2018

Decreasing Unethical Behaviors in Financial Institutions

Jiari Ebony Anderson
Walden University

Walden University

College of Management and Technology

This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Jiari Anderson

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by
the review committee have been made.

Review Committee
Dr. Deborah Nattress, Committee Chairperson, Doctor of Business Administration Faculty

Dr. Tim Truitt, Committee Member, Doctor of Business Administration Faculty

Dr. Krista Laursen, University Reviewer, Doctor of Business Administration Faculty

Chief Academic Officer
Eric Riedel, Ph.D.

Walden University
2018

Abstract

Decreasing Unethical Behaviors in Financial Institutions

by

Jiari E. Anderson

MBA, Webster University, 2007

BS, South Carolina State University, 2004

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

November 2018

Abstract

An ethical climate helps to ensure a trustworthy organizational culture. This multiple case study explored strategies that banking managers in the southeastern region of the United States used to decrease unethical employee behaviors. The target population included 6 banking managers who demonstrated effective strategies to help ensure an ethical culture and decease unethical behaviors. Hunt and Vitell's ethical decision making theory served as the conceptual framework for this research. Data were obtained from face-to-face interviews and the review of archival data from website information. Data analysis involved an inductive examination following case descriptions. Intensive leadership skills and managers' effective communication emerged as the significant themes. Strategies that facilitated group effort in participants' organizations related to developing comprehensive training programs and policies and procedures. Organizational leaders that promote ethical behaviors can bring about positive change by encouraging inclusive growth, creating productive economic opportunities for individuals, alleviating poverty throughout communities, and contributing to the health and education of those communities.

Decreasing Unethical Behaviors in Financial Institutions

by

Jiari E. Anderson

MBA, Webster University, 2007

BS, South Carolina State University, 2004

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

November 2018

Dedication

My first dedication goes to my mom, Deborah Butler. Without her guidance and support, I never would have enrolled in the Walden University DBA Program. Thank you for identifying my inner capabilities, trapping me into starting a new journey. You knew once I started this program, I was not going to quit until I finished. My second dedication goes to my son Nyjele Anderson. Nyjele, I completed this program to show you the importance of acquiring a higher level of education. It is imperative for you to understand that you are in control of your destiny, and there are no limitations when it comes to success. No matter how tough any situation may become, just dedicate yourself until you reach the end. My third dedication goes to my sister, Porche Phelps. Porche, when I became overwhelmed with my fitness program, you took the initiative to assist with my workout sessions, allowing me to have days off to complete my study. I really want to thank you for your consideration and your support. I do not know what I would do without you. My last dedication goes to Corey Bell. Corey, I want to say thank you! Just know that you are the next best thing that has happened to me. I love you all, and I am grateful for each of your contributions in my life.

Acknowledgments

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my chair, Dr. Nattress, for her guidance and mentorship throughout this journey. Your constructive comments and useful tips improved the quality of my doctoral study and helped me to complete this process more efficiently.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

Section 1: Foundation of the Study

The global financial crisis of 2007-2008 affected several major financial institutions, causing banks to lose money on mortgage defaults, interbank lending to freeze, and consumer and business credit to dry up (Llwellyn, 2014). Many consumers changed their attitudes toward purchasing because of the breakdown of trust in the financial system (Llewellyn, 2014). Following the financial crisis, the banks enforced regulator Federal Depositor Insurance Cooperation (FDIC) to become more formal in April 2009 through the recommendation of the Financial Stability Board regarding their global financial system. (FSB; Liu, Wright, & Wu, 2015). Unethical behaviors of institutions, companies, workers, and customers contributed to the 2007-2009 financial crisis (Llewellyn, 2014). Because ethical behaviors in the banks became less complex rather than more transparent following the crisis, banks must transform into trusting organizations by adhering to specific guidelines used to regulate behavioral ethics and core values (Flint, 2013). Meanwhile, senior management officials should continue to adopt training programs along with explicit rule-making provisions to increase transparency in their organizations. Increasing transparency involves cultural change through managerial leadership, performance rewards and punishments, and communication that recognizes and develops the bank's core values in employees' day to day performances (Loi, Ngo, & Xu, 2016).

Background of the Problem

Corporate scandals continue to impact financial institutions and result in yearly losses of $40 billion dollars (Finn, 2015). After the global financial crisis, employees continued to make unethical decisions, which slowed the ability of the banks to rebuild and affected their profit maximization (Liu et. al, 2015; Thau, Derfler-Rozin, Pitesa, Mitchell, & Pillutla, 2015). Shafer (2015) posited that unethical employees increase the chances of unethical behaviors in the workplace. Because employees tend to respond negatively to mistreatment, managers using poor and ineffective leadership are harmful and contribute to employees' unethical behaviors in organizations (Gill, 2012; Leaver & Reader, 2017).

Most employees look to their managers for clarity regarding behaviors and controls (Alhaqbani, Reed, Savage, & Ries, 2016). When the financial crisis struck in 2007, bank managers' weaknesses in internal governance, controls, and risk management proved to be a primary source of vulnerability (Liu et al., 2015). Inexperienced managers who lacked proficiencies of internal governance led to ineffective management of employees. Economically, employees' unethical behaviors in the financial industry affect everyone including other staff members and consumers (Mirshekary & Carr, 2015). The lack of ethics negatively impacts employee performance, growth in business development, and customer service. Gill (2012) concluded that if a lack of ethics in a business become public knowledge, that business loses credibility. In this study, I explored the strategies banking managers use to encourage ethical employee behaviors.

Problem Statement

Corporate misconduct results in a yearly loss of $40 billion dollars and remains a common crisis in financial institutions (Finn, 2015). In 2014, employee misconduct increased by 60%, which involved both managers and employees, with employee theft remaining the primary form of misconduct in the banking industry (Thau et al, 2015). The general business problem is that unethical behaviors of employees working in financial institutions contribute to organizational deviances and financial losses. The specific business problem is that some banking managers lack strategies to reduce unethical employee behaviors.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative, multiple case study was to explore strategies that banking managers use to reduce unethical employee behaviors. Banking managers from three financial institutions located in the Southeastern region of the United States served as the targeted population. This population was appropriate for the study because of participants' financial institutions' renewed commitments to business ethics. The resulting positive social change would be the potential to creating productive economic opportunities for individuals, alleviating poverty throughout local communities, and investing in health and education as the finding could affect social change/behavior.

Nature of the Study

I chose the qualitative method to explore strategies banking managers use to reduce unethical employee behaviors. Researchers use the qualitative method to gain an understanding of participants underlying opinions and motivations regarding a given problem that may provide insight into the problem (Bernard, 2012). My participants provided insight into the compositions of business ethics when reducing organizational transgressions. Therefore, the qualitative approach was appropriate for this study. Quantitative researchers use systematized processes to compare numerical data in an orderly way, targeting larger samples and the relationship between variables, or testing theories via statistical hypotheses (Maher, Markey, & Ebert-May, 2013). Examining a relationship between variables was not the purpose of this study. Therefore, the quantitative method was not applicable to this study. Researchers who use mixed methods integrate both qualitative and quantitative methodologies in a single study. The scope of this study did not require the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods, which led to the rejection of the mixed methods approach.

Qualitative researchers can choose from different designs (e.g., phenomenology, ethnography, or case study). For this study, I selected a multiple case study design. A case study design allows for a deep understanding of the phenomenon under investigation by using multiple sources of evidence (Yin, 2017). Using a multiple case study provided me with a comprehensive understanding of the processes involved in reducing unethical employee behaviors based on the demonstrated experiences of banking managers. A phenomenological investigation involves an empirical analysis that explores participants' real life perspectives (Gill, 2014). The collected research based on participants' real life perspectives would not have allowed me to identify strategies to implement an ethical atmosphere, which made the phenomenological design inappropriate for this study. Ethnographic researchers explore cultural phenomena by observing a targeted audience (Jerolmack & Khan, 2014). Interacting with and/or observing participants' behaviors would not reveal factors contributing to an ethical environment, and so the ethnographic approach was not relevant for this study.

Qualitative Research Question

The overarching research question for this study was: What strategies do banking managers use to reduce unethical employee behaviors?

Interview Questions

I asked the following interview questions to address the overarching research question for this qualitative multiple case study:

1. What strategies have you implemented to reduce unethical employee behaviors in your institution?
2. What barriers existed in implementing the strategies, and how did you address them?
3. How did the employees respond to the strategies implemented to reduce unethical behaviors?
4. What strategies worked best in reducing unethical employee behaviors?
5. What strategies failed in reducing unethical employee behaviors in the workplace?
6. How would you describe the role of trust in your organization?
7. What other demonstrated experiences would you like to share in reducing unethical employee behaviors?

Conceptual Framework

I used the Hunt and Vitell (H-V) theory as the conceptual framework for this study. Hunt and Vitell (1986) developed and used their ethical decision making model to carry out key strategies using a combination of utilitarian and deontological assessments.

Given that ethical corporate behavior is a result of employees' ethical behavior, Gazley, Sinha, and Rod (2016) tested the H-V model of marketing law transgressions that allowed researchers to link past transgressions and intent to disobey in the future by using different concepts of control. Based on the two assessments Gazley et al. identified four categories covering past transgression, consequences of past transgressions, future transgressions, and the effect of past transgressions. Gazley et al. discovered that some managers based their extent of controls on internal and external perceptions. Internally, managers defined controls as governing an ethical climate; externally, the manager detected risk in an organization by using his or her scope of the controls. Additionally, managers evaluated the conditions of motives, opportunities, and controls based upon the field of the employee transgressions (Muller et al., 2013). Overall, based on the results of the utilitarian and deontological assessments, Gazley et al. found that even allegations of corporate misconduct have reputational effects leading to potential reductions in profitability. Because the H-V theory aligned with this study, I used a combination of utilitarian and deontological assessments that provided a lens for exploring the strategies that some banking managers use to reduce unethical employee behaviors.

Operational Definitions

I used the following operational definitions of these key terms throughout the study:

Change oriented leadership: A term used in relation to the process of modification; rather than stemming from individual traits, this term describes how leaders treat and involve employees during transformations (Appelbaum, Degbe, MacDonald, & Nguyen-Quang, 2015).

Code of conduct: A tool for transmitting the organizational culture to its members, conferring on them a sense of common identity as members of a team (Kurz, Bauchau, Mahy, Glismann, van der Aa, & Simondon, 2017).

Conflict of interest: A situation that occurs when an individual or organization is involved in multiple interests, one of which could corrupt motivation (Liao, 2013).

Entrepreneurial leadership: A distinctive style of leadership that can be present in an organization of any size, type, or age, which influences the activities of an organized group toward goal achievement (Renko, Tarabishy, Carsrud, & Brännback, 2015).

Management control: A system within social, cultural, political, and economic environments that managers use to align employee behavior with organizational objectives and to supervise internal and external interdependencies (Efferin & Hartono, 2015).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

Assumptions are things researchers believe are true but that are unverifiable (Tsakas, 2014). In this study, I assumed that participant responses were factual. Because data collection consisted of interviews, I was unable to control the personal bias of the participants that may have informed their responses. Second, I assumed that the managers had a direct impact on their employees. The managers have a direct line of supervision for the employees, which made them influential to the team. Finally, I assumed that the participants had the knowledge and experience to share key strategies that contributed to financial institutions. Although participation was voluntary, I did not have any control over managers' willingness to share their insights.

Limitations

Limitations refer to weaknesses of a study that might influence the results and conclusions (Brutus & Duniewicz, 2012). I interviewed banking managers regarding the ethical environments of their organizations located in the Southeastern region of the United States. Point of views expressed are unlikely to resemble perceptions of employees located in other industries and demographic areas, thus limiting the findings. Because ethical behaviors and climates can change over time, time was also a limitation that impacted my study. I gathered data over 3 weeks and ensured rapid data evaluation to diminish the time delay between data collection and publication of the results. Another limitation included the possible difficulty in interpreting experiences pertaining to unethical behaviors, with some participants feeling uncomfortable about responding truthfully about issues pertaining to ethics.

Delimitations

Researchers use delimitations to define the boundaries for the study (Spitzmuller & Warnke, 2011). This case study focused on three financial institutions located in a small city in a Southeastern state. Examining national and international banks outside the geographic location was beyond the scope of this study. I also delimited the study to participants who had management roles and who systematically understood their organizations' core values and influenced business ethics in the organizational environment.

Significance of the Study

Findings from this study may be of value to different financial institutions, especially those in the Southeastern region of the United States, looking to reduce the costs of unethical employee behaviors. Moreover, the study is of potential significance to the society when bank managers have strategies to prevent unethical employee behaviors to build the organization's integrity, or reputation. In qualitative studies, the researcher should aim to make a difference in business practices by focusing on strategic proficiencies (Howell & Avolio, 2014). The insight gained from this study could help banking managers reduce unethical behaviors and increase the level of effectiveness of organizational culture.

Contribution to Business Practice

The FDIC has increased its scrutiny of financial institutions during the past several years. Severe breaches of trust and employee transgressions triggered this trend. Banks must transform into trusting organizations by adopting behavioral ethics and core values (Flint, 2013). Advancing research on organizational culture that promotes trust in banking positively affects banks' abilities to enhance their reputations. Findings from this study provide practitioners with guidelines on how to mitigate unethical behaviors within the organizational culture. My primary goal in this study was to explore strategies to create ethical organizational cultures in financial institutions. Banking managers could use the results of this study to regulate the internal organizational environment to promote ethical behavior. Organizational culture and ethics are of paramount importance in restoring a robust and trustworthy financial system (Flint, 2013).

Implications for Social Change

The findings of this study contribute to positive social change by advancing ethical behavior in financial institutions. A bank's main role in society is to provide financial services to help people and businesses achieve their goals and reach their potential (Bülbül, 2013; Loi et al., 2016). Findings from this study could provide managers with strategic insights on how to create an ethical and trustworthy organizational culture. Entrepreneurial leadership and organizational trust promote stability across the business network (Bülbül, 2013) As a source of finance, employees who work in financial institutions directly generate value for customers, employees, suppliers, and shareholders (Loi et al., 2016). Enabling stakeholders and the economy to thrive is their primary initiative and contributes significantly to a healthy, well functioning society (Loi et al., 2016). Leaders interested in positive social change will find this study valuable because reducing unethical behaviors in financial institutions will develop trustworthy and ethical organizations.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

In the literature review, a researcher must successfully filter large amounts of information, synthesizing it into a report that allows readers to understand what is currently known about the specific topic (Pan, 2016). When gathering literature to review, I used the following research question as a guideline: What strategies do banking managers use to reduce unethical employee behaviors?

Adopting a thematic approach to the literature review, I focused on three components. The first component involved the conceptual framework, the research methodology, and materials on codes of conduct. The second component addressed my rationale for the review including the top strategies banking managers use in reducing unethical behaviors, followed by subsections with an emphasis on safeguarding confidential information and ethical reporting that helped identify what strategies banking managers use to strengthen managers' capabilities in financial institutions. The third component involved relevant literature concerned with organizational culture and climate.

For the literature review, I first used standard search strategies in three online databases (EBSCO, Google Scholar, and ProQuest) using the following keywords: *unethical behaviors, employee misconduct*, and *corporate scandals*. I then searched for the same keywords in other databases, such as Emerald and JSTOR as well as the ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. In total, these searches resulted in my retrieval of 134 sources for the literature review. Of that number, 119 had been published within 5 years of expected approval of this doctoral study, and 89 were peer-reviewed.

My purpose for this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the strategies banking managers use to reduce employee unethical behaviors. In the literature review, I searched for materials on ethical conduct in financial institutions. This process included an evaluation of how banking managers conduct ethical training and the strategies they use to reduce issues causing employee unethical behaviors. Walumbwa, Hartnell, and Misati (2017) suggested that managers and employees adhering to a code of conduct create an ethical organizational culture. Developing a positive and healthy corporate culture allows managers to improve the morale of workers in the organization, which may increase productivity and employee retention (Gürçay & Baron, 2017).

H-V Ethical Decision-Making Model

Hunt and Vitell (1986) introduced their H-V ethical decision-making model in 1986, then revised it slightly in 1993 (Gazley et al., 2016). The H-V model is used by researchers to evaluate key strategies carried out through a combination of utilitarian and deontological assessments (Hunt & Vitell, 1986). The utilitarian system allows the participant to make predictions using a deliberative response, whereas the deontological system focuses on an emotional impulse when responding to personal dilemmas (Gürçay & Baron, 2017). Using different concepts of corporate governance, Gazley et al. (2016) tested the H-V model for marketing law transgressions to link past transgressions with intent to transgress in the future. Walumbwa et al. (2017) posited that to understand ethical dilemmas, a researcher must explore and identify strategies to regulate ethical decision making that surrounds corporate governance. Therefore, I chose to use the H-V model to identify strategies researchers previously used to address my research question.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory

When developing their theory, Hunt and Vitell drew on Maslow's (1943) theory of human motivation, which, despite widespread criticism, bears much relevance to the study of human behavior (Winston, 2016). Maslow (1943) developed a model for human needs by presenting a hierarchy of five clusters regarding physical, psychological, and social needs: physiological needs, safety needs, love and belongingness needs, esteem needs, and the need for self-actualization. The first four are deficiency needs, also referred to as D-needs; and the need for self-actualization referenced are being needs (b-needs). Winston (2016) indicated that deficiency needs (d-needs) is a term used to define motivating behaviors, and growth needs (b-needs) is a term used to fuel one's desire to become a more self-actualizing individual (Winston, 2016; Maslow, 1987).

Some researchers use Maslow's theory to identify understanding how individuals behave and function in order to motivate them. Researchers have used Maslow's hierarchy of needs to understand managers' work ethics and identify how managers should provide a workplace that enables employees to fulfill their unique potentials. Employers continue to use Maslow's hierarchy of needs because the theory tends to enhance employee engagement, satisfaction, commitment, and performance. According to Maslow (1943), motivation occurs when an employee feels satisfied in a job setting, is consistently challenged, and has a variety of tasks to accomplish. In this study, I used Maslow's hierarchy of needs as a supporting theory when analyzing the strategies banking managers used to reduce employee unethical employees' behaviors in financial institutions.

Alderfer's ERG Theory

Alderfer (1967) redefined the five categories of Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs theory as three motivations: existence, relatedness, and growth (ERG). In his ERG theory, Alderfer suggested that a manager could best motivate employees by attempting to satisfy multiple employee needs simultaneously, allowing the employees to relapse from a higher level need to a lower level need. Most managers strongly believed that employees who progress to a higher need for motivation maintain a high level of work performance in an ethical environment (Walumbwa et al., 2017). According to Walumbwa et al. (2017) and Maslow, employees are empowered to make better decisions when managers provide ample training that focuses on one area at a time. The ERG theory was useful, and offered a lens to directly address the satisfaction of motivational levels. However, allowing employees to decrease their levels of motivation appeared critical in reducing unethical behaviors in financial institutions.

Employee Unethical Behaviors

Unethical employee behaviors occur daily in organizations (Askew, Beisler, & Keel, 2015). Unethical behaviors including ignoring rules, standards, regulations, and company guidelines lead to detrimental consequences for others (Askew et al., 2015). And slow an organization's performance and growth. Fleming et al. (2016) posited that unethical employee behaviors foster an environment of conflict, disrupt the company culture, and minimalize employee commitment, performance, and inspiration. When employee commitment, performance, and motivation decrease, the organization suffers significantly (Askew et al., 2015). As a result, companies want to prevent unethical behaviors and promote ethical behaviors.

Regulatory organizations use the Sarbanes Oxley Act to deliver internal controls that place financial organizations' compliance objectives within reach. Because of the Sarbanes Oxley Act, employers must comply with a corporate code of ethics and meet disclosure requirements (Ge, Koester, & McVay, 2017). While some CEOs in financial institutions may complain about the cost of the increased level of regulation, most CEOs appreciate the reminders involving corporate governance to avoid consequences if financial institutions do not comply with the regulations of the act. Fleming, Riley, Hermanson, and Kranacher (2016) noted that the 2016 report from the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners (ACFE) showed how a typical business could anticipate losing 5% of its annual revenue to fraudulent employee activity. Scholten and Ellemers (2016) argued that to prevent unethical behaviors and business crises resulting from employee misconduct, companies should operate around a set of core values that do not place a larger importance on maximizing profit at the risk of ensuring safety.

The employer has the right to expect its employees to behave according to company policies (Fleming et al., 2016). Ge et al. (2017) posited that most employers implement company policies against deception, coercion, and illegal activities to convey trustworthiness to their customers and employees. Scholten and Ellemers (2016) suggested that leaders in organizations use transparency, communication, and accountability around ethical behaviors as leadership strategies to reduce unethical behaviors. Leaders in organizations that nudge employees in the wrong direction encourage unethical behaviors such as greed, conflict of interest, and lack of transparency. These types of behaviors lead employees to a skewed view of reality and ultimately contribute to ethical violations (Scholten & Ellemers, 2016).

Greed and financial behaviors. Unfortunately, greed exists in most financial markets (Takacs Haynes, Campbell, & Hitt, 2017).). Senior professionals working in the U.S. and U.K financial sectors (including fund managers, bankers, analysts, and asset managers) discovered that 25% of employees who observed or conducted unethical behavior in their organizations felt pressured by bonuses or compensation plans to attain personal benefits (Labaton & Sucharow, 2012). Labaton and Sucharow (2012) added that some management collaborators and banking staff become more interested in maximizing their personal wealth and increasing gains from their present leadership or management position than securing their job or their corporation's security and existence. For example, Enron provided contractual incentives to executives, management, and lower level employees through shared bonuses that linked to their performances, and yet management still initiated fraudulent financial transactions (Grebe, 2013). Employees who conduct unethical behaviors threaten the reputation of the company along with the entire market. Without the trust of the market, capital availability and market liquidity are threatened (Fleming, Riley, Hermanson, & Kranacher, 2016).

Greed is the primary source of many economies (Braun, 2016). Economist and government officials thoroughly examined the causes of the last financial crisis that began in 2008, concluding that the crisis happened because of matters such as inadequate government regulation, lack of good financial reporting, and misunderstood risk factors (Fleming et al., 2016). Braun (2016) argued that people often associate greed with related constructs such as maximization, materialism, and self-interest. Empirical research on how greed affects an individual's financial outcome is scarce and inconclusive (Krekels & Pandelaere, 2015). An individual's financial situation is both positively and negatively influenced by their disposition to be greedy. Although the effects of greed on financial behavior might be small, greedy employees can face critical consequences over a lifetime (Seuntjens et al., 2016; Braun, 2016).

Another way in which greed might affect ethical decisions and behaviors is in an individual's life, especially in situations of poverty and low income. Lui (2015) concluded that a contributing factor to the financial crisis included the low income of some employees. Lui (2015) added that employees tend to care more about money and possessions, rather than the company's core values. Younger people tend to be greedier than older individuals (Seuntjens et al., 2016). More recently, Seuntjens et al. (2016) found that conscientiousness and neuroticism are associated with more financial distress in young adults. There are psychological processes that play an important role in financial behavior. Gross-Schaefer, Trigilio, Negus, and Ceng-Si (2000) posited that three out of every four businesses fail because of internal employees' greedy behaviors. Greed negatively affects financial institutions' profitability and increases the unemployment rate (Fleming et al., 2016; Gross-Schaefer et al., 2000).

Conflict of interest in a workplace. Conflict of interest arises when there is a clash between a professional obligation and an employee's personal interest (Loewenstein, Cain, & Sah, 2011). After employees experience a conflict of interest, they face ethical issues revolving around two options, but the employee can only select one to avoid making the wrong decision (Thompson, 2013; Effelsberg & Solga, 2015). Employees tend to struggle between their diverging interests, points of views, or allegiances because organizations' codes of conduct do not disclose any information regarding conflict of interest (Thompson, 2013). Employees must avoid any behaviors that signal conflicts of interest in workplaces (Effelsberg & Solga, 2015). Conflicts of interest can jeopardize an employee reputation, integrity, and trustworthiness in the eyes of management.

In the case of financial conflicts of interest, only one of the interests has a priority, and the problem is to ensure that the other interest does not control the employee. For example, most banks and brokers engage in the safekeeping of assets without harm. Because both entities provide access to the payments system while offering accounting services to track transactions and balances, the conflict arises between the bank and the broker, as each will want to satisfy their own interests (Thompson, 2013). Loewenstein et al. (2011) concluded that a bank employee experiences a conflict of interest when:

- A relative or close friend reports to a manager who affects their job responsibilities, compensation, or promotions.
- A male manager dates a female employee who reports to him or vice versa.
- An employee who works for a financial institution starts a company that provides similar services to similar clients/customers as of those their full-time employer. This is especially a conflict of interest when an employer had the employee to sign a non-compete agreement.
- A board of director accepts fees and provides advice to another financial institution that is in direct competition with the financial institution where the board of directors remains positioned.

It is imperative that all organizations address conflicts of interest using a code of conduct along with other ethical situations an employee might encounter (Effelsberg & Solga, 2015). Thompson (2013) concluded that organizations that address ethical concerns such as conflict of interests in their code of conduct reduce the corruption of motivation or ethical decision making of that employee. In financial institutions, business ethics training must cover the exact same messaging as your code of conduct in a different way that helps employees retain the information. With the proper training, managers can provide scenarios to employees and help guide them in making the right decision when a conflict of interest arises (Larkin & Loewenstein, 2017). Effelsberg and Solga (2015) posited that even if an employee is aware of a conflict of interest, it is the manager priority to encourage the employee to disclose the information. Larkin and Loewenstein (2017) suggested that creating formal reporting policies allow employees to have an open channel of communication and ask questions.

A conflict of interest may also exist in organizations when employees engage in the practice of nepotism. Nepotism is a favoritism shown to relatives by individuals in a position of authority (Firfiray, Cruz, Neacsu, & Gomez-Mejia, 2018). The use of nepotism has negative effects on human resource management recruitment and selected practices because managers chose candidates for their friendships and blood relationships (Firfiray et al., 2018). Because the employees may not have the adequate relevant knowledge and job skills, they may not perform as well as suitably qualified candidates. In small states, improving performance and credibility requires a comprehensive but orchestrated institutional reform that combats corruption and frees up the latent potential of these organizations, redirecting their practices to serve developmental ends (Firfiray et al., 2018). The requirement for the employees who serve these ends must be competent, professional and ethically (Firfiray et al., 2018). Loewenstein et al. (2011) posited, employees tend to behave unethically and compromise the interest of their company for the benefit of relatives. If an employee realizes that nepotism exists, he or she should alert their supervisor or Human Resources to determine if a conflict of interest exists.

Lack of transparency in banks. In financial institutions, the organization may experience a lack of transparency when supervisors create confusion and ambiguity in the workplace (Giannetti, 2007). Without transparency, it is easy for the wrong information to become dispersed. Ikonen, Luoma-aho, and Bowen (2017) concluded that transparency is the primary element of a corporate governance framework because the manager provides all stakeholders with the information necessary to evaluate the financial institution's sustainability. Transparency is not meaningful if organizations bank policies and procedures are not accessible, timely, relevant and cultivate a new zeal for an effective contingency plan for managing systemic distress (Ikonene et al., 2017; Trettel et al., 2017).

Financial institutions can grow toxic when transparency is lacking. Transparency is not just a leader responsibility. Managers and employees contribute to organizational transparency as well. Lack of transparency in the workplace is due to a lack of trust from the employees (Ikonene et al., 2017; Loewenstein et al., 2011). Loewenstein et al. (2011) argued that when managers initiate ineffective programs, the employees' behaviors can result in regulatory and civil penalties, along with collateral damage to a company's brand and reputation. This type of unethical behavior initiated by employees could possibly lead to bank failures (Trettel et al., 2017). Therefore, the use of transparency must be the guiding principle for employee actions at every level of the financial institutions.

Leaders have linked transparency with communication to create an organization that engages with employees based on decisions and processes when creating an ethical environment (Farrell, 2016). Trettel et al. (2017) added that another key element used to foster a culture of trust between leaders and their employees include transparent leadership. Employees understand their role and the overarching purpose and core values of the company when they put their trust in their employer (Loewenstein et al., 2011). Although transparency is a tool that can increase productivity and employee happiness, it can also decrease the employee turnover rate in the organization. Therefore, it is imperative that managers introduce transparency into the workplace, keeping all employees up to date with current changes within the organization (Farrell, 2016).

Corporate Code of Conduct

Employers use codes of conduct to measure the quality of information guiding employees throughout the organization (Treguer-Felten, 2017; Cleek & Leonard, 1998). Adams, Tashchian, and Shore (2001) posited that one can view codes of conduct as attempts to institutionalize the morals and values of company founders such that he or she becomes part of the corporate culture to help socialize new individuals. While researchers continue to examine the many reasons why companies have ethical codes, one of the most substantial reasons include improving the organizational climate and culture so that individuals can behave ethically and understand the effectiveness of the organization (Treguer-Felten, 2017). Xu, Loi, and Ngo (2016) identified that an ethical climate and culture refer to aspects of an organization's context thought to influence employees' attitudes toward ethical behaviors. Schneider et al. (2013) also recommended that organizations use ethical climate and culture for the competing values framework as a first step of integrating the two disciplines (climate and culture).

Companies also use ethic codes to identify the organization's conduct standards, the types of ethical and legal issues employees may face in their organization, and the organization's core values (Xu et al., 2016; Bonner, Greenbaum, & Mayer, 2016). Many organizations require employees to sign a code of conduct on an annual basis. By signing the code of conduct, the employee pledges that he or she has read the code and agrees to all terms of the policy. Based on previous studies done on this topic (Schneider et al., 2013), I think reiterating the bank's code of conduct seems beneficial and may positively influence unethical employees' behaviors throughout organizations.

In a code of conduct, the organization reflects the culture and makes a statement throughout the workplace (Bonner et al., 2016). Employers use the code of conduct as a communication tool to inform internal and external stakeholders about what is valued by a particular organization, its employees, and management (Bonner et al., 2016; Xu et al., 2016). Schneider et al. (2013) posited that the executive team writes the codes of conduct to reflect a cross section of employees from various functions focusing on corporate communications, marketing, and human resources staff, depending on the organization and its internal mode of operation and management style. Using a code of conduct will enhance the integration within the organization and increase the involvement of more stakeholders during the implementation process (Bishop, 2013).

Code of conduct in financial institutions. In 2013, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) issued guidance to regulated financial institutions emphasizing the importance of an effective internal corporate code of conduct to the promotion of fair and ethical actions (Desai & Roberts, 2013). FDIC uses written standards to promote honest and ethical conduct and compliance with applicable laws and regulations by all individuals involved with a financial institution (Banks, 2016). Now that codes of conducts have become more effective (Bonner et al., 2016), Banks (2016) and Treguer-Felten (2017) suggested that financial institutions incorporate ethics into the policies to articulate the difference between right and wrong behaviors for the organization. Codes of conduct should apply to all directors, officers, and employees to protect the rights and assets of others inside and outside the organization (Desai & Roberts, 2013). Violations of the codes of conduct may also constitute violations of law, which may expose both employees and the organization to criminal or civil penalties (Banks, 2016; Bonner et al., 2016).

In a recent study, Fleming et. al (2016) recognized the leaders who continue to use fair and practices within financial institutions and understand and support the bank's core values and business operations. In relation to employees understanding ethical codes, Desai and Roberts (2013) suggested that every leader in a financial corporation must review its code of conduct annually to ensure that the code addresses the elements set forth in the FDIC's guidance and that the compliance officers implementing procedures (including training, monitoring, testing, and reporting, etc.) structure to best ensure compliance. Leaders that comply with FDIC's regulations may increase the commitment of employees' ethical practices. In addition, company leaders have begun to place their ethical code of conduct on company intranets and include the information in the employee handbook to ensure that all employees have access to the policy within the organization (Bishop, 2013).

Senior management must update the code of conduct frequently to encompass new business activities and convey the message to the employees by demonstrating integrity and ethical values of the highest standards (Tréguer-Felten, 2017; Bishop, 2013). The board of directors establish clear expectations based on acceptable business practices to ensure that the codes of conduct remains communicated and understood throughout the organizations (Banks, 2016), whereas the managers communicate the information in the codes of conduct to the employees during periodic training to help provide the employees with resources when questions arise (Desai et al., 2013). According to Mayer et al. (2013), these steps may not guarantee adherence to the code of conduct; however, providing a clear outline of resources and updating the organization's code of conduct will increase the effectiveness of the organization.

Safeguarding information in financial institutions. Regulatory agencies require financial institutions to acquire safeguard rules by developing a written security plan that describes banks program to protect customer information (Suwardi & Tohang, 2017). The plan must be appropriate to the bank's capacity and complexity, the nature and scope of its activities, and the sensitivity of how to handle and protect the customer's information (Suwardi & Tohang, 2017). In accordance with the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act of 1999, to protect sensitive customer information, financial institutions require administrative, technical, and physical safeguards (Fleming et al., 2016; Rezaee, Elmore, & Szendi, 2001). The chances of information infrastructures subjected to attacks have increased proportionally with the growth of networked, multinational organizations, and e-commerce (Fleming et al., 2016). Ula and Fuadi (2017) posited because financial institutions rely on the internet and computer technologies to operate his or her businesses and market exchanges, the detection of threats and security breaches slowly increased. Therefore, it is important that financial officers and the bank employees act honestly to promote ethical conduct and comply with the law, particularly as related to the maintenance of the financial institution (Banks, 2016). All employees within the organization should comply with the established procedures to safeguard the confidential information of others.

The percentage of threats regarding confidential information increased to 98% in 2009 compared to 83% in 2008; 89% of the threats contained exported user data, and 86% of them have a keystroke-logging component (Ula et al., 2017). According to Chandio et al. (2017), information systems have become the heart of modern banking and a primary asset to protect the organization from insiders, outsiders, and competitors in our world today. Bank employees must understand ethical banking practices to safeguard depositors' interests, maintain the stability of the systems and preserve the reputation of the financial institution (Ula et al., 2017). Employees who adhere to the highest ethical standards within an organization can prevent the law and corrupt practices within a financial institution.

Ethical reporting in financial institutions. Regulators, stakeholders and customers expect financial institutions to embed sustainable business practices as part of their ethical approach in conducting their businesses (Chalmers, 2016). As part of the social performer in society, financial institutions require certain resources to strengthen and enhance their ethics communication system. An ethics communication system is a structure used for employees to report improper behaviors, abuses, or to obtain guidance to provide aid to the affected entities in handling unethical concerns (Gilley et al., 2010). Chalmers (2016) posited that in resolving internal issues professionally, using an ethics communication system for employees minimize their emotions (e.g., anger, frustration, etc.) when reporting unethical concerns. Chalmers added that employees can use company hotlines, email addresses, or other forms of communication to report ethical concerns.

Bank employees work in a highly regulated environment. For this reason, it is important that the compliance officers coordinate the code of conduct across the company, providing ethical knowledge through different methods such as training, seminars, and workshops (Fein & Weibler, 2014). Desai et al. (2013) stated that compliance officers with applicable rules to govern management in the operation of the financial institution sets a prime example for the conduct and behavior of all employees. Ethical reporting plays a key role in risk assessment (Fein & Weibler, 2014), therefore, the compliance officer must work with management and operations to develop contingency plans to ensure that the issues relating to ethics and compliance consist of evaluations and monitoring (Chalmers, 2016). If employees do not comply with the rules and regulations, actions can lead to legal and administrative sanctions, financial losses, or damage the image and reputation of the financial institution (Desai et al., 2013).

Requesting employees to report unethical behavior depends on the reinforcement levels of the code of conduct (Mayer, Nurmohamed, Trevino, Shapiro, & Schimke, 2013). While it is important to avoid making frivolous allegations, bank employees should report observed malpractices if the evidence cannot be fully substantiated (Chalmer, 2016). Bank employees should also check and follow the bank's protocol in making a complaint and confine the complaint only to the compliance officer(s) to handle the company allegations. Fein and Weibler (2014) concluded that when compliance officers investigate company allegations, it is important that the employee report the behavior using a context of clarification. This self-regulatory process includes that the compliance officer ensures that the occurred behavior(s) aligns with the socially accepted moral standards of the organization (Fleming et al., 2016).

Ethical Culture

Ethical culture refers to characteristics within the organization in terms of formal and informal control systems (e.g., rules, reward systems, and norms) that aims specifically at influencing behavior (Pekerti & Arli, 2017; Trevi˜no, 1986). Important components of ethical culture at the organization level regarding formal systems include decision making processes, organizational structure, and performance management systems (Bonner, Greenbaum, & Mayer, 2016), whereas, informal control systems consist of norms, language, and rituals (Pekerti et al., 2017). Because employees in organizations pay close attention to performance recognition and what strategies managers use to discipline employees, the formal and informal control systems including setting goals and securing rewards to those goals remain important to organizational culture (Pekerti et al., 2017). Schneider, Enrhart, and Macey (2013) posited that shared assumptions, values, and beliefs within an organization, influence internal integration and external adaptation used to solve problems, in which all factors contribute to defining the organizational culture.

Organizational culture is a concept strictly linked to organizational climate. Both organizational culture and climate consist of shared meanings and guide decision-making (Coda, Silva, & Custodio, 2014). Pekerti et al. (2017) described ethical organizational culture as a subset of making decisions to influence employee ethical behaviors. Using a directional tool that provides employees with direction for his or her everyday behaviors including a reward and punishment system is based on an anthropological aspect of the organization (Huhtala, Kaptein, & Feldt, 2016). Aiken, Schlieder, and Wasson (2017) expressed anthropology both through research and an intervention aspect using effective strategies to solve ethical issues within organizations. Within the banking industry, leaders have come to realize that when building an organizational culture, employees' trust must start with their manager (Wallace et al., 2013). Baumgartner and Rauter (2017) discovered that organizational culture and ethics are of paramount importance to restoring a robust and trustworthy financial system.

Because business leaders consider ethical culture and climate as a critical factor in the initiation and implementation of transformations within organizations, upholding of an ethical culture in banking is of critical importance to regulators, the financial institution, employees and customers (Schneider et al., 2013). Because regulators use a financial infrastructure to strengthen organizations, it is imperative for employees to understand the functioning of organizations when leaders use corporate culture and climate as their two fundamental elements to increase both the effectiveness and efficiency in the organization (Huhtala et al., 2013; Schneider et al., 2013; Baumgartner and Rauter, 2017). Researchers continue to use the Treviño's (1986) ethical decision-making model to emphasize the importance of the organizational context by introducing the notion of ethical culture as a moderator to reduce unethical behaviors (Huhtala et al., 2016). Baumgartner and Rauter (2017) addressed the benefits organizations encounter when upholding an ethical culture including an increase in profitability. Executives who focus on acquiring an ethical culture using the practical framework to guide employees through the complexities not only enhances the image of the organization, but the organization's personality as well (Baumgartner & Rauter, 2017).

Organizational trust and banking. Organizational trust is an essential element of economic transactions required for employee engagement and organizational excellence (Algan & Cahuc, 2013). Bjørnskov and Méon (2013) concluded that the propensity to trust advances educational, institutional, and economics. The need for trust in financial institutions remains a fundamental building block of any organization and an important factor that makes issues pertaining to trust capable of making or breaking an organization's culture (Siebert, Martin, Bozic, & Docherty, 2015). Huhtala et al. (2016) posited, trust is a difficult attribute to measure and a delicate dynamic to maintain. Trust is a condition that diverges by degree based on the managerial leadership to employees, coworkers, and departments within an organization (Llewellyn, 2014). In the banking industry, employee trust takes a long time and much effort to develop, but only one event to diminish or eliminate completely (Huhtala et al., 2016).

Restoring trust in the banking industry remains an ongoing issue (Järvinen, 2014). Since the financial crisis of 2008, stakeholders question how banks can restore the trust of their clients (Bülbül, 2013). Armstrong (2012) posited that global financial institutions that resulted in high growth rates and assets, accompanied by a decline of concern for shareholders' capital. Business researchers conducted an annual survey across 27 countries that assessed perspectives about the state of trust in different institutions which demonstrated that very little has changed since 2008, and the trust lost in the financial and banking industries remained (Nienaber, Hofeditz, & Searle, 2014). Incentives to engage in risky investments lead to the deterioration of governance and trust (Armstrong, 2012). Nienaber et al. (2014) argued how corporate governance regulation interacts with managers' incentives and affects corporate trust and investment strategies. Banks' organizational culture and internal systems allowing untrustworthy behavior led to the public's loss of trust (Nienaber et al., 2014).

The trustworthiness of banks is crucial for sustainable customer relationships and relevant to the wider banking network (Bülbül, 2013). Within the organizational element is a culture of trust that impacts the organization's performance (Nienaber et al., 2014). Building a culture includes a cyclical process created by leaders, employees, and followers within the organization and is bounded by individuals' character, consistency of behavior, competency, and communication (Epstein and Buhavoc, 2014; Nienaber et al., 2014). It is important to note that the use of consistency separates the character of an employee because unethical individuals remain consistent with their behavior (Nienaber et al., 2014). The consistency of unethical behavior can have a detrimental impact on organizational trust; whereas consistent ethical behavior, character, and competence improve organizational trust (Nienaber et al., 2014).

Banks can benefit from organizational trust. Employees who work in financial institutions are predisposed to mistrust managers because of bad experiences with managers at other jobs in other companies (Shafer, 2015). Epstein and Buhavoc (2014), suggested that in the establishment of a sustainable social corporate culture, the key component to a successful manager is earning the employee’s trust. Epstein and Buhavor (2014) added, organizational trust has a lot to do with the numerous decisions that managers make every day. Employees trust managers who they believe are ethical and honest. Additionally, competent managers are not only competent in thinking strategically and executing effectively (Shafer, 2015), but also in doing their part to build employee engagement (Algan & Cahuc, 2013).

Organizational trust and ethical climates. An ethical climate has been defined as stable, psychologically meaningful perceptions members of organizations hold concerning ethical procedures and policies existing in their organizational subunits (Bachmann, Gillespie, & Priem, 2015). Employee tendency to trust refers to an employee’s internal dispositions and his or her willingness to become vulnerable to the actions of other people within the same environment (Stevens, MacDuffie, & Helper, 2015). Employees with a strong tendency to trust are more willing to take risks based on others because they generally tend to trust others more (Steven et al., 2015). Existing studies comprised that researchers began to examine the relationship between ethical climates and trust to help identify the different types of climates regarding ethical behaviors (Banchmann et al., 2015). Jiang and Probst (2015) posited that the moderating effect of an ethical climate regarding the relationship between individual trust and job-related outcomes, includes job satisfaction, commitment, job security, motivation, and engagement. Upholding an ethical infrastructure helps to protect the organization from unethical behaviors (Banchmann et al., 2015). Benevolent climates have a positive effect on trust in the organization (Simha, Stachowicz, & Stanusch, 2015). Egoistic climates had a negative effect on supervisory and organizational trust (Simha et al., 2015). Managers using successful practices within organizations can influence ethical behavior (Fu & Deshpande, 2014). If managers believed that ethical behavior is necessary for organizational climates, such a perception would be a strong motivation for unethical behavior (Simha et al., 2015; Bachmann et al., 2015).

One important factor used to influence ethical behaviors of employees is the ethical climate of an organization (Fu & Deshapande, 2014). An ethical climate represents the shared perceptions of how managers address ethical problems when correcting unethical behavior (Shafer, 2015). Fu and Deshapande (2014) used previous work done on an ethical theory using Kohlberg (1967, 1984) moral development and sociocultural theories of organizations to investigate the different types of ethical climate within an organization. Fu and Deshapande (2014) addressed the Kohlberg (1967) theory regarding the development of 36 moral climate descriptions which included certain criteria (caring, principled, or instrumental) and the level of analysis (individual, organizational, or humanity). Kohlberg (1967) emerged six climate types from the factor analysis. Fu and Deshapande (2014) used the climate types to measure the ethical climate of the sample non-profit organization identifying the perceived ethical practices of successful manager contributions to an ethical climate.

Scholars have stressed over time the importance of human resource management (HRM) in creating and sustaining an ethical climate in organizations. Human resource management (HRM) can promote ethical behaviors using HRM practices as a tool to successfully create ethical climates, suggest strong collaboration between HRM manager and managers from other departments to promote corporate ethics (Guerci et al., 2015). Guerci et al. (2015) presented that human resource (HR) practitioners on average have an ethics management competence and should involve in ethics management. Ethics management as a component of the organization’s strategy provides a framework that helps employees to understand the need to create an ethical organizational climate (Guerci et al., 2015). Blome and Paulraj (2013) added top management’s ethical norms and the implementation of the code of conduct influence ethical climates.

The role of HRM in promoting ethical behaviors in organizations is undeniable. Research about the effects of human resource management (HRM) practices on ethical climates revealed that opportunity-enhancing HRM practices served benevolent and principled ethical climates (Guerci et al., 2015). An ethical climate represents an important window to understand the ethical orientation of an organization (Guerci et al., 2015). Motivation enhancing HRM practices, on the other hand, initiated egoistic climates (Guerci et al., 2015). Understanding the existence of an ethical climate in an organization allows HRM to develop practices to foster an ethical culture (Shafer, 2015). HRM contributes to create and sustain ethics, ethical culture, and ethical climate by embedding ethical orientation in every functional dimension of HRM within organizations because ethical climates have an impact on the extent to which the organization experiences serious ethical problems (Guerci et al., 2015).

Ethical climate is a type of work climate which guides ethical behavior within an organization (Fu & Deshapande, 2014). Employees who work in ethical climates assist other employees in deciding what is right or wrong behavior within an organization (Fu & Deshapande, 2014). Given that an organization's ethical image can be positively perceived by customers (Fu & Deshapande, 2014), most employers expect their employees to increase customer satisfaction. Customer's satisfaction refers to a customer's overall evaluation based on their purchase and consumption experiences with products or services (Steven et al., 2015).

Organizational trust and ethical leadership. Ethical leadership is 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 (Walumbwa et at., 2017). Ethical leadership is vital to a leader's credibility and his or her potential to exert meaningful influence (Engelbrecht, Heine, & Mahembe, 2017). This credibility of ethical leaders is likely to have a significant influence on trust between a leader and followers (Engelbrecht et al., 2017). Recent studies show that employees tend to have a greater job satisfaction when they work under a leader who acts as a primary source of ethical leadership (Mo & Shi, 2017). Ethical leaders who serve as legitimate role models influence employees by capturing their attention and making sure the message of positive ethics salient in their organizations (Mo & Shi, 2017). Employees engage in open communication and express their true emotions when leaders are open and honest (Mo & Shi, 2017).

Walumbwa et al. (2017) posited that ethical leadership has garnered and increased attention among academics and practitioners alike as organizations aim to attenuate liabilities associated with unethical conduct. Walumbwa et al. added the heightened interest in promoting ethical leadership is warranted because ethical leadership increases employees' abilities to deal with conflict situations and reduces employee misconduct. In addition, integrity, which refers to adherence to moral principles, captures the essence of ethical values and therefore can be seen as an important driver of ethical leadership (Engelbrecht et al., 2017). Researchers who conducted studies on business ethics in the past focused on the positive impact of ethical leadership at the team or organizational level (Mo & Shi, 2017). Because an organization’s core values are important, ethical leadership can enhance a team-level ethical culture/climate that subsequently leads to individual employees’ ethical and unethical cognition and behaviors (Walumbwa et al., 2017).

While ethical leaders attempt to build a loyal relationship with employees who are willing to engage in learning behaviors, it remains uncertain that coworkers' behaviors are a constraint to ethical leadership's influence on group learning behaviors (Mo & Shi, 2017). This issue is important for ethical research because both leaders and followers are influential sources of normative expectations that guide group behavior and learning (Walumbwa et al., 2017; Engelbrecht et al., 2017). Hartnell, Kinicki, Lambert, Fugate, and Doyle Corner (2016) posited that leaders are credible role models whose behavior signals to employees what attitudes and behaviors are desired, expected, and rewarded in the workplace. Therefore, employee behavior remains a salient source of normative control because group members' behaviors define the expectations of other group members, express core group values, and clarify what is distinctive about the group's identity (Mo & Shi, 2017). Extant research shows that group members' behaviors and expectations can be an effective source of normative cues and social control (Engelbrecht et al., 2017; Walumbwa et al., 2017). When group members explore and evaluate alternative methods, ask questions, challenge assumptions, reflect on their own actions, hold each other accountable, clarify their expertise, demonstrate their capabilities, and experiment with new behavior patterns, members learn new skills and discover new, constructive interaction patterns (Engelbrecht et al., 2017).

Practitioners, consultants, and academic researchers view trust as an important concept that appears to be a widespread agreement on the importance of human conduct (Suk Bong, Ullah, & Won Jun, 2015). Trust and ethical leadership are attributes that influence the organizational climate that affects the leader’s behavior and organizational performance (Suk Bong et al., 2015). Simha et al. (2015) emphasized that when a leader recognizes the employees’ contributions to building an ethical work climate, the relationship between leader and followers become one of trust. In addition, organizational trust leads to a shared work climate not only by employees, but also by the stakeholders such as consumers, investors, and the community in which the firm does business (Hartnell et al., 2016; Suk Bong et al., 2015).

Transition

Unethical employees' behaviors remain a problem with a financial cost to corporations and employees. As the researcher, identifying the strategies banking managers use to reduce unethical employees' behaviors is the overarching goal of my research. In Section 1, I included the purpose as well as the significance of conducting the study involving managers and the effects they have on employees' unethical behaviors in the workplace. This section also contained definitions of terms used throughout the study. Section 2 consists of a description of the participants in the study, the research method and design, the data collection strategies, and a discussion regarding ethical concerns. In Section 3, I provide discussion of the data collection process and analysis regarding a presentation of the findings, following the suggestions on how the study affects the banking professional community and include the implications for social change. Section 3 also includes recommendations for further research on this topic. All three sections related to the overall research question of the study: What strategies do some banking managers use to reduce unethical behaviors in financial institutions?

Section 2: The Project

In Section 2, I identify the steps I took to reach the overall objective of the research project. This section begins with a reiteration of the purpose statement presented. Next, I present a rationale for my role as the researcher, followed by a brief discussion regarding research method and design, and population and sampling. In the remainder of this section, I discuss the ethical protection of each participant and provide in-depth information on the data collection and analysis process.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative, multiple case study was to explore strategies that banking managers use to reduce unethical employee behaviors. Banking managers from three financial institutions located in the Southeastern region of the United States served as the targeted population. This population was appropriate for the study because of participants' financial institutions' renewed commitments to business ethics. The resulting positive social change would be the potential to creating productive economic opportunities for individuals, alleviating poverty throughout local communities, and investing in health and education as the finding could affect social change/behavior.

Role of the Researcher

Qualitative researchers employ methods that ground their analyses in real life, which allows them to examine participants' social experiences and the meaning the produce in a specific setting (Brown & Treviño, 2013). As the researcher, my goal was to analyze participants' key strategies used to reduce employee unethical behaviors then interpret interview data. In addition, identifying consistency between the interpretations with the use of triangulation supported and developed an understanding of my qualitative multiple-case study and helped mitigate bias. My interview protocol served to guide the data collection and interview process (Brown et al., 2013). Because this study involved human subjects, the relationships I established with the participants could have raised a range of different ethical concerns such as respect for privacy and the establishment of honest and open interactions (see Cope, 2014). To ensure ethical procedures throughout the research process, I referred to the Belmont Report protocol. The Belmont Report outlined protocols to ensure ethical research. I used key strategies such as highly respecting the participants' morals and beliefs, ensuring confidentiality, and maintaining fidelity to participants' responses to minimize any misrepresentations. During the interviews, no participants rejected or refused to participate at any time. However, I informed each participant of their rights and risks, including their right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

Participants

Effective participant recruitment is vital to the success of a research study, and yet many researchers fail to recruit a sufficient number of participants (Newington & Metcalfe, 2014). Using a purposive sample, I interviewed 6 banking managers with experience in implementing ethical strategies for their organizations. I recruited participants via letters, emails, and phone conversations. The vice president of each bank identified and recommended the participants based on the following criteria: (a) was at least 18 years of age, (b) was employed as a banking manager for at least 2 years, and (c) had managerial experience in implementing effective strategies to build and strengthen employees' ethical behaviors. I used a research schedule to determine the participant's eligibility. Using a research schedule allows the researcher to determine who is eligible to participate in the study (Taylor, 2013). Those who agreed to participate signed a consent form before the interviews took place. I used general strategies to gain access to the participants such as making telephone reminders. The strategies for establishing a working relationship with the participants consisted of employing project identity to enhance the participants' commitment to providing their thoughful responses regarding strategies for reducing employee unethical behaviors. Researchers often use project identity to help the participant recognize the project and the materials associated with the project from beginning to end (Penckofer, Byrn, Mumby, & Ferrans, 2011). Using identity as a recruitment and retention strategy included knowing the participants' attributes (personal and available resources) and treating them with respect. I emphasized respect to gain the participants' trust during the interview process.

Research Method and Design

Research Method

A research method is a set of procedures that structure a research project (Reale, 2014). Yin (2014) posited that the qualitative method allows the researcher to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events such as individual life cycles, small group behavior, organizational and managerial processes, neighborhood change, school performance, and international relations. Qualitative researchers seek to understand reality through interaction with the research subjects (Haneef, 2013). Haneef (2013) noted that the researcher must transfer the findings from one setting to another using subjective interpretation. In this study, I worked to show how banking managers implement strategies to reduce unethical behaviors in an organization by using a subjective examination of the participants' demonstrated experiences. Qualitative methodology was thus an appropriate choice for my research.

Quantitative methods relate to the positivist worldview, which presumes an objective reality independent of the researcher (Whyuni, 2012). Babones (2015) concluded that in positivist studies, the researcher is independent of the study, and there are no provisions for human interest in the study. Using a quantitative design allows the researcher to compare numerical data in a systematic way, targeting larger samples or testing theories using statistical hypotheses (Maher et al., 2013). The aim of quantitative research is to gather and generalize numerical data across groups of people to explain a phenomenon (Haneef, 2013). A quantitative method was not appropriate for this research because using statistical analyses would not reveal the strategies banking managers use to reduce employee unethical behaviors.

Mixed methods research involves the integration of qualitative and quantitative methodology in a single study (Vink, Van Tartwijk, Bolk, & Verloop, 2015). For a mixed methods approach, the researcher addresses complex research problems that are difficult to understand using a single research method (Venkatesh et al., 2013). The mixed methods researcher's aim is to provide a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone could provide (Whyuni, 2012). My exploration of strategies banking manager's use to reduce employee unethical behaviors did not require the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods. Therefore, a mixed methods approach was not suited to the study.

Research Design

There are various types of research designs that researchers use to analyzed different research topics (Yin, 2014). I selected a multiple case study design to explore the strategies banking managers use to reduce unethical employee behaviors. Goldberg and Allen (2015) posited that when unethical behaviors are hard to minimize, researchers must use a multiple case study design to examine the events associated with a full variety of evidence including documents, artifacts, interviews, and observations. Using a multiple-case study design ensures external validity and guards against researcher bias by providing a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under study (Beaudoin, Cianci, & Tsakumis, 2015).

In a case study, researchers explore a real life, contemporary case or multiple bounded cases over time using detailed, in depth data collection involving multiple sources of information (Yin, 2014). As the researcher, using a multiple case study design allowed to account for multiple experiences in this study. Researchers who use multiple case study design identify repeated patterns, which increases the robustness of the findings (Vohra, 2014). Other qualitative research designs that did not meet my needs for this study included focus groups, ethnography, phenomenology, and narrative. Focus groups involve group participation used for the collection of qualitative data in lieu of individual responses to formal questions (Weber, 2014). A focus group design was inappropriate for this study because the qualitative data needed for this case study involved individuals' responses and not a group discussion. Researchers use an ethnographic research design to collect, analyze, and observe information based on specific cultures in the field of study (Mears, 2013). I did not examine strategies to establish an ethical environment from a cultural perspective. Therefore, an ethnographic design was not suitable for this study. Phenomenology refers to an occurrence or experience regarding the reactions, perceptions, and feelings of an individual or group of individuals (Mjøsund et. al., 2017). Examining the participants' reactions, perceptions, or feelings was not the purpose of this study, making the phenomenological design unsuitable. A narrative design refers to stories told through the lives of individuals including elements such as the setting, characters, problems, actions, and resolutions (Holt, 2010). The narrative design is useful when creating an aggregate of narratives, each bearing on the participants' lives. Organizational ethics is a field full of principles, values, and decisions which did not permit the choice of a narrative design.

Saturation is a tool used for ensuring sufficient data for the study (Hennink, Kaiser, & Marconi, 2017). Failure to reach data saturation negatively impacts the quality of the research and hampers content validity (Vohra, 2014). Some ways to ensure reaching data saturation include mitigating personal bias, using triangulation, and paying attention to the richness of data (Hennink et al., 2017). To reach data saturation, I mitigated personal bias by implementing strategies to identify the case boundaries of the study.

Population and Sampling

The sample for this multiple case study consisted of banking managers from three different financial institutions located in the Southeastern region of the United States. This sample was appropriate for understanding how participants developed effective strategies to train employees to minimize unethical behaviors. The criteria for I used to recruit study participants was as follows: (a) they are banking managers and employed by a financial institution in the Southeast, and (b) they had a minimum of two years of managerial experience with effective strategies to build and strengthen employees' ethical behaviors. The banking managers' work relationships with his or her financial institution and demonstrated experiences in using ethical strategies are the primary criteria I used for selecting participants. The participants from the targeted population were not determined by race or gender.

I decided to use a purposeful criterion sampling method in this study. The purposive sample included 6 banking managers who demonstrated effective strategies for minimizing unethical behaviors. Purposeful sampling was appropriate because the targeted population consisted of specific participants such as banking managers employed by financial institutions (see Marshall, Cardon, Poddar, & Fontenot, 2013). Palinkas, Horwitz, Green, Wisdom, Duan, and Hoagwood (2015) concluded that a purposeful sampling method is more detailed than other superficial sampling methods and could provide a researcher with data-rich information that is specific and targeted to the study.

Using an appropriate process for recording the findings included interviewing participants to reach data saturation. Data saturation entailed bringing new participants into the study until I found redundancy or replication of information in participant responses and no new insights emerged (see Stewart, 2012).

Ethical Research

Research protocols typically center on four dimensions: (a) privacy and confidentiality, (b) informed consent, (c) protection of vulnerable groups, and (d) the avoidance of harm (Barker, 2013). To avoid conducting unethical research, I first requested the approval of the Institutional Review Board (IRB), ensuring compliance with the ethical standards of Walden University. Most universities provide a list of the kinds of research which require ethical clearance using the greatest elements to minimize harm to participants (Said & Omar, 2014). Upon the approval of the IRB, I conducted a research study based on the appropriate skills and qualifications of the ethical standards. The IRB approval number for the study is 06-01-18-0536881.

All participating individuals received an informed consent form. Each participant completed and return the form within 4 calendar days. The informed consent form included a brief description and other primary information regarding the relevance of the study. Because the participants enlisted as volunteers, there were no incentives provided. However, each participant received a verbal “thank you” for his or her time and participation as compensation. Although the consent form included the procedures for participation withdrawal, each respondent carried out their full participation rights.

Researchers must minimize the risk of harm to participants (Crowther & Llyd, 2012). It is the researcher’s priority to assure the participants of their privacy and describe in much detail the procedures for protecting the data. The protection of the data collected for this study included building a relationship with the participants and assuring confidentiality by using a private setting to conduct the interviews then storing the data in a locked fireproof safe in my home for 5 years. Gaining the participant's trust included the use of facilitation by explaining the role of the participant in the study and ensuring that he or she understood their rights to withdraw from the study without any obligation or cost (Timraz et al., 2017).

Data Collection Instruments

As the primary data collection instrument for this study, it is important to understand that the task of data collection includes replicating until further coding is no longer feasible to avoid hampering the validity and transferability of the study results ((Mohammed, Peter, Gastaldo, & Howell, 2015). Yin (2014) determined that a good case study researcher must ask good questions, be a good listener, have a strong grasp of the problem investigated, and avoid bias. As the researcher, I was the primary source of data collection and obtained the remainder of data by gathering, analyzing, recording, and processing information based on the strategies banking managers use to reduce unethical employee behaviors in financial institutions.

Data collection in qualitative research includes a variety of methods: interviews, direct observations, and document analysis (Palinkas et al., 2015). In addition to given attention to the four sources of data collection, the stream for triangulating the data included following protocol, creating a chain of evidence, and ensuring the database for the study is appropriate. Another empirical source of data collection came from face to face interviews with the managers of the case company. The primary strategy was to apprehend the meaning from the selected participants based on their demonstrated experiences using semistructured questions during the interview. The interview questions consisted of 7 semistructured questions to acquire insights in recovering the strategies of banking managers for reducing unethical behavior in financial institutions (see Appendix A). Using semistructured questions during interviews structured the content analysis and promoted the generalization of the findings. Other researchers have successfully used this combination of data collection techniques to gain insights about ethicality and trust in organizations (Anyan, 2013).

The data collection process consisted of audio recorded interviews and reflective note taking. Therefore, the documentary information was the final source of data collection. Documentation helps to understand the organizational context and can take on many forms, such as administrative documents, event reports, and internal records (Poulis, Poulis, & Plakoyiannaki, 2013). During the interview process, I adhered to the interview protocol and pre-labeled each folder to differentiate the participant's data retrieved. The participants' names were necessary due to the use of the signed consent forms. The folders included the participant's signed informed consent, as well as interview notes, but did not specify the names of the respondents who participated in the study. To enhance reliability, each folder had a specific code referencing an assigned number to keep the participants' identities confidential. Zohrabi (2013) posited that a cautious selection of participants enhances both reliability and validity.

Because reliability is problematic when using interview questions, to ensure reliability, the data must be consistent (Leug, 2015). Leug (2015) postulates that the validation process relies on the participants and appropriateness of the study. The objective was to include questions that replicate themes to identify strategies based on the participant's demonstrated experiences. In the audit trail, the details included the gathering of the data, identifying themes, and the results obtained for this study. After obtaining rich and thick data descriptions, using member checking helped to identify the achievement of data saturation.

Data Collection Technique

Purposeful sampling is a nonprobability sampling used in qualitative research for the identification and selection of information rich cases related to the phenomenon of the study (Panlinkas et al., 2015). Doody and Noonam (2013) recommended using purposeful sampling for synthesizing qualitative research because published literature includes a sparse discussion on how to apply different strategies within research. I conducted semistructured interviews and gathered data to address the overarching research question: What strategies do banking managers use to reduce unethical behaviors in financial institutions. Semistructured interviews consist of several key questions that allow the researcher to diverge and pursue an idea or response in more detail (Doody & Noonan, 2013). Yin (2017) suggested during interviews, it is imperative that the researcher design an interview schedule to ask questions to yield as much information about the study's phenomenon as possible and be able to address the aims and objective of the research. Researchers exploiting the benefits of interviewing tend to minimize the risk of bias, systematically draw from detailed analysis of the data, and perceive and demonstrate appropriate non-verbal communication for culture and context (Doody et al., 2013). The advantages of gathering primary data include issues and subjects evaluated that covers in depth information in detail (Yin, 2014). Disadvantages associated with primary data include the skills of the researcher influenced by personal habits and biases (Yin, 2014).

Because qualitative studies often involve interpretation, I employed member checking to enhance the reliability and validity of the data collection process. Member checking is a summary that qualitative researchers rely on to ensure credibility by giving participants opportunities to correct errors, challenge interpretations and assess results after transcribing the data (Dasgupta, 2015; Morse & McEvoy, 2014). The member checking process included emailing each participant an interpretation of the interview requesting verification. Each participant verified and returned their summary within 48 hours. There were no requested follow-up member checking interviews scheduled.

During interviews, the researcher generates contextual data of participants' experiences and their interpretation (Doody et al., 2013). As the researcher, I designed an interview protocol to guide the data collection process. Researchers use an interview protocol as a guide to achieve a comfortable interaction with the participant (Doody et al., 2013; Jacob & Furgerson, 2012). The protocol includes planning for any difficulties that may arise prompts and reminds the researcher of what to say before and after the interview (Jacob & Furgerson, 2012). According to Taylor (2013), researchers provide structure during the data collection process when adhering to an interview protocol. Yin

(2014) supported this statement, including that interview schedules also increase the reliability of the study. The distribution of the participant's invitation and consent form consisted of the researcher sending the request to the banking manager's email. Upon the retrieval of the signed invitation and consent forms, each participant scheduled and received a time for their interview. During the interviews, my personal iPhone 5s served as the recording device. Before commencing the interview, ensuring that the participants understood and sign the consent form was a priority. Throughout the interview, each participant responded to 7 open-end questions, followed by probing questions for clarification. The closing of the interview included a huge thank you to the participant. After transcribing the data, the participants received a copy of the interpretation of the interview via email to verify the collected information. I requested that each participant verify the notes taken during the interview.

Yin (2014) posited that a pilot study aims at refining the intended research process. A pilot study was not substantial because I did not collect preliminary data before committing to my qualitative study.

Data Organization Technique

The prerequisites to focus on an efficient interview contains communicating with the participants, ensuring confidentiality, and assuring that all operating devices have a backup plan in case the researcher experiences technical issues (Fu, Huang, Ren, Weng, & Wang, 2017). I recorded the interviews using my iPhone 5s and used reflective notetaking as an alternative in case the device failed to operate. Additionally, I audio recorded interviews using Voice Recorder as a backup solution. After the participants completed the interviews, I transferred and saved the data to my personal computer using a mp3 audio file. The audio file consisted of two saved versions using different hard drives for security purposes. I used detail descriptions during the interview examinations and assigned pseudonyms for the participants and each financial institution to secure the information. I stored the data collection materials in a locked fireproof safe in my home for 5 years, after which I shredded and recycled the paper documents to comply with Walden's University records of retention rule. In addition, terminating the data also included physically destroying USB drive and wiping the memory clean on the hard drive (electronic documents). Stored data should always remain in a secured place to ensure confidentiality (Fu et al., 2016).

Data Analysis

Selecting the most appropriate method for data collection and using triangulation of different sources are important mechanisms in establishing validity (Yin, 2014). Data triangulation increases the validity of a study and supports data saturation (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Methodological triangulation refers to employing multiple research methods, which helps the researcher uses multiple methods of data collection attempting to gain an articulate, comprehensive view of the phenomenon (Fusch & Ness, 2015). I analyzed and organized data using different data collection methods, which included interview transcripts, archival records, and notes and journaling recorded throughout the data analysis process. Data from documentation included written material that helped to communicate mutual values with employees and other case-specific substantiation.

Archival records included policies and procedures retrieved from the company's external website.

Unlike a quantitative study, qualitative case studies build words generated by interviews or observational data that describe and summarize. (Woods, Paulus, Atkins, & Macklin, 2016). For the data analysis, I compiled different forms of rich data and thick descriptions to identify strategies based on the biographical responses of the participants regarding their demonstrated experiences. Disassembling the data included applying provisional codes to similar words and themes using NVivo™ software. When reassembling the data, the identification of the codes and patterns developed the key strategies for reducing unethical behaviors. I chose to use the Moustakas' modified van Kaam method for the data analysis. The Moustaka (1994) method included the following steps:

1. List all relevant experiences (*horizational)* and attach the relative importance of the experience in given sets.
2. Eliminate any information that is abstract, extraneous, vague, or insufficient to understand or categorize (reduction and elimination).
3. Clustering the remain information and identify themes *(thematizing*)
4. Develop a *textural* description.
5. Create a *structural* description.
6. Create a composite of *textual* and *structural* descriptions to obtain and synthesize the essence of the experience

Using the NVivo™ software allowed me to focus on the themes emerged from the collected data and the original research question. The central aim of using this tool was to enable a visual display of ideas from the data as an aid in developing and testing interpretations (Davidson, Thompson, & Harris, 2017). The NVivo™ software assisted with making connections, cross examined data, and validated the research material. Woods et al. (2015) posited that NVivo™ software is an important factor when mapping and interpreting qualitative data. The primary themes identified, related to my review of the literature and conceptual framework discussed further in Section 3 of the study.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability

In qualitative research, researchers use reliability as a term to identify the consistency of data (Zohrabi, 2013). When evaluating the reliability of the findings, Zohrabi (2013) recommended that a researcher address dependability. Researchers use dependability to establish trustworthiness and to ensure that the findings remain consistent and repeatable (Yin, 2014). To enhance dependability, the researcher must use an audit trail, properly select participants, consider conditions surrounding the interview, and choose appropriate methods of data collection (Eno & Dammak, 2014). I ensured dependability of the study by using member checking, providing the participants with summaries of their responses to review. The participants returned the summaries promptly. After receiving the summaries, I started gathering and analyzing the collected data.

Validity

Validity means that the researchers' findings accurately represent the phenomenon of the study (Zohrabi, 2013). In qualitative research, validity refers to elements that enhance the trustworthiness of a study (Elo et al., 2014). Obtaining trustworthiness increases dependability, credibility, transferability, and confirmability (Birt, Scott, Cavers, Campbell, & Walter, 2016; Dasgupta, 2015). As the researcher, enhancing validity consisted of conducting the initial interviews, accurately interpreting the participants' responses, and reviewing the summaries with the participants for validation. Leug (2015) argued that validity relies on the participants and the appropriateness of the study. I used member checking during the interview process to strive for trustworthiness.

Credibility. Credibility refers to the focus of the research and how well the researcher interprets the collected data. (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). Yin (2014) posited that selecting the most appropriate method for data collection and using triangulation of different sources are important mechanisms in establishing credibility. I increased the credibility of this study by outlining the rationale for choosing the case study design over other research designs. In addition, using methodological triangulation to verify the consistency of data sources based on multiple experiences contributed to increasing the creditability of this study.

Confirmability. Confirmability refers to the degree in which other individuals review and validate the results of the research (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004; Dasgupta, 2015). Researchers may use different strategies to achieve confirmability. Hancock, Mary, & RN COI, 2016) suggested that the achievement of confirmability consist of a researcher documenting comprehensive notes and the reflective diary that provides the rationale for decisions made in the study. As the researcher, using member checking, methodological triangulation, and documenting the procedures throughout the study ensured confirmability.

Transferability. Transferability refers to the degree to which the results of qualitative research is applicable to other contexts or settings (Hancock et al., 2016). In qualitative research, transferability requires the researcher to provide details about the case organization, sampling method, and participants (Hennink, et al., 2017). According to Graneheim and Lundman (2014), a researcher's rich and vigorous presentation of the findings, together with appropriate quotations, will enhance transferability. In determining the applicability of the study, I reported the findings through reflective note taking. In addition, providing sufficient thick descriptions of the phenomenon and allowing the participants to have a complete understanding of the study also enhanced transferability.

Data saturation. Data saturation is the point in research when no new themes occur, and no new information becomes available (Marshall et al., 2013). Failure to reach data saturation has an impact on the quality of the research conducted and interferes with the validity (Yin, 2014). The researcher can track saturation by noting major codes using a saturation grid listing with research questions against interviews and cover all bases of the saturation list (Hennink, et al., 2017). To reach data saturation, I used semistructured interview questions to identify strategies demonstrated by the participants. By providing a description of the strategies and rich, vivid quotes from the participants, I critiqued the credibility of the study and substantiated the interpretations. In addition, searching for reoccurring patterns across all sources of evidence consisted of printing my interview transcripts, connecting transcripts with documentation, and emerging all available data and coding relevant insights to initiate themes.

Transition and Summary

Section 2 included the reiteration of the purpose statement and a discussion regarding the research method and design chosen for this qualitative multiple-case study. Following the qualitative paradigm, I justified the appropriateness of using a qualitative multiple-case study design then covered the data collection strategies along with the research process used to enhance reliability and validity of the study. Section 3 includes the application for professional practice and implications for social change, following the presentation of the findings. I conclude Section 3 with recommendations for actions and further research on this topic.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies banking managers use to reduce unethical behaviors in financial institutions. Banking managers from ethical financial institutions located in the Southeastern United States who were involved in ethical decision making affecting the organizational culture served as participants for this study. I conducted interviews with banking managers associated with different departments across the organizations, including loan operations, marketing (sales), and retail banking. Analysis of interview data resulted in identification of four key strategies participants used to reduce unethical employee behaviors. The first strategy aimed at demonstrating intensive leadership skills by making choices and taking actions aligned with the organization's morals and values. Communicating effectively with others was the second most important strategy. Developing comprehensive training program(s) emerged as the third strategy. The fourth strategy involved working to ensure that employees adhered to all policies and procedures.

Presentation of the Findings

The overarching research question for this study was: What strategies do banking managers use to reduce unethical employee behaviors? I used participants' responses from face-to-face semistructured interviews to answer this question. As an important information source for managerial decision-making in an environment of change, employee voice has the potential to contribute to organizational sustainability (Muller et al., 2013). Muller et al. (2013) defined employee voice as the expression of change-oriented ideas, opinions, and suggestions to a specific target within the organization with the intent to improve workplace situations. In existing literature, managers reported unhealthy cultures, poor employee retention, and an unbalanced work life because of employee transgressions (Muller et al., 2013).

I recruited participants from three financial institutions. Eleven banking managers at these institutions met the criteria for this study. I contacted each, and six expressed interest and participated in this study. I sent each participant a recruitment email requesting them to review and sign the informed consent form. Each participant provided responses to seven interview questions and agreed to complete the member checking process to ensure an accurate representation of their acquired insights. Within 72 hours, I emailed copies of the interview summaries to each participant. All participants replied via email within 48 hours approving the summaries.

Because none of the participants shared any company documentation, my examination of the topic was based on interview interpretations and the documentation retrieved from the company websites. I amplified data collection using online sources (e.g., financial reports, mission statements, company policies, and disclosures), reflective note-taking, and direct observations to achieve methodological triangulation. Using an inductive approach to analyze data, I coded and categorized data until major themes emerged. I used NVivo software to code, organize, and classify multiple sources of data. To help distinguish the connection between the codes and themes, I used a mind-mapping approach. The mind mapping approach provided a format for representing the emergent themes that helped me understand the problems and identify associations between contributing factors generated from data collection.

Methodological triangulation and data analysis of different data sources revealed four major themes, explicitly leadership skills, communicating clearly, training programs, and policies and procedures. These four themes were associated with the following major strategies for reducing unethical employee behaviors: (a) demonstrating intensive leadership skills, (b) communicating unambiguously with others, (c) developing comprehensive training programs, and (d) establishing policies and procedures to deliver the core values of the organization.

Table 1 illustrates the frequency rate for each theme. The themes show what banking managers considered the key strategies for reducing unethical employee behaviors. The alignment between research findings, the conceptual framework, and literature demonstrate the reliability of the study.

Table 1

Frequency of References for Each Theme

Theme	Frequency	Rate of frequency %
Ethical leadership skills	41	35.33
Communicating clearly	32	27.24
Training programs	24	22.50
Policies and procedures	17	14.93

Theme 1: Ethical Leadership Skills

The most prominent strategy was demonstrating intensive leadership skills. This strategy aimed at good management to provide services to the community in an appropriate, efficient, equitable, and sustainable manner. Communicating a company's vision to others consists of good management and strategies for reducing unethical employee behaviors. Managers using ineffective leadership do not correspond with findings from the literature review. Participants reported that demonstrating this strategy involved continuously communicating the core values and expected results effectively based on the organization's business ethics. Each participant emphasized settings that characterized unethical employee behaviors in an organization. One participant explained the importance of intensive leadership noting, "Managers need to have the knowledge, skills, and understanding of their role, tasks, and purpose of the services they deliver. Knowledge and creative problem-solving help to promote ethical behaviors."

Ethical leadership is crucial to a leader's credibility and his or her potential to exert meaningful influence (Engelbrecht et al., 2017). This credibility of ethical leaders is likely to have a significant influence on trust between a leader and followers (Engelbrecht et al., 2017). This finding represents how managers create and foster an environment in which they and the people they manage are constantly learning. A significant portion of banking management involves leadership skills and competencies such as motivating staff, communicating and negotiating with stakeholders, and maintaining certain attitudes and behaviors that reduces unethical behaviors. Although participants refused to share documentation, one participant emphasized that their organization's core values remain accessible in the employee handbook, code of conduct, and are discussed throughout Banker Video Services (BVS) performance solutions training, which is used to assess employees' knowledge regularly. Building a common understanding of processes is a prerequisite for reducing unethical behaviors while demonstrating intensive leadership skills (Huang et al., 2016). Continuous education and learning of core values allowed the case company to successfully integrate intensive leadership skills in pursuit of controls targeting employee transgressions.

Theme 2: Clear Communication

Another major strategy was communicating clearly with others. Research has shown that effective lateral and workgroup communication leads to an improvement in overall company business ethics (Loi, Ngo, & Xu, 2016). Five participants explained the empowerment of upward communication, which resulted in a happy team. A dedicated manager organized informal department meetings on a weekly basis. These departmental meetings aimed at driving employee engagement and developing a connection with employees across the organization to emphasize the importance of ethical decision making. Internal and external perceptions and organizational transparency supported communication regarding organizational dilemmas which relate to concepts of the H-V theory. In recent studies, researchers have shown that effective communication increases with positive peer relationships and reduces unethical decision making (Anitha, 2014). The use of communication allows companies to be productive and operate effectively (Loi et al., 2016).

Another primary determinant of an ethical organization is HRM promotion of ethical behaviors by collaborating with managers from other departments to promote business ethics (Guerci et al., 2015). Participants 1, 2 and 5 posited that the tenure ranking in the organization was high because of the communication and environment. Participant 1 noted, "Last week will mark my 16th anniversary here, I feel well respected and at home here." Similarly, Participant 2 added, "There are many employees that have retired and returned because of the family environment." Participant 5 concluded, "Why leave an organization if the organization is built on trust and respect?"

Theme 3: Training Programs

Developing comprehensive training programs through structures and processes was the third strategy participants identified to reduce unethical employee behaviors. Because financial regulation changes are more frequent than ever, using effective training programs minimizes employee misconduct and compliance costs in organizations. Financial institutions focus on training programs to influence employees to behave ethically in comparison to other financial institutions (Askew, 2015; Chalmer, 2016). All respondents mentioned the importance of training programs. There were no cases where participants indicated dissatisfaction or unethical behaviors regarding their training development processes. Processes creating an ethical institution that related to training and rehabilitation included adopting special rewards programs, incentives, and training that primarily depend on the level of excellence and job performance, as well as personal capabilities.

The bank's organizational structure conducted training programs through dedicated departments (e.g. loan operations, marketing, and retail banking). The loan operations department reported to an external committee. Employees could report unethical behavior to the credit administration department by calling an independent number. Ethical leadership and lateral communication referenced the onset of deontological emotional impulses, while training programs resemble utilitarianism and shaped the organizational form aligning with H-V theory. The focus on training programs led one case company to reduce unethical employee behaviors by strengthening their performance in their current roles.

Theme 4: Policies and Procedures

Policies and procedures were the fourth strategy in reducing unethical employee behaviors. This strategy confirms existing literature on banking leaders acknowledging that the use of codes of conduct measures the quality of information guiding employees throughout the organization (Cleek & Leonard, 1998; Treguer-Felten, 2017). Participants perceived this factor as the most detrimental influence for employees. The organization's manager demonstrates intensive leadership skills embracing collaborative values of respect and inclusion growth. Therefore, most of the participants spoke of ways to communicate the organization's values during business development and performance management, throughout the origination of policy and procedures. Participant 1 noted, “Because most of the employees fail to read the hard copies, we are now required to view company policies and procedures through a web-based company site.” Participant 4 concluded, “I usually read the policies to gain a clear understanding of the expectations demanded from the organization.” Participant 6 added, “When I communicate the information to my employees, we discuss any concerns and the importance of the code of conduct.”

HRM’s essential role in creating an ethical environment confirms insights gained from existing literature (Blome & Paulraj, 2013; Guerci et al., 2015). HRM contributes to create and sustain ethics by embedding policies and procedures in every functional dimension to promote ethical behaviors on the extent to which the organization experiences serious ethical problems (Guerci et al., 2015). One of the primary policies used by HRM is the bank’s employee handbook. The employee handbook is generally divided into sections that identify a specific element within an organization (e.g., administrative, compliance, lending, and operational). Within these sections are numerous supporting policies and procedures that address various topics to facilitate the acquisition of ethical behavior (Brown & Treviño, 2013). Participant 3 closed their interview stating, “We use the employee handbook as a view to serve as a stimulus and accelerator of socialization within the organization.” Internally, I discovered that managers defined controls as governing an ethical environment; externally, managers detected risk in an organization by using his or her scope of the controls. Because managers based their extent of controls on internal and external perceptions, policy and procedures is a key strategy that aligned with H-V theory.

Applications to Professional Practice

Findings from this qualitative study are relevant to banking managers concentrating on reducing unethical employee behaviors. The specific business problem was that some banking managers lack strategies to reduce unethical behaviors in financial institutions. Underlying the specific business problem, I identified effective strategies to reduce unethical employee behaviors. Attempting to deliver clarification on how to solve this business problem, I provided industry insights to promote ethical behaviors within a financial institution. This financial institution won various business development awards and received acknowledgments for cultivating an ethical corporate culture. Respondents in this study, senior officers and practitioners, agreed on the importance of demonstrating trustworthy business practices through leaders and their followers as the primary initiative toward minimizing unethical behaviors (Flint, 2013; Liu et al., 2015). The primary strategies derived from this research were based on participants' insights to provide direction on how to reduce unethical employee behaviors. First, the most eminent finding highlights the importance of demonstrating intensive leadership skills. While intensive leadership is essential to producing and sustaining an ethical environment, the process is not complete without using effective communication to deliver the core values within an organization. Behavioral indicators that resemble leadership and communication into employee evaluations are an effective way of linking deontological and utilitarian assessments to value management. Banking managers will find this strategy beneficial as it provides a visual for creating a receptive atmosphere.

Insights regarding experiences gained from this research demonstrated the interchange between different strategies influencing ethical behaviors including intensive leadership skills, effective communication, training programs, and policies and procedures. Reducing unethical behaviors is not an inaccessible task. However, when standards are unclear and questionable, employees may find themselves questioning profoundly held values. Unless managers take appropriate action to address unethical behaviors, the system designed to define ethical conduct and promote an ethical environment must integrate and support different divisions within the organizations. Revealed as a critical factor, banking managers must use intensive leadership to maintain and communicate the ethical vision of an organization. Both effective communication and training programs provided the foundation of ethical behavior. Considering these findings, existing policies and procedures may need additional enhancements or the creation of new policies. Policy and procedures are to ensure consistency and signal to employees that the organization does not support immoral practices but provides a safe way to report unethical behaviors. The four themes generated from this research will help employers make sense of employees' actions and preferences when making decisions in a workplace.

Implications for Social Change

This study integrates research to stimulate positive social change. Findings provide a guideline to banking managers on how to reduce unethical employee behaviors. Because suspicion of banking existed after the 2007-2009 financial crisis struck, now resentment over periodic banking crises continues to undermine trust. There was a need for many financial institutions to adopt effective mechanisms for assessing and controlling unethical behaviors in a workplace. Translation of ethics involves moral understanding of intercultural common values inside and outside of an organization. Managers using ethical banking practices aim at stimulating societal well-being (Loi et al., 2016). Building trust, investing capital into non-profit organizations, and providing people and organizations access to credit, and networks, ensuring mutual growth through patient, will develop positive social impact. The implications involve inclusive growth creating productive economic opportunities for individuals, alleviating poverty throughout local communities, and investing in health and education as the finding could affect social change/behavior.

Recommendations for Action

The underlying axiom of findings from this study revealed the importance of reducing unethical employee behaviors. Linking different strategies that focus on ethical practices starts with defining the core values of the organization. Ethical values flow through the entire financial infrastructure of a business organization, shaping how it plans its strategy, interacts with customers, and manages its workforce. Stipulating ethical behaviors based on external influences will make the adoption of ethics more difficult.

Using intensive leadership skills and effective communication can be achieved by embracing collaborative values of respect and establishing an effective communication system across departments. Weekly departmental meetings, training programs, coaching to assess employees' satisfaction, and following annual evaluations are some recommendations in demonstrating intensive leadership skills and effective communication.

Training programs have a profound influence on employees and are an effective way to minimize unethical employee behaviors. Managers need to develop comprehensive training programs for employees to gain a clear understanding of the organization core values. Comprehensive training programs presence during employee orientation, business workshops, and behavioral webinars are recommendations to help employees understand the essentials of ethics regarding knowledge needed for maintaining an ethical environment.

The purpose of this study was exploring strategies that banking managers use to reduce unethical employee behaviors. I received access to award-winning ethical financial institutions, operating based on financial integration. The findings demonstrated a replication of best practice examples and will be useful to a variety of audience. First, banking managers focusing on ensuring ethical organizational behavior will find these recommendations valuable because they provide practical strategies on how to reduce unethical behaviors in a workplace. Second, policy makers, such as corporate governance institutions can draw on the findings listed here to enhance their policies and ensure a consistent direction across their organization. Third, findings from this study will be useful for any manager aiming to reduce unethical employee behavior. While findings were based on financial institutions, the essence of minimizing unethical behaviors is applicable to any organization.

I plan to provide a summary of findings to local corporate governance institutions. I will be available to present my findings during some chamber of commerce events and will inform my professional network about the primary insights gained from this research.

Recommendations for Further Research

The research undertaken for this study highlighted several limitations for which further research would be beneficial. As mentioned above, I questioned banking managers of three ethical financial institutions in the southeastern region of the United States regarding strategies for reducing unethical behaviors. Points of views expressed are unlikely to resemble perceptions of employees located in other financial industries and demographic areas limiting these findings. Further research can address this limitation by examining whether the research findings of this study are consistent with other demographical areas or other financial institutions.

The second recommendation for further research underlying the framework was ethical climates. Because ethical behaviors and climates can change over time, this was a limitation that impacted my study. Further research can reveal whether findings are applicable to an ethical climate in other organizations and financial industries with the use of ethical scenarios, rather than a list of issues supported by studies in business ethics fields. Using scenarios to address ethical issues increases environmental quality, energy, and technology when sustaining an ethical environment (Guerci et al., 2015).

A confluence of trends across corporate governance worldwide underlies current strong concerns about employee’s reporting of ethical issues in organizations, including how employees understand (un)ethical work behavior and protection for employees, organizations, and society. To sustain interest and impact, researchers need rigorous and relevant research. Further research must include advancing employee silence of ethics by expanding theories using a multi-perspective, integrative approach and testing models that span social, cognitive, and emotional elements in processes of silence. At this point, educating employees on ethical reporting promotes a healthy and driven workforce, more successful and sustainable organizations, and more engaged societies.

These recommendations provide an outline to improve future research which explores the effectiveness of educating employees on business ethics in a workplace. In the late 1950s, researchers identified this topic as an important issue that appears to be more important today (Guerci et al., 2015). Captivating insights are emerging from tests of multilevel models to improve personal interactions in increasing hierarchies and a leader's authority following an ethical climate using context support in employees to voice ethical concerns (Morrison et al., 2015). To summarize this ethical decision-making model, it is important that the employees of these assessments understand the teaching of ethical awareness (ethical issues embedded in a workplace) or ethical reasoning (assisting employees with making the correct decisions). In addition, most multilevel models introduced by theorists offer new ways of thinking when resolving issues.

Reflections

I transformed academic research ensuring the best use of limited resources when exchanging knowledge between researchers and practitioners to minimize the flaws in observation and gain truthful knowledge. I preconceived data collection to be a timid process given roles and ethnic differences between myself and the research participants. Contrary to my expectations, the participants engaged in an informative manner with opened and relaxed responses. For future purposes, I will restrain from prejudgment and interact with different ethnic backgrounds in a more trusting manner.

The insights obtained for this doctoral study derived from a critical assessment of questioning practitioners. In reviewing the current literature, I revealed that various strategies in this study did not directly relate to the literature review. Searching academic publications is less clear and involves elaboration of literature relating to the subject being explored. Because a conceptual outline of corporate climates can be deceptive, input from practitioners will disclose the true dynamics of a phenomenon.

Conclusion

The aim for this doctoral study was to reveal how financial institutions can promote ethical behavior by employees. Employee misconduct happens at the workplace during hours of operations. Because business ethics begin with the employees, it is important for managers to strengthen their decision-making processes. Although this was a relatively small scale exploratory study, confidence in the generalizability of the findings demonstrated a moderate level of consistency in the data, and the H-V theory proved to be a useful lens to investigate factors promoting ethical behavior.

Perceptions gained from this study revealed that demonstrating intensive leadership skills stimulate and encourage ethical behaviors in organizations. In assessing the effectiveness of promoting ethical behaviors within organizations, revealing the underlying axiom of the findings resulted in utilizing effective styles of communication, enhancing training programs, and improving business policies and procedures. However, there are still several questions left unanswered about unethical behaviors. By mitigating the derivations that encourage employees to behave unethically, banking managers can help reduce the occurrence of unethical behaviors in their organizations.

References

Alderfer, C. P. (1967). Convergent and discriminant validation of satisfaction and desire measures by interviews and questionnaires. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 51*, 509-520. doi:10.1037/h0025101

Algan, Y., & Cahuc, P. (2013). Trust and growth. *Annual Review of Economics, 5*, 521-549. doi:10.1146/annurev-economics-081412-102108

Alhaqbani, A., Reed, D. M., Savage, B. M., & Ries, J. (2016). The impact of middle management commitment on improvement initiatives in public organisations. *Business Process Management Journal, 22*, 924-938. doi:10.1108/BPMJ-01-2016-0018

Anyan, F. (2013). The influence of power shifts in data collection and analysis stages: A focus on qualitative research interview. *Qualitative Report, 18*(18), 1-9. Retrieved from http://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/

Appelbaum, S. H., Degbe, M. C., MacDonald, O., & Nguyen-Quang, T. S. (2015). Organizational outcomes of leadership style and resistance to chart. *Industrial and Commercial Training, 47*, 73-80. doi:10.108/ICT-07-2013-0044

Armstrong, A. (2012). Restoring trust in banking. *National Institute Economic Review, 221*, 4-10. doi:10.1177/002795011222100111

Askew, O. A., Beisler, J. M., & Keel, J. (2015). Current trends of unethical behavior within organizations. *International Journal of Management & Information Systems (Online), 19*(3), 107-110. doi:10.19030/ijmis.v19i3.9374

Babones, S. (2015). Interpretive quantitative methods for the social sciences. *Sociology, 49*(3*)*, 1-17. doi:10.1177/0038038515583637

Bachmann, R., Gillespie, N., & Priem, R. (2015). Repairing trust in organizations and institutions: Toward a conceptual framework. *Organization Studies, 9*, 1123-1142. doi:10.1177/0170840615599334

Banks, S. (2016). Everyday ethics in professional life: Social work as ethics work. *Ethics and Social Welfare, 10*, 35-52. doi:10.1080/17496535.2015.1

Bardy, R., Drew, S., & Kennedy, T. (2012). Foreign investment and ethics: How to contribute to social responsibility by doing business in less-developed countries. *Journal of Business Ethics, 3*, 267-282. doi:10.1007/s10551-011-0994-7

Barker, M. (2013). Finding audiences for our research: Rethinking the issue of ethical challenges. *Journal of the Communication Review, 16,* 70-80. doi:10.1080/10714421.2013.7575

Baumgartner, R. J., & Rauter, R. (2017). Strategic perspectives of corporate sustainability management to develop a sustainable organization. *Journal of Cleaner Production, 140,* 81-92. doi:10.1016/j.jclepro.2016.04.146

Beaudoin, C., Cianci, A., & Tsakumis, G. (2015). The impact of CFOs' incentives and earnings management ethics on their financial reporting decisions: The mediating role of moral disengagement. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *128*, 505-518. doi:10.1007/s10551-014-2107-x

Bernard, R. H. (2012). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Birt, L., Scott, S., Cavers, D., Campbell, C., & Walter, F. (2016). Member checking: A tool to enhance trustworthiness or merely a nod to validation. *Qualitative Health Research, 26*, 1802-1811. doi:10.1177/1049732316654870

Bishop, W. H. (2013). The role of ethics in 21st century organizations. *Journal of Business Ethics, 118*, 635-637. doi:10.1007/s10551-013-1618-1

Bjørnskov, C., & Méon, P. G. (2013). Is trust the missing root of institutions, education, and development? *Public Choice, 157*, 641-669. doi:10.1007/s11127-013-0069-7

Blome, C., & Paulraj, A. (2013). Ethical climate and purchasing social responsibility: A benevolence focus. *Journal of Business Ethics, 116*, 567-585. doi:0.1007/s10551-012-1481-5

Bonner, J., Greenbaum, R., & Mayer, D. (2016). My boss is morally disengaged: The role of ethical leadership in explaining the interactive effect of supervisor and employee oral disengagement on employee behaviors. *Journal of Business Ethics 4*, 731-742. doi:10.1007/s10551-014-2366-6

Braun, B. (2016). Gross, greed, and ETFs: The case for a microfounded political economy of the investment chain. *Economic Sociology the European Electronic Newsletter, 17*, 6-13. doi:10.1016/j.joep.2016.09.002

Brown, M. E., & Treviño, L. K. (2014). Do role models matter? An investigation of role modeling as an antecedent of perceived ethical leadership. *Journal of Business Ethics, 122*, 587-598. doi:10.1007/s10551-013-1769-0

Brutus, S., & Duniewicz, K. (2012). The many heels of Achilles: An analysis of self-reported limitations in leadership research. *Leadership Quarterly, 23*, 202-212. doi:10.1016/j.leaqua.2011.11.015

Burgess-Allen, J., & Owen-Smith, V. (2010). Using mind mapping techniques for rapid qualitative data analysis in public participation processes. *Health Expectations: An International Journal of Public Participation in Health Care and Health Policy*, *13*, 406–415. doi.10.1111/j.1369-7625.2010.00594.x

Campbell, J., & Göritz, A. (2014). Culture corrupts: A qualitative study of organizational culture in corrupt organizations. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *120*, 291-311. doi:10.1007/s10551-013-1665-7

Chalmers, S. (2016) Ethical fairness in financial services complaint handling. *International Journal of Bank Marketing, 34*, 570-586. doi:10.1108/IJBM-09-2014-0124

Chandio, F. H., Irani, Z., Zeki, A. M., Shah, A., & Shah, S. C. (2017). Online banking information systems acceptance: An empirical examination of system characteristics and web security. *Information Systems Management, 34*, 50-64. doi:10.1080/10580530.2017.1254450

Cleek, M. A., & Leonard, S. L. (1998). Can corporate codes of ethics influence behavior? *Journal of Business Ethics, 17*, 619-630. doi:10.1023/A:1017969921581

Cope, D. G. (2014). Methods and meanings: Credibility and trustworthiness of qualitative research. *Oncology Nursing Forum, 41*, 89-91. doi:10.1188/14.ONF.89-91

Crowther, J. L., & Lloyd-Williams, M. (2012). Researching sensitive and emotive topics: The participants' voice. *Research Ethics, 8*, 200-211. doi:10.1177/1747016112455887

Dasgupta, M. (2015). Exploring the relevance of case study research. *Vision, 19*, 147-160. doi:10.1177/0972262915575661

Davidson, J., Thompson, S., & Harris, A. (2017). Qualitative data analysis software practices in complex research teams: Troubling the assumptions about transparency and portability. *Qualitative Inquiry, 23*, 779-788. doi:10.1177/107780041773

DeMassis, A., & Kotlar, J. (2014). The case study method in family business research: Guidelines for qualitative scholarship. *Journal of Family Business Strategy, 5*(1), 15-29. doi:10.1016.j.jfbs.2014.01.007

Desai, R., & Roberts, R. (2013). Deficiencies in the code of conduct: The AICPA rhetoric surrounding the tax return preparation outsourcing disclosure rules. *Journal of Business Ethics, 114*, 457-471. doi:10.1007/s10551-012-1329-z

Dewatripont, M., & Tirole, J. (2012). Macroeconomic shocks and banking regulation. *Journal of Money, Credit & Banking (Wiley-Blackwell), 44*, 237-254. doi:10.1111/j.1538-4616.2012.00559.x

Doody, O., & Noonan, M. (2013). Preparing and conducting interviews to collect data. *Nurse Researcher, 20*, 28-32. doi:10.7748/nr2013.05.20.5.28.e327

Effelsberg, D., & Solga, M. (2015). Transformational leaders' in-group versus out-group orientation: Testing the link between leaders' organizational identification, their willingness to engage in unethical pro-organizational behavior, and follower-perceived transformational leadership. *Journal of Business Ethics, 126*, 581-590. doi:10.1007/s10551-013-1972-z

Efferin, S., & Hartono, M. (2015). Management control and leadership styles in family business: An Indonesian case study, *Journal of Accounting & Organizational Change*, *11*, 130 - 159. doi:10.1108/JAOC-08-2012-0074

Engelbrecht, A. S., Heine, G., & Mahembe, B. (2017). Integrity, ethical leadership, trust and work engagement. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal, 38*, 368-379. doi:10.1108/LODJ-11-2015-0237

Epstein, M. J., & Buhovac A. R. (Eds.). (2014). *Making sustainability work: Best practices in managing and measuring corporate social, environmental, and economic impacts* (2nd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler.

Farrell, M. (2016). Transparency. *Journal of Library Administration, 56*, 444-452. doi:10.1080/01930826.2016.1157426

Fehr, R., Kaichi, Y., & Dang, C. (2015). Moralized leadership: The construction and consequences of ethical leader perceptions. *Academy of Management Review, 40*, 182-209. doi:10.5465/amr.2013.0358

Fein, E., & Weibler, J. (2014). Review and shortcomings of literature on corruption in organizations in offering a multi-faceted and integrative understanding of the phenomenon. *Behavioral Development Bulletin, 19*, 67-77. doi:10.1037/h0100592

Finn, D. (2015). Discussant comment on the influence of regulatory approach on tone at the top by Bradley Lail, Jason MacGregor, Marty Stuebs, & Timothy Thomason. *Journal of Business Ethics, 126*, 39-42. doi:10.1007/s10551-013-2038-y

Firfiray, S., Cruz, C., Neacsu, I., & Gomez-Mejia, L. R. (2018). Is nepotism so bad for family firms? A socioemotional wealth approach. *Human Resource Management Review, 28*, 83-97. doi:10.1016/j.hrmr.2017.05.008

Fleming, A. S., Riley Jr., R. A., Hermanson, D. R., & Kranacher, M. (2016). Financial reporting fraud: Public and private companies. *Journal of Forensic Accounting Research, 1*, A27-A41. doi:10.2308/jfar-51475

Fu, W., & Deshpande, S. P. (2014). The impact of caring climate, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment on job performance of employees in a China's insurance company. *Journal of Business Ethics, 124*, 339-349. doi:10.1007/s10551-013-1876-y

Fu, Z., Huang, F., Ren, K., Weng, J., & Wang, C. (2017). Privacy-preserving smart semantic search based on conceptual graphs over encrypted outsourced data. *IEEE Transactions on Information Forensics and Security, 12*, 1874-1884. doi:10.1109/TIFS.2017.2692728

Ganna, A., & Ingelsson, E. (2015). Five-year mortality predictors in 498, 103 UK Biobank participants: A prospective population-based study. *The Lancet, 386*, 533-540. doi:10.1016/S0140-6736(15)60175-1

Gazley, A., Sinha, A., & Rod, M. (2016). Toward a theory of marketing law transgressions. *Journal of Business Research, 69*, 476-483. doi:10.1016/j.jburses.2015.05.004

Ge, W., Koester, A., & McVay, S. (2017). Benefits and costs of Sarbanes-Oxley Section 404 (b) exemption: Evidence from small firms' internal control disclosures. *Journal of Accounting and Economics, 63*, 358-384. doi:10.1016/j/jacceco.2017.01.001

Gill, L. (2012). Systemic action research for ethics students: Curbing unethical business behavior by addressing core values in next generation corporates. *Systemic Practice Action Research, 25*, 371-391. doi:10.1007/s11213-012-9228-x

Gill, M. J. (2014). The possibilities of phenomenology for organizational research. *Organizational Research Methods, 17*(2), 118-137. doi:10.1177/1094428113518348

Giannetti, M. (2007). Financial liberalization and banking crises: The role of capital inflows and lack of transparency. *Journal of Financial Intermediation, 16*, 32-63. doi:10.1016/j.jfi.2006.04.001

Goldberg, A. E., & Allen, K. R. (2015). Communicating qualitative research: Some practical guideposts for scholars. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 77*, 3-22. doi:10.1111/jomf.12153

Graneheim, U.H., & Lundman, B. (2004). Qualitative content analysis in nursing research: Concepts, procedures, and measures to achieve trustworthiness. *Nurse Education Today, 24*, 105-112. doi:10.1016/j.nedt.2003.10.001

Grebe, S. (2013). Things can get worse: How mismanagement of a crisis response strategy can cause a secondary or double crisis: The example of the AWB corporate scandal. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal, 8*, 70-86. doi:10.1108/13563281311294137

Gross-Schaefer, A., Trigilio, J., Negus, J., & Ceng-Si, R. (2000). Ethics education in the workplace: An effective tool to combat employee theft. *Journal of Business Ethics, 26*, 89-100. doi:10.1023/A:1006038310865

Guerci, M., Radaelli, G., Siletti, E., Cirella, S., & Rami Shani, A. B. (2015). The impact of human resource management practices and corporate sustainability on organizational ethical climates: An employee perspective. *Journal of Business Ethics, 126*, 325-342. doi:10.1007/s10551-013-1946-1

Gürçay, B., & Baron, J. (2017). Challenges for the sequential two-system model of moral judgement. *Thinking & Reasoning, 23*, 49-80. doi:10.1080/13546783.2016.1216011

Hancock, R. O., Mary, E., & Coi, M. A. (2016). Focus group data saturation: A new approach to data analysis. *The Qualitative Report, 21*, 2124-2130. doi:10.1080/08870440903194015

Haneef, N. (2013). Empirical research consolidation: A generic overview and a classification scheme for methods. *Quality & Quantity, 47*, 383-410. doi:10.1007/s11135-011-9524-z

Hartnell, C. A., Kinicki, A. J., Lambert, L. S., Fugate, M., & Doyle Corner, P. (2016). Do similarities or differences between CEO leadership and organizational culture have a more positive effect on firm performance? A test of competing predictions. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 101*, 846-861. doi:10.1037/apl0000083

Hennink, M. M., Kaiser, B. N., & Marconi, V. C. (2017). Code saturation versus meaning saturation. *Qualitative Health Research, 27*, 591-608. doi:10.1177/1049732316665344

Holt, A. (2010). Using the telephone for narrative interviews: A research note. *Qualitative Research, 10*, 113-121. doi:10.1177/1468794109348686

Howell, J. M., & Avolio, B. J. (2014). The ethics of charismatic leadership: Submission or liberation? *Executive, 6(*2), 43-54. doi:10.5465/AME.1992.4274395

Huang, F., Gardner, S., & Moayer, S. (2016). Towards a framework for strategic knowledge management practice: Integrating soft and hard systems for competitive advantage. *VINE Journal of Information and Knowledge Management Systems, 46*, 492-507. doi:10.1108/VJIKMS-08-2015-0049

Huhtala, M., Kaptein, M., & Feldt, T. (2016). How perceived changes in the ethical culture of organizations influence the well-being of managers: A two-year longitudinal study. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, *25*, 335-352. doi:10.1080/1359432x.2015.1068761

Hunt, S. D., & Vitell, S. J. (1986). A general theory of marketing ethics. *Journal of Macromarketing, 6*, 5-15. doi:10.1177/027614678600600103

Ikonen, P., Luoma-aho, V., & Bowen, S. A. (2017). Transparency for sponsored content: analysing codes of ethics in public relations, marketing, advertising and journalism. *International Journal of Strategic Communication, 11*, 165-178.

doi:10.1080/1553118X.2016.1252917

Järvinen, R. A. (2014). Consumer trust in banking relationships in Europe. *International Journal of Bank Marketing, 32*, 551-566. doi:10.1108/IJBM-08-2013-0086

Jerolmack, C., & Khan, S. (2014). Talk is cheap: Ethnography and the attitudinal fallacy. *Sociological Methods & Research, 43*, 178-209. doi:10.1177/0049124114523396

Jiang, L., & Probst, T. M. (2015). Do your employees (collectively) trust you? The importance of trust climate beyond individual trust. *Scandinavian Journal of Management, 31*, 526-535. doi:10.1016/j.scaman.2015.09.003

Krekels, G., & Pandelaere, M. (2015). Dispositional greed. *Personality and Individual Differences*, *74*, 225-230. doi:10.1016/j.paid.2014.10.036

Kurz, X., Bauchau, V., Mahy, P., Glismann, S., van der Aa, L. M., & Simondon, F. (2017). The advance code of conduct for collaborative vaccine studies. *Vaccine, 35*, 1844-1855. doi:10.1016/j.vaccine.2017.02.039

Labaton, S. (2012). US & UK financial services industry survey. Retrieved from http://www.labaton.com/en/about/press/upload/US-UKFinancial-Services-Industry-Survey-July-2012-Report.pdf

Larkin, I., & Loewenstein, G. (2017). Business model related conflict of interests in medicine: Problems and potential solutions. *Jama*, *317*, 1745-1746. doi:10.1001/jama.2017.2275

Leaver, M. P., & Reader, T. W. (2017). Safety culture in financial trading: An analysis of trading misconduct investigations. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *2*, 227-456. doi:10.1007/s10551-017-3463-0

Leung, L. (2015). Validity, reliability, and generalizability in qualitative research. *Journal of Family Medicine and Primary Care, 4*, 324–327. doi:10.4103/2249-4863.161306

Liao, S. S. C. (2013). Enhancing ethics and the competitive environment by accounting for conflict of interest in project procurement. *Leadership & Management in Engineering, 13*, 86-95. doi:10.1061/(ASCE)LM.1943-5630.0000219

Llewellyn, D. T. (2014). Reforming the culture of banking: Restoring trust and confidence in banking. *Journal of Financial Management, Markets and Institutions, 2*, 221-236. doi:10.12831/78760

Loewenstein, G., Cain, D. M., & Sah, S. (2011). The limits of transparency: Pitfalls and potential of disclosing conflicts of interest. *The American Economic Review, 101*, 423-428. doi:10.1257/aer.101.3.423

Lui, A. (2015). Greed, recklessness and/or dishonesty: An investigation into the culture of five UK banks between 2004 and 2009. *Journal of Banking Regulation, 16*, 106-129. doi:10.1057/jbr.2014.1

Maher, J. M., Markey, J. C., & Ebert-May, D. (2013). The other half of the story: Effect size analysis in quantitative research. *CBE-Life Sciences Education*, *12*, 345-351. doi:10.1187/cbe.13-04-0082

Marshall, B., Cardon, P., Poddar, A., & Fontenot, R. (2013). Does sample size matter in qualitative research? A review of qualitative interviews in IS research. *Journal of Computer Information Systems, 54*, 11-22. doi:10.1080/08874417.2013.11645667

Maslow, A. H. (1943). A theory of human motivation. *Psychological Review, 50*, 370. doi:10.1037/h0054346

Maslow, A. H. (1987). *Motivation and personality* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Harper & Row.

Mayer, D. M., Nurmohamed, S., Treviño, L. K., Shapiro, D. L., & Schimke, M. (2013). Encouraging employees to report unethical conduct internally: It takes a village. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 121*, 89-103. doi:10.1016/j.obhdp.2013.01.002

Mirshekary, S., & Carr, R. (2015). Effects of exposure to unethical practices on the personal attitudes of accountants in small accounting firms. *Journal of Management & Organization, 21*, 98-106. doi:10.1017/jmo.2014.62

Mjøsund, N. H., Eriksson, M., Espnes, G. A., Haaland-Øverby, M., Jensen, S. L., Norheim, I., ... & Vinje, H. F. (2017). Service user involvement enhanced the research quality in a study using interpretative phenomenological analysis the power of multiple perspectives. *Journal of Advanced Nursing, 73*, 265-278. doi:10.1111/jan.13093

Mo, S., & Shi, J. (2017). Linking ethical leadership to employee burnout, workplace deviance and performance: Testing the mediating roles of trust in leader and surface acting. *Journal of Business Ethics, 144*, 293-303. doi:10.1007/s10551-015-2821-z

Morrison, E.W., K.E., and Pan, C. (2015). An approach–inhibition model of employee silence: The joint effects of personal sense of power and target openness. *Personnel Psychology 68*: 547–580. doi:10.1111/peps.12087

Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Muller, R., Andersen, E., Kvalnes, O., Shao., J., Sankaran, S., Turner, J. R., Biesenthal, C., Walker, D.,… Gundergan, S. (2013). The interrelationship of governance, trust, and ethics in temporary organizations. *Project Management Journal*, *44*, 26-44. doi:10.1002/pmj.21350

Nienaber, A., Hofeditz, M., & Searle, R. H. (2014). Do we bank on regulation or reputation? A meta-analysis and meta-regression of organizational trust in the financial services sector. *International Journal of Bank Marketing, 32*, 367-407. doi:10.1108/IJBM-12-2013-0146

Newington, L., & Metcalfe, A. (2014). Factors influencing recruitment to research: Qualitative study of the experiences and perceptions of research teams. *BMC Medical Research Methodology, 14,*10. doi:10.1186/1471-2288-14-10

Paguirigan, A. L., Christensen, W. D. Holman, Z. J., Smith, L.J., Stevens, E. A., Wood, B.W.,…Radich, J. (2016). A population sampling approach for validating deconvolution of high throughput sequencing data to describe clonality in heterogeneous tumor samples. *Cancer Research, 76*, 2420. doi:10.1158/1538-7445.AM2016-2420

Palinkas, L. A., Horwitz, S. M., Green, C. A., Wisdom, J. P., Duan, N., & Hoagwood, K. (2015). Purposeful sampling for qualitative data collection and analysis in mixed method implementation research. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research*. *42*, 533-544. doi:10.1007/s10488-013-0528-y

Pan, M. L. (2016). *Preparing literature reviews: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Routledge, NY: Pyrczak Publications.

Pekerti, A., & Arli, D. (2017). Do cultural and generational cohorts matter to ideologies and consumer ethics? A comparative study of Australians, Indonesians, and Indonesian migrants in Australia. *Journal of Business Ethics, 143*, 387-404. doi:10.1007/s10551-015-2777-z

Penckofer, S., Byrn, M., Mumby, P., & Ferrans, C. E. (2011). Improving subject recruitment, retention, and participation in research through Peplau's theory of interpersonal relations. *Nursing Science Quarterly*, *24*,146–151. doi:10.1177/0894318411399454

Rassia, M., & Matthews, D. (2014). Supervisor moral attentiveness, ethical leadership, and employee unethical decision making. *Academy of Management Proceedings*. *2014,* 14427. doi:10.5465/AMBPP.2014

Reale, E. (2014). Challenges in higher education research: The use of quantitative tools in comparative analyses. *Higher Education, 67,* 409-422. doi:10.1007/s10734-013-9680-2

Renko, M., El Tarabishy, A., Carsrud, A. L., & Brännback, M. (2015). Understanding and measuring entrepreneurial leadership style. *Journal of Small Business Management, 53*, 54-74. doi:10.1111/jsbm.12086

Rezaee, Z., Elmore, R. C., & Szendi, J. Z. (2001). Ethical behavior in higher educational institutions: The role of the code of conduct. *Journal of Business Ethics, 30*, 171-183. doi:10.1023/A1006423220775

Roy, S., and Venkateswaran, P. (2014). Online payment system using steganography and visual cryptography. *Electrical, Electronics and Computer Science. 2*(1), 1-5. doi:10.1109/SCEECS.2014.6804449

Said, J., & Omar, N. (2014). Corporate integrity system: Comparative analysis of two giant government linked companies. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 145*, 12-17. doi:10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.06.006

Schneider, B., Ehrhart, M. G., & Macey, W. H. (2013). Organizational climate and culture. *Annual Review of Psychology, 64*, 361-388. doi:10.1146/annurev-psych-113011-143809

Scholten, W., Scholten, W., Ellemers, N., & Ellemers, N. (2016). Bad apples or corrupting barrels? Preventing traders' misconduct. *Journal of Financial Regulation and Compliance, 24*, 366-382. https://doi.org/10.1108/JFRC-06-2016-0051

Seuntjens, T. G., van de Ven, N., Zeelenberg, M., & van der Schors, A. (2016). Greed and adolescent financial behavior. *Journal of Economic Psychology, 57*(1), 1-12. doi:10.1016/j.joep.2016.09.002

Shafer, W. E. (2015). Ethical climate, social responsibility and earnings management. *Journal of Business Ethics. 126*, 43-60. doi:10.1007/s10551-013-1989-3.

Siebert, S., Martin, G., Bozic, B., & Docherty, I. (2015). Looking beyond the factory gates: Towards more pluralist and radical approaches to intraorganizational trust research. *Organization Studies, 36*, 1033-1062. doi:10.1177/0170840615580010

Spitzmuller, J., & Warnke, I. H. (2011) Discourse as a linguistic object: Methodical and methodological delimitations. *Critical Discourse Studies, 8*, 75-94. doi:10.1080/17405904.2011.558680

Stachowicz-Stanusch, A., & Simha, A. (2013). An empirical investigation of the effects of ethical climates on organizational corruption. *Journal of Business Economics and Management, 14*, 433-446. doi:10.3846/16111699.2012.744345

Stevens, M., MacDuffie, J. P., & Helper, S. (2015). Reorienting and recalibrating interorganizational relationships: Strategies for achieving optimal trust. *Organization Studies, 36*, 1237-1264. doi:10.1177/0170840615585337

Stewart, J. (2012). Multiple-case study methods in governance-related research. *Public Management Review, 14*, 67-82. doi:10.1080/14719037.2011.589618

Hartnell, C. A., Kinicki, A. J., Lambert, L. S., Fugate, M., & Doyle Corner, P. (2016). Do similarities or differences between CEO leadership and organizational culture have a more positive effect on firm performance? A test of competing predictions. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 101*, 846-861. doi:10.1037/apl0000083

Suwardi, A., & Tohang, V. (2017). An Analysis of XBRL Adoption Towards Systemic Risk of Financial Institutions Listed in NYSE. *Australasian Accounting, Business and Finance Journal, 11*, 23-37. doi:10.14453/aabfj.v11i4.3

Takacs Haynes, K., Campbell, J. T., & Hitt, M. A. (2017). When more is not enough: Executive greed and its influence on shareholder wealth. *Journal of Management, 43,* 555-584. doi:10.1177/0149206314535444

Thau, S., Derfler-Rozin, R., Pitesa, M., Mitchell, M. S., & Pillutla, M. M. (2015). Unethical for the sake of the group: Risk of social exclusion and pro-group unethical behavior. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 100*, 98-113. doi:10.1037/a0036708

Thompson, D. F. (2013). Understanding financial conflicts of interest. *The New England Journal of Medicine, 329*, 573-576. doi:10.1056/NEJM199308193290810

Timraz, S. M., Alhasanat, D. I., Albdour, M. M., Lewin, L., Giurgescu, C., & Kavanaugh, K. (2017). Challenges and strategies for conducting sensitive research with an Arab American population. *Applied Nursing Research, 33*(2*)*, 1-4. doi:10.1016/j.apnr.2016.09.009

Tréguer-Felten, G. (2017). The role of translation in the cross-cultural transferability of corporate codes of conduct. *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management, 17*, 137-149. doi:10.1177/1470595817694659

Trettel, A., Cherubino, P., Cartocci, G., Rossi, D., Modica, E., Maglione, A. G., ... & Babiloni, F. (2017). Transparency and reliability in neuromarketing research. *In Ethics and Neuromarketing 121*, 101-111. doi:10.1007/978-3-319-45609-6_6

Tsakas, E. (2014). Epistemic equivalence of extended belief hierarchies. *Games and Economic Behavior, 86,* 126-144. doi:10.1016/j.geb.2014.03.008

Vink, S. C., Van Tartwijk, J., Bolk, J., & Verloop, N. (2015). Integration of clinical and basic sciences in concept maps: A mixed-method study on teacher learning. *BMC Medical Education, 15*, 20. doi:10.1186/s12909-015-0299-0

Walumbwa, F. O., Hartnell, C. A., & Misati, E. (2017). Does ethical leadership enhance group learning behavior? Examining the mediating influence of group ethical conduct, justice climate, and peer justice. *Journal of Business Research*, *72*, 14-23. doi:10.1016/j.jbusres.2016.11.013

Weber, M.J. (2014). Defining the constructs of making, enabling, and keeping promises: A focus group application. *Journal of Services Research, 13*, 117-130. doi:10.3928/02793695- 20130404-0

Winston, C. N. (2016). Positive theory of human motivation. *The Humanistic Psychologist*, *44,* 142-163. doi:10.1037/hum0000028

Woods, M., Paulus, T., Atkins, D. P., & Macklin, R. (2016). Advancing qualitative research using qualitative data analysis software (QDAS)? Reviewing potential versus practice in published studies using ATLAS.ti and NVivo, 1994–2013. *Social Science Computer Review, 34*, 597-617. doi:10.1177/0894439315596311

Xu, A., Loi, R., & Ngo, H. (2016). Ethical leadership behavior and employee justice perceptions: The mediating role of trust in the organization. *Journal of Business Ethics, 134*, 493-504. doi:10.1007/s10551-014-2457-4

Ula, M., & Fuadi, W. (2017). A method for evaluating information security governance (ISG) components in banking environment. *Journal of Physics, 812*, 12031. doi:10.1088/1742-6596/812/1/012031

Yin, R. K. (2017). *Case study research: Designs and methods* (6th ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Zohrabi, M. (2013). Mixed method research: Instruments, validity, reliability and reporting findings. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 3,* 254-262. doi:10.4304/tpls.3.2.254-262

Appendix A: Interview Questions

Date:
Destination:
Interview Type (Phone or face-to-face):
Duration:
Researcher (Ebony Anderson):
Interviewee:

Purpose of Study:

The purpose of this qualitative, multiple case study is to explore the strategies that banking managers use to reduce unethical employees' behaviors.

Interview Questions:

The interview questions for this qualitative multiple-case study are as follows:

1. What strategies have you implemented in reducing unethical employee behaviors in your institution?
2. What barriers existed in implementing the strategies, and how did you address them?
3. How did the employees respond to the strategies implemented to reduce unethical behaviors?
4. What strategies worked best in reducing unethical employee behaviors?
5. What strategies failed in reducing unethical employee behaviors in the workplace?
6. How would you describe the role of trust in your organization?
7. What other demonstrated experiences would you like to share in reducing unethical employee behaviors?