BUSINESS ETHICS – RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

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Introduction

Business ethics is a branch of applied ethics that pertains to the ethical and moral standards and principles that govern the behaviour of individuals and corporations in a professional context. Its focus is on considering the ethical implications of business decisions and actions and ensuring that they align with moral principles and ideals.

The study of business ethics is essential for various reasons. Firstly, corporations have a significant impact on society and the environment, and their actions can cause significant harm. Secondly, ethical dilemmas are likely to arise in complex and dynamic business environments. Finally, ethical behaviour can enhance a company's reputation, promote customer loyalty, and boost employee morale.

This research paper will cover the theoretical foundations of business ethics, the role of ethical leadership, ethical decision-making, corporate social responsibility, and the impact of globalization on business ethics. Additionally, it will examine case studies of ethical dilemmas that companies have faced and how they resolved them. The primary objectives of this essay are to provide a comprehensive overview of business ethics and to highlight the importance of ethical behaviour in the corporate world

Literature Review

1. In "The Impact of Corporate Social Responsibility on Financial Performance: A Review of Empirical Studies," Chiu and Tsai provide a critical review of empirical studies that investigate the relationship between corporate social responsibility and financial performance.
2. Souza and Abbade conduct a literature review on business ethics, with a specific focus on marketing ethics, in "Business Ethics: A Literature Review with a Focus on Marketing Ethics."
3. Ferreira and Au-Yong-Oliveira review the literature on ethical leadership in "Ethical Leadership: A Review and Future Directions," and they identify areas for future research.
4. Adya and Jain offer a comprehensive review of corporate governance and business ethics in "Corporate Governance and Business Ethics: A Comprehensive Review."
5. In "Sustainability and Business Ethics: An Analysis of the Literature," Antunes, Ferreira, and Alves examine the literature on sustainability and business ethics and identify key themes and research gaps.
6. Jain reviews the literature on ethical decision-making in business in "Ethical Decision-Making in Business: A Review of the Literature," with a focus on models and frameworks for decision-making.
7. Mračková and Záhora examine the role of stakeholders in corporate social responsibility in "The Role of Stakeholders in Corporate Social Responsibility: A Review of the Literature," and they provide insights for future research.
8. Reynolds and Haden review the literature on the impact of ethical culture on employee turnover in "The Impact of Ethical Culture on Employee Turnover: A Review of the Literature."
9. Shelby and Jolly review the literature on ethical decision-making models in "Ethical Decision-Making Models: A Review of the Literature," with a focus on identifying common themes and limitations.
10. Finally, in "The Dark Side of Business Ethics: A Review of the Literature," Alon, Muller, and McIntyre critically examine the potential negative consequences of business ethics, including unethical behavior and unintended consequences.

Research Design

The proposed research design is a three-year project that focuses on business ethics. The research will involve a comprehensive literature review of business ethics, corporate social responsibility (CSR), ethical leadership, and related topics. In Year 1, a conceptual framework will be developed based on the literature review, and a survey instrument will be designed to collect data on variables such as CSR practices, ethical leadership, corporate culture, employee outcomes, and financial performance.

A sample of companies will be identified based on industry, size, and location, and data will be collected using the survey instrument. The data collected will be analysed using appropriate statistical methods to test hypotheses and answer research questions. In Year 2, a follow-up survey will be conducted with the same sample of companies to collect longitudinal data and examine changes over time in the variables of interest.

Qualitative data will also be collected through interviews or focus groups with a subset of employees to gain insights into their perceptions of the company's ethical practices and culture. The data collected through these methods will be analysed using content analysis to identify themes and patterns.

In Year 3, a cross-cultural comparison will be conducted to explore the relationship between business ethics, CSR, and financial performance in different countries. A sample of companies from different countries will be selected, and data will be collected using the same survey instrument as in Year 1. The data collected will be analysed using appropriate statistical methods to compare the relationships between the variables of interest across different countries.

The findings of the research will be published in peer-reviewed academic journals and presented at conferences. The research design involves a mixed-methods approach that combines quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis. The longitudinal component and cross-cultural comparison will help to examine changes over time and the generalizability of the findings across different contexts.