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THE IMPACT OF GENDER ON ETHICAL WORK CLIMATES: A CROSS-CULTURAL COMPARISON OF BUSINESS SCHOOL FACULTY

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to examine the relationship that Ethical Work Climates and National Culture have on business faculty in universities based on gender. Most studies involving ethics focus on students or professions outside academia. Since business faculty form the frontline between student and the professional, their role becomes one that should be analyzed as a critical link in the study between organizational and national culture and their effect on the student. In our study the results showed that Ghana demonstrated an overall benevolent climate more conducive for ethical decision-making where the student is concerned. The United States of America and Taiwan showed a greater reliance on rules, laws, and codes to govern their decision-making. One distinguishing result revealed Taiwan to be stronger in egoism, usually associated with individualist cultures. One possible explanation is the way Taiwan structures its incentive programs. They are more designed to drive faculty to achieve more personal gain beneficial to their academic career than the United States of America. This difference could negatively impact ethical decision-making at the organizational level.

JEL: M00, M14

KEYWORDS: National Culture, Cross-Cultural, Ethical Work Climates

INTRODUCTION

The role of the educator has expanded beyond just preparing students through the acquisition of knowledge and skills to include interactions that impact their relationship as student and teacher. In doing so, their relationship and interactions become more acute in higher education. The student-faculty relationship and interactions can lead to confusion and distress if they sense their moral sensibilities are dishonored (Ozcan, Bayler, & Servi; 2013). In today's environment faculty responsibilities may extend beyond the campus. Study abroad experiential trips, sporting events, club events, luncheons and fundraising are some of the activities faculty are expected to participate in with students. The added dimension of diversity of genders at universities assumes that men and women solve ethical problems the same. Harvard psychologist, Carol Gilligan, suggests men consider moral issues in terms of justice, rules, and individual rights, whereas women, approach the same issues from a position of relationships, caring, and compassion (Leslie Dawson, 1995). This may have significance within the United States of America but what of other countries. Will this assessment hold to different cultures? Do men and women respond to ethical issues the same the world over. The other issue we faced was the impact of organizational culture and its relationship with national culture. Does the intersection of the two cultures impact differently on men and woman from different parts of the world? To gain a greater understanding of this issue, we focused our study on three nations from different parts of the world;

Ghana, Taiwan, and the United States of America. We used the Ethical Work Climate survey developed by Victor and Cullen, (1987, 1988) and James W. Bronson (1993) to assess the ethical climate within each institution. The insight we gained provided us with a view of how male and female business faculty from different points on the globe within distinct institutions approached ethical decision-making. This gauge was then viewed in terms of national culture and any affects that may have had. We found this study to be of deep concern in the changing view of higher education and the role that the educator is expected to play.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Ethical Work Climates

"Ethical climates are conceptualized as general and pervasive characteristics of organizations; affecting a broad range of decisions" (Victor & Cullen, 1988, p.101). The Ethical Climate Questionnaire is "simply an instrument to tap, through the perceptions of organizational participants, the ethical dimensions of organizational culture" (Victor & Cullen, 1988, p.103). Therefore, the participants become the 'type of observer' who views different kinds of behavior, whether in decision-making or their compliance in the organization's practices and procedures; "but not evaluating the perceived organizational expectations" (Cullen, Victor, & Bronson, 1993, p.671). The Ethical Climate covers two dimensions of theoretical typology (Victor & Cullen, 1988); one dimension is ethical criterion, which is used for the organization's decision-making, and the second, locus of analysis, refers to ethical decision-making. Egoism, benevolence, and principle are the three 'ethical criterion' dimensions. Egoism drives self-interest. In an organizational setting, the individual places their own welfare above others or the business. When an employee displays benevolence, they are more open to caring and interpretation of rules and laws than obeying them. And lastly, a principled employee is one who would blow the whistle on another employee without second thoughts. A violation of policy is an unethical act and that is all they need to make their decision (Victor & Cullen, 1988). The three 'locus of analysis' are individual, local and cosmopolitan. An employee who relies on their own point of view is described as individual. Local relies more on the group for decision-making, while the cosmopolitan will seek professional associations or laws.

National Culture and Organizational Culture

Studies have shown that organizational cultures are affected by national cultures regardless of the presence of significant subcultures within a nation (Soeters et. al., 1988; Hofstede et. al., 1990). Parboteeah et. al. (2005) also explains the usefulness of the concept of national culture to distinguish work practices (Hofstede, 2001). These work practices summed up as an organization's culture – "a pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration" (Schein, 1992, p.12) – have a direct link to the national culture of the individuals who make up the company's workforce (Joiner, 2001; Dusan, 2003). Employees are influenced by various institutions present in their culture before they even join a given organization, such as family, society, religious orders, educational systems, and many other in which they participate have been shaping their beliefs, habits, and identities for years and it is not surprising that employees bring these external influences with them they join an organization. A similar view is echoed by Erakovich and others (2002) who pointed out those cultural influences have the power to change the character and identity of an organization, altering the perceptions and behavior of organizational members.

Research (Crisitie et. al., 2003) has also shown that more than thirty empirical cross-cultural studies on ethical attitudes and ethical behavior have been conducted and practically all of them recognize the influence of national culture on one's ethical attitude and behavior. This demonstrates how national culture plays a significant role on the ethical reasoning and the ethical attitudes of persons, including those in the teaching profession. Hence, we can assume that "if organizational cultures are influenced by

national cultures, one can also expect that national cultures will have a significant impact on ethical climates" (Parboteeah et. al., 2005, p.462).

National Culture, Ethical Work Climates and Business College Faculty

Ethical issues associated with the teaching profession have not been given significant attention regardless of many moral and ethical issues being constantly dealt with in university teaching. One of the reasons for this negligence is that even though several researches (De Russy, 2003; Sergiovanni, 1992; Braxton & Bayer, 1999; Markie, 1994) have over the years emphasized the importance of the teaching profession and the power teachers have to create a long lasting impact on their students, "college teaching is not recognized as a distinct profession" (Markie, 1994, p.155). College faculty have been referred to as "gatekeepers of knowledge" (Gaikward, 2011, p.22) who have a significant influence on the quality of life their students are going to have once they are on their own. In A Professor's Duties: Ethical Issues in Professional Teaching (1994), Markie tackles various ethical issues in college teaching by partly focusing on the obligations of individual professors, primarily with regard to issues about what and how to teach. Markie asserts that the role of college teachers is a complex one which comes with considerable power and authority, the exercise of which can have significant effect on the lives of students. This 'power and authority' can either be used to better or destroy inadvertently the lives of students shown in the irresponsible and unethical behavior within the professoriate. These include, among other, "lateness for class, use of vulgarity in scholarly forums, showing favoritism among students, improper use of campus funds, plagiarism, and sexual liaisons with students, failure to properly perform administrative duties and unwilling to uphold the value of truth in teaching and research" (De Russy, 2003, p.20).

Even less research has been conducted to determine whether there is any difference between genders as a variable in ethical decision making. Studies have found conflicting results, considered inconclusive (Chen, Tuliao, Cullen, & Ching; 2016). One study conducted at universities in Hong Kong (Au, Chan, and Tse, 2006) found there to me a difference between genders, where males were found to be less ethical than females. Kahreh, et.al 2014) in a study examining the effects of gender differences on CSR found women to have a slightly higher orientation and intention toward CSR than men. In another study though, 513 executives were given a seven ethical scenarios related to economics. Barnett and Karson (1989), found no gender differences in four out of the seven. To bring the differences if any into focus, we decided on a study that looks at the organizational climate of the institution in relation to their national culture. To analyze the major distinguishing characteristics of Ghanaian, USA, and Taiwanese national cultures that impact the perceived ethical climate by faculty in Business Colleges, this study focused on the three ethical climates; egoism – maximizing one's own self-interest, benevolence – maximizing the joint interest of an organizational community, and principle – loyalty to universal values and beliefs.

Faculty members in an egoistic climate, more associated with individualism, will more than likely opt for actions that are motivated by personal gains and are beneficial to their career in an academic institution. Given the direct link established between the corporate scandals that have plagued the business world and the responsibility of institutions of higher education to nurture and produce 'ethically-sound' graduates, it is highly relevant to study differences in egoistic climates for faculty in Business Colleges. Benevolence grounded in collectivism is primarily based on concern for others (Victor & Cullen, 1987; 1988). An organization characterized by a benevolent climate will find faculty identify and solve ethical problems where the well-being of others takes precedent. Parboteeah et. al. (2005) also notes that decisions are aimed to coincide with socially responsible behavior. In a principled or rule-based climate, ethical decisions are made on the interpretation of rules, laws, and standards (Victor & Cullen, 1998). In an educational institution with a principled climate, fraternization policies prohibiting romantic, sexual, and exploitative relationships between college employees and students will be observed to the letter. The academic institutional rules and professional code of conduct will guide faculty in ethical decision-making.

DATA AND METHODOLOGY

This study aims to discover the ethical work climate perceived by male and female business faculty members across cultures. Ethical Work Climate dimensions will serve as the independent variables for this research. The independent variables will determine whether the possible factors show any significant effect on the dependent variables, which are male and female college business faculty across three nations.

Research Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference on perceived ethical work climate values from their institution between male faculty and female faculty.

Hypothesis 2 There is no significant difference on perceived ethical work climate values from their institution between male Ghana faculty and female Ghana faculty.

Hypothesis 3 There is no significant difference on perceived ethical work climate values from their institution between male Ghana faculty and male Taiwan faculty.

Hypothesis 4 There is no significant difference on perceived ethical work climate values from their institution between male Ghana faculty and female Taiwan faculty.

Hypothesis 5 There is no significant difference on perceived ethical work climate values from their institution between male Ghana faculty and male U.S.A. faculty.

Hypothesis 6 There is no significant difference on perceived ethical work climate values from their institution between male Ghana faculty and female U.S.A. faculty.

Hypothesis 7 There is no significant difference on perceived ethical work climate values from their institution between female Ghana faculty and male Taiwan faculty.

Hypothesis 8 There is no significant difference on perceived ethical work climate values from their institution between female Ghana faculty and female Taiwan faculty.

Hypothesis 9 There is no significant difference on perceived ethical work climate values from their institution between female Ghana faculty and male U.S.A. faculty.

Hypothesis 10There is no significant difference on perceived ethical work climate values from their institution between female Ghana faculty and female U.S.A. faculty.

Hypothesis 11 There is no significant difference on perceived ethical work climate values from their institution between male Taiwan faculty and female Taiwan faculty.

Hypothesis 12 There is no significant difference on perceived ethical work climate values from their institution between male Taiwan faculty and male U.S.A. faculty.

Hypothesis 13 There is no significant difference on perceived ethical work climate values from their institution between male Taiwan faculty and female U.S.A. faculty.

Hypothesis 14 There is no significant difference on perceived ethical work climate values from their institution between female Taiwan faculty and female U.S.A faculty.

Hypothesis 15 There is no significant difference on perceived ethical work climate values from their institution between female Taiwan faculty and male U.S.A. faculty.

Hypothesis 16 There is no significant difference on perceived ethical work climate values from their institution between male U.S.A faculty and female U.S.A. faculty.

Research Instrument

The Ethical Climate Questionnaire developed by John Cullen and Bart Victor (1987, 1988) and further perfected with James W. Bronson (1993) was used. The questionnaire is based on the assumptions that 1) each company or subgroup has its own moral character; 2) group members know what character is; and 3) group members can tell an outsider about their organization's moral character in an objective way (Acharya, 2005). In the ECQ, questions emphasize description rather than feelings and respondents are asked to act as observers of their organizations (Victor & Cullen, 1988). The questionnaire is composed of a 36-item Likert scale representing the nine dimensional values of ethical climate. Minor linguistic changes were made to fit an educational institution. In place of the word 'company', institution was replaced. 'Customer' and 'public', which appeared in items 26, 30, and 34, were substituted with student and stakeholder. These linguistic changes did not alter the meaning of the questions, rather brought the questionnaire in line with terminology best understood within an academic sector setting. The questionnaire was translated into Mandarin Chinese for the Taiwanese faculty. The Chinese version was prepared by a bi-lingual professor in Taiwan and translated back into English by a different professor from the Applied English department at Southern Taiwan University of Science and Technology in Taiwan. Pre-tests were conducted for assurance using faculty in Taiwan from engineering, health sciences, and linguistics and foreign languages departments.

Data Collection

Data was collected from Business faculty in the USA, Ghana, and Taiwan. Twenty-one American professors from three different states in the United States responded. One hundred Ghanaian professors from Accra and Kumasi and seventy professors from public and private universities in Taiwan took part in the study for a total of one hundred ninety-seven respondents. The sample population was as close to even as possible. A total of 110 male and 87 female faculty responded to this study. The study was conducted in 2013. Because the sample was geographically dispersed, administering electronic questionnaires was a major advantage due to relative inexpensiveness and fast delivery to email accounts at the American universities. However, an exception was made for Ghanaian and Taiwanese faculty members to whom questionnaires were personally administered. This was deemed necessary by the researchers as proper etiquette in the two cultures.

Research Methods

Factor analysis was used for this research. This extracted the data into factors that determined the dimensions of ethical work climates among male and female college of business faculty.

Reliability Measure of the Instrument

The reliability statistics result showed that the ECQ has a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.858, which is above the standard reliability measure of 0.70. Empirical results also show Cronbach's Alpha of each item range from 0.851 to 0.863 in the questionnaire. It means good internal reliability.

Table 1: Reliability and Validity Measure of ECQ

Panel A: Reliability Measure	**Value**
Cronbach's Alpha	0.858
Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	0.866
Panel B: Validity Measure	
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy (KMO)	0.817
Bartlett test of sphericit	3,172.405***[a]

*This table shows the reliability and validity measures. *** indicates p value below 1 percent.*

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Factor Analysis

Several procedures were done in performing factor analysis. Initially, there were nine factor loadings formed from the first procedure with a 64.603% of total variance explained. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure is 0.817, which shows that the homogeneity of the constructs are adequate to continue running the factor analysis. Construct validity took place using the Principal Component Factoring (PCF). Q10, Q33, Q17, Q36 contained factor loadings lower than 0.5 and were removed one by one after each rotation. Then, we use the principal component analysis to analyze the remaining 32 questions and product eight constructs over 1. 63.985% of variance can be explained by the eight constructs.We test the correlation between eight constructs. All of the correlation coefficients are 0.000, meaning the eight constructs is very independent.

Table 2: Independent Sample T-Test on ECQ Dimensions on Gender

ECQ Dimensions	**Mean Scores**		**Difference**		**P Value**
	Male	**Female**			
Caring	0.0657	-0.0831	0.1488		0.3010
Professional Codes	-0.1269	0.1605	-0.2874	**	0.0449
Self-Interest,	-0.2188	0.2766	-0.4954	***	0.0005
Rules	0.0370	-0.0468	0.0838		0.5603
Team Interest	-0.0223	0.0282	-0.0505		0.7256
Personal Morality	-0.2055	0.2599	-0.4654	***	0.0011
Social Responsibility	-0.0238	0.0300	-0.0538		0.7086
Efficiency	0.0312	-0.0395	0.0707		0.6232

*This table shows the independent sample T-test of the variables. ***, ** and * indicate significance at the 1, 5 and 10 percent levels respectively.*

Factor 1: Caring contains the dimensions of Benevolence-Individual (BI) and Benevolence-Local (BL) dimensions of ECQ. Each construct loaded in this factor describes that faculty perceived the ethical climate of caring as being more concerned in maintaining good relationship and team interest among faculty members.

Factor 2: Professional Codes contain the dimensions of Principle-Cosmopolitan (PC). Professional codes are served as the first important ethical climate dimension in their institution.

Factor 3: Self-Interest is the combination of Egoism-Individual (EI) and Egoism-Local. Factor loadings show that personal interest exists in the organization.

Factor 4: Rules contains the dimension of Principle-Local (PL). Factor loadings show that standard operating procedures are followed by the participants.

Factor 5: Team Interest is formed by the constructs of Benevolence-Local (BL).

Factor 6: Personal Morality contains the dimension Principle-Individual (PI). Factor loading explains that most of the individuals are morally responsible for their actions distinguishing right from wrong and to be ethical or unethical.

Factor 7: Social Responsibility is formed by the constructs of Benevolence-Cosmopolitan (BC). Factor loadings explain that individuals perform their tasks with social awareness or responsibility.

Factor 8: Efficiency is formed by the constructs of Egoism-Cosmopolitan (EC). Efficiency is being observed by individuals.

Factor analysis results extracted eight dimensions and all of them were originally identified from the base theory of the Ethical Work Climate of Cullen, Victor, and Bronson (1993). These are Caring, Professional Codes, Self-Interest, Rules, Team Interest, Personal Morality, Social Responsibility, and Efficiency.

Table 3: Independent Samples T-test on ECQ Dimensions on Gender and Nationality

ECQ Dimensions	Ghana		Taiwan		USA	
	Male (N=66)	Female (N=34)	Male (N=30)	Female (N=40)	Male (N=14)	Female (N=13)
Friendship	-0.0458	0.0228	0.3084	-0.2044	0.0713	0.0135
Laws, Professional Codes	-0.1133	0.0039	-0.3564	0.3679	0.3009	-0.0683
Self-Interest	-0.5287	-0.0141	0.6847	0.8437	-0.6941	-0.7077
Social Responsibility	0.0856	-0.1105	0.1561	-0.0570	-0.4472	0.1511
Rules, Standard Operating Procedures	-0.0359	-0.2117	-0.0343	0.2282	0.0675	0.0403
Personal Morality	-0.3818	0.2841	0.0976	0.2399	-0.0244	0.2581
Efficiency	-0.0198	-0.0941	-0.1659	0.0012	0.2618	0.4436
Team Interest	0.2546	0.4786	-0.2512	-0.3636	-0.4167	-0.3972

This table shows analysis of Ghana, Taiwan, and USA faculty members.

Table 4: Independent Samples T-test on ECQ Dimensions on Ghana Male vs Taiwan and USA

ECQ dimensions	Difference[a]				
	Ghana Male vs. Ghana Female	Ghana Male vs. Taiwan Male	Ghana Male vs. Taiwan Female	Ghana Male vs. USA Male	Ghana Male vs. USA Female
Friendship	-0.0686	-0.3542 *	0.1586	-0.1171	-0.0593
Laws, Professional Codes	-0.1172	0.2431	-0.4812 **	-0.4142	-0.0451
Self-Interest	-0.5145 ***	-1.2134 ***	-1.3724 ***	0.1654	0.1790
Social Responsibility	0.1961	-0.0704	0.1426	0.5329 *	-0.0654
Rules, Standard Operating Procedures	0.1757	-0.0017	-0.2642	-0.1035	-0.0762
Personal Morality	-0.6658 **	-0.4794 **	-0.6217 ***	-0.3574	-0.6399 ***
Efficiency	0.0743	0.1461	-0.0209	-0.2816	-0.4633
Team Interest	-0.2239	0.5058 ***	0.6183 ***	0.6713 **	0.6519 **

*This table shows analysis of Ghana Male faculty members and Taiwan and USA faculty members. ***, ** and * indicate significance at the 1, 5 and 10 percent levels respectively.*

Table 5: Independent Samples T-test on ECQ Dimensions on Ghana Female vs Taiwan and USA

ECQ dimensions	Difference[a]				
	Ghana Female vs. Taiwan Male	Ghana Female vs. Taiwan Female	Ghana Female vs. USA Male	Ghana Female vs. USA Female	Taiwan Male vs. Taiwan Female
Friendship	-0.2856	0.2272	-0.0485	0.0093	0.5128 **
Laws, Professional Codes	0.3603	-0.3641	-0.2970	0.0721	-0.7243 ***
Self-Interest	-0.6989 ***	-0.8579 ***	0.6800 **	0.6936 **	-0.1590
Social Responsibility	-0.2666	-0.0535	0.3367	-0.2616	0.2131
Rules, Standard Operating Procedures	-0.1774	-0.4399 *	-0.2792	-0.2520	-0.2625
Personal Morality	0.1864	0.0441	0.3085	0.0260	-0.1423
Efficiency	0.0718	-0.0953	-0.3559	-0.5376	-0.1670
Team Interest	0.7298 ***	0.8422 ***	0.8953 **	0.8758 ***	0.1124

*This table shows analysis of Ghana Female faculty members and Taiwan and USA faculty members ***, ** and * indicate significance at the 1, 5 and 10 percent levels respectively.*

Table 6: Independent Samples T-test on ECQ Dimensions on Taiwan and USA

ECQ dimensions	Difference[a]				
	Taiwan Male vs. USA Male	Taiwan Male vs. USA Female	Taiwan Female vs. USA Male	Taiwan Female vs. USA Female	USA Male vs. USA Female
Friendship	0.2371	0.2949	-0.2757	-0.2179	0.0578
Laws, Professional Codes	-0.6573 **	-0.2881	0.0670	0.4362	0.3691
Self-Interest	1.3789 ***	1.3925 ***	1.5378 ***	1.5514 ***	0.0136
Social Responsibility	0.6033 *	0.0050	0.3902	-0.2081	-0.5983
Rules, Standard Operating Procedures	-0.1018	-0.0746	0.1607	0.1879	0.0272
Personal Morality	0.1220	-0.1604	0.2643	-0.0181	-0.2825
Efficiency	-0.4277	-0.6094 **	-0.2607	-0.4424 *	-0.1817
Team Interest	0.1655	0.1460	0.0531	0.0336	-0.0194

*This table shows analysis of Taiwan and USA faculty members ***, ** and * indicate significance at the 1, 5 and 10 percent levels respectively.*

Hypotheses 1-15 are partially supported. Hypothesis 16 is fully supported. There was no significant difference between U.S.A. male and female college of business faculty.

CONCLUSION AND LIMITATIONS

Our goal was to examine whether business school faculty across cultures would provide insight into whether they were influenced by their organizational culture or national culture when making ethical decisions that would impact on their students. The data collected from universities in the United States, Ghana, and Taiwan was analyzed using SPSS. A one way ANOVA was performed with surprising results. The results did show that ethical behavior is influenced by both ethical climates (organizational culture) and national culture, although the results were not as expected. Our study discovered that overall female respondents will draw upon professional codes, their own sense of right and wrong, as well as have greater concern for their own self-interest than males. Ghanaian male faculty were less driven by personal gain and rewards in academia than either Taiwanese male or female faculty. We also found that Ghanaian male faculty is less likely to rely on their own sense of right and wrong when making ethical-decisions than their male and female Taiwanese counterparts, as well as American female faculty.

Ghanaian male faculty was shown to be more benevolent, grounded in identifying and solving ethical problems where the well-being of others takes precedent than either male or female Taiwanese faculty.

Taiwanese female and both American male and female faculty are more rule based, prone to rely upon a standard set of laws, codes, and rules to guide them in ethical decision-making than Ghanaian male faculty. Ghanaian female faculty where shown to be more driven by personal gain and personal morality than Ghanaian male faculty, although not to the extent that faculty from Taiwan and the United States demonstrated. Not surprisingly, Ghanaian female faculty is more benevolent than both Taiwanese and American faculty. Taiwanese faculty and American male faculty are more strongly rule based than Taiwanese males. Both Taiwanese male and female faculty are driven more by personal gains that are more beneficial to their academic careers than either male or female American faculty. In conclusion, we are able to discern that the ethical climate within Ghanaian universities are more benevolent, that is, less egoistic than either Taiwan or the United States. Taiwan thought to be more collectivist, has shown itself to more individualist or egoist associated with individualist national culture than the United States. One reason for this may be the structure of incentives in the respective countries. American universities offer a greater variety of incentive to travel and compensation than Taiwan. The scores demonstrating greater personal gain in Taiwan reflect a Confucian hierarchy of governmental incentives that might negatively impact on ethical decisions at the organizational level.

Limitations of The Study and Future Study

The small number of respondents from the United States may have skewed the results. Many respondents were also reluctant to participate. There is always the risk when participants are asked ethical questions that the respondents may attempt to answer the questions as they deem to be socially or culturally acceptable. This then makes the answers biased with the potential to distort the results. To conclude more accurate finding and expand the study for future research the study should be replicated using other countries around the world to determine if there are significant differences among them where ethical climate is concerned. Another important implication of this study is to encourage faculty to emphasize more on ethics while teaching. Research has proven that the more ethical faculty members are the more positive outcomes for students (Hagedorn, 2000). This may provide further incentive for leadership within Business Colleges to work to foster a more benevolent and/or principled Ethical Climate.

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