for the interview afforded me the contingency to be near executives, to achieve a deeper understanding of their perception about the phenomenon. The strategy also enabled me to clarify any issues that may be associated with participants' responses to the questions.

Consistent with this study's data collection method, the Delphi method, I used open-ended questions. Because my goal was to achieve a consensus about concepts, such questions were appropriate. Challenges associated with semistructured interview are

achieving rigor and managing bias (Cassell, 2018). Bias could occur because of differences in an individual's disposition to other individuals and occurrences. There is the possibility of developing an exploitative relationship or biased relationship with participants (Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy, 2013).

In this study I addressed bias by remaining objective during data collection from experts and ensuring that the information I gathered depicted the exact meanings participants provided. I also shared the information with participants at the end of the interview. In this manner, I was able to clarify any issue or objection respondents raised in the captured responses.

Because the process involves non verbal aspects, I used a reflexive journal to capture meanings associated with the phenomenon that were unexpressed in words (Chenail, 2011). I focused on the study's objective, ensuring that the process and the outcome are credible. The journal enabled me to achieve a rigorous and substantive data to achieve a credible result. A rich description of the process would enable whosoever reads the research work to understand the process, adding value to the study's credibility.

Procedure for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

The sample recruitment process included identification of multiple experts, the number having the tenacity to provide information about the topic to the point of achieving saturation (Trotter, 2012). Living and working in Abuja, Nigeria's capital, which situates most of the federal government agencies, enabled me to build a strong social network. I used my social connections to meet and recruit executives to inform the

study. I also engaged experts from different ethics organizations, both government and nongovernmental, to achieve diverse views about the phenomenon.

The research sites were agencies related to enforcing ethics in Nigeria, the Independent Corrupt Practices and Related Offences Commission, and the Code of Conduct Bureau. Others are Civil Society Liberty Advocacy Center, a representative of Transparency International in Nigeria, and the Federal Ministry of Education, which oversees the educational curriculum in Nigeria. Another advantage is that these agencies were close to one another, which helped me save time in accessing participants.

The research included 20 participants: Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (n=five), Code of Conduct Bureau (n=five), Transparency International (n=five), and Federal Ministry of Education (n=five). Because respondents work in these agencies, there are official procedures to gain entry to the offices and engage participants for the study. I wrote letters to the top management for permission to engage participants for the study in accordance with the official procedure of the agencies.

The letters also included ancillary documents such as a copy of the proposal, Walden's Institutional Review Board (Walden IRB) permission to conduct the study, and sample of a consent form. The letters delineated the study's purpose and usefulness to the agencies. The permission to engage participants for the study was given in a letter of cooperation by the heads of the agencies. The heads of agencies also provided a list of all the executives. Afterwards, in line with Walden's IRB policy, I used the inclusion criteria for sampling, selected, and approached potential executives for the study. I administered

consent forms to executives who were interested in participating in the research to sign. The consent forms contained details of the research topic, the importance of the study in creating positive social change, and addressed ethical issues that may arise while conducting the study.

The Delphi method was the data collection technique. The method focuses on expert in-depth knowledge about a phenomenon for decision making especially in public policy development (Brady, 2015). As an exploratory method, the account people give about their experiences with the phenomenon is useful to produce a credible and reliable result. The Delphi method is also appropriate for conducting studies to improve future policy, especially in areas where previous data or information is unavailable and expert opinion becomes the only possible way of acquiring reliable information (Ribeiro, Pereira, & da Silva, 2015).

As the purpose of this study was to explore the meanings experts give to conceptualizing, implementing, and teaching ethical leadership for Nigerian public officials, I chose the Delphi method. The method is appropriate for collecting data to investigate social phenomenon where knowledge is incomplete, in this case, ethical leadership framework (Rowe & Wright, 2011). The method is sufficient for exploring specific behaviors apropos for the framework. The approach involves a series of questionnaires and multiple series of questioning and data aggregation from leadership experts to develop a framework (Davidson, 2013).

The purpose of the Delphi method is also to explore perceptions, behaviors, opinions, judgments about a phenomenon from experts' knowledge, expertise,

experiences, qualification to achieve a reliable and credible result (Hasson & Keeney, 2011). Therefore, the Delphi method required careful selection of experts. Key aspects of the method is that experts analyze each other's opinion iteratively to generate a consensus that best described the phenomenon (Nowack et al., 2011), and experts are anonymous to one another (Brady, 2015). Because the purpose of the Delphi method is to define, predict, and explore group attitudes, needs, and priorities, there is the challenge of achieving validity and reliability (Davidson, 2013). The Delphi method was challenging in this study because the approach banked on multiple interpretations.

Morse (2015) also noted that establishing rigor in the Delphi method is elusive because of the methodological and contextual challenges, including how to analyze data, and interpret the outcome of the result. Because of the paucity of literature, and the absence of a previous study the Delphi method was tasking. I addressed these issues through extensive thematic analysis, a methods journal, and member checking .The iterative characteristic of the Delphi method, through the administration of three rounds of questionnaires provided rigor in the study. The consensus of expert opinion in the study also provided a means for obtaining a credible result.

Marsden, Dolan, and Holt (2003) employed an electronic Delphi method using questionnaires to stakeholders, policymakers, and nongovernmental experts to explore the improvement of nursing practice and education. The method involved contacting 24 respondents via email to introduce the topic and purpose, administer the questionnaires (specifically within two weeks to facilitate quick answers), and to ensure that data quality

is intact. The questionnaires generated important themes, refined through member checking to ascertain the themes' accuracy.

In line with Marsden et al. (2003) study, I administered three rounds of questionnaires to experts through emails. However, respondents did not reply to the emails due to their busy schedules. As a result, I resorted to administering the questionnaires manually, in three rounds to the participants at their offices. After the questionnaire administration, I conducted one round of face-to-face semistructured interviews with each of the executives at their offices. I used the recorder in my I Phone to obtain their views and clarify answers to the questions. I also employed reflexive journals to write down perceptions, intuitions, and feelings, during the interview. At the end of the data collection, I debriefed participants about the process before exiting their offices.

Debriefing participants allowed me to clarify information about the process, and the results (Collins, Onwuegbuzie, Johnson, & Frels, 2013), adding value and quality to the study (Erlingsson & Brysiewicz, 2012). The debriefing gave participants the chance to question me about the process, provide transparency of the methods, and add credibility to the data collection and data analysis methods. I also engaged my Chair and Committee Member, who are methodology experts to review the appropriateness and comprehensiveness of the questionnaires and interview protocol for data collection.

Data Analysis Plan

Data analysis encompasses identifying, analyzing, and describing common themes in participants' words (Fade & Swift, 2010). The process involves organizing and

interpreting themes into meanings that best describe participants' experiences with a phenomenon (Petty, Thomson, & Stew, 2012; Crowe, Inder, & Porter, 2015) as guided by a study's theoretical foundation (Erlingsson & Brysiewicz, 2012).

I identified and categorized common words into concepts. The objective was to identify themes in participant's words iteratively, to answer the research questions, and identify new understandings of the phenomenon. As a major part of the research, the process required careful observation and report of findings. A well-grounded study produces new concepts, apart from theoretical concepts, adding value to the generalizability of the results (Gibbs et al., 2007). Without credible data analysis, the outcome of the result would be questionable.

A critical aspect of the process was interpreting data. Data interpretation involved careful delineation of participants' accounts of experiences about the phenomenon in the exact manner and context. Although a pre-knowledge or experience of the topic and the context was valuable, the prior conception could influence the respondents and the interpretation of results. Moreover, my worldview influenced the manner I comprehended the process. Knowledge of the context enabled me to clarify my feelings, intuition and to remain unbiased during the process and in interpreting the result. Therefore, I studied the context carefully before analyzing the data.

Taking a cue from Salmon (2013), I interpreted the data in the specific context and not merely described the themes. The Delphi method was amenable to garner experts' views for describing the phenomenon. The method aligned with the study's

theoretical underpinnings and was capable of providing answers to the research questions (Fade & Swift, 2010). Therefore, there was methodological alignment in the study.

As the purpose of this study was to explore experts' opinions about conceptualizing, implementing, and teaching frameworks for ethical leadership, I used thematic analysis to gather and interpret themes from the data for the framework. The method provided the opportunity to explore and interpret the underlying meanings or patterns in details to answer the research question, capturing words and meanings in categories and themes (Emmel, 2015). However, the process was challenging. I used basic, crucial steps including recording interviews with participants, transcribing the data into text, immersing self in the text by repeated reading of the data, identifying codes in each text, arranging codes into categories, and categories into themes (Erlingsson, & Brysiewicz, 2012; Warnick et al., 2016). Otherwise, erroneous representation of participants' perceptions would suffice which could impact the study's credibility and reliability.

I refined the themes repeatedly to capture meanings and related the themes to a particular portion of the transcribed data by using excerpts to portray the meanings (De Stefano, Mann-Feder, & Gazzola, 2010). I identified patterns of themes that were similar and different in the data, using the text in the transcribed interviews. I employed codes, which were labels, depicting words, quotes, and sentences in the data. I used a journal to describe the codes in detail for easy audits trailing. I also arranged similar codes, which were a group of common themes into categories. The categories depicted a particular socio-cultural context to represent a central meaning (Emmel, 2015).

Developing codes was through deductive, inductive, or electronic approaches (Fade & Swift, 2016). The deductive method uses preconceived codes, organized hierarchically, and reorganized into new categories; the inductive approach uses a ladder approach to build the codes into categories as the process continues (Fade & Swift, 2016; Kemparaj, & Chavan, 2013). As specified by Fade & Swift (2016), I employed the inductive approach to coding. Specifically, I used open coding, which provided a premise to organize and justify the data; axial coding, established the interconnections between the categories; and selective coding, provided a basis to establish the narratives and ideas behind relationships between the categories.

I employed NVivo to code and generate themes from the data. The software allowed me to transcribe the data and identify themes efficiently. The software does not interpret data, as the researcher is the main instrument for interpretation (Petty et al., 2012). Another important aspect of the process is data management. As the process involved a large amount of data, organizing, managing, keeping, and accessing information in the original context was key to achieving a credible analysis. I used NVivo to analyze the data iteratively by organizing codes into themes, identifying new patterns and triangulating the patterns with participants' words to achieve a consensus of themes. The software also helped me save time through efficient data management.

Data storage was through my personal computer as well as a backup in an external drive to safeguard the data in the event of computer malfunction. The recorder in the I Phone is the tool for documenting the interview. The phone was in a good working condition. I also used a reflexive journal for writing observations during the interview. I

used NVivo to transcribe the data from the interview and journal immediately after collection.

A tenet of qualitative research is the interpretation of data, achieved through rigor. Rigor means data collection and data analysis methods are credible, tenable to garner interpretations; interpretations are substantive, and grounded in the study's conceptual underpinnings (Crowe et al., 2015). It is noteworthy that a particular datum could have several interpretations. Although the result shows the interpretations, the inference should be substantive, grounded in a conceptual premise or triangulation, using values from different individuals or member checking (Crowe et al., 2015). Accordingly, I grounded all interpretations of data in ethical leadership theory and previous literature.

Because not all perceptions are the same, negative, or discrepant cases of patterns and themes exist (Crowe et al., 2015). Addressing inconsonant cases is an important aspect that also substantiates the result. Therefore, I addressed all the negative cases in the study by including them in the second and third rounds of questionnaires. Morse (2015) also suggested the saturation of such cases to reveal key differences in the themes, as a platform to ground the common ones. The process involved using alternative interpretations to describe their inability to meet the requirement for the main themes, thereby adding value to the results' credibility (Patton, 2002, pp. 554-555).

Issues of Trustworthiness

The following sections outline the subject of trustworthiness, including (a) credibility, (b), transferability, (c) dependability, and ethical procedures.

Credibility

Because the study relies on subjective perceptions, interpretations, and meanings, the method's credibility is important. It indicates how consistent and coherent the methods for data collection in providing substantive information to address the topic and answer the research question. Achieving credibility is through methodological rigor, which means that the research question, methodology, and methods are in alignment (Cleary et al., 2014; Leung, 2015). The method for data collection must have the capacity to gather appreciable information for data analysis; the methods employed for data analysis should have the capacity to infer the result accurately.

There are two major issues related to establishing credibility in interviews; how comprehensive, painstaking, and articulate the researcher is in writing notes and in transcribing and interpreting participants' words precisely (Devers & Frankel, 2000; Morse, 2015). Because certain aspects of the data may be lost during transcription, it is critical to store the data properly. The important thing to note is that the transcribed words culminate into themes, which also represent the concepts in the phenomenon.

As the tradition involves subjective meta-interpretations, there is no single method to achieve credibility; it is the prerogative of the researcher to choose. I used triangulation, which encompassed multiple data collection methods, such as interviews, observation, and questionnaires to address errors that may occur in data collection (Patton, 2002, p. 556). My goal was also to handle the data appropriately so that its quality was not compromised, which invariably could mar the study's credibility.

In this study, the use of multiple means of collecting data, questionnaires, semistructured interviews, and observation, provided substantive data. In this way, there is alignment between the themes in the result and the concepts existing in reality for a better understanding of the phenomenon (Barnham, 2015). The Delphi method, which was the design for data collection was also rigorous. I administered three rounds of questionnaires to participants to garner consensus of opinions. After administering the questionnaires, I conducted one round of semistructured to clarify participants' responses in the questionnaires. I also engaged participants to review the results for clarity. Because the method relied on experts' consensual opinions, rigor is achievable, which also added credibility to the study.

Transferability

Transferability indicates that the same result is achievable in another setting, using the same participants and methods (Farrelly, 2013; Morse, 2015; Cope, 2014; Crowe et. al. 2015; Bengtsson, 2016). Because the goal of the study is to substantiate existing theory, achieving transferability is important. The key is to ensure that the same result is obtainable in another study, using the same method and conditions. After all, the process depends on perception, which could be inconsistent.

Transferability also involves a thick description of the research processes and settings, from data collection to data analysis to demystify the phenomenon. In this study, I provided a robust description of the research setting, context, processes and method. I addressed discrepant or negative cases, patterns or themes. I used alternative interpretations to show the inability of negative cases to meet the requirement for the

main themes, or to add value to the result in a clear manner (Patton, 2002, pp. 554-555).

These strategies added to the transferability of the study.

Dependability

Dependability means that the data are consistent and stable throughout the process (Kemperaj & Chavan, 2013), and accessible through an audit trail (Morse, 2015). The concept refers to well-grounded methods and the integrity of the findings (Noble & Smith, 2015). As the method depends on human perceptions, which could change, dependable data encompasses consistent information about the phenomenon. The goal is to ensure that the method for collecting data is suitable to gather accurate information from subjects.

I collected, stored the answered questionnaires and transcribed data in my personal computer and external hard drive. I used these approaches to maintain a consistent data throughout the process, adding to the dependability of the study. I also achieved dependability through member checking. I used Baillie's (2015) suggestion and engaged participants to review and ascertain the appropriateness of the transcribed data in the description of their responses. I ensured that all participants crosschecked the information provided to achieve accuracy.

Confirmability

Confirmability means that the result obtained represent the phenomena in reality (Farrelly, 2013; Morse, 2015, Cope, 2014), highlighted by the research design or methods for data collection and analysis (Maxwell, 2013, pg.123). A basic criterion is that the methods for data collection and analysis are robust and capable of providing relevant and

meaningful information to achieve an objective result (Kemparaj & Chavan, 2013).

Threats to confirmability are bias and reactivity (Maxwell, 2013, pg. 123). Reactivity is the potential way in which the investigator could influence the site and participants, which is unavoidable because he or she is the research instrument (p.123).

Biases are the researcher's subjective perceptions, experience, preconceived ideas, espoused values, and expectations that could influence the process and the findings. Therefore, the investigator should remain objective, guaranteeing that the data collected truly represent participants' views, which may be difficult to achieve.

Reflexive journals are useful to clarify feelings, preconceptions and any known area where bias could occur (Maxwell, 2013, p. 123). Writing may also allow the investigator to trace how things evolved in the exercise. For this reason, I used a reflexive journal to clarify my feelings, and address biases. It also enabled me to understand and describe the research context appropriately.

Ethical Procedures

As previously stated, the procedure relied on human perspectives. Because the interviewing process could reveal confidential information, thoughts, perceptions, and feelings, ethical concerns may arise (Patton, 2002, p. 406). Therefore, it is pertinent that the researcher maps out strategies to mitigate these issues. Accordingly, Houghton et al. (2013) remarked that methods for addressing the confidentiality of the participants and sites are an important prerequisite to address ethical requirements and should be an integral part of the research design.

The researcher has the responsibility to inform participants about these matters before the interview process. Addressing ethical concerns is also by declaring beliefs, interests, and commitments. As such, Patton (2002, pp. 408-409) developed an ethical issue checklist: Explanation of the research purpose, the benefit to participants, clarification of any potential legal, psychological risks, political, assurance of confidentiality of information, data storage, and management. Others are informed consent according to the guidelines of the Institutional Review Board (IRB), information about data ownership and access to result and publication, ethical framework and guidance for the study, and protection of the interviewee's mental health.

The checklist would make the process transparent and address ethical concerns in the study. To address these issues, and in line with the dissertation rubric, I obtained permission to embark on data collection from Walden University IRB by clearly stating the research process, and addressing all ethical concerns. Part of the approval process included providing the interview questions (Patton, 2002, p. 409). It also involved discussing steps taken to get permission to enter the research site, including a letter to explain the purpose of the study and benefit to participants (Gibbs et al., 2007).

I secured Walden University IRB approval (# 11-09-18-0356469), disseminated, and clarified information on ethical issues before starting the interviews. I am aware that participants have human rights, which is inviolable. Therefore, I assured participants that the research would not infringe on their rights and that ethical issues related to their participation would be in line with Walden University IRB approval, using the informed consent and confidentiality form.

Summary

In this chapter, I discussed the exploratory Delphi method, exploring the views of experts for a framework for conceptualizing, implementing, and teaching ethical leadership for Nigerian public officials. The method relied on a consensus of experts opinion related to normatively appropriate behaviors for officials to use in their fiduciary roles, influence followers, and build an ethical climate.

The chapter also encompassed an explanation of the data collection instrument, description of my role as the researcher, addressing bias, a description of the methodology, which outlined the Delphi method for data collection and thematic analysis for data analysis. There was also a description of the approach for participant selection, including sampling strategy and sample size. I highlighted the data collection instruments, which consisted of questionnaires, interview protocol, and journaling as well as the strategy for entering the research site.

Also, there was delineation of the data analysis method, thematic analysis; including transcription, coding, addressing aberrant cases, data management, and data storage. The discussion also included issues of rigor, including credibility, confirmability, dependability, and transferability. The chapter also encompassed addressing ethical requirements related to data collection processes, including the treatment of respondents and data according to Walden University IRB stipulations. Next is Chapter 4, which outlines the research process and the results

Chapter 4: Results

The objective of this qualitative, Delphi study was to explore the views of experts for conceptualizing, implementing, and teaching ethical leadership frameworks for Nigerian public officials. My goal was to investigate precursors, attributes, and results suitable to describe ethical leadership and to developing a pragmatic course for ministries, departments, and agencies. The study involved development of questionnaires and semistructured interviews to gather expert responses. The questionnaires and interview questions stemmed from the following research question, which also provided a premise for data collection and analyses: What are the views of experts for conceptualizing, implementing and teaching frameworks for ethical leadership for Nigerian public officials?

In this chapter, I describe the research setting, and delineate the participants' demographics, data collection, data analysis, and evidence of trustworthiness, which also includes credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Finally, I disseminate the result of the study.

Research Setting

The research setting involved three governmental agencies, the Independent Anticorruption Practices and Related Offences Commission (ICPC), Code of Conduct Bureau (CCB), Federal Ministry of Education (FME), and one nongovernmental agency, Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CSLAC), representative of Transparency International in Nigeria. These agencies are in Abuja, Nigeria's capital city. Locating the agencies and using place-reflexivity, I made preliminary visits to the agencies to

understand the bureaucracy, the environment, getting access to gatekeepers, and access to the participants (Swaminathan & Mulvihill, 2019).

Because of the highly bureaucratic structure of the government agencies, getting access to gatekeepers and participants was very difficult and time-consuming. It took several visits to the agencies to obtain a letter of cooperation to conduct the study, identify participants, and administer the consent forms for the research. One advantage I encountered was that all the agencies are in the central business district of the city. For example, the Code of Conduct Bureau and the Federal Ministry of Education is a block away from each other. The ICPC and CSLAC are about 15 minutes drive from the other three agencies. The proximity facilitated my movement between the agencies to administer the questionnaires and conduct the face-to-face interviews with executives.

In line with the research proposal and as indicated in the letters of cooperation, I administered the questionnaires electronically through participants' private email. However, 2 weeks after the administration of questionnaires, only one out of the 20 participants responded. Consequently, I sent several reminders to executives, none of them responded to my mail. I followed up with telephone calls, which also did not yield a positive result. I discovered that executives were too busy with their work to attend to my emails.

To address this issue, I resorted to administering hard copies of the questionnaires to participants at their agencies. Because participants were very busy executives, I experienced difficulty in accessing them. At this juncture, I approached the heads of the agencies that appointed a clerical staff to support me with accessing the participants. The

clerical staffs liaised with participants to confirm their availability and booked an appointment for me with the respondents.

It is important to mention that the highly bureaucratic nature of government agencies in Nigeria made it difficult to access participants, who were executives at the top. Most of the agencies have 14 hierarchical levels. Accessing executives follow a protocol that passes through the levels. Therefore, the heads of agencies' appointment of clerical staffs to access participants was necessary, and did not affect the confidentiality of participants. The heads of agencies had no knowledge of the identity of participants.

The clerical staffs were also lower level officers and did not have any influence over participants or knowledge of the study. The clerical officers' role was to book appointment for me to access the participants. Otherwise, the data collection process would not have been possible. The clerical staffs were not involved in the questionnaire administration and interview processes. I administered the three rounds of questionnaires to participants and conducted one round of semi structured interviews with respondents solely.

Demographics

After receiving Walden University IRB approval, I sent a letter of application to the head of the agencies to conduct the research, stipulating the inclusion criteria for participants, and seeking permission to enter the site. I included ancillary documents such as a copy of the proposal, Walden University IRB approval, my Walden University student identity card, consent form, questionnaire, interview protocol, and a draft of the letter of cooperation. The draft letter of cooperation was written in line with Walden

University requirement. The agencies then approved the letter of application for the study and provided a letter of cooperation using the draft I had submitted. My chair verified the letters of cooperation.

The agencies also attached a list of potential participants, with their email addresses and mobile telephone numbers. Participants on the list are on the premises of the inclusion criteria I had provided in the letter of application. Subsequently, I entered the sites and established a rapport with participants. Entering the site provided an opportunity to understand the workings and networks in the organization. It enabled me to understand the context in which respondents experience and give meanings to the phenomenon, which invariably added value to data interpretation and data analysis.

I chose five participants from each agency, using the potential list of participants based on the study's inclusion criteria, totaling 20. Thereafter, I administered the consent forms to participants to read and sign. The consent forms contained an explanation of the framework for the study. After collecting the signed consent forms, I administered the questionnaires through the respondents' personal emails. As previously stated, participants did not respond to the emails due to their very busy schedule. Consequently, I administered the questionnaires manually to participants in their offices at the agencies.

A major aspect of the Delphi method is participants' anonymity. The anonymity of participants to one another addressed the issue of the bandwagon effect, the process of influencing each other perception, which may affect the result's credibility (Winkler & Moser, 2016). In this study, participants were unknown to one another for the following reasons. First, because the agencies involved in the study were different and independent,

participants were unknown to each other. In addition, respondents from the same agency were from different departments. Another factor that aided participants' anonymity was the participant lists that were provided by the heads of the agencies. I chose and engaged participants independently, in the privacy of their offices. In line with Walden University's IRB requirement, I treated participants' identities and the information respondents provided with confidentiality.

A respondent from one of the agencies declined to participate after recruitment, citing a tight work schedule. Thereafter, I engaged another participant from the list as a replacement. As a result, the participants' retention rate was 100%. Barnett, Aguilar, Brittner, and Bonuck (2012) also achieved a substantive retention rate of > 90% using three rounds of interviews for data collection in their qualitative study. The authors achieved these rates by building trust with respondents and spending minimal time during interviewing to accommodate participants' tight work schedules. I delineated the demographic distribution of respondents in Appendix E.

The appendix highlights the gender, academic qualification, number of years in service, and hierarchy in the organization. In line with the proposal for the study and as suggested by Gaytan (2013), I used purposive sampling; with inclusion criteria as stated in the letter of cooperation identify participants for the study. The inclusion criterion for participants was to engage executives with at least 5 years experience in a leadership position in the agencies. The list of the potential participants provided by the heads of agencies met the criteria. I also verified the participants' number of years of employment

from the information participants provided during the interview. The participants were from four agencies as follows: ICPC (n=5), FME (n=5), CCB (n=5), and CSLAC (n=5).

The purposive sampling provided a leverage to engage respondents that are knowledgeable about the research topic. Van Rijnsoever (2017) also noted that purposive sampling could raise the question of the integrity of the data. The diversity of respondents in the study was an opportunity to achieve consensus, which is an important characteristic of the Delphi method. Consensus highlights the studies' methodological alignment, a key element of the research trustworthiness.

The sample size of 20 was substantive to gather in-depth information about the topic. Regarding sample size, there is no specific number in a qualitative study. Because qualitative studies aim to investigate deep and not broad meanings individuals give to a phenomenon, a sample size of one is also tenable (Boddy, 2016). The choice of size should align with the research methodology. Fossey, Harvey, McDermot, and Davidson, (2002) also noted that although there is no fixed number in sample size, the researcher has the responsibility to ensure that the number of respondents can provide substantive information to answer the research questions. Because of their experience with the phenomenon under investigation, I referred to respondents as experts. I aimed to garner valuable information and achieve data saturation from their expertise.

The research approach determined the sample size. As noted by Trotter (2012), where the qualitative research purpose is to develop theory, the sample size should be such that could garner data saturation. It means that the sample size would change until no new information or theme emerges from the data. Where the goal is to confirm an

existing theory, the sample size would be predetermined before data collection (Broddy, 2016; Trotter, 2012). Whichever approach, the researcher has the responsibility to ensure that the sample size is justifiable to produce data that are reliable and valid. Reliability and validity of data are issues to address in a qualitative study because of the generalization of the research findings.

Because qualitative analysis is iterative and emergent, there is flexibility in all aspects of the process. As ethical leadership is a complex phenomenon involving various contexts such as culture, ethical climate, the approach was to conduct the study in line with the research question, research design, data collection, data analysis, and findings. Thus, the researcher has the onus to reevaluate each process to align with the theoretical concept of the study. Sinkovics and Alfoldi (2012) called this approach *progressive focusing*, a nonlinear approach that connects various parts of the study to address issues that may arise during different stages of the research so that the research process fit together.

My focus in this study was to achieve methodological alignment with the research question using the Delphi method. The method for collecting data was robust and had the tenacity to corral valuable information to answer the questions. I used a sampling strategy and sample size that had the capacity to produce data saturation, the point during sampling at which no new themes emerge from the data. As Avella (2016) noted, achieving data saturation was a major aspect to consider in answering the research questions and achieving the research purpose. The author noted that the importance of obtaining substantive information to address the questions and provide insights to

demystify the phenomenon. The heterogeneous representation of executives from various related ethics agencies in this study provided a high level of data saturation.

Sinkovics and Alfoldi (2012) also emphasized that the research approach should be fluid and pliant to accommodate issues such as new concepts or theories that may arise during the research process, which is strength of the qualitative study. The authors noted that progressing focusing takes cognizance of changes that researchers may encounter while collecting data and make room to accommodate the changes to achieve a credible study. The authors also suggested consideration of the context of the study in light of the conceptual framework.

During data collection, I noted that executives were slow in responding to the questionnaires I administered to their emails. I resorted to administering hard copies of the questionnaires to participants in place of the electronic copies. Retention rates of respondents also posed a challenge. Gul and Ali (2010) noted that it is important to retain recruited participants to avoid threats to the trustworthiness of the study. It means that the researcher should create strategies to engage participants throughout the study.

Based on the suggestion of Barnet et al. (2012), I used a recruitment and retention plan for accessing participants in the offices throughout the data collection phase. As previously mentioned, the clerical staff nominated by the heads of the agencies liaised with participants and booked appointment for me to access executives, independently in the privacy of their offices. I also used the established rapport with participants and conversance with the operations of the agencies to engage participants to achieve a retention rate of 100 %.

Data Collection

Upon receiving Walden University's IRB permission to conduct the study, I started the recruitment of participants at the agencies. Heads of the agencies provided a list of five participants from the list in each agency. Before engaging participants, I visited the agencies to understand the operational bureaucracies, delineate the research purpose to selected participants from the potential participants' list and gain their support and trust.

In line with Walden University's IRB policy, I administered the consent forms to respondents to formalize their participation. After collecting the signed forms, I sent the first round of questionnaires to participants through their personal email addresses. As previously mentioned, participants were too busy to respond to the emails. I resorted to administer the questionnaires manually to the respondents at their offices. Consistent with the research proposal and the method used by Manizade and Mason (2011), I collected data through three rounds of questionnaires.

There is an objective for each round of the Delphi process. The goal of the first round was to identify and quantify responses in preparation for the second round. The objective of the second round was to narrow down the list of items identified in the first round to a reasonable and manageable number. The goal of the third round was to identify and rate the consensus of opinions. I employed multiple-choice questions in the questionnaires to give respondents a wide range of options for expressing their views, for ease of tabulating, interpreting, and analyzing the data.

For such questionnaires, there is the risk of respondents choosing answers based on assumption. I deliberately juggled the position of the choices to the answers to some of the questions in the questionnaire. I also intentionally used bottom-up approaches for some questions to address the issue of incorrect answers associated with studies adopting a top-down approach (Heckler, 2011). Because I planned to garner the deep meanings respondents give to the phenomenon, I articulated the questionnaires in a manner that was consistent with the research question. As previously mentioned, I administered the questionnaires to participants in three rounds.

At the end of the first round, I used the results obtained to modify the questionnaires in preparation for the second round. The second version contained a mean of responses of answers to each question in percentage rating. Participants were asked to reconsider their answers in light of the responses from other participants to achieve consensus. After the conclusion of the second round, I collated the mean of the responses and reported the results in percentage ratings. Consequently, I included the ratings in the questionnaire in preparation for round three. Thereafter, I administered the third round of questionnaires and collated the final ratings of the responses. There was a two weeks interval between each round of questionnaire administration. I administered the three rounds of questionnaires to participants at their offices manually.

I identified discrepant cases from the answers participants provided in the first round of questionnaires to achieve credibility of the data. The negative cases were included in the second and third round of questionnaires. In line with Morse (2015) suggestion, I used the negative cases to show differences in participants' views, and to

provide a basis to establish the common perceptions. Another strategy that enabled me to achieve a credible result was maintaining a high retention rate of participants. Because I had built a rapport with participants, I achieved a 100% retention rate of responses from participants in the study.

I also addressed bias by engaging participants to review the responses and provide comments as applicable. Because of the heterogeneity of executives, there was the possibility of outliers in opinion. According to Avella (2016), the outliers were justifiable in light of the majority of opinions because other respondents could consider the aberrations and change their viewpoints to achieve a consensus. I included all outliers of responses in all the rounds of administering the questionnaires. Taking a cue from the study by Barnett et al. (2012), which also employed the same sample size of 20, I did not describe the outliers in statistical terms due to the paucity of the size.

I conducted one round of semistructured interviews with participants after the questionnaire administration to garner additional information for the data. I performed the semistructured interviews in the offices of participants at the close of work. Because it was outside office hours, it was conducive for participants to answer the questions without any interference from their work. I completed the semistructured interviews in two weeks. I also recorded the semistructured interviews using the Apple I Phone 7. The recorded data were then transferred and stored in an external hard drive. 20 participants responded to the questionnaires as follows: ME (n=5), ICPC (n=5), CCB (n=5), and CSLAC (n=5). I collected the answered questionnaires manually from participants at their offices in the central business district of Abuja, Federal Capital Territory.

The non-availability of recruited respondents could pose a threat to the internal and external validity of the research (Gul & Ali, 2010). Although the plan was to administer the questionnaires electronically through participants' email, I discovered that all participants did not reply to the sent email. Thereafter, I followed up their responses with several phone calls, which was unproductive. I discovered that executives were too busy to read and respond to the emails. This took a huge toll on the time for data collection. I had planned to administer and collect each round of questionnaires in 1 week.

I resorted to administering hard copies of the questionnaires to participants in their offices. This process was very tasking because participants were not readily available due to their very busy work schedule. Thereafter, I approached the management of the agencies to assist me with accessing the participants. The heads of each agency obliged my request and nominated a clerical staff to liaise with participants and organize appointments for me to access the respondents. As a result, I was able to administer and collect the first round of questionnaires in 2 weeks.

I administered and completed the second round of questionnaires in 2 weeks. I issued and finished the third round of questionnaire in another 2 weeks. I also conducted one round of the semistructured interviews with participants. The semistructured interviews with each participant lasted 30 minutes, completed within 1 week. The whole process of data collection took me 8 weeks to complete. I used the existing rapport with executives to achieve a retention rate of 100% in all the three rounds of questionnaire administration and one round of semistructured interview.

As also stated in the proposal, I conducted one round of the semistructured interviews with participants at their offices to collect additional data. I planned to garner in-depth information to make the result more substantive. The semistructured interviews as an additional data collection method also provided an opportunity to achieve triangulation, thereby enriching the data (Carter, Bryant-Lukosius, DiCenso, Blythe, & Neville, 2014). I employed an interview protocol with semistructured questions to conduct the interview. The semistructured interviews provided a basis to understand executives' perception of the phenomenon under investigation and identify emerging themes, the relationship between themes, and outliers in the questionnaires.

The combination of methods served to refine the data analysis and achieve triangulation. The iterative characteristic of the process of data collection and data analysis was to also to ensure data saturation. I used audit trailing to document data saturation (Kerr, Nixon, & Wild, 2014). A poser is also how to ascertain the preclusion of other individuals during data collection would not have an impact on the findings. Morse (2015) noted that the use of purposive sampling using inclusion criteria could be interpreted as bias. At the same time, it is impossible to engage a large number of respondents to ask the research questions. The purpose was to garner deep meanings related to the phenomenon.

The sample size of 20 was plausible to collect a rich data. However, I had the responsibility to use data and ensure consistency during the process to achieve rigor. I used member checking and debriefing to clarify from participants the answers the respondents provided to the interview questions which I transcribed from the recordings.

I also transcribed the data immediately after collecting each round of questionnaires, which I shared with participants. The executives confirmed that the transcribed information depicted the meanings the respondents gave to the phenomenon. In line with Laumann's (2020) assertion, the transcribed data from the three rounds of questionnaires and one round of semistructured interviews did not show any new information, indicating data saturation.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was the method employed for data analysis. I commenced data analysis immediately after data collection. I also used a step-by-step approach to analyze the data. First, I created folders in my personal computer and external drive and saved the questionnaires in the folders. The external drive served as a back-up in the event of loss of data in my personal computer. Next, I used the NVivo software to organize the data by creating files under the data section for each participant, using a pseudonym. I imported the saved data for each respondent from the folders in into the created files in NVivo. I also transferred the recordings and notes in my journal into the respective files for each participant.

Taking a cue from the study by Boda (2019), I analyzed the data iteratively using three methods for coding. The first was open coding, which provided the premise to organize and justify the data. Open coding involved immersing myself in the data by reading the information provided by each participant repeatedly, reviewing, identifying, and taking notes of patterns of words that portray a particular meaning in the data. I grouped similar words, phrases, and ideas into codes.

The second method was axial coding. I identified and organized interconnections between the codes, grouping codes that portray similar meanings into themes. As suggested by Brady (2015), I used a unit of analysis to organize the codes into themes. I Finally, I used selective coding, which provided a basis to establish and group the narratives and ideas between the themes into categories relationships.

For example in the responses participants provided, I used open coding to identify similar words and code the words as: Ethical rules and ethical policies, oath of office, morally accepted standards, moderation of conduct, display of ethical rules and policies, orientation and reorientation to ethical policies, achieving the common good, achieving the greatest good for the greatest number of people, leadership by example, transparency, honesty, trustworthy, accountability, consideration of the outcome of the leaders actions, influence on followers, doing what is right and doing the right thing, and personal values.

I also employed axial coding, using a unit of analysis to organize codes that depict similar meanings into themes. For example, I used the name, law as a theme to organize the codes, ethical rules and ethical policies, and oath of office. I also employed the name, norms and values as a theme for the codes, morally accepted standards and moderation of conduct. Other examples are effective communication as a theme for the codes, display of ethical rules and policies and orientation and reorientation of ethical policies.

I used selective coding to group the themes, law, norms and values, effective communication into a category. I named the category ethical leadership concepts. I used this approach to group the data into codes, themes and categories. Because views are divergent, I identified and addressed discrepant cases from participants' responses. I

interpreted the meanings in the discrepant cases and noted their inability to fit the meaning the themes portrayed. As an example, I identified, interpreted and coded words such as building my character and building the character of the community. I noted that these codes could not fit into any of the themes I identified in the data, such as law, norms and values, and effective communication. The discrepant cases were alternative interpretations and a premise to establish the themes.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Credibility

A major issue was ascertaining the credibility of the study. Credibility shows the appropriateness and tenacity of the method for data collection and data analysis to produce results that are true representations of the meanings participants give to the phenomenon under investigation (Camfield & Palmer-Jones, 2013). Two key characteristics of the Delphi method, which is the method employed for this study invariably enriched the data and entrenched to the research credibility: Heterogeneous representation of experts and consensus of opinions.

The iterative characteristics of the process using three rounds of questionnaires and one round of the semistructured interviews made the processes rigorous. Manizade and Mason (2011) stated that as a result of the iterative nature of the Delphi method, credibility is attainable. Serendipity in qualitative research also exists, adding value to the process. I found out that one of the participants was a doctoral student. From this standpoint, the respondent's view added value to the data during member checking

Transferability

An important aspect of every research is to establish the ability to generalize the findings to another similar context. A key part of transferability is to avoid a bias of opinion. In this study, transferability was feasible through the following: Participants were unknown to each other so that there were no influences on their opinions, iterative administration of questionnaires during the three sessions to reappraise participants responses in the light of the results, controlled feedback by dissemination information on all the responses and analysis and interpretation of data in statistics (Lacina, & Block, 2011). Prolonged engagement with the research setting and the cordial relationship with participants provided an opportunity to address potential bias and ensure that the interpretations aligned with respondent's perceptions about the phenomenon.

Dependability

The question of dependability in qualitative research encompasses strategies undertaken by the researcher to ensure the same result is attainable if the research is repeated using the same process for data collection, interpretation, and analysis (Morse, 2015). The process involves consistency of the result in any other research that may be conducted using the same approach to collect, interpret, and analyze data. It also means constancy to the research methodology and detailed, rigorous documentation of the process for an audit trail (Mcpherson, Reese, & Wendler, 2018). In this study, I achieved dependability by strict adherence to the research methodology. I also provided a detailed description of data collection and data analysis processes. I was also able to achieve dependability in the study by engaging expert to collect rich data to inform the study.

Confirmability

Manizade and Mason (2011) asserted that confirmability is related to the method for data collection and data analysis. Because the research approach is interpretative, careful consideration and adherence to the method are important. The choice of method stems from the research questions, the purpose of which is to demystify the topic. The method has the key to find answers to the research questions.

Whatever method employed, it behooves the investigator to research in such a manner that other scholars using the same data achieve would the same result (Mcpherson et al., 2018). Because social phenomenon occurs in a context, the methods could change due to some circumstances. That is why qualitative studies are flexible. Therefore, the researcher has to provide a cogent reason to justify the changes and provide an audit trail to achieve confirmability. In this study, I achieved confirmability through member checking to address bias and ensure that the data and interpretations are in alignment with participants' responses. I also used audit trailing to account for the interpretations.

Study Results

In this research I adopted a Delphi method to garner a consensus of opinions and understanding for conceptualizing, implementing, and teaching ethical leadership frameworks from executives within agencies in Abuja, Nigeria. I used a purposive selection of 20 participants from four agencies, five respondents from each agency. I administered three rounds of questionnaires to the 20 executives, and conducted one round of interviews with the respondents, and field notes to collect data. The resulting

data highlighted a rich representation of the opinion of experts based on their experience with the phenomenon.

I also adopted one research question in the study, from which the questionnaires and semistructured interview questions premised. I transcribed data from the questionnaires, semistructured interviews, and entries from the journal into codes, themes, and categories. As suggested by Greenbaum et al. (2014), the codes emanated from the conceptual framework, which is Brown et al. theory of ethical leadership and the consensus of the opinions from the experts. The codes gave rise to themes, which also produced the categories. The research question that I used to guide this study was: What are the views of experts for conceptualizing, implementing, and teaching frameworks for ethical leadership for public officials in Nigeria?

In this section, I delineate the results of the Delphi study, a presentation of the analysis of the answers to the research question using questionnaires and interview protocol. A detailed evaluation and summary of the results are highlighted in Appendix F and Appendix G (See Appendix F and Appendix G).

Appendix F highlights a synthesis of information from the three rounds of questionnaires, one round of interviews, a review of field notes and the research journal. It involved transcription of the data into codes, themes, and categories. A total of ten themes emerged from the data. Highlights of the results are in the following list.

1. Law. Law was the first theme that emerged from the information provided by respondents to the questionnaires and the semistructured interview. I categorized

the data into conceptualizing ethical leadership. The codes were ethical rules and guidance and oath of office.

2. Norms and Values. Norms and values were the second themes that emanated from the data, which was categorized to conceptualizing ethical leadership. The codes that emanated from the responses were morally accepted principles and moderation of conduct.

3. Effective Communication. Effective communication was the third theme that emerged from the responses executives provided in the questionnaires and semistructured interviews. I categorized the theme into conceptualizing ethical leadership. Display of ethical rules and conduct, orientation and reorientation to ethical principles were the codes identified from the responses.

4. Governance. The fourth theme that emerged from the data was governance, which was also categorized into conceptualizing ethical leadership. The codes are achieving the common good and achieving the greatest good for the greatest number of persons.

5. Leaders Attributes. Leadership attributes were the fifth theme I identified from the information participants gave. Also, I categorized this theme into conceptualizing ethical leadership. The codes identified were leadership by example, transparency, honesty, trustworthiness, accountability, the influence of followers, doing what is right, doing the right thing, and personal values.

6. Responsibility of Executives in Implementing Ethical Policies. The sixth theme from the participants' responses was the responsibility of executives in enforcing

ethical policies, which was categorized into implementing ethical leadership. The codes that emerged under this category were overcoming greed and nurturing an ethical climate.

7. Responsibility of ICPC and CCB in Implementing Ethical Leadership. The seventh theme that was garnered from participants' responses was the responsibility of ICPC and CCB in enforcing ethical policies. I also categorized the theme under implementing ethical leadership in public agencies. The codes that emerged were monitoring budget performance in the appropriation of funds and the prosecution of culpable officials.

8. Instruments for Implementing Ethical Leadership. The eighth theme that emanated from the responses executives provided to the three rounds of questionnaires and one round of semistructured interview was instruments for implementing ethical leadership. I also categorized this theme under implementing ethical leadership. The codes were code of ethics, a whistleblowing policy, declaration of assets, declaration of conflict of interest, reward system, due process, and punitive measures.

9. Education. The ninth theme that emerged from the data provided by respondents was education, which I also categorized under teaching ethical leadership. The codes were the introduction of ethical leadership in education curricula of primary, secondary, and tertiary education in Nigerian schools.

10. Training Programs. Training programs for executives emerged as the tenth theme, which was categorized into teaching ethical leadership. The codes were

training on extant civil service rules, training on ethical policies, and on-the-job training.

Appendix G highlights the categories, themes, codes and percentage consensus of opinions from the responses participants provided to inform the study. A further highlight of the themes is in the following list.

Theme 1: Law. The first theme that was identified from the three rounds of questionnaires, one round of semistructured interviews, and the reflexive journal was law. The result in Appendix G highlights a 52 % consensus from the 20 respondents view that law was a major construct for conceptualizing ethical leadership. The respondents opined that ethical leadership encompasses rules, guidelines, and policies for achieving the common good in governance. As proposed by Snellman (2015), ethical leadership encompasses the rules and regulations that promote the common good and the well being of society.

Apart from advancing the common good, ethical rules also set the framework for public office executives to conduct themselves appropriately. These rules delineate the schemas for leaders to guide their behavior. Riivari and Lämsä (2014) opined that rules and guidelines are important standards for guiding ethical behavior in public agencies. As a result of the paucity of available funds for public expenditure, it behooves on leaders to use these resources appropriately for the well being of the citizenry.

Another important aspect of ethical policies is the usefulness as a framework for officials to conduct themselves appropriately when faced with ethical dilemmas.

These dilemmas emanate from the bureaucracies that exist in public agencies, making administrative processes challenging. It means there should be proper procedures for simplifying and addressing these challenges. Grigoropolous (2019) noted that as a result of the complexities of organization, ethical rules and policies provide a precinct to guide executives in achieving the common good. The ethical guidelines also exist to guide executives to appropriate conduct in the appropriation of funds and propriety in behavior.

However, many executives do not consider these ethical rules in performing their roles and responsibilities. For example, the result obtained highlights a high level of consensus as to the leaders' attributes (69%-90%). The emphasis is on the character, behavior, and the value of the leader. 74 % of respondents stated that greed is a major obstacle to implementing ethical leadership. Greedy leaders have an unending desire to misappropriate public funds for their personal use. The leaders' value also resonates in the way executives conduct themselves.

Appointed or elected leaders must be those whose espoused values align with achieving the common good.

Theme 2: Norms and Values. Norms and values emanated as the second theme from the information participants provided in the three rounds of questionnaires, one round of semistructured interviews, and analysis of the field notes. The result in Appendix G shows a 76 % agreement that norms and values for moderating the leaders' conduct are key to conceptualizing and ethical leadership in public agencies. There was also a 95 % consensus amongst the experts that norms and

values for entrenching morally accepted standards in the leader's behavior encompass conceptualization of ethical leadership. Norms and values delineate the leaders' roles and obligations in society. Dion (2012) asserted that the norms and values of a society influence ethical leadership practices. The author noted that these values are the foundation of the roles, responsibilities, and behavior of the leader.

Norms and values are elements of a culture, whether in the agencies or in society, embedded in daily practices and rituals. Wilson and McCalman (2017) viewed ethical leadership based on social practices, developing ethical behavior, and values for both the leader and followers. The authors view is in line with the social learning theory that presupposes that daily practices of social norms enable ethical values to be embedded in the culture.

Culture provides a strong basis to galvanize social actions. This is also true when viewed in the light of organizational culture. Huhtala, Kangas, Lamsa, and Feldt (2013) advised that executives should strive to build a strong ethical culture in the agencies. The authors noted that a formidable ethical culture supports appropriate decision-making and effective governance, especially in situations of ethical dilemmas. Leaders also have the responsibility to make their organization perform effectively. Therefore, the superiors have to ensure the right norms and values exist in the agencies.

Kaptein (2015) advised executives to be moral entrepreneur, whose role is to advocate ethical values for the subordinate to emulate. The author stated that

because of the role public officials play in the society, the executives have the obligation to set new ethical norms to make the agencies better. However, as a result of continued misappropriation of public funds by executives, citizens consider unethical practices of officials as a norm. Nnabuike (2010) noted that unethical practices are a norm that is embedded in the Nigerian society, reinforced by inappropriate practices. Unethical behavior is not culturally accepted in Nigeria (Hope, 2018).

For the reason that most culpable officials are not prosecuted, citizens are reluctant to report ethical violations in agencies. Even in cases where there is a prosecution of liable officials, penalties are not enforced effectively. The renewed efforts to empower the ICPC and CCB have resulted in high cases of success. In 2019, a former Chief Justice of the Federation, Justice Mike Onnoghen was arraigned by CCB and penalized by dismissal from office due to false declaration of assets (Eze, 2019).

Also, in the same year, a former governor of Abia State, Uzor Kalu was prosecuted by the ICPC and found guilty of malfeasance with public funds. He was sentenced to 12 years in prison (Fadipe, 2019). These successful cases have renewed public confidence in the performance of the anticorruption institutions. Invariably, it would change the perception of the citizenry about unethical practices as a norm in government agencies.

Theme 3: Effective Communication. Communication of ethical rules and policies to officials emerged as theme four in the findings. One of the participants opined that:

“It is not enough to appoint executives and expect them to be conversant with extant rules and guidelines. Most of them are inexperienced. The officials need a proper orientation and reorientation to ethical rules and guidelines of public agencies to understand their roles and responsibilities. Executives should use appropriate behaviors and decision making in the allocation of funds.”

Participants viewed effective communication as an element for conceptualizing ethical leadership on three premises: Orientation and reorientation to existing ethical policies (67 % consensus), display of ethical codes in agencies (62 % consensus), and display of whistleblowing policy in agencies (51%).

Kao and Cheng (2017) also stated that newly appointed public officials require training and orientation on rules, guidelines, and missions of the departments. The authors noted that such training would present opportunities for executives to understand and to align with the expectations, roles, and requirements of the office. As public agencies provide services for the wellbeing of the citizenry, the officials occupy an important aspect of the functioning of society. Public administration is a complex process that requires a high level of understanding of its operation.

Although there are several extant rules in public agencies to guide ethical conduct, officials need to be kept abreast of these rules. Followers should also

understand ethical rules and guidelines. Each agency requires a formal means of communicating ethical rules through roadshows, town hall discussions, symposia, and workshops. These programs require adequate funding from the government. There is difficulty in executing these programs due to lack of funds. Displaying ethical codes and policies in key places in the agency for officials to read is an effective means of communication these guidelines (Grigoropolous, 2019).

Theme 4: Governance. Governance emerged as the third theme from the information subjects provided in the three rounds of questionnaires, one round of semistructured interviews, and a review of the field notes. Executives viewed governance as a major construct of ethical leadership. The participants viewed governance on the premises of achieving the greatest good for the greatest number of people (43% consensus) and achieving the well being of the society (43% consensus). Governance provides the structure and processes for ethical leadership practices.

For the fact that governance stems from the law; it is mandatory and is also a key element for achieving fiduciary goals in the agencies. Governance also sets the procedure for the dissemination of information and appropriation of funds in ministries. For example, in Nigeria, the government established the Budget, Monitoring, and Price Control Intelligence Unit, (BMPCIU), which has the responsibility to enforce transparency, accountability, and control of public expenditure in government agencies (Nnabuiife, 2010).

The effectiveness of these structures in addressing unethical practices is questionable. As Steckler and Clark (2019) noted, these governance structures are inadequate to elicit accountability, transparency, and ethical decision-making in government departments. The author advised the reconsideration of governance premised on behavioral elements, which focuses on the behavior of the leaders, and subordinates to align with the governance procedures.

Jones and Lasthuizen (2018) also noted that governance structures in many developing countries are weak, leading to widespread unethical practices in the administration of funds. When leaders focus on the outcome of their ethical practices, it may elicit moral awareness and ethical behaviors. Avella (2017) emphasized that the consequences of the leaders' actions should be the basis of ethical leadership. Although governance is a process, focusing on the outcome is key to understanding the impact on society.

Whatever approach, it is important to note the outcome of the leaders, decisions, and actions affects citizens' wellbeing. Leaders, who are accountable, honest, and trustworthy, ensure that public funds are employed appropriately to meet citizens' needs. As such, Othman and Abdul Rahman (2014) identified effective governance on the tenets of the leaders' behavior such as accountability, integrity, fairness, responsibility responsiveness, and transparency. The authors observed that these behaviors set the tone for followers to emulate, which also creates an ethical climate in the organization. The leaders' ethical behavior is impactful when there is an ethical climate in the organization.

Theme 5: Leaders Attributes. The fifth theme that emanated from the information participants provided in the three rounds of questionnaires, one round of semistructured interviews and entries from field notes for conceptualizing ethical leadership was the leaders' attributes. These attributes include the leaders' behavior such as leadership by example (90 % consensus), transparency (83% consensus), honesty (94% consensus), integrity (93% consensus), trustworthy (79% consensus), influence on followers (86% consensus), doing what is right and doing the right thing (69 % consensus) and the leaders' personal values (77% consensus). There was a 74 % consensus amongst the experts that greed, an aspect of a leaders' behavior is a major obstacle in implementing ethical leadership in public agencies.

The result indicates that the leaders' behavior was key to ethical practices. The highest level of consensus was the leaders' attributes, as a major element in conceptualizing ethical leadership. Avella (2017) also asserted construing ethical leadership on the premises of the leaders, behavior, actions, and consequences of the action. A very high percentage of consensus on the leaders' behavior shows that ethical rules and policies are not enough to conceptualize leadership. The leaders' behavior and actions must align with the written policies for governance. This point is also reiterated in one of the emergent themes that occurred during the interview, leadership by example.

Apart from the leaders' behavior, participants also agreed that the executive's value is an important aspect of ethical leadership. The result indicates a 77 %

consensus on the leaders' value. As Stouten et al. (2012) noted, the leaders' value motivates subordinates to behave ethically or unethically. That is why it is key to select executives with the right values to lead public agencies. Invariably, these values show in the leaders' behavior, which also motivates subordinates to behave likewise. When the leaders' and followers' ethical behavior is congruent, an ethical climate ensues in the agencies.

Theme 6: Responsibility of Executives in Implementing Ethical Leadership. The sixth theme that emerged from the questionnaires, semistructured interviews, and field notes is the responsibility of executives as a key construct in implementing ethical leadership in public agencies. The result of the data analysis also shows a 74 % consensus that the greed of executives is a major obstacle in implementing ethical leadership. Leaders must exhibit appropriate behaviors because of their fiduciary roles, and the influence executives have on subordinates,

A key aspect of this role is the appropriation of funds. Just as Belle and Catarelli (2017) noted, greed motivates executives to behave unethically in the disbursement of funds. The authors emphasized that in order to implement ethical leadership, leaders should reappraise their values and ensure that the values align with their fiduciary roles. Moore, Mayer, Chiang, Crossley, Karlesky, and Birch (2019) also observed that the leaders' greed influences followers to emulate, which breeds an unethical organizational climate. As such, it would be difficult to implement ethical leadership.

Another responsibility of the officials in implementing ethical leadership from the results obtained is nurturing an ethical climate. The results show a 63 % consensus amongst respondents that nurturing an ethical climate is a major aspect of implementing ethical leadership, which is the leaders' duty. Choi, Ullah, and Kwak (2015) noted that ethical climate encompasses shared moral values between the leaders and subordinates. It means that is both the leaders and subordinates use morally appropriate behaviors in their roles and responsibilities. The leaders' ethical behavior elicits the propensity of subordinates to behave appropriately. As such leaders need to provide resources to create ethical climates and use behaviors that align. These strategies create a sustainable ethical climate in the organization.

Theme 7: Responsibility of ICPC and CCB in Implementing Ethical Leadership.

The seventh theme that emerged from the questionnaires, semistructured interviews, and field notes is the responsibility of executives as a key construct in implementing ethical leadership in public agencies. The result indicate that involvement of ICPC and CCB in monitoring budget performance in the appropriation of funds (74% consensus), enforcing and monitoring ethical behavior in public agencies (77% consensus), undertaking public enlightenment of ethical codes (83% consensus), and prosecution of culpable officials (95% consensus) are important aspects of implementing ethical leadership in public agencies.

These high levels of agreement from participants' opinions indicate that the ethics agencies have a major responsibility in implementing ethical leadership. Osifo

(2014) mentioned that anticorruption agencies are responsible for implementing ethical principles and values in public agencies. Because these anticorruption agencies stem from the law, the agencies have the independence and power to instill ethical principles and ethical behavior in public agencies. At the same time, it is ironic that the government appoints the heads of these agencies. It means that the government has an indirect influence on the administration of the agencies, which affects the proper functioning of the department.

Theme 8: Instruments for Implementing Ethics and Ethical Leadership. The eighth theme that emerged from the questionnaires, semistructured interviews, and field notes is the responsibility of executives as a key construct in implementing ethical leadership in public agencies. The result highlights the following as important instruments for implementing ethical leadership: Code of conduct (52% consensus), whistleblowing policy (58% consensus), reward system (65% consensus), conflict of interest (71 % consensus), asset declaration (77%) and oath of office (0 %).

Quarcoo (2009) asserted that these instruments are effective for enforcing ethical leadership behavior and actions in government agencies. A major concern of respondents was whether there are incentives to reward and protect whistleblowers. The respondents noted that such an initiative would create an ethical climate in the agencies. Participants identified that public agencies need the support of ethical agencies to monitor appropriation of funds for governance, and for prosecuting culpable officials.

One interesting point to note is the participants' conception of an oath of office and its effect on ethical leadership practices. The results highlight a zero percent consensus (0%) that oath of office is an effective instrument for enforcing ethical leadership in public agencies. Oath of office is a major instrument used in public agencies in Nigeria to implement ethical leadership practices.

The high levels of consensus on other instruments such as conflict of interest and asset declaration indicate their effectiveness for enforcing ethics in the agencies. Many public officials do not declare their assets. These assertions indicate the need to explore alternative means to implement ethical leadership in the agencies.

Theme 9: Education. The ninth theme that emerged from the data in the questionnaires, semistructured interviews, and field notes was education. The results in Appendix G shows a 95% agreement amongst respondents that including ethical leadership studies in the educational curricular of primary, secondary, and tertiary institutions is key to teaching ethical leadership principles to future public officials. Participants view this point as a long-term strategy to develop ethical leaders' behavior in Nigeria.

Nnabuike (2010) also suggested that future public officials require an understanding of ethical leadership behavior and practices useful for public service in Nigeria. The continued perception of unethical practices in government agencies as a norm in the Nigerian culture could undermine this strategy.

Executives had suggested that empowering ethical agencies to undertake public enlightenment programs could address these negative perceptions. Quarcoo

(2009) noted that engaging the public and disseminating the goals of public office would give the citizenry knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of officials.

The understanding would make citizens more aware of their rights and expectation from public agencies.

Theme 10: Training Programs. Training of executives on the role and responsibility of public office emanated as the fifth theme from the information provided by participants in the questionnaires, semistructured interviews, and field notes. The results in Appendix G shows the following elements as key attributes for training programs on ethical policies for officials: Orientation and reorientation on civil service rules and ethical policies (85 % consensus), workshop and symposia (71 % consensus), and on-the-job training (65% agreement). For the reason that public services encompass propriety in the organization of resources for citizen's welfare, teaching officials these principles are important. Participants considered these approaches as short-term measures to teach ethical leadership. As previously mentioned, executives view the inclusion of ethical leadership principles in educational curricular as a long-term strategy to teach ethical leadership.

Mayer et al. (2010) suggested that public service requires experts for the effective performance of the agencies. As public agencies in Nigeria are highly bureaucratic, with 14 levels of hierarchy, administrative processes are complex. It means that information and decisions would take a long time to reach the citizens. Therefore, executives require excellent knowledge and experience to man the

agencies for effective performance. As previously stated, many executives are political appointees, with poor knowledge of public administration.

Wilson and McCalman (2017) also noted that achieving the common good is a complex phenomenon that requires multi perspectives to decipher. As such, officials need to be conversant with the workings of the agencies, allocating funds appropriately. The tenure of executives in most agencies is short due to the condition of the political appointment. Therefore, it is difficult to achieve long term goals in a very short time.

Executives are bound to face ethical dilemmas due to the complex workings of public agencies. Such quandary may result in making inappropriate decisions.

Dzuranin et al. (2013) suggested an ethics education program to familiarize officials with ethical guidelines. The authors noted that these programs would also empower officials to address ethical dilemmas and to make an appropriate decision in such a situation. Training programs could also increase executives' moral awareness in challenging situations.

Executives are unable to understand their fiduciary duties in the light of ethical guidance and conduct without proper orientation. Grover et al. (2012) emphasized there is a need to educate officials to view ethical leadership on the premise of achieving the common good. As such, officials need continued awareness of ethical policies to guide decision-making and conduct. Familiarization of ethical guidelines would give officials the opportunity to understand their roles, and to use transparency, accountability in the allocation of funds.

The recurrent cases of malfeasance of public funds by officials necessitate orientation and reorientation to these guidelines. The presence of these guidelines is insufficient to address unethical behavior. For the reason that most political appointees view public office as an avenue to amass wealth for their personal use, these strategies are necessary. The purpose is to educate officials and realign their expectations with their fiduciary responsibilities.

Summary

In Chapter four, I delineated the analysis and a review of the themes expunged from the information participants provided in the questionnaires and interview questions for conceptualizing, implementing, and teaching ethical leadership for Nigerian public officials. The emerging themes in the chapter includes (a) Law, (b) Norms and Values, (c) effective communication, (d) governance, (e) leaders attributes, (f) responsibility of executives in enforcing ethical leadership, (g) responsibility of ICPC and CCB in implementing ethical leadership, (h) instruments for implementing ethical leadership, (i) education, and (j) training Programs.

The data was related to the underlying research question: What are the views of experts for frameworks for conceptualizing, implementing, and teaching ethical leadership for Nigerian public officials? Evidence from the literature shows that ethical leadership is a complex phenomenon, involving different approaches, antecedents, constructs, practices, and contexts to demystify the phenomenon (Wilson & McCalman, 2017). One approach is a juxtaposition of principles and values into ethical guidelines, laws, and acts to guide appropriate standards in governance. The purpose is to have a

frame of reference for the administration of funds for the provision of infrastructure and services for citizens. However, executives disregard the ethical guidelines, leading to a plethora of unethical practices in public agencies (Osifo, 2014).

Another strategy is a focus on the leader's attributes that align with ethical guidelines. The leaders' attributes are behaviors that produce appropriate decision making and moral conduct that serves as a role model for subordinates to emulate. Such executives provide amenities and services appropriately for citizens by using due process for disbursing funds, and addressing ethical dilemmas (Pasztor, 2015). Superiors also display appropriate behaviors in performing their roles to support ethical guidelines, which serve as role models for subordinates. Such leaders foster an ethical climate in the agencies, which also infiltrates into the society for citizens to emulate.

Another approach is a focus on the leaders' actions that addresses poverty and a lack of infrastructure such as housing, hospitals, and schools for citizens. The leader may have high moral awareness, yet, could make unethical decisions. Therefore, the leaders' ethical action is important. The underlying assumption is that leaders make accountable and transparent decisions in allocating public funds for the good and well being of citizens (Snellman, 2015).

Against this backdrop, the main of this study was to explore the views of experts for frameworks for conceptualizing, implementing, and teaching ethical leadership for Nigerian public officials. The result shows that ethical leadership encompasses laws, norms, and values for nurturing leaders behavior and actions related to funds appropriation; and creating an ethical climate through role modeling. Ethical leaders

ensure adequate provision of amenities and services for citizens by following due process in funds appropriation.

Since appointed and elected officials are responsible for disbursement of funds for the provision of amenities, the leaders face many ethical dilemmas in decision-making (Pasztor, 2015). Despite these difficulties, responsible leaders' role is to serve the citizens and display appropriate behaviors in performing responsibilities. Superiors foster an ethical climate in organizations with appropriate behavior.

The result also shows that ethical leadership requires instruments for implementation, including ethical agencies; and tools for enforcing appropriate conduct, such as code of ethics and whistle blowing policy. The role of the ethical agencies is to monitor and ensure that the leaders' behavior and administrative processes in public agencies align with prescribed values in ethical guidelines. Finally, the research findings also indicate that education and training programs are a means to nurture ethical leaders' behavior for achieving the common good.

In chapter five, I provide a detailed discussions, conclusions, and recommendations of the study. The chapter also delineates interpretations of the result, implication for positive social change, and recommendations for future studies. Finally, I provide a summary and conclusion of the study, and recount my experience with the process.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

My goal in this qualitative, Delphi study was to garner the opinions of executives for developing a framework for conceptualizing, implementing, and teaching ethical leadership for Nigerian public officials. The Delphi technique was the most plausible method to answer the research question, which encompassed the collation of deep understanding of concepts that are attributable to a framework for conceptualizing, implementing, and teaching ethical leadership for Nigerian public officials. The data that informed this study emanated from divergent sources including three rounds of questionnaires, one round of semistructured interviews, and entries from field notes.

Interpretation of Findings

The research question led to the choice of the nature of the study. The question provided a basis to interpret the themes observed in the questionnaires, interview results, and field notes about the constructs suitable for conceptualizing, implementing, and teaching ethical leadership for Nigerian public officials. A review of the data from the questionnaires, interviews, and field note indicated that concepts including, law, norms and guidelines, governance, effective communication, leaders' attributes, the responsibility of officials in implementing ethical leadership, the responsibility of ethics agencies in implementing ethical leadership, education, and training programs emerged as a basis for an understanding of the themes pertinent to the research. Analysis of the literature provided a premise to confirm the results obtained in the study.

Research Question

The research question that I used to guide this study was: What are the views of experts for conceptualizing, implementing, and teaching ethical leadership framework for Nigerian public officials?

Theme 1: Law

Law was the first theme that emanated from the review and interpretation of the data from the three rounds of questionnaires, one round of semistructured interviews, and field notes. I found that rules, guidelines and policies for achieving the common good were key elements for conceptualizing ethical leadership for public officials. The finding is in line with Bowman, West, and Beck's study (2014), in which the authors posited that ethical leadership encompasses rules and guidelines that support appropriate behavior and practices for achieving the common good in society. As a result of the administrative complexities, and paucity of funds, government agencies require transparent processes in disbursement of funds. Leaders should exhibit accountability during such disbursement to ensure that public expenditure is appropriately allocated and traceable.

Ethical rules and guidelines provide a frame of reference for appropriate behaviors and practices in the agencies. King, Chilton, and Roberts (2010) also stated ethical leadership encircles rules and guidelines for ensuing appropriate behavior and actions in public administration. As ethical policies have legal backings, binding, and sacrosanct, executives must comply with ethical guidelines. However, implementation of these guidelines is crucial. Jurkiewicz and Giacalone (2016) asserted that these policies require administrative structures to monitor and ensure that the processes for public

expenditure comply with the ethical guidelines. The implication is that there should be standard processes for enforcing these rules.

Although there is a plethora of ethical policies, the structures and procedures for implementing them are ineffective. As a result, officials continue to engage in many unethical practices and malfeasance abound in public offices. These policies serve as control systems for accountability and transparency. The guidelines enable proper disbursement of allotted monies for citizen's welfare and ensure auditability of the public expenditure. Wright, Hassan, and Park (2016) also noted that the absence of ethical policies compliance monitoring structures encourages inappropriate behaviors in the agencies.

The mere presence of ethical policies is insufficient to elicit appropriate conduct in appropriation of public funds. Bussmann and Niemeczek (2019) mentioned that even though systems for enforcing ethical policies compliance are present, the structures are insufficient to instill ethical practices. The authors noted that awareness or knowledge of ethical laws is not enough to elicit ethical behavior (Bussmann & Niemeczek, 2019). Therefore, the agencies need compliance monitoring systems to control and interdict unethical practices. Luk (2012) categorized ethical policy control systems as internal and external control. The author noted that external systems are ethical principles and guidelines, ethics enforcing agencies, entrenched by provisions of various acts.

The internal systems are the ethical leadership training programs, code of ethics codes, and whistle-blowing policies existing in the agencies. The internal and external control systems must align for ethical leadership to ensue. Leaders need a cogent

knowledge and understanding of ethical policies to use in their activities. That is why training programs on ethical leadership are important. As appointed executives are fledglings in administrative procedures, these training programs would enhance executives' propensity to use appropriate behaviors in their roles.

Theme 2: Norms and Values

Norms and values were the second theme that emerged from the review and interpretation of the data from the questionnaires, semistructured interviews, and field notes. I found that norms and values for achieving the common good and achieving moral conduct is a construct for conceptualizing ethical leadership for public officials. The common good embodies norms and values achievable through a balance between administrative management and leadership in ethical policies and principles (King et al., 2010). Administrative processes and decision making in the agencies should be in consonance with existing ethical guidelines.

The findings are in line with Pulay's (2014) assertion that public organizations could promote ethical behaviors on the premise of norms and values. The author noted that using ethical values and principles in daily operations of the organization would create an ethical climate. The author noted values could be achieved through training programs, use of code of ethics, and mission statements.

The norms and values that are prevalent in a society influence ethical leadership practices. Because public officials misappropriate funds with impunity, citizens consider such actions as a norm (Nnabuife, 2010). That is not to say citizens expect executives to misappropriate public funds. The high level of poverty and lack of infrastructure as a

result of public officials' malfeasance means that there is high level of expectation of ethical leadership in public agencies by citizens. Hope (2018) noted that unethical behavior might be a norm but is not morally accepted in the Nigerian culture.

Bussmann and Niemeczek (2019) also noted the importance of nurturing ethical norms and values in the organization. The authors noted that norms and values are embedded in the organizational cultures that leaders could promote and use in their roles for followers to emulate. Public agencies need structures and processes for communicating and enforcing ethical principles. The most effective means is for leaders to allocate funds for such practices. Schwartz (2013) noted that the obligation of executives is to prescribe ethical norm and values in agencies. The author identified these norms as transparency, accountability, trustworthiness, and public responsibility, which support appropriate conduct in the agency.

Executives are responsible for prescribing and using ethical principles in their conduct. Subordinates emulate their leaders' actions, which in addition to the leaders ethical conduct, results in an ethical climate in the agency. Therefore, a leaders' ethical ideology is key to prescribing ethical norms (Fernando, Dharmage, & Almeida, 2008). That is why it is important to engage officials whose values align with ethical principles. As people perceive and interpret values differently, it is necessary to develop ethical codes with specific values for the agencies. Communicating and interpreting organizational values in a manner that subordinates understand is crucial.

Thaler and Helmig (2016) asserted that actions and behaviors of executives in public agencies should represent the values of public offices. The authors noted that

ethical codes should provide guidance for appropriate conduct in the agencies and standards to address dilemmas and conflicts that could undermine ethical conduct. When the leader exhibits ethical conduct, it takes time to trickle down to subordinates to emulate. Because of the short tenure of officials, the leaders' ethical behaviors may not be impactful on subordinates. It is necessary for government to reappraise the engagement time of executives.

Yang (2016) also noted that enlightenment programs on ethical values and conflict of interest situations create awareness. The approach could help leaders and subordinates garner deep understanding and appreciation of ethical values. Although Hope (2018) argued that unethical practices is a norm in Nigeria, majority of Nigerian consider these practices as morally unacceptable. The author noted that because of weak governance structures, unethical practices abound in the Nigerian society. Public enlightenment strategies could create awareness of roles and responsibilities of officials and galvanize citizens' support of ethical principles.

Theme 3: Effective Communication of Ethical Rules and Policies

Communication of ethical rules and policies to officials, which emerged as the fourth theme in the findings obtained from the information respondents provided in the three rounds of questionnaires, one round of semistructured interviews, and entries from the field notes was key to conceptualizing ethical leadership for public officials. I found out that consistent communication of ethical policies to officials is an avenue for officials to gain awareness of ethical codes and nurture ethical behaviors. Effective communications of ethical rules and policies is in three ways: Orientation and

reorientation to existing ethical policies, display of ethical codes in agencies, and display of whistle-blowing policy.

Orientation and Reorientation of Ethical Policies. Orientation and reorientation of ethical policies are short-term measures for implementing ethical leadership. Officials could make unethical decisions due to ethical dilemmas and complex workings of public agencies. Dzurainin et al. (2013) suggested an ethics education program to familiarize officials with guidelines to address ethical dilemmas and to make appropriate decision in such situations.

As previously mentioned, most leaders in agencies are elected or political appointees, inexperienced about the workings of public agencies. Such officials would require orientation programs to acquaint themselves with ethical policies in public administration. Without proper orientation, it is impossible for officials to understand their roles and responsibilities in the light of ethical guidance and conduct. Grover et al. (2012) asserted that there is a need to educate officials to view ethical leadership on the basis of achieving the common good.

Public administration involves several key actors and changing political platforms, social reforms, law, revenue, and tenure of office. The implication is that executives need proper understanding of principles, values, and roles related to achieving the common good (King et al., 2020). Officials have to understand the interconnectedness of various administrative processes to ensure compliance with ethical principles in decision-making and funds disbursement for the welfare of citizens.

Despite the presence of ethical policies, recurrent cases of malfeasance by

officials necessitate an orientation and reorientation to these guidelines. The presence of ethical policies is insufficient to address unethical behavior. Most political appointees view public office as an avenue to amass wealth for their personal use. Therefore, familiarization with ethical policies would also allow officials the leverage to understand and use transparency, accountability in decision-making. It is necessary to educate officials and realign their expectations with fiduciary roles (Rahaman, Stouten, & Guo, 2019).

Methods for communicating ethical policies abound. For example, orientation and reorientation programs, workshops, and training on ethical policies and values. These training programs would enable executives to keep abreast of the expected behavior, values, and knowledge related to the standards, guidelines, and policies of the agencies (Stahl & De Luque, 2014). Another example is training program to realign espoused values with the objectives of the agencies. Wyatt-Nichol and Franks (2009) described such approach as *value orientation*, a process of establishing an ethical culture and making sure that members of the organization understand the rules associated with the culture.

The agencies could also invest in ethics training for leaders. As custodians and enforcers of ethical policies, the agencies have a responsibility to organize training programs to teach public officials moral conduct in fiduciary duties. Because appointed officials are novices to ethical policies, this strategy would equip executives with competences to administer public duties. Mayer et al. (2009) suggested topics such as communicating the importance of ethics, rewarding and supporting employees who

behave ethically, and serving as ethical role models. Such training could give leaders the opportunity to become moral individuals and moral managers.

As ethical practices resonate in values and principles, leaders' need extensive training to nurture appropriate behavior (Pucic, 2015). Public officials have to unlearn misaligned values and embrace new principles that support ethical behavior. The training programs should be recurrent, as officials need time to understand and imbibe moral conduct in their fiduciary duties. That is why it is important to organize ethical leadership training programs consistently to nurture these behaviors. Executives are responsible for communicating and promoting ethical principles and behavior in the agencies (d'Adda, Darai, Pavanini, & Weber, 2017). Invariably, the leaders' ethical conducts trickle down to subordinates, which produce an ethical climate.

Citizens have a role to play in nurturing an ethical culture. Therefore, citizens also need orientation and reorientation to ethical codes. As previously stated, unethical behavior of public officials is culturally accepted in Nigeria. It is necessary to educate the citizenry on ethical behavior. This point is also reiterated in the results from the information respondents provided in the questionnaires, semistructured interviews, and entries from the field notes that the culture of a society affects ethical leadership practices.

Enlightening the public on key attributes of effective governance and responsibilities of public officials in fostering good governance is important. The knowledge acquired may help citizens to have a voice and monitor the performance of officials in appropriating funds. As Poff (2010) noted orientating the public to view

ethical values on the basis of the well being of the society instead of on material goods is key. Enlightened citizens would understand the roles and responsibilities of public officers and create synergy of expectations in public administration.

Display of Ethical Policies in Public Organization. Displaying ethical policies in prominent parts of the agencies would create awareness of ethical codes and elicits ethical behavior. The strategy is a key attribute in implementing ethical leadership in public agencies. Riivari and Lämsä (2014) asserted that code of ethics provides a framework to guide ethical behavior in public organization. Invariably, displaying ethical guidelines creates awareness of appropriate behavior.

The presence of ethical code may not elicit moral conduct, requiring proper implementation practices. Strategies to enforce ethical behavior and practices would be ineffective without an ethical climate. As previously mentioned, bureaucracies and complexities in public administration could produce ethical dilemmas. Ethical guidelines need an enabling environment, which is also the responsibility of the leader to create.

Leaders nurture an ethical climate when the executives' behaviors align with ethical policies, motivating subordinates to do likewise (Engelbrecht, Wolmarans, & Mahembe, 2017). Leaders require adequate training to increase an understanding of ethical rules and policies guidelines. Bureaucracies and complexities in public administration necessitate awareness to ethical guidelines for achieving the common good.

Public agencies operate under prescribed guidelines, which control the performance of work activities and conduct. Thaler and Helmig (2016) asserted that the

actions and behavior of executives should represent values characteristic of public office. The authors emphasized that ethical codes provides guidance for appropriate conduct in the agencies. In reality, there seems to be a gap between executives' conduct and the prescribed behavior in ethical codes.

Despite the display of code of ethics in all government agencies, executive need to internalize and use behaviors in line with the principles. In addition, the leaders' ethical conduct would take time to trickle down to subordinates to emulate. That is why displaying ethical codes in strategic places in the agencies is important. In this manner, both the leader and followers have access to ethical guidelines to guide moral conduct in the agencies.

Because of a lack of structures for enforcing and monitoring ethical conduct, unethical practices abound in public agencies (Wright et al., 2016). Therefore, the anti graft agencies, ICPC and CCB should create such structures to monitor inappropriate conduct in the agencies. Yang (2016) noted the importance of including specific procedures in code of conduct to address potential ethical dilemmas and conflicts of interest.

Display of Whistle-Blowing Policy in Public Agencies. Whistle-blowing policy supports ethical governance through reporting of ethical violations and preventing of malfeasance in public expenditure (Ugaddan & Park, 2019). Whistle-blowing guidelines also empower individuals, including subordinates to participate in enforcing ethical behavior by reporting against unethical practices. Employees require a contributive ethical climate to participate in whistle-blowing activities.

While organizational policies, guidelines and human resources practices produce ethical climate; the leaders' behavior is more effective because it serves as a role model (Liu, Zhao, Jiang, & Li, 2016). As such it is crucial that executives act in line with ethical guidelines to encourage subordinates to act likewise. The leaders' ethical behavior motivates subordinates to report wrongdoings in the agencies (Ugaddan & Park, 2019).

The approach also requires an independent agency, which is external to public agencies to monitor and control whistle-blowing policy. The strategy would address and prevent executives' undue influence in reporting of malfeasance. The CCB and ICPC have the mandate to monitor whistle-blowing in the agencies. However, the ethical agencies are ineffective (Hope, 2018). There is a need to synergize the activities of the ethical agencies to achieve prescribed goals. That is why there was a 77% consensus amongst respondents in the study that ethical agencies are key to implementing ethical leadership in public agencies.

A very critical aspect in whistle-blowing policy is to create strategies to protect whistle-blowers from possible retaliations (Zhou, Liu, Chen & Zhao, 2018). Otherwise, employees may be afraid to report violations. Executives have a responsibility to address reported cases to encourage employees. There should be procedures for disseminating punitive actions against reported ethical wrongdoings to encourage whistle-blowers. Another advantage of whistle-blowing policy is early detection of unethical practices to enable the agency to address the issues (Liu et al., 2016).

Theme 4: Governance

Governance was the third theme that emanated from the review and interpretation of the data from the questionnaires, and semistructured interviews, and the field notes. I found governance on the basis of achieving the common good and achieving the greatest good for the greatest number of persons was a construct for conceptualizing ethical leadership for public officials. This assertion is in line with Ciulla et al.'s (2018) assertion that ethical leadership encircles the leaders conduct, followers' behavior and organizational process for governance. The authors noted that well articulated governance processes provide spurs the leader and followers into ethical conduct in support of the common good.

Governance is structures for monitoring and ensuring that administrative practices align the expected standards. The overall goal is to ensure proper expenditure of public funds through transparency, accountability, and due process so that the common good and the greatest good for the greatest number of persons are achievable. As agencies operate in conjunction with the ethical guidelines, there should be internal and external governance structures to achieve propriety in funds disbursement.

As Othman and Abdul Rahman (2014) mentioned, ethical leadership promotes good governance practices including accountability, integrity, fairness, responsibility, responsiveness, and transparency, which are concepts that support the common good. Therefore, it is the responsibility for executives to create systems for achieving governance in the agencies. Hope (2018) and Nnabuiife (2010) also asserted that it is mandatory for public agencies to use well-structured procedures for dissemination of

funds and other administrative functions. In this manner, there are clear and transparent processes for expending and monitoring disbursed funds.

Snellman (2015)) also noted that the purpose of governance is to monitor and control administrative procedures for disseminating funds in line with ethical guidelines. The author identified two aspects of governance in public agencies: Internal control and external control. Internal control includes training programs on ethics and whistle-blowing policies; external controls are various ethical regulations, code of ethics, and ethical agencies established by government to enforce ethical behavior and address malfeasance.

Because executives may face challenging situations when making decision, control systems to instill appropriate decision is crucial. These systems provide a framework for accessing and disbursing funds, and are useful for auditing the departments' expenditure. Therefore, executives have a prerogative that administrative processes adhere to these mechanisms. Luk (2012) also mentioned that these controls are tenacious to address ethical dilemmas and sustain integrity in public agencies.

Jurkiewicz and Giacalone (2016) also opined that leaders could ensure ethical practices in three ways: By aligning the departments' objectives and goals with various ethical laws, using ethical leadership principles in the daily operations and policies, and creating internal structures for monitoring compliance with ethical policies. Governance supports ethical policies by providing guidance and direction for enforcement. Hassan et al. (2014) noted that unethical practices abound in public agencies because of

bureaucracy and a lack of effective governance structures for proper monitoring and enforcing ethical conduct.

For example, the federal government of Nigeria established a structure for enforcing governance in public expenditures, the Budget Monitoring and Price Intelligence Unit (BMPIU), or Due Process Unit. The purpose is to ensure execution of all public expenditures on the basis of transparency, accountability, and compliance with ethical rules and procedures (Nnabuife, 2010). Therefore, executives must engage the BMPIU for proper disbursement of funds for public expenditure. However, the widespread malfeasance in the departments is indicative that officials circumvent the due process in appropriation of funds. As previously stated, the mere presence of governance structures is insufficient to enforce ethical leadership. The leaders' behavior is crucial to achieve ethical practices in the departments.

Steckler and Clark (2019) also asserted that governance involves internal procedures and external regulations that enhance accountability, transparency to achieve ethical decision-making. An effective governance structures in the organization should stem from ethical guidelines related to public office. However, Hope (2018) noted that these governance structures are not effective for promoting ethical behaviors. Because of widespread unethical practices, the effectiveness of governance structures in public offices is debatable. It may be that the highly bureaucratic structure and complex administrative processes enhance these occurrences.

Jones and Lasthuizen (2018) emphasized that because governance structures are ineffective and weak in public offices, executives should be committed to governance,

serving as a good example for subordinates to address ethical violations. Bureaucracy and complexity in public administration necessitate proper governance structures for accountability and audit of funds. Belle and Cantarelli (2017) noted that governance enables accountability and a more sustainable public agency.

Pulay (2014) also noted that governance supports ethical leadership in two complimentary ways, enforcing compliance with ethical rules and promoting ethical values and principles. The author noted that although law prescribes ethical rules for public procurement, law does not prescribe promotion of values and principles. The high level of bureaucracy in public agencies could hamper the efficacy of governance processes. Even where these structures exist, instruments for monitoring performance are necessary. Because of multiplicity of functions of ethical agencies, monitoring enforcement is also complex and ineffective. However, the BMPIU could set up structures in every agency to monitor and ensure that funds are disbursed according to approved due processes.

Theme 5: Leaders' Attributes

The leaders' attributes emerged as the fifth theme is the findings for conceptualizing ethical leadership in public agencies, obtained from the information participants provided in the three rounds of questionnaires, one round of semistructured interviews, and field notes. I found out leaders attributes, which encompass antecedents and consequences of ethical behavior are key constructs for conceptualizing ethical leadership. These attributes are leadership by example, transparency, honesty, trustworthy, influence on followers, doing what is right and doing the right thing, and

values. The findings are in line with Mayer et al. (2009) assertion that the leaders attributes epitomize ethical leadership.

Because leaders are influential, followers have the proclivity to imitate the superiors' conduct. Nygaard, Biong, Silkoset, and Kidwell (2017) called such influence *referent power*, the influence leaders have on their subordinates that emanate from the leadership position, and galvanizes subordinates to the leaders' character. As previously stated, when leaders act in agreement with ethical policies, such action serves as a reference for subordinates to emulate. An ethical climate ensues when the leader and subordinate act in accordance to ethical guidelines (Knights et al., 2020).

Another important leaders' attributes that emanated from the result for conceptualizing ethical leadership is leading by example. Bencsik, Csokas, and Seben (2019) asserted that leading by example means the leaders' values and moral principles are in consonance with the code of ethics. The authors noted that attributes are powerful tools to enforce ethical behavior and to nurture an ethical organizational climate. The leaders' attributes show during social interaction with subordinates, and provide a basis for followers to copy. As executives make decision for the welfare of subordinates, there is a high expectation of moral conduct from the leaders (Luk, 2012).

An ethical climate occurs in the agencies when there is a synergy between the leaders' and followers' ethical conduct. Stouten et al. (2012) stated that executives who lead by example use behavior and actions that influence followers to conduct themselves appropriately. The authors noted that subordinates consider executives who lead by examples as trustworthy, honest and accountable. Such behaviors have a trickle-down

effect in the organization, encouraging workers to behave in the same manner. As executives do and practice espoused values, subordinates believe that the leaders would make ethical decisions, and appropriate funds effectively.

The findings in the study also indicate that transparency is a key leaders' attribute for conceptualizing ethical leadership. As public servants occupy roles and responsibilities related to trust, officials require clear, transparent, and accountable processes for decision-making and appropriation of funds. Grobler (2018) noted that an ethical leader is transparent, honest, disciplined, and trustworthy. The leaders ensure that all expenditure follow due process and are auditable. Even in cases of ethical dilemmas, a transparent leader follows ethical guideline to ascertain propriety in the dissemination of funds. Leaders who are transparent in decision-making provide a fair environment for subordinate to work, serving as role models (Sharif & Scandura, 2014). Such environment also nurtures an ethical climate and encourages subordinates to perform their duties effectively.

Fredriksson and Edwards (2019) also referred to transparency as providing unambiguous information about the agencies' expenditures to the public. Citizens trust that monies are disbursed properly when leaders are accountable for decisions on funds appropriation. As Ciulla et al. (2018) noted power and privileges vested on leaders necessitate accountability and transparency in their duties. The leaders have a responsibility to disseminate information to citizens about their stewardship. The paucity of public funds requires auditing of expenditure.

Because public agencies play a key role in the welfare of citizens, the offices function on the basis of trust. Thaler and Helmig (2016) asserted that ethical codes should encircle standards for appropriate conduct in the agencies. A trustworthy leader acts consistently in line with ethical standard, knowing that such conduct influences followers. Followers perceive trustworthy leaders as executives who would make appropriate decisions, even in ethical dilemmas. Subordinates expect trustworthy leaders to be truthful in challenging situations.

As Lawton and Paez (2015) also emphasized, ethical leaders are those who build trust by acting responsibly towards ethical policies. For the fact that leaders earn followers' trust, executives should shun practices that could mar the trust. Executives should consistently use and display trustworthy attributes to nurture an ethical agency.

Theme 6: Responsibility of Executives in Implementing Ethical Leadership

The sixth theme that emerged from analysis and interpretation of data participants provided in the three rounds of questionnaires, one round of semistructured interviews, and field notes is the responsibility of leaders to enforce ethical leadership. I found out that overcoming greed and nurturing ethical climates are key actions for leaders to implement ethical leadership in the agencies. Overcoming greed is achievable when leaders focus on the values and principles of the organization. Snellman (2015) noted an increase in misappropriation of public funds for personal use. Officials could address such behavior by consistently questioning their ideologies and ensuring alignment with the principles and values of the office (Garza-Mitchell, 2012).

The approach embodies the moral awareness concept of ethical leader behavior, propounded by Brown et al. (2005), which is the conceptual framework of this study. The authors emphasized the leaders' responsibility to use ethical behavior, which serves as role models for subordinates to emulate. In this manner, an ethical climate develops, and supports the values delineated in ethical codes. Moral awareness to ethical codes is important in Nigeria because there is a vague distinction between the professional responsibility of executives and their personal lives (Hullsten & Larbi, 2006). Leaders need to understand the principles and operations of public office and separate their personal goals from these values. Ethical leadership training programs are necessary to guide leaders into appropriate conduct in their fiduciary roles.

The second responsibility of leaders that respondents in the study provided for enforcing to enforce ethical leadership respondents was nurturing an ethical climate. The approach involves behaving in alignment with ethical codes, undertaking training on ethical codes to increase moral judgment, and increasing the propensity to report unethical practices (Menzel, 2015). As previously stated, ethical codes and guidelines are insufficient to elicit appropriate behavior. While knowledge of the code is tacit, behavior are explicit representations of the ethical guidelines. Therefore, nurturing an ethical climate embodies developing behaviors that are expressive of the ethical codes.

When leaders behave in consonance with the ethical codes, subordinates follow suit. An ethical climate develops, which makes the code effective. Therefore, leaders are moral entrepreneurs, who use their behaviors to elicit moral ethical conduct, develop new ethical norms, addresses ethical dilemmas in decision making, and set examples for

subordinates to follow (Kaptein, 2015). Leaders could send a strong message by displaying ethical behavior such as integrity, which serves as role models to subordinates, rewarding subordinates' ethical conduct, organizing trainings to support ethical standard (Kaptein, 2015). The onus also lies on executives to maintain an ethical climate by ensuring that administrative processes adhere to ethical standards. These strategies result in a reduction of ethical violations.

Mayer et al. (2009) also noted a strong ethical climate leads to a reduction in ethical misconduct and employees are comfortable to report violations without a feeling of retaliation. Developing an ethical climate also involves removal of obstacles that could make the environment unfavorable to ethical conduct by subjugating disciplinary measures against erring subordinates, retaliation from top management on reporting ethical misconduct, and absence of propensity to seek advice from senior executives on ethical matters (Kaptein, Huberts, Avelino, & Lasthuizen, 2005).

The leaders' responsibility to implement ethical leadership is important for the following reasons. First, leadership position bestows power on executives to reward ethical behavior and punish unethical conduct. Second, the leaders appropriate behavior serves as role model for employees to emulate. Third, superiors could allocate funds to communicate code of ethics training to employees. Finally, executives could ensure that funds disbursement is in line with due processes in the agencies. These arguments show the importance of appointing morally sound leaders. Therefore, government should create a policy for evaluating the moral competency of leaders for public agencies, apart from the technical and managerial competencies (d'Adda et al., 2017).

Theme 7: Responsibility of ICPC and CCB in Implementing Ethical Leadership

The seventh theme that emerged from the responses the executives provided in the three rounds of questionnaires, and one round of semistructured interviews and field notes is the responsibility of ethical agencies in implementing ethical leadership in public organizations. The duty of the ethical agencies is to implement ethical governance in government agencies. Osifo (2012) asserted that the ethics enforcing agencies could enforce ethical leadership by educating the citizenry through workshops, road shows, ethical codes, whistle-blowing and monitoring mechanism, and persecute and punish erring public officials. Other duties are providing ethical leadership training for public officials on their moral responsibility and delineating the codes of ethics for officials to understand its workings better (Hullsten, & Larbi, 2006).

Because the ethics enforcing agencies exist on the premise of various Acts, the agencies have bestowed power to enforce moral conduct in public offices. However, a challenge is non-synchronous activities in instilling ethical conduct due to duplication of functions. There are no clear dividing lines of responsibility between the ICPC and CCB while investigating and prosecuting officials who misappropriate funds.

Another constraint is a lack of adequate funds for prosecuting culpable executives. As a result of paucity of funds, the ethical institutions are unable to carry out their responsibilities effectively. The agencies require funds to investigate and prosecute liable leaders, articulate training programs to enlighten the citizenry, and organize workshops to communicate code of ethics.

The short tenure of heads of ethical agencies is also a challenge. It takes time for the ethical behavior of the leader to trickle down to subordinates. Therefore, a short tenure is insufficient for subordinate to emulate the leaders' behavior. A long tenure could also result in the trickling down of unethical leaders' behavior, which may result in an unethical climate. Ethical institutions should monitor the activities of executives to interdict unethical behaviors and practices.

There are two complimentary mechanisms for enforcing leaders' ethical behavior in public agencies, internal, which is ethical leadership training, whistle blowing policy; and external, which is ethical laws, code of ethics and ethical agencies (Luk, 2012). The role of the ethical institutions is to monitor adherence to ethical codes and guidelines in public agencies. As mentioned by Pulay (2014) ethical agencies could implement morally appropriate behavior and practices by embarking on ethical training programs, interpreting the code of ethics, and monitoring ethical values in administrative processes of public agencies.

Theme 8: Instruments for Implementing Ethical Leadership

The eight themes that emerged from analysis of the data collected from participants' responses in the three rounds of questionnaires, one round of semistructured interviews, and the field notes is instruments for implementing ethical leadership in public agencies. The constructs depicting the theme are code of ethics, civil service guidelines, whistle-blowing policy, reward system, conflict of interest declaration, asset declaration, and oath of office.

The constructs encompass two aspects, instruments under the control of ethical agencies, such as code of ethics, civil service guidelines, whistle blowing policy, reward system and oath of office; and instruments that are the responsibility of officials, including conflict of interest declaration, and asset declaration. I found that the highest instruments for implementing ethical leadership are those under the responsibility of the leader, which is conflict of interest declaration and asset declaration. The result is evident that the leaders' behavior is key to implementing ethical leadership in the agencies.

The effectiveness of these tools is debatable. Reason being that officials fail to disclose all their assets and there are no standard domains to trace undisclosed assets. In addition, it is a common practice for officials who practice malfeasance to hide acquired assets through proxies. Therefore, tracing undeclared assets to prosecute culpable officials is challenging for the ethics agencies. As previously mentioned, officials do not understand situations that produce conflict of interest due to the vague distinction between their private and professional goals.

While whistle-blowing policy encompasses a framework for addressing ethical dilemmas, and malfeasance (Luk, 2012), ethical code encircles guidance for transparency and accountability in the appropriation of funds (Bussman & Niemeczek, 2019). Although these policies are under the supervision of the ethics agencies, the guidelines require an ethical climate to be effective, which is the leaders' responsibility to nurture. Leaders create an ethical climate through behaviors that are in line with ethical policies, which serves as a motivation for subordinates to emulate (Engelbrecht et al., 2017).

Another major highlight of the result is whether there are incentives to reward and protect whistle blowers from retaliations. Findings from the study highlighted the need for executives to reward and recognize whistle-blowers. Such initiative would encourage subordinates to report ethical violations. Because executives engage in unethical practices, the expectation is that the superiors would discourage whistle-blowing in the agencies. However, the ethics agencies could mitigate this issue by supervising the whistle-blowing policy, and providing reward for whistle-blowers in government agencies.

A finding from the study is that oath of office is an ineffective instrument for implementing ethical leadership in public agencies. Oath of office is the first instrument administered to public officials for the implementation of ethical conduct in Nigeria. The recidivistic unethical behavior of officials indicates the inefficacy of oath of office, creating the need to explore other means for implementing ethical leadership. Because the result highlights a high level of consensus of opinion that asset declaration and conflict of interest are effective instruments for implementing ethical leadership, the ethics agencies should place more emphasis on these tools.

Theme 9: Education

The result in Appendix G that was obtained from the analysis of the data collected from the answers participants provided in the three rounds of questionnaires, one round of semistructured interviews, and field notes for teaching ethical leadership is education. The category depicting the theme is: Inclusion of ethics education in primary, secondary and tertiary institution. The result shows a 95% consensus of opinion amongst

respondents that inclusion of ethics education in the schools curricular is a long term strategy to teach ethical leadership to future public officials. Participants are of the view that such approach would enrich the espoused theory of future leaders with principles for achieving the common good.

In countries where unethical practices of executives abound, civic ethics education is effective to diffuse ethical behaviors and values in the society (Hullsten & Larbi, 2006). The authors stated that educating citizens on ethical principles would enable citizens to understand their moral and political responsibilities in the society (Hullsten, & Larbi, 2006). Education is a powerful tool for shaping people's values, and for nurturing their ethical behavior. Developing people's moral values and ethical ideologies takes time. Introducing moral principles into the educational curriculum in Nigeria would give individuals the opportunity to learn ethical behavior timely.

The ethical leadership curriculum would provide graduates an opportunity to understand ethical principles for achieving the common good, which may useful for future leadership roles in public service. Myers (2015) suggested an ethical leadership curriculum in tertiary institution to develop the moral reasoning of future leaders. The author suggested four courses, one each year from freshman, sophomore, senior, and capstone years. For the freshman year, the course is critical thinking to familiarize students with the moral reasoning, ethical decision making skills, and aligning personal values with the institutions' mission and goals.

In the sophomore year, the topic is understanding ethical analysis by application of acquired critical analysis skills to ethical theories, normative principles, and moral

conduct. The course for the senior year is fundamentals of ethical leadership, which is an analysis and application of key leadership theories to contemporary business models, ethical decision-making principles, understanding ethical dilemmas in business, and evaluation of personal leadership styles in relationship with existing leadership models. Finally for the capstone year, the course is addressing moral issues in society, which is developing ethical leaders' behavior to address various moral challenges in the society (Myers, 2015). These courses are approaches for acquisition and application of moral principles in leadership roles.

Theme 10: Training Programs

The result obtained from analysis of the data collected from the answers participants provided in the three rounds of questionnaires, one round of semistructured interview, and field notes for teaching ethical leadership for public officials is training programs. The categories depicting the theme are: Orientation and reorientation of civil service rules and ethical policies, workshops and symposia and on-the-job training. As previously noted, many officials are political appointees, and are inexperienced with civil ethical guidelines. An orientation and reorientation of civil service rules and ethical policies, workshops and symposia, and on-the-job training would provide leverage for officials to understand public administration.

Public services encompass propriety in appropriation of resources for achieving the common good. As previously noted, because government agencies in Nigeria consist of 14 bureaucratic levels, administrative processes are complex and slow. Therefore, executives require an excellent knowledge of civil service guidelines and ethical policies

to perform their roles appropriately. Keeping executives abreast of extant civil service rules and ethical policies would also increase their moral awareness of the policies.

Wilson and McCalman (2017) noted that achieving the common good is a complex phenomenon that requires multiple perspectives. Officials should be conversant with the workings of the agencies, and understand ethical dilemmas. However, the tenure of executives in most agencies is short due to the conditions of political appointment, making it difficult to achieve long-term goals in a very short time. That is why it is important to allocate substantive budget to train executives. Training programs empower executives with knowledge to perform their duties properly. Menzel (2015) noted that these training programs are avenues for executives to gain understanding of ethical rules to address ethical dilemmas, and maintain high ethical standards.

Different training programs produce specific results. Workshops and symposia are important platforms for officials to collaborate and share knowledge, experiences about various administrative processes, and to address ethical dilemmas. The programs are avenues for officials to leverage and to reappraise existing ethical policies in light of current realities. On-the-job-training (OJT) is a short-term approach to teach ethical leadership through simulations. OJT is a premise to understand key attributes of the job, ethical issues in daily routine activities, and ways to mitigate these challenges (Heres & Lasthuizen, 2012). These strategies enhance the ability of officials to learn appropriate behaviors to support their fiduciary responsibilities.

Limitations of the Study

The first limitation in the study was the efficacy of the data obtained from perceptions and experiences of participants, which could change as a result of some circumstances. Although the proposal was to use participants' private e-mail to administer the questionnaires for data collection, I had to resort to manual administration of the questionnaires. Executives were too busy to respond to the mails. I achieved a 100% response to the questionnaires from participants by building rapport with them.

The second limitation is the expectation that the 20 respondents were knowledgeable and had the ability to provide valuable data to inform the study. The purposeful selection of participants, using inclusion criteria helped to identify experts for the study. There may be other precluded knowledgeable experts who could have added value to the data. Their preclusion could be a potential limitation to the credibility of the study. The rigor obtained through iterative process of three rounds of questionnaires and one round of semistructured interview to achieve a consensus of opinion added credibility to the result. However, the result may not be transferable to public officials in other agencies that are not included as sites in this study.

The third limitation is achieving transferability of the results. As the nature of the research approach was explorative and descriptive, there was divergence of views. Because the objective was not to generalize the results, transferability is at the prerogative of the audience (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). I provided a detailed description of the research setting to create a deeper understanding of the context, to support the transferability of the results. My goal was to elucidate the method for data collection and

delineate and interpret the findings in a manner that represented participants' depiction of their experience with the phenomenon.

The fourth limitation is that as the research instrument, bias may occur in the way I perceived and interpreted the data. I could become familiar with participants, which may elicit my empathy towards their experience with the phenomenon. However, I used the suggestion of Morse (2015) and addressed bias by remaining objective, detaching myself from sentiments and consistently questioning my thoughts to remain focused on the study's objective. Member checking was also the method I used to address bias and substantiate the validity of the data. I asked participants to review and clarify the answers to the questionnaires and semistructured interview questions.

Recommendations

The following are recommendations for future research, premised on my analysis of the data from the responses executives provided in the questionnaires, semistructured interviews, and field notes I recorded. While the information obtained from the data is credible, the transferability is the prerogative of the research audience (Farrelly, 2013).

The result provided evidence that is substantive for conceptualizing, implementing, and teaching framework for ethical leadership for public officials in Nigeria.

Because views and perceptions are divergent, it may be useful to expand the scope of this study and explore subordinates' views on developing a framework for conceptualization, implementation, and teaching for public officials in Nigeria. The approach is important because subordinates' opinions also matter in exploring ethical

leadership. The leader and subordinates must behave appropriately for ethical climate to grow.

Because subordinates rely on leaders for reward, subordinates emulate the leaders' behaviors and actions. The findings from this study show that leading by example is one of the most important leaders' attributes for conceptualizing ethical leadership. It may be beneficial to explore how various leaders' attributes impact on followers' ethical conduct. As many executives' behavior misaligns with the code of conduct, followers do not see a need to comply with the guidelines. The leaders' moral attributes and actions serve as an example for followers to imbibe and nurture ethical values (Bonner, Greenbaum, & Mayer, 2016).

Another recommendation is to investigate the effectiveness of various ethical leadership implementing instruments for public officials. Menzel (2015) noted that these instruments are compliance driven tools, which exist on the premises of ethical guidelines. The author noted that these tools are more effective for nurturing ethical behavior than integrity-based tools such as ethical training program. Evidence from the study shows various level of effectiveness of the tools, including oath of office, asset declaration, conflict of interest, whistle-blowing, and reward system.

Findings from the study highlight ineffectiveness of an oath of office in nurturing an ethical leaders' behavior. Other instruments such as asset declaration and conflict of interest are also not plausible because of non-disclosure by executives. Because an oath of office is the major instrument for enforcing ethical leadership for public officials in

Nigeria, research on the effectiveness of such tools may demystify the challenges associated with the instrument.

Despite the existence of ethical instruments, the leaders' espoused theory may be different from the theory-in-use, especially in challenging situation. Leaders face such situations daily as a result of complexity and bureaucracy in public administration. Therefore, executives need to question their espoused theory so as to make the right judgment in such situations. Evidence from the study indicate that the leaders' moral character such as doing the right thing and doing things right is key to addressing ethical dilemma.

Eisenbeiss and Giessner (2012) asserted that the leaders' moral character serves as a premise for moral identify, which provides a frame of reference for decision making in challenging situations. The authors suggested an assessment of the leaders moral character during engagement into public office to ascertain alignment with ethical policies. The exercise could demystify the leaders' espoused theory, which may serve as evidence to the theory-in-use. The purpose of enforcing ethical leadership is to align the leaders ethical ideology with the ethical behavior delineated in the ethical codes.

Another recommendation, which was beyond the scope of this study, is to explore how leaders of private institutions view the conceptualization, implementation and teaching of ethical leadership. The vision and mission of an organization shapes the way leaders perceive ethical leadership (Lawton & Paez, 2015). Whereas the goal of public agencies is to provide goods and services for the common good, the mission of private organizations is to make financial gain from the production of goods and services. As

such, there is divergence of values and principles between executives from private companies and public departments. Heres and Lasthuizen (2012) noted that superiors of public agencies construed ethical leadership on the basis of achieving the common, while managers of private organization viewed ethical leadership on the premises of organization performance and employee motivation.

As private organizations rely on public agencies to guide statutory requirements, social exchanges occur between both entities. Therefore, the ethical climate in public agencies may infiltrate into private organization. Private companies also contribute to citizens' welfare through production of goods and services. Unethical practices in these organizations also infiltrates into the society. Therefore, exploring how leaders of private companies construe ethical leadership conceptualization, implementation, and teaching may reveal new approaches to enrich the literature. Private organizations have funds to develop new ethical leadership models, which could serve as an example for public institutions to emulate.

Evidence from the study revealed that the ethical agencies are not effective in monitoring ethical behavior in the agencies. Findings in the study also highlight a need to engage an ethics officer to monitor and enforce ethical behavior in public agencies. Therefore, a recommendation is to investigate the effectiveness of an ethics officer in implementing ethical leadership in public offices. As suggested by Grigoropolous (2019), the agencies should have an ethics officer to enforce transparency and accountability in disbursement of funds. The ethics officer's duty is also to monitor all administrative processes, and ensure compliance with ethical guidelines. The appointment an ethics

officer should be in collaboration with ethical agencies, for the purpose of credibility. In this manner, there would be a concerted strategy between the ethical codes, ethics officer, and ethical agencies to enforce ethical leadership.

Evidence from the literature, which is beyond the scope of this study, delineates the concept of public service motivation (PSM), the interest to serve citizens appropriately. Leaders with a high PSM have the propensity to use ethical behaviors that align with the principles and values of the office (Wright et al., 2016). Public officials are responsible for provision of services for the welfare of citizens, therefore citizens expect civil servants to behave appropriately. Stahl and De Luque (2012) also suggested ascertaining officials' personality traits, motives, and values during appointment, which may indicate the proclivity to engage in unethical behavior.

Because public office exists on the basis of trust, public servants should have a motivation to uphold the values and principles of the office. It may be valuable to investigate how PSM influences ethical behaviors and practices in the agencies. Belle and Cantarelli (2017) noted that appointed executives should be individuals with a high level of commitment to serve the public because civil service functions on the premises of ethics and morality. Leaders with such motivation would uphold due process in funds appropriation.

Another recommendation for future research is to expand the scope of this study by exploring organizational factors that enable ethical leadership in public departments. As public offices operate in a highly bureaucratic and complex environment, understanding the factors that support ethical behavior is relevant. Evidence from the

literature indicates that administrative systems such as accounting, human resource management, and organizational culture could influence ethical leadership practices (Grover et al., 2012).

Findings from the study reveal that an effective reward system is important aspect of implementing ethical leadership. An effective reward system encourages subordinates to report ethical violations. Rewarding employees who display ethical behavior serves as a motivation for others to do likewise. These insights may be helpful to understand the type of support systems that enable ethical leadership practices.

Finally, a recommendation for further research, which is also beyond the scope of this study, is to explore how legislators view ethical leadership conceptualization. Omotosho (2015) asserted that because legislators make laws and guidelines for public offices, executives have an oversight responsibility for the implementation of ethical policies in public agencies. The manner legislators understand the leaders' ethical behavior and actions is also important for conceptualization of the phenomenon. Because legislators could also display unethical conduct, it may be valuable to investigate their views and identify the gaps in construing ethical leadership. Perspectives could shape the way legislators enact ethical policies. Citizens may also emulate the unethical conduct of legislators.

As evidence from the study revealed that laws and guidelines are key to ethical leadership conceptualization, it may be also be valuable to explore the perception of legislators for developing a framework to conceptualize, implement and teach the phenomenon. The research findings also show that prescribed instruments for

implementing ethical leadership such as oath of office, conflict of interest declaration, and assets declaration are ineffective. Legislators may also provide useful views that could demystify the non-effectiveness of these tools.

The findings from this study shows that there is a need to explore constructs for developing a framework for conceptualizing, implementing and teaching ethical leadership in public organizations. Divergent views and differences in cultural practices make the framework challenging to articulate. By exploring the views of different experts, a more concrete conceptualization, implementation, and teaching of ethical leadership may be achievable.

Undertaking further research to explore various instruments, organizational systems, and practices that support implementation of the phenomenon is also important. The strategy may create new insights for implementing ethical leadership. Finally, there is also a suggestion to investigate various frameworks for teaching ethical leadership to public officials. The purpose is to explore key construct that are applicable for nurturing ethical leaders' conduct and actions for achieving the common good.

Implications

My purpose in this qualitative, Delphi study was to explore the development of a framework for conceptualizing, implementing, and teaching ethical leadership for Nigerian public officials. The result from the study may contribute to positive social change in several ways. First, evidence from study may show specific characteristics that are applicable for understanding ethical leadership. Because ethical leadership is complex and has cultural undertones, there is a need to delineate the concept for public officials to

understand the phenomenon in Nigeria. Because of executives fiduciary responsibilities, understanding ethical leadership concept may elicit appropriate behavior to achieve a positive social change by: Addressing ethical dilemmas, disbursing funds to eradicate poverty, and providing basis infrastructure such as water, schools, electricity, and hospitals for citizens.

Another potential benefit of the results obtained from the study is for the Federal Ministry of Education to articulate a leadership curriculum for primary, secondary, and tertiary schools. As there is no such syllabus, the modules may include constructs to enable students understand the attributes, and implementation of ethical leadership in the Nigerian society. As students graduate from the institutions, the knowledge achieved may be useful in performing future fiduciary responsibilities in public offices. Knowledge of ethical leadership may create a positive social change by increasing the moral awareness of students, useful for addressing ethical dilemmas and nurturing an ethical culture in the society.

Because the result obtained from this research also shows that the ethical agencies lack funds to implement ethical leadership, the federal government of Nigeria may provide more funds to empower the agencies. The ethical bureau may create a positive social change by using a robust technology and fiscal resources to monitor appropriation of funds for citizens' welfare, undertake public enlightenment of ethical policies, create a database for whistle-blowers, prosecute culpable officials, and reward whistle-blowers.

Also, the agencies bureaucracies are obstacles to effectively investigate, and prosecute erring officials. A proper definition of roles and responsibility of each ethical

agency as well as synergies in overlapping functions would address some of the inadequacies in performing their roles. As one participant noted:

“We have ethical codes on display in the agencies, but there is no clear method for implementation. Besides the codes are old and require a review.”

Therefore, a review of the codes of conduct and whistle-blowing policies is key to address issues, dilemmas, and obstacles for effective implementation. My findings show that ethical codes in Nigerian public agencies are old and becoming obsolete in the light of current realities.

Public officials’ continuous engagement of unethical practices indicates a lack of knowledge of ethical leadership. Therefore, leaders need education on ethical principles to enable them nurture and use moral conduct in their duties. Because this study addresses the development of an ethical leadership framework, the result may be useful for development of an ethical leadership curriculum in primary, secondary, and tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The involvement of executives of the Federal Ministry of Education was useful to corral their experience and knowledge to inform the study. Education is a long-term measure that may create a positive social change by providing Nigerian public executives the leverage to learn and internalize ethical behaviors. These behaviors are useful in their fiduciary responsibilities.

A major highlight of the result from this study is the need for the federal government of Nigeria to provide funds for the ethical agencies to undertake a robust public enlightenment programs on ethical leadership, as a short-term measure to implement ethical leadership in public agencies. By educating the public about roles and

responsibility of public officials, intended executives may understand the rules that guide ethical conduct in appropriation of public funds. The approach may create a positive social change by empowering citizens to understand their roles and responsibility to behave appropriately in the society.

Ethical leadership is a complex phenomenon involving different perspectives, including doing the right thing, doing things right, achieving the common good, and achieving the greatest good for the greatest number of people. Therefore, the complex and multidimensional aspects make the phenomenon difficult to construct, resulting in paucity of models to develop a framework for conceptualizing, implementing, and teaching (Sharma, Agrawal, & Khandelwal, 2019). The authors noted that existing frameworks premise on the leaders' attributes and consequences of the leaders' actions.

Such perspectives are parochial to address the unethical practices that leaders of public agencies engage in. These practices have brought widespread poverty and a lack of basic infrastructure such as water, shelter, electricity, hospitals, roads, and schools in Nigeria. The leaders' behavior shows a lack of ethical leadership in the departments, creating a premise for this study. Again, the purpose of the study is to add knowledge and broaden the ethical leadership literature, which may create a positive social change through the development of a framework for conceptualizing, implementing, and teaching ethical leadership for Nigerian public officials to use their fiduciary roles.

Pierterson (2018) identified four different approaches to investigate, understand, and broaden the nature of ethical leadership: Theory-building studies, empirical or hypothesis-testing, narrative-interpretive accounts of ethical leadership activities and

experiences, and ethical leadership development and improvement research. The author noted that the four categories represent the discourse, research, and practice of ethical leadership. According to the author, type one encompasses developing ethical leadership theories and models.

Type two encircles hypothesis testing, and deductive methodology. Type three is about descriptive studies focusing on reconstructing and describing individuals lived experiences of ethical leadership using unstructured interviews, case studies, and content analysis. Type four encompasses action research frameworks for empowering leaders and building an ethical organizational climate through ethical practices.

In line with Pieteresen (2018) assertion, I employed two aspects of the ethical leadership research typology in this study, interpretative and intervention. I used a descriptive account of the lived experiences of public office executives to develop a framework to demystify, and provide a premise to conceptualize, implement, and teach the phenomenon. The results obtained from the study may be useful for developing an intervention program for ethical leadership in public agencies. These strategies may result in a positive social change by delineating appropriate leaders' behavior that may be useful for officials to address ethical dilemmas in their fiduciary responsibilities.

The research findings may also be beneficial for effective administration of funds in public agencies in Nigeria. Governance in these departments is slow due to bureaucracy; and there are insufficient processes for accountability, leading to widespread funds misappropriation. The study provided experts' views on developing a framework to conceptualize, implement, and teach ethical leadership for public officials.

This threefold approach of ethical leadership may create a positive social change through the development of an ethical climate that supports effective administration of public expenditure for citizens' welfare.

As stated by Morse (2015), the credibility of a study is achievable through the design, engagement of knowledgeable experts, and substantive data. This study employed the Delphi method to gather experts' consensual view about the concept. The research involved two ethical agencies, ICPC and CCB, one educational agency, FME, and one nongovernmental agency, CSLAC, which represents Transparency International to collate experts' views to inform the study. The approach is to collect data from the experiences of knowledgeable experts in the cultural context the executives experience the phenomenon. This approach may create a positive social change through a deeper understanding of ethical behaviors and practices that may be useful for public officials in their fiduciary duties.

Conclusions

My objective in this qualitative Delphi study was to explore the views of experts for conceptualizing, implementing and teaching frameworks for ethical leadership for public officials in Nigeria. I collected and analyzed data from knowledgeable experts from four agencies to answer the research question: What are the views of experts for conceptualizing, implementing, and teaching frameworks for ethical leadership for public officials in Nigeria?

The findings in this study aligned with Ikeanyibe and Ibietan's (2018) assertion that ethical leadership is achievable through a coordinated approach that includes:

Political commitment, law, due process, code of ethics, training programs, effective reward system, the involvement of ethics agency and involvement of civil society as a watchdog summarizes the findings in this study. The inclusion of officials from the ethics agencies and experts from CISLAC, which is the representative of Transparency International in Nigeria addressed these aspects by providing firsthand experience and knowledge for conceptualizing, implementing, and teaching ethical leadership frameworks for Nigerian public officials.

Also, Gottlieb and Sanzgiri (1996) indicated that the leaders' ethical behavior is a major attribute for ethical leadership conceptualization. Therefore, the leader has the prerogative to question assumptions and ensure that decision-making aligns with civil service and ethical guidelines. Based on evidence from this study, organizing training programs on ethical leadership for public executives could increase their moral awareness to unethical behavior and practices. Because executives influence subordinates, the leaders' moral conduct elicits similar conduct in followers, which may produce an ethical climate.

The result obtained in this study also indicates that ethical agencies are the key enforcers of ethical leadership. Therefore, the federal government should provide funds to upscale ethical agencies' technology and capacity to monitor and enforce ethical practices in public agencies. It may be that public officials would use these behaviors and practices to ensure appropriate administration of funds for citizens' welfare, which may create a positive social change. Finally, findings from the study show that the Federal Ministry of Education has a key responsibility to develop ethical leadership by

articulating a curriculum to teach students ethical leadership in primary, secondary, and tertiary schools. The strategy may be useful to equip future Nigerian leaders with appropriate behaviors that are appropriate for fiduciary responsibilities in public agencies.

A concerted execution of three approaches from the findings in this study may be useful for the federal government of Nigeria to nurture and sustain ethical leadership for present and future public officials. The strategies are: Provision of funds to execute ethical training programs for public officials to increase leaders' moral awareness, which may be useful during decision making and appropriation of public funds. The second approach is provision of a robust technology and funds for ethical agencies to enforce and monitor ethical leadership in government agencies. The third strategy is the inclusion of ethical leadership teachings in the Nigerian schools' curriculum to nurture future, ethical Nigerian public officials. These approaches are useful for nurturing ethical climate in public agencies and society.

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Appendix A: Ethical Leadership Questionnaire 1

Dear Respondent:

As is evident, public officials are responsible for allocating funds and providing the nation's infrastructure such as electricity, water, roads, schools, and hospitals. Ethical leadership embodies these responsibilities.

In the light of this, I am conducting a study entitled "Developing a Framework for Conceptualizing, Implementing, and Teaching Ethical Leadership for Nigerian Public Officials." The topic is important to encourage ethical behavior and to develop a training curriculum in the public service.

The study employs the Delphi method using questionnaires to garner a consensus of views from experts. There are four parts. Part 1 focuses on your opinions about the topic; Part 2 centers on contextual factors; Part 3 requests demographic information; and Part 4 asks for any additional information you may wish to provide.

Please be assured of treatment of all information with STRICT confidentiality. Thank you for your participation.

Part 1: Conceptualizing, Implementing and Teaching Ethical Leadership

Please provide your opinion on each question; there is no right or wrong answer

A. Conceptualizing Ethical Leadership

1. Which definition of ethics do you believe comes closest to yours
 - a. Ethics are rules, guidelines and policies for achieving the common good in governance
 - b. Ethics encompass appropriate behaviors for promoting the well being of society
 - c. Ethics are principles for nurturing humaneness, and environmental sustainability
 - d. Ethics are guidelines for morally appropriate behaviors
 - e. Other _____

2. In making an ethical decision, the best guideline is a decision that is:
 - a. The greatest good for the greatest number of people
 - b. What is good for one is good for all
 - c. An improvement of my character and the character of my community
 - d. The well being of society
 - e. Other _____

3. A leaders' behavior is a fundamental characteristic of leadership.
 - a. Strongly Disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Don't Know
 - d. Agree
 - e. Strongly Agree

4. A leaders' actions are important aspect of leadership.
 - a. Strongly Disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Don't Know
 - d. Agree
 - e. Strongly Agree

5. The leaders' actions are not important aspect of leadership.
 - a. Strongly Disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Don't Know
 - d. Agree
 - e. Strongly Agree

6. The outcome of a leader's action is a key construct of leadership.
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Don't Know
 - d. Agree
 - e. Strongly Agree

7. Ethical leadership includes behaviors that support the common good.
 - a. Strongly Disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Don't Know
 - d. Agree
 - e. Strongly Agree

B. Implementing Ethical Leadership

8. What is the prominent cause of corruption
 - a. Desire to live a sybaritic lifestyle
 - b. Personal values
 - c. Cultural practices
 - d. Greed
 - e. Other _____

9. Identify the most important building block in managing ethics:
 - a. Code of Ethics
 - b. Oath of Office
 - c. Audits
 - d. Assets Declaration
 - e. Other _____

10. What is the most important reform that should be undertaken in short term in managing ethics?
 - a. Create public awareness of code of ethics
 - b. Provide training for leaders on ethics
 - c. Publicize whistle blowing policies
 - d. Create due process in managing public assets and funds
 - e. Other _____

11. What is the most important reform that should be undertaken in long term in managing ethics
 - a. Compulsory asset declaration by public officials
 - b. Creating a database for officers who violate ethical guidelines
 - c. Rewarding officials who comply with code of ethics
 - d. Include ethics education in the educational curricular of schools
 - e. Other _____

12. The 5th Schedule of the 1999 Code of Ethics for Public Officials plays a significant role in producing ethical behaviors in public organizations.
 - a. Strongly Disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Don't Know
 - d. Agree
 - e. Strongly Agree

13. Displaying the 5th Schedule of the 1999 Code of Ethics for Public Officials in agencies elicits ethical behavior.
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Don't Know
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly Disagree

14. Whistle blowing policies are effective in establishing compliance with ethical codes.
 - a. Strongly Disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Don't Know

- d. Agree
 - e. Strongly Agree
15. Displaying whistle blowing policies in agencies results in reporting ethical violations.
- a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Don't Know
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly Disagree
16. There are established processes for protecting and rewarding whistle blowers.
- a. Strongly Disagree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Don't Know
 - d. Agree
 - e. Strongly Agree
17. The Anti-Corruption and Related Offences Commission (ICPC) plays a key role in enforcing overall ethical behavior in public agencies.
- a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Don't Know
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree
18. The Anti-Corruption and Related Offences Commission (ICPC) plays a key role in enforcing ethical practices in appropriation of funds in public agencies.
- a. Strongly Disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Don't Know
 - d. Agree
 - e. Strongly Agree
19. The Anti-Corruption and Related Offences Commission is effective in achieving its mission to “rid Nigeria of corruption through law enforcement and preventive measures.”
- a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Don't Know
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly Disagree

20. The Anti-Corruption and Related Offences Commission is effective in arresting and prosecuting culpable officials who violate the 5th Schedule of the 1999 Code of Ethics for Public Officials.
- Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Don't Know
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree
21. The Code of Conduct Bureau (CCB) is effective in nurturing ethical behavior among public officials.
- Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Don't Know
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
22. There is synergy between the Anti-Corruption and Related Offences Commission (ICPC) and the Code of Conduct Bureau (CCB) in fostering ethical behavior amongst public executives.
- Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Don't Know
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree

C. Teaching Leadership

23. Executives in public agencies use ethical behaviors in their roles.
- Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Don't Know
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree
24. Executives do not use rewards to reinforce employees' ethical behavior.
- Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Don't Know
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree
25. A leader's ethical behavior has a positive 'trickle-down' effect on followers.
- Strongly Agree

- b. Agree
 - c. Don't Know
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly Disagree
26. Executive ethical behavior does not nurture an ethical climate in organizations.
- a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Don't Know
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly Disagree
27. Training programs are effective for achieving awareness of ethical codes.
- a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Don't know
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly Disagree
28. Training programs can help executives nurture, use, and communicate ethical behavior.
- a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly Disagree
29. Training programs on ethical behaviors exist in public organizations.
- 1. Strongly Agree
 - 2. Agree
 - 3. Don't Know
 - 4. Disagree
 - 5. Strongly Disagree

Part 2: Contextual Factors and Ethical Leadership

30. Contextual factors such as culture influences ethical practices.
- a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Don't Know
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly Disagree
31. Contextual factors influences ethical leadership.

- a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Don't Know
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly Disagree
32. A leader's personal values does not influence his or her ethical behavior.
- a. Strongly Disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Don't Know
 - d. Agree
 - e. Strongly Agree
33. A leader's moral awareness is effective in nurturing ethical actions.
- a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Don't Know
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly Disagree
34. Transparency is a key attribute of a leader's ethical behavior.
- a. Strongly Disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Don't know
 - d. Agree
 - e. Strongly Agree
35. A leader, who is trustworthy, is ethical.
- a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Don't know
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly Disagree
36. Honesty is an important attribute of a leader's ethical behavior.
- a. Strongly Disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Don't know
 - d. Agree
 - e. Strongly Agree
37. Public executives' ethical practices are synonymous with achieving the common good.
- a. Strongly Agree

- b. Agree
 - c. Don't know
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly Disagree
38. The culture of the society influence ethical leadership practices.
- a. Strongly Disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Don't know
 - d. Agree
 - e. Strongly Agree
39. The culture of the society influences ethical leadership practices.
- a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Don't Know
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly Disagree
40. Followers expect and perceive that leaders make ethical decisions.
- a. Strongly Disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Don't know
 - d. Agree
 - e. Strongly Agree
41. Both leaders and employees share a common perception of ethical behavior.
- a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Don't Know
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly Disagree

Part 3: Basic Information

Kindly tick the appropriate box

1. Identify the hierarchical level you occupy in your organization

Executive Management Senior Supervisory Senior Non-Supervisory

2. State your gender

Male Female

3. Check your academic qualification

PhD MSc/MBA PGD BSc HND OND
Other

4. How long (years) have you been working in this organization?

0-5 6-10 11-15 More than 15 years

5. Is the primary mission of your organization clear?

Yes No

Part 4: Other Information

Kindly provide any other information about the topic

Appendix B: Ethical Leadership Questionnaire 2

Dear Respondent:

Please find below a second questionnaire containing the ratings in percentage of responses from the first questionnaire for the study titled “Developing a framework for conceptualizing, implementing and teaching ethical leadership for Nigerian Public Officials”.

As previously stated in the first questionnaire, a key requirement of the Delphi Method, which this research employs, is to garner a consensus of responses from participants about the topic.

In view of this, I kindly ask you to re-appraise your opinion and re-rank your answers considering the responses provided by other participants so as to achieve a consensus of opinion to inform the study.

Please be assured that all information provided will be treated with STRICT confidentiality

Part 1: Conceptualizing, Implementing and Teaching Ethical Leadership

Please provide your opinion on each question; there is no right or wrong answer

A. Conceptualizing Ethical Leadership

1. Which definition of ethics do you believe comes closest to yours
 - a. Ethics are rules, guidelines and policies for achieving the common good in governance (%)
 - b. Ethics encompass appropriate behaviors for promoting the well being of society (%)
 - c. Ethics are principles for nurturing humaneness, and environmental sustainability (%)
 - d. Ethics are guidelines for morally appropriate behaviors (%)
 - e. Others _____ (%)

2. In making an ethical decision, the best guideline is a decision that is:
 - a. The greatest good for the greatest number of people (%)
 - b. What is good for one is good for all (%)
 - c. An improvement of my character and the character of my community (5%)

- d. The well being of society (%)
 - e. Others _____ (%)
3. A leaders' behavior is a fundamental characteristic of leadership.
 - a. Strongly Disagree (%)
 - b. Disagree (%)
 - c. Don't Know (%)
 - d. Agree (19%)
 - e. Strongly Agree (%)
 4. A leaders' actions are important aspect of leadership.
 - a. Strongly Disagree (5%)
 - b. Disagree (%)
 - c. Don't Know (%)
 - d. Agree (%)
 - e. Strongly Agree (%)
 5. The leaders' actions are not important aspect of leadership.
 - a. Strongly Disagree (%)
 - b. Disagree (%)
 - c. Don't Know (%)
 - d. Agree (0%)
 - e. Strongly Agree (0%)
 6. The outcome of a leader's action is a key construct of leadership.
 - a. Strongly Agree (%)
 - b. Agree (%)
 - c. Don't Know (%)
 - d. Disagree (%)
 - e. Strongly Disagree (%)
 7. Ethical leadership includes behaviors that support the common good.
 - a. Strongly Disagree (%)
 - b. Disagree (%)
 - c. Don't Know (%)
 - d. Agree (%)
 - e. Strongly Agree (%)

B. Implementing Ethical Leadership

8. What is the prominent cause of corruption
 - a. Desire to live a sybaritic lifestyle (%)
 - b. Personal values (%)
 - c. Cultural practices (%)

- d. Greed (%)
 - e. Others _____ (%)
9. Identify the most important building block in managing ethics:
- a. Code of Ethics (%)
 - b. Oath of Office (%)
 - c. Audits (10%)
 - d. Assets Declaration (%)
 - e. Others _____ (%)
10. What is the most important reform that should be undertaken in short term in managing ethics?
- a. Create public awareness of code of ethics (%)
 - b. Provide training for leaders on ethics (%)
 - c. Publicize whistle blowing policies (%)
 - d. Create due process in managing public assets and funds (%)
 - e. Others _____ (%)
11. What is the most important reform that should be undertaken in long term in managing ethics
- a. Compulsory asset declaration by public officials (%)
 - b. Creating a database for officers who violate ethical guidelines (%)
 - c. Rewarding officials who comply with code of ethics (%)
 - d. Including ethics education in the educational curricula of schools (%)
12. Others _____ (%) The 5th Schedule of the 1999 Code of Ethics for Public Officials plays a significant role in producing ethical behaviors in public organizations.
- a. Strongly Disagree (%)
 - b. Disagree (%)
 - c. Don't Know (%)
 - d. Agree (%)
 - e. Strongly Agree (%)
13. Displaying the 5th Schedule of the 1999 Code of Ethics for Public Officials in agencies elicits ethical behavior.
- a. Strongly Agree (%)
 - b. Agree (%)
 - c. Don't Know (%)
 - d. Disagree (%)
 - e. Strongly Disagree (%)
14. Whistle blowing policies are effective in establishing compliance with ethical codes.
- a. Strongly Disagree (%)

- b. Disagree (%)
 - c. Don't Know (%)
 - d. Agree (%)
 - e. Strongly Agree (%)
15. Displaying whistle blowing policies in agencies results in reporting ethical violations.
- a. Strongly Agree (%)
 - b. Agree (%)
 - c. Don't Know (%)
 - d. Disagree (%)
 - e. Strongly Disagree (%)
16. There are established processes for protecting and rewarding whistle blowers.
- a. Strongly Disagree (%)
 - b. Disagree (%)
 - c. Don't Know (%)
 - d. Agree (%)
 - e. Strongly Agree (%)
17. The Anti-Corruption and Related Offences Commission (ICPC) plays a key role in enforcing overall ethical behavior in public agencies.
- a. Strongly Agree (%)
 - b. Agree (%)
 - c. Don't Know (%)
 - d. Disagree (%)
 - e. Strongly Disagree (%)
18. The Anti-Corruption and Related Offences Commission (ICPC) plays a key role in enforcing ethical practices in appropriation of funds in public agencies.
- a. Strongly Disagree (%)
 - b. Disagree (%)
 - c. Don't Know (%)
 - d. Agree (%)
 - e. Strongly Agree (%)
19. The Anti-Corruption and Related Offences Commission is effective in achieving its mission to "rid Nigeria of corruption through law enforcement and preventive measures."
- a. Strongly Agree (%)
 - b. Agree (%)
 - c. Don't Know (%)
 - d. Disagree (%)
 - e. Strongly Disagree (%)

20. The Anti-Corruption and Related Offences Commission is effective in arresting and prosecuting culpable officials who violate the 5th Schedule of the 1999 Code of Ethics for Public Officials.
- Strongly Agree (%)
 - Agree (%)
 - Don't Know (%)
 - Disagree (%)
 - Strongly Disagree (%)
21. The Code of Conduct Bureau (CCB) is effective in nurturing ethical behavior among public officials.
- Strongly Disagree (%)
 - Disagree (%)
 - Don't Know (%)
 - Agree (%)
 - Strongly Agree (%)
22. There is synergy between the Anti-Corruption and Related Offences Commission (ICPC) and the Code of Conduct Bureau (CCB) in fostering ethical behavior amongst public executives.
- Strongly Agree (10%)
 - Agree (%)
 - Don't Know (%)
 - Disagree (%)
 - Strongly Disagree (%)

C. Teaching Leadership

23. Executives in public agencies use ethical behaviors in their roles.
- Strongly Agree (%)
 - Agree (%)
 - Don't Know (%)
 - Disagree (%)
 - Strongly Disagree (%)
24. Executives do not use rewards to reinforce employees' ethical behavior.
- Strongly Agree (%)
 - Agree (%)
 - Don't Know (%)
 - Disagree (%)
 - Strongly Disagree (%)
25. A leader's ethical behavior has a positive 'trickle-down' effect on followers.

- a. Strongly Agree (%)
 - b. Agree (%)
 - c. Don't Know (%)
 - d. Disagree (%)
 - e. Strongly Disagree (%)
26. Executive ethical behavior does not nurture an ethical climate in organizations.
- a. Strongly Agree (%)
 - b. Agree (%)
 - c. Don't Know (%)
 - d. Disagree (%)
 - e. Strongly Disagree (%)
27. Training programs are effective for achieving awareness of ethical codes.
- a. Strongly Agree (%)
 - b. Agree (%)
 - c. Don't know (%)
 - d. Disagree (%)
 - e. Strongly Disagree (%)
28. Training programs can help executives nurture, use, and communicate ethical behavior.
- a. Strongly Agree (%)
 - b. Agree (%)
 - c. Neutral (%)
 - d. Disagree (%)
 - e. Strongly Disagree (%)
29. Training programs on ethical behaviors exist in public organizations.
- a. Strongly Agree (%)
 - b. Agree (%)
 - c. Don't Know (%)
 - d. Disagree (%)
 - e. Strongly Disagree (%)

Part 2: Contextual Factors and Ethical Leadership

30. Contextual factors such as culture influences ethical practices.
- a. Strongly Agree (%)
 - b. Agree (%)
 - c. Don't Know (%)
 - d. Disagree (%)
 - e. Strongly Disagree (%)

31. Contextual factors influences ethical leadership.
- Strongly Agree (%)
 - Agree (%)
 - Don't Know (%)
 - Disagree (%)
 - Strongly Disagree (%)
32. A leader's personal values does not influence his or her ethical behavior.
- Strongly Disagree (%)
 - Disagree (%)
 - Don't Know (%)
 - Agree (%)
 - Strongly Agree (%)
33. A leader's moral awareness is effective in nurturing ethical actions.
- Strongly Agree (%)
 - Agree (%)
 - Don't Know (%)
 - Disagree (%)
 - Strongly Disagree (%)
34. Transparency is a key attribute of a leader's ethical behavior.
- Strongly Disagree (%)
 - Disagree (%)
 - Don't know (%)
 - Agree (%)
 - Strongly Agree (%)
35. A leader, who is trustworthy, is ethical.
- Strongly Agree (%)
 - Agree (%)
 - Don't know (%)
 - Disagree (%)
 - Strongly Disagree (%)
36. Honesty is an important attribute of a leader's ethical behavior.
- Strongly Disagree (%)
 - Disagree (0%)
 - Don't know (0%)
 - Agree (%)
 - Strongly Agree (%)
37. Public executives' ethical practices are synonymous with achieving the common good.

- a. Strongly Agree (%)
 - b. Agree (%)
 - c. Don't know (%)
 - d. Disagree (%)
 - e. Strongly Disagree (%)
38. The culture of the society influence ethical leadership practices.
- a. Strongly Disagree (%)
 - b. Disagree (%)
 - c. Don't know (%)
 - d. Agree (%)
 - e. Strongly Agree (%)
39. The culture of the society influences ethical leadership practices.
- a. Strongly Agree (%)
 - b. Agree (%)
 - c. Don't Know (%)
 - d. Disagree (%)
 - e. Strongly Disagree (%)
40. Followers expect and perceive that leaders make ethical decisions.
- a. Strongly Disagree (%)
 - b. Disagree (%)
 - c. Don't know (%)
 - d. Agree (%)
 - e. Strongly Agree (%)
41. Both leaders and employees share a common perception of ethical behavior.
- a. Strongly Agree (5%)
 - b. Agree (33%)
 - c. Don't Know (24%)
 - d. Disagree (29%)
 - e. Strongly Disagree (10%)

Part 3 : Other Information

Kindly provide any other information about the topic

Appendix C : Ethical Leadership Questionnaire 3

Dear Respondent:

Please find below a third questionnaire containing the ratings in percentage of responses from the second questionnaire for the study titled “Developing a framework for conceptualizing, implementing and teaching ethical leadership for Nigerian Public Officials”.

As previously stated in the second questionnaire, a key requirement of the Delphi Method, which this research employs, is to garner a consensus of responses from participants about the topic.

In view of this, I kindly ask you to re-appraise your opinion and re-rank your answers considering the responses provided by other participants so as to achieve a consensus of opinion to inform the study.

Please be assured that all information provided will be treated with STRICT confidentiality

Part 1: Conceptualizing, Implementing and Teaching Ethical Leadership

Please provide your opinion on each question; there is no right or wrong answer

A. Conceptualizing Ethical Leadership

1. Which definition of ethics do you believe comes closest to yours
 - a. Ethics are rules, guidelines and policies for achieving the common good in governance (%)
 - b. Ethics encompass appropriate behaviors for promoting the well being of society (%)
 - c. Ethics are principles for nurturing humaneness, and environmental sustainability (19%)
 - d. Ethics are guidelines for morally appropriate behaviors (%)
 - e. Others _____ (%)

2. In making an ethical decision, the best guideline is a decision that is:
 - a. The greatest good for the greatest number of people (%)
 - b. What is good for one is good for all (%)
 - c. An improvement of my character and the character of my community (%)
 - d. The well being of society (%)

- e. Others _____ (%)
- 3. A leaders' behavior is a fundamental characteristic of leadership.
 - a. Strongly Disagree (%)
 - b. Disagree (%)
 - c. Don't Know (%)
 - d. Agree (%)
 - e. Strongly Agree (%)
- 4. A leaders' actions are important aspect of leadership.
 - f. Strongly Disagree (%)
 - g. Disagree (%)
 - h. Don't Know (%)
 - i. Agree (%)
 - j. Strongly Agree (%)
- 5. The leaders' actions are not important aspect of leadership.
 - a. Strongly Disagree (%)
 - b. Disagree (%)
 - c. Don't Know (%)
 - d. Agree (%)
 - e. Strongly Agree (%)
- 6. The outcome of a leader's action is a key construct of leadership.
 - a. Strongly Agree (%)
 - b. Agree (%)
 - c. Don't Know (%)
 - d. Disagree (%)
 - e. Strongly Disagree (%)
- 7. Ethical leadership includes behaviors that support the common good.
 - a. Strongly Disagree (%)
 - b. Disagree (%)
 - c. Don't Know (%)
 - d. Agree (%)
 - e. Strongly Agree (%)

B. Implementing Ethical Leadership

- 8. What is the prominent cause of corruption
 - a. Desire to live a sybaritic lifestyle (%)
 - b. Personal values (%)
 - c. Cultural practices (%)
 - d. Greed (%)
 - e. Others _____ (%)

9. Identify the most important building block in managing ethics:
- Code of Ethics (%)
 - Oath of Office (%)
 - Audits (%)
 - Assets Declaration (%)
 - Others_____ (%)
10. What is the most important reform that should be undertaken in short term in managing ethics?
- Create public awareness of code of ethics (%)
 - Provide training for leaders on ethics (%)
 - Publicize whistle blowing policies (%)
 - Create due process in managing public assets and funds (%)
 - Others_____ (%)
11. What is the most important reform that should be undertaken in long term in managing ethics
- Compulsory asset declaration by public officials (%)
 - Creating a database for officers who violate ethical guidelines (%)
 - Rewarding officials who comply with code of ethics (%)
 - Including ethics education in the educational curricula of schools (%)
 - Others_____ (%)
12. The 5th Schedule of the 1999 Code of Ethics for Public Officials plays a significant role in producing ethical behaviors in public organizations.
- Strongly Disagree (%)
 - Disagree (%)
 - Don't Know (%)
 - Agree (%)
 - Strongly Agree (%)
13. Displaying the 5th Schedule of the 1999 Code of Ethics for Public Officials in agencies elicits ethical behavior.
- Strongly Agree (%)
 - Agree (%)
 - Don't Know (%)
 - Disagree (%)
 - Strongly Disagree (%)
14. Whistle blowing policies are effective in establishing compliance with ethical codes.
- Strongly Disagree (%)
 - Disagree (%)

- c. Don't Know (%)
 - d. Agree (%)
 - e. Strongly Agree (%)
15. Displaying whistle blowing policies in agencies results in reporting ethical violations.
- a. Strongly Agree (%)
 - b. Agree (%)
 - c. Don't Know (%)
 - d. Disagree (%)
 - e. Strongly Disagree (%)
16. There are established processes for protecting and rewarding whistle blowers.
- a. Strongly Disagree (%)
 - b. Disagree (%)
 - c. Don't Know (%)
 - d. Agree (%)
 - e. Strongly Agree (%)
17. The Anti-Corruption and Related Offences Commission (ICPC) plays a key role in enforcing overall ethical behavior in public agencies.
- a. Strongly Agree (%)
 - b. Agree (%)
 - c. Don't Know (%)
 - d. Disagree (%)
 - e. Strongly Disagree (%)
18. The Anti-Corruption and Related Offences Commission (ICPC) plays a key role in enforcing ethical practices in appropriation of funds in public agencies.
- a. Strongly Disagree (%)
 - b. Disagree (%)
 - c. Don't Know (%)
 - d. Agree (%)
 - e. Strongly Agree (%)
19. The Anti-Corruption and Related Offences Commission is effective in achieving its mission to "rid Nigeria of corruption through law enforcement and preventive measures."
- a. Strongly Agree (%)
 - b. Agree (%)
 - c. Don't Know (%)
 - d. Disagree (%)
 - e. Strongly Disagree (%)

20. The Anti-Corruption and Related Offences Commission is effective in arresting and prosecuting culpable officials who violate the 5th Schedule of the 1999 Code of Ethics for Public Officials.
- Strongly Agree (%)
 - Agree (%)
 - Don't Know (%)
 - Disagree (%)
 - Strongly Disagree (%)
21. The Code of Conduct Bureau (CCB) is effective in nurturing ethical behavior among public officials.
- Strongly Disagree (%)
 - Disagree (%)
 - Don't Know (%)
 - Agree (%)
 - Strongly Agree (%)
22. There is synergy between the Anti-Corruption and Related Offences Commission (ICPC) and the Code of Conduct Bureau (CCB) in fostering ethical behavior amongst public executives.
- Strongly Agree (%)
 - Agree (%)
 - Don't Know (%)
 - Disagree (%)
 - Strongly Disagree (%)

C. Teaching Leadership

23. Executives in public agencies use ethical behaviors in their roles.
- Strongly Agree (%)
 - Agree (%)
 - Don't Know (%)
 - Disagree (%)
 - Strongly Disagree (%)
 - f.
24. Executives do not use rewards to reinforce employees' ethical behavior.
- Strongly Agree (%)
 - Agree (%)
 - Don't Know (%)
 - Disagree (%)
 - Strongly Disagree (%)
25. A leader's ethical behavior has a positive 'trickle-down' effect on followers.
- Strongly Agree (%)

- b. Agree (%)
 - c. Don't Know (%)
 - d. Disagree (%)
 - e. Strongly Disagree (%)
26. Executive ethical behavior does not nurture an ethical climate in organizations.
- a. Strongly Agree (%)
 - b. Agree (%)
 - c. Don't Know (%)
 - d. Disagree (%)
 - e. Strongly Disagree (%)
27. Training programs are effective for achieving awareness of ethical codes.
- a. Strongly Agree (%)
 - b. Agree (%)
 - c. Don't know (%)
 - d. Disagree (%)
 - e. Strongly Disagree (%)
28. Training programs can help executives nurture, use, and communicate ethical behavior.
- a. Strongly Agree (%)
 - b. Agree (%)
 - c. Neutral (%)
 - d. Disagree (%)
 - e. Strongly Disagree (%)
29. Training programs on ethical behaviors exist in public organizations.
- a. Strongly Agree (%)
 - b. Agree (%)
 - c. Don't Know (%)
 - d. Disagree (%)
 - e. Strongly Disagree (%)

Part 2: Contextual Factors and Ethical Leadership

30. Contextual factors such as culture influences ethical practices.
- a. Strongly Agree (%)
 - b. Agree (%)
 - c. Don't Know (%)
 - d. Disagree (%)
 - e. Strongly Disagree (%)
31. Contextual factors influences ethical leadership.

- a. Strongly Agree (%)
 - b. Agree (%)
 - c. Don't Know (%)
 - d. Disagree (%)
 - e. Strongly Disagree (%)
32. A leader's personal values does not influence his or her ethical behavior.
- a. Strongly Disagree (%)
 - b. Disagree (%)
 - c. Don't Know (%)
 - d. Agree (%)
 - e. Strongly Agree (%)
33. A leader's moral awareness is effective in nurturing ethical actions.
- a. Strongly Agree (%)
 - b. Agree (%)
 - c. Don't Know (%)
 - d. Disagree (%)
 - e. Strongly Disagree (%)
34. Transparency is a key attribute of a leader's ethical behavior.
- a. Strongly Disagree (%)
 - b. Disagree (%)
 - c. Don't know (%)
 - d. Agree (48%)
 - e. Strongly Agree (%)
35. A leader, who is trustworthy, is ethical.
- a. Strongly Agree (%)
 - b. Agree (%)
 - c. Don't know (%)
 - d. Disagree (%)
 - e. Strongly Disagree (%)
36. Honesty is an important attribute of a leader's ethical behavior.
- a. Strongly Disagree (%)
 - b. Disagree (%)
 - c. Don't know (%)
 - d. Agree (%)
 - e. Strongly Agree (%)
37. Public executives' ethical practices are synonymous with achieving the common good.
- a. Strongly Agree (%)

- b. Agree (%)
 - c. Don't know (%)
 - d. Disagree (%)
 - e. Strongly Disagree (%)
38. The culture of the society influence ethical leadership practices.
- a. Strongly Disagree (%)
 - b. Disagree (%)
 - c. Don't know (%)
 - d. Agree (%)
 - e. Strongly Agree (%)
39. The culture of the society influences ethical leadership practices.
- a. Strongly Agree (%)
 - b. Agree (%)
 - c. Don't Know (%)
 - d. Disagree (%)
 - e. Strongly Disagree (%)
40. Followers expect and perceive that leaders make ethical decisions.
- a. Strongly Disagree (%)
 - b. Disagree (%)
 - c. Don't know (%)
 - d. Agree (%)
 - e. Strongly Agree (%)
41. Both leaders and employees share a common perception of ethical behavior.
- a. Strongly Agree (%)
 - b. Agree (%)
 - c. Don't Know (%)
 - d. Disagree (%)
 - e. Strongly Disagree (%)

Part 3 : Other Information

Kindly provide any other information about the topic

Appendix D : Interview Protocol

Title of Study: Conceptualizing, Implementing, and Teaching Ethical Leadership for Nigerian Public Officials

Date: _____ Time: _____

Location:

Interviewer: Stella Georgeson-Agege

Interviewee: _____

Interviewee Pseudonym: _____

Interview Questions

A. Conceptualizing Ethical Leadership

1. What do you understand by the term ethical leadership?
2. What in your opinion are the attributes of an ethical leader?
3. What are the key behaviors of a leader who you consider as ethical?
4. How may these behaviors be implemented?
5. How does a leasers' ethical behavior influence followers?
6. In your opinion, what leader attributes are amenable for conceptualizing ethical leadership?

B. Implementing Ethical Leadership

7. What do you think enables ethical leadership in public organizations?
8. How may the Anti-Corruption and Related Offences Commission enforce ethical leadership practices in public agencies?
9. How are ethical leadership practices enforced in public agencies?

C. Teaching Ethical Leadership

10. Do you think ethical leadership behavior is teachable?
11. In your opinion what are the components of a teaching curriculum for ethical leadership

D. Contextual Factors and Ethical Leadership: Culture, Ethical Climate, Personal Values

12. Do you think the culture of a society influences ethical behavior and practices?
13. In what ways do the presence of an ethical climate influences ethical behavior?
14. In what ways do the leaders' personal values influence his or her behavior?
15. Is there any additional information you would like to provide?

E. Debriefing Participants

14. Give answers to participants to review
15. Inform participants about treating their responses with strict confidentiality
16. Thank participants

Appendix E : The Demographic Profile of 20 Respondents in the Study

	Hierarchy	Academic Qualification	Years	Gender
Participant 1	Senior Supervisory	MSc/MBA	15	Male
Participant 2	Management	BSc	23	Male
Participant 3	Management	BSc	15	Female
Participant 4	Management	LLB	15	Male
Participant 5	Senior Sup	MSc/MBA	15	Female
Participant 6	Management	MSc/MBA	15	Female
Participant 7	Management	PGD	15	Male
Participant 8	Management	MSc/MBA	15	Female
Participant 9	Senior Non-Supervisory	HND	5	Female
Participant 10	Senior Supervisory	MSc/MBA	5	Male
Participant 11	Management	MSc/MBA	10	Female
Participant 12	Senior Non-Supervisory	BSc	5	Male
Participant 13	Executive	BSc	15	Female
Participant 14	Management	BSc	5	Male
Participant 15	Senior Non-Supervisory	MSc/MBA	10	Female
Participant 16	Management	BSc	5	Male
Participant 17	Management	MSc/MBA	15	Female
Participant 18	Senior Supervisory	MSc/MBA	15	Female
Participant 19	Senior Supervisory	MSc/MB	15	Female
Participant 20	Senior Supervisory	MSc/MBA	15	Male

Appendix F: Research Findings in Categories, Themes, and Codes

Categories	Themes	Codes	Type	
Ethical Leadership Concepts	Law	Rules and Guidelines	Apriori	
		Oath of Office	Emergent	
	Norms and Values	Morally Accepted Standards	Apriori	
		Moderation of Conduct	Apriori	
		Effective Communication	Display of Ethical rules and Policies	Emergent
	Governance		Orientation and Reorientation to Ethical policies	Emergent
			Achieving the Common Good	Apriori
		Leaders Attributes	Achieving the Greatest Good for the Greatest Number of People	Apriori
			Leadership by Example	Emergent
			Transparency	Apriori
		Honesty	Apriori	

		Trustworthy	Apriori
		Accountability	Apriori
		Consideration of the Outcome of the Leaders Actions	Apriori
		Influence on Followers	Apriori
		Doing what is right and Doing The Right Thing	Emergent
		Personal Values	Apriori
Implementing Ethical Leadership	Responsibility of Executives in Implementing Ethical Leadership	Overcoming Greed	Emergent
		Nurturing an Ethical Climate	Apriori
	Responsibility of ICPC and CCB in Implementing Ethical Leadership	Monitoring Budget and Performance of Agency Funds	Emergent
		Enforcing and Monitoring Ethical Behavior in Public Agencies	Emergent

		Prosecuting of Culpable Officials	Apriori
		Undertaking Public Enlightenment Programs	Emergent
	Instrument for Implementing Ethical Leadership	Code of Ethics	Apriori
		Whistle Blowing Policy	Apriori
		Use of Extant Civil Service Rules	Apriori
		Declaration of Assets	Apriori
		Declaration of Conflict of Interest	Apriori
		Due Process	Emergent
		Reward System	Emergent
		Use of Punitive and Preventive Measures	Emergent
Teaching Ethical Leadership	Education	Inclusion of Ethical Leadership Training in Schools' Curricular in Nigeria	Emergent

Training
Programs

Training on
Civil Service
Rules and
Conduct

Emergent

Training and
Retraining on
Ethical
policies

Emergent

On-The-Job-
Training

Emergent

Appendix G : Research Findings in Categories, Themes, and Percentage Consensus

Categories	Themes	Codes	Percentage Consensus (%)
Ethical Leadership Concepts in Public Agencies	Law	Ethical Rules and Ethical policies	52
		Norms and Values	Moderation of conduct
	Morally Accepted Standards in Conduct		95
	Governance		Achieving the Common Good
		Achieving the Greatest Good for the Greatest Number of Persons	43
		Effective Communication	Orientation and Reorientation to Existing Ethical Policies
	Display of Ethical Codes in Agencies		62
	Display of Whistle Blowing Policy in Agencies		51

	Leaders Attributes	Leadership by Example	90
		Transparency	83
		Honesty	94
		Integrity	93
		Trustworthy	79
		Influence on Followers	86
		Doing what is right and Doing The Right Thing	69
		Personal Values	77
Implementing Ethical leadership in Public agencies	Responsibility of Executives in implementing Ethical Leadership	Overcoming Greed	74
		Nurturing an Ethical climate	63
	Responsibility of Ethics Agencies (ICPC and CCB) in implementing Ethical Leadership	Involvement of ICPC and CCB in Monitoring Budget Performance in Appropriation of Funds	74
		Enforcing and Monitoring Ethical Behavior in	77

		Public Agencies	
		Public Enlightenment of Ethical Code	83
		Prosecution of Culpable Officials	95
	Instruments for Implementing Ethical Behavior	Code of Ethics	52
		Extant Civil Service Guidelines	58
		Whistle-Blowing Policy	58
		Reward System	65
		Conflict of Interest Declaration	71
		Asset Declaration	77
		Oath of Office	0
Teaching Ethical Leadership in Public agencies	Education	Inclusion of Ethics Education in Primary, Secondary and Tertiary School Curricula	95

Training Programs	Orientation and Reorientation of Civil Service Rules and Ethical Policies	85
	Workshops and Symposia	71
	On-the-Job-Training	65