

A Research On Managerial Ethics in Azerbaijan Media Organizations

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ABSTRACT *Social/organizational and political/managerial ethics continue to be one of the most prominent predicaments of our time. Recent advances in information technologies have allowed easier and faster access not only to technical and production, but also social, cultural and ethical information, viewpoints and assessments by the public at large –without the scrutiny of a centralized administration. This ongoing process has paved the way for a new people-oriented ethics to emerge, while, underlining the importance of such concepts as human rights, equality and freedom. Managerial ethics' sphere of influence is not limited to the business world. It is, in fact, concerned with every aspect of social life. In this regard, it functions at the core of socio-economic process in creating public benefit while solving/preventing problems. How managerial ethics, as an applied field, can be implemented within a methodology in organizational process, and how to solve the problems that may arise along the way is an important field in modern administrative sciences. It is of special importance that, the media organizations, commonly referred to as the fourth power in democratic societies, have an internal system of governance driven by managerial ethics and its practices.*

Keywords: *Ethics, Managerial Ethics, Corporate Social Responsibility, Business Ethics, Media Organizations* JEL Kod: M14

Azerbaycan Medya Organizasyonlarında Yönetmelik Üzerine Bir Araştırma

ÖZET *İçinde yaşadığımız çağın en önemli sorunsallarından biri gerek siyasal / yönetmelik alanda gerekse toplumsal / örgütsel alanda etik'tir. Günümüzde özellikle bilgi ve iletişim teknolojilerinin geldiği aşama, sadece teknik ve üretime yönelik bilgilerin değil, aynı zamanda, merkezi otoriteler tarafından denetlenemeyen bir şekilde sosyal, kültürel ve ahlaki bilgi ve değerlendirmelerinde çok hızlı bir şekilde iletilmesine olanak sağlamıştır. Bu süreç, insan odaklı evrensel bir ahlakın gelişmesine ve insan hakları, eşitlik ve özgürlük kavramlarının önemini yeniden tüm insanlığın gündemine taşımaktadır. Yönetmelik etik, iş yaşamının (çalışanlardan tüketicilere) yanı sıra bütün toplum kesimlerini ve çevreyi ilgilendirmektedir. Bu anlamda, yönetmelik etik, toplumsal boyutta sosyo-ekonomik süreçte karşılaşılan sorun ve çelişkileri çözmede ve/veya önlemede kamusal yarar açısından önemli bir işleve sahiptir. Bir uygulamalı etik alanı olan yönetmelik etik'in örgütsel süreçlerde metodolojik bir program dahilinde nasıl uygulanacağı, uygulama sürecinde ortaya çıkan sorunları ve bu sorunların nasıl ve hangi yöntemler ile çözülebileceği çağdaş yönetim bilimi için önemli bir uygulama alanıdır.*

Demokratik toplumlarda dördüncü kuvvet olarak nitelendirilen ve bir tür toplumsal denetim mekanizması olan basın işletmelerinin kendi yönetsel süreçlerinde yönetsel etik kavram ve uygulamalarına sahip olmaları özel bir önem taşımaktadır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Etik, Yönetsel Etik, İş ahlakı, Kurumsal Sosyal Sorumluluk, Medya Şirketleri
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Introduction

Ethics as one of the most mentioned subjects of the daily life in Azerbaijan and also in the World is not so much accentuated by the academic world. However, this concept has gradually gained its importance in managerial discipline especially after 1980's. The main feature is the raise of the social sensitivity and the public (especially the non-governmental organizations) pressure due to the social-cultural structures changing according to the technological improvements in knowledge and communication. In this context, considering corporations as social systems as well as economic beings has become a highly acknowledged general notion.

It is necessary to emphasize here that the conflicts caused in the social life by the dilemma between managers and managed people and the economic imbalance, which can be described as primary (basic) ethics problems, cannot be totally solved as the causes cannot be totally eliminated. It is expected to have an inversely proportional increase in the public ethics due to the decrease in these differences.

Almost every problem handled in the scope of managerial ethics is actually the reflection of the field of primary (basic) ethics problematic. In other words, secondary ethical problems as corruption, bribe, personal benefit, false advertisement are results of primary ethical problems and come out as different images/reflections of primary problems.

Problems handled in the scope of managerial ethics will continue to exist as long as the solution of the primary problems of ethics gets difficult. The secondary problems which are the reflections of basic social problems will be eliminated in line with the elimination of these public matters.

The adoption of the managerial ethics in this context by the companies is important in the sense of protection and improvement of social ethics.

There is limited amount of holistic literary studies or researches in the field of managerial ethics. In this respect, the aim of this study is to handle managerial ethics in all aspects and offer to the information and evaluation of the academics, managers and all others who are concerned of the matter.

The last chapter, which is the research part of our study, the application of managerial ethics in the organizational structure of the press associations and the stipulation of the press associations concerning managerial ethics are examined.

It is necessary here to indicate that, there are many studies on the professional ethics of the press employees under the title of “media ethics”. In our study, ways of applications of the managerial ethics as a program is handled in the scope of administrative sciences.

Interviews and surveys are made covering managers of thirty three national newspapers, online newspaper and journals. Target of the research is to exemplify the relation between managerial ethics’ codes and appliance of managerial ethics’ training programs in the extent of press corporations.

1. Basic Concepts:

1.1. Social Responsibility Concept:

Social responsibility may be defined as adopting the restriction of the companies from unsafe activities through the whole process from production to consumption and the policies, procedures, movements that force companies to work in favour of people as a principle. (Özgener, 2009; 161)

Another definition covers the social responsibilities of companies that force to restrict unsafe effects resulting from the economical activities and that contribute to actions for the safe and comfort of people and activities that aim accordance with community alterations. (Nalbant, 2005; 194)

1.2. Social Sensitivity:

The concept “social sensitivity” basically can be expressed as the corporations’ evolving policies on social issues and attention to these matters

Actually this approach states that “social responsibility concept” stands for the leading role of the enterprises in social activities and also in the inclination in prosperity besides the obligation of fulfilling the laws and the requirements of people. (Sayiner, 2005; 28)

1.3. Social Control:

Social control is an analysis made on an enterprise’s level of accomplishment of its aims in social responsibilities.

Social control mechanism measures, evaluates and reports the social performance level of the enterprise periodically in all the fields whether related to the business area of the company or not. (Rachman, 1996; 63)

Consequently, it becomes possible to evaluate the people’s benefit due to the social activities and social control mechanisms and to compare the alternative social policies and movements.

1.4. Managerial Ethics Concept:

Academic studies have been concentrated on managerial ethics since 1970's. The number of essays and educational books on managerial ethics has increased by 1980's.

Managerial ethics, studies the behaviour standards of people and norms that organize and lead the relationship between workers and the companies they work for and dissimilar to the thoughts that suppose enterprises should work hard to gain much with main target of a maximum profit, examines, evaluates and comments on the enterprises' activities in respect of morality. (Flippo ve Gary ve Munsinger, 1982; 71)

Managerial ethics is defined as the moral principles and behaviour standards improved by the managers or organizations in order to success in business and achieve the organizational targets. (Bartol ve Martin, 1994; 102)

2. A Research On Managerial Ethics in Azerbaijan Media Organizations:

2.1. Aim and Importance of the Research:

The basic aim of this research is to examine the application of managerial ethics concept in press enterprises' organizational structure.

In an organization which performs a basic public service as news production, managerial ethics approach, besides business ethics, is very important and determining in respect of press enterprises.

It is only possible when enterprises adopt and practise ethical approach to perform their activities and decisions in the scope of ethical rules. So the enterprises' publishing some principles or rules under the name "ethical codes" is not the main issue in this context, it is the enabling of the employees to adopt and discuss these principles by means of training programs.

It is intended mainly in this study to state how the press enterprises apply managerial ethics and how much space takes the managerial ethics training in their programs.

There are very limited studies made related to managerial ethics in our country. As we refer to literature, we see that most of the studies related to managerial ethics are realized in USA, England, Canada and Germany. These studies are generally on the occurrence of ethical codes, the ethical and unethical behaviour of organizations, and the ethical performance perception in respect of consumption assessments.

(Associated with these studies, see; "Journal of Business Ethics, Volume 1/1982-Volume 99 / 2011; ISSN: 0167-4544)

As far as the relevant literature is concerned there is not another study on managerial ethics codes, managerial ethics appliers, unethical practise reports and ethical tendencies of press enterprises handled all together. So this makes our research more significant.

In this context, the four main components of managerial ethics fact, managerial ethics codes, ethical committee, unethical practise reports and their feedbacks and results of unethical applications and managerial ethics training programs/methods and evaluation of results form the main structure of our study.

We have tried in this study to identify the present situation of the press enterprises in respect with their managerial ethics, their managerial ethics application and training programs.

In this context, the results and data of the research is valuable for the other researchers, experts and academics as they provide an opportunity of comparision.

Examining managerial ethics through press is another essential point as the social/managerial and economical degenerations in the society are brought to public attention by press and press data is utilized in searching and studying these kinds of degenerations (e.g. Sarıkaya, Funda Tuğrul and Behçetoğuları, Pembe; 1935, 1945, 1955, 1965, 1975 and 1985 Cumhuriyet newspaper Scan Research, Political Degeneration, Ankara University).

2.2. Scope of the Research and Its Limits:

Our research covers the national newspapers, journals and web sites published in Azerbaijan. Organizational capacities or circulation rates are not considered as scales. In this respect our research is an inventory study. The main inadequacy faced during the research was the manner of the managers of the press enterprises that were interviewed. They hesitated to answer the questions regarding ethical approaches. In this context, some of the managers and employees stated that they should have the permission of the owner of the company because the information we requested included special organizational data and they felt worried. This fact only causes an important obstacle in research.

As our study is an organizational inventory research and we have interviewed three top and middle managers from each press enterprise.

2.3. Method and Model of the Research:

Our research mainly examines the relation between the managerial ethics codes and ethical trainings.

Our research is an organizational inventory study and it is descriptive.

Our research is actualized with the top and middle executives of the enterprises and has a primary source research quality.

In respect of time our research is a sectional research.

2.4. Hypothesis of The Research:

Through our research, a hypothesis has been progressed on the relation between the managerial ethics codes and ethical trainings of press enterprises.

Hypothesis:

H0: There is no relation between having managerial ethics codes and having ethical trainings in respect of press enterprises.

H1: There is a relation between having managerial ethics codes and having ethical trainings in respect of press enterprises.

2.5. Pre-Acceptances:

In our research we tried to state the managerial ethics codes in press enterprises. We have not made any estimation on adoption of managerial ethics codes or the behaviours being appropriate or not and we have not made any ascertainments or commendations on this subject.

Declaration of a certain procedure in the press enterprises mentioned in the research does not mean that this procedure is really being applied during the operation process. For instance, a manager telling that a person informing about an unethical behaviour will be rewarded by the directorate, may act just oppositely in reality.

In conclusion, the relation between having managerial ethics codes and having ethical trainings in respect of press enterprises are examined in our research.

2.6. Main Body:

Main body of the research is all the national press enterprises.

The press enterprises which we have interviewed the managers of are newspaper, journals and web sites.

In this context, our research is a full count system and sampling method is used.

2.7. Data Collection Method:

Questionnaire is used in this research. First of all, human resources managers of all the national press enterprises were called and informed about the research and were invited to contribute in the research.

Some of the managers of human resources hesitated in contributing when they learned that the topic of the research was managerial ethics as private institutional information was concerned. Whereupon we have made face-to-face interviews with the managers and explained them the academical content of the research and persuaded them for contribution.

After this process questionnaires were to be answered in control of at least two (human resources and financial-administrative) managers from all the enterprises with a cross-check. E-mails were sent to the managers by the Azerbaijan Press Council and explaining the research.

Phone calls were made with the managers to explain the questionnaires and resolve misunderstandings or lack of information.

Three of the managers have declared that they should have the permission of the directorate, and consequently, this and these kinds of other situations have caused delays in data collection. And some managers have had problems in answering the questionnaires in electronic medium, so technical support have been given to them.

Finally, the contribution percentage of the questionnaire is 100%. The questionnaire is examined by two different managers separately and has been answered by them together in every enterprise mentioned.

There are 45 questions in the questionnaire. 12 of the 45 questions are related to ethical codes' occurrence. The others are related to the announcement of ethical codes in organizational process; when and by whom the codes were were improved; procedures applied in cases of code infringe; contents of the codes and updating of the codes according to the differing conditions.

Questions associated to managerial ethics training program in the questionnaire form are related to the occurrence of ethical training program, how and by whom and for whom it was realized, how often it was applied, the content and method of the training program.

Questions associated to the reporting of unethical appliances in the questionnaire form are related to behaviour models –the way that an employee facing unethical manners would act-which come out in cases of immoral attitude.

Questions associated to the managerial ethics appliances in the questionnaire form are related to the units overtaking ethical responsibilities (ethical committees, units).

2.8. Statistical Analysis of Data:

During the evaluation process of the knowledge collected, answers are coded with numbers and SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) for Windows 17.0 program is used for the statistical analyses.

During the evaluation process of the working data, besides definitive statistical methods (Frequency, Percentage), Pearson Chi-Square and Fisher Exact tests are used in comparing qualitative data.

2.9. Validity and Reliability of the Research:

Our research is an institutional inventory study. Thus the data collected consists of consistent information of individuals and companies at the time of research. The legal institutional

structure of the press enterprises is examined. Therefore, the existence of these structures is not a subjective state altering according to individual cases.

For instance, if we had asked a question as “Is the managerial informed of any demand of unethical behaviour from inside or outside the company?”, the answer, according to the perception of the individual or the company, would be subjective. Whereas, through our research, we asked as, “Is there an ethical code concerning the reporting of a demand for an unethical behaviour, from inside or outside of the company?” So, we were searching for ethical codes and this is an objective case which would not differ according to individuals.

As our research is an institutional inventory study, the questionnaire was examined and answered together by at least two top managers.

“Reliability, in general saying, is related to the level of decisiveness and repetition of the results obtained at the end of an observation.” (Sencer, 1989; 418)

“Validity is the range of the research reflecting the truth.” (Kurtuluş, 1983; 15)

“Reliability of the data is the probability of getting similar answers out of other evaluations realized by same methods and same procedure but by different samples from the same group.” (Şencan, 2005; 12)

“To check that a surveying tool gives consistent results the same data would be measured with similar methods and techniques.” (Yumlu, 1990; 141)

Based on the grounds we have explained our research has validity and reliability.

3. Abstract Of Research Data:

3.1. Data Related To Ethical Codes:

It is found that 27 of the 35 national newspapers included in our research have ethical codes and that 8 of them do not have managerial codes.

Table: 1. Possession of managerial ethics codes

	n	percentage
Companies that have managerial ethics codes	27	77.1
Companies that do not have managerial ethics codes	8	22.9
TOTAL	35	100

Only 6 of the national newspapers contributing to our research that have managerial ethics codes have distributed the documents having the managerial ethics codes written on.

Table: 2. Distribution of documents that have managerial ethics codes written on

	n	percentage
Companies that have distributed the documents	6	17.1
Companies that have not distributed the documents	29	82.9
TOTAL	35	100

Another outcome of the research is related to the people improving managerial ethics codes. Accordingly, it is stated that 17.1 (6 companies) percent of the press enterprises surveyed by our research that have managerial ethics codes have improved managerial ethics codes by the aid of human resources departments. 9 of the press enterprises surveyed by our research that have managerial ethics codes have improved managerial ethics codes by the aid of their employees.

Table: 3. Active departments in the improvement of managerial ethics codes

	n	percentage
By top management	17	48.6
By department directors	3	8.6
By employees	9	25.7
By human resources departments	6	17.1
TOTAL	35	100

3.2. Data Related To Executives Of Managerial Ethics:

We have reached various data related to the executives of managerial ethics as ethical committees and sections.

There is no any press enterprises we have surveyed possessed a managerial ethics committee occurrence.

Table: 4. Possession of managerial ethics committees

	n	percentage
Possessing companies	0	0
Non possessing companies	35	100
TOTAL	35	100

Besides, within the press enterprises surveyed it is stated that Top Management (17) come out as the responsible unit in managerial ethics in addition to the other tasks, by a proportion of 48.6 percent.

Table: 5. Departments taking responsibility related to managerial ethics

	n	percentage
Top Management	17	48.6
Human Resources Department	3	8.6
Auditing Department	6	17.1
Managers of Departments	4	11.4
Nobody / Department	5	14.3
TOTAL	35	100

3.3. Data Related To Unethical Appliance Reports And Sanctions:

We asked the contributors if they were able to report the unethical behaviours to the top management. It was stated that only 15 companies had given this possibility.

Table: 6. Companies that provide the possibility to report the unethical behaviour to the top management

	n	percentage
Companies providing that possibility	15	42.9
Companies not providing that possibility	20	57.1
TOTAL	35	100

In this context, we also asked the contributors what was the expected application in case of an employee reporting an unethical behaviour. The data reached at the end was interesting: 65.7 percentages of the contributor companies did not know what was going to be done. 11 companies declared that the reporter was going to be secured. Non of companies had an awarding system for this case.

Table: 7. Applications orientated to the person reporting unethical behaviour to top management

	n	percentage
Awarded	-	-
Protected	11	31.4
Suffered	1	2.9
Ambiguous	23	65.7
TOTAL	35	100

3.4. Data Received Related To Managerial Ethics Training:

At the end of the survey it is found that none of the companies contributed had a special managerial ethics training program. Only 8 of them have stated that they have included ethics in the existing training program.

27 (77.1 percentages) companies do not have ethical training at all.

Table: 8. Managerial ethics training occurrence

	n	percentage
Special managerial ethics training	-	0
Managerial ethics included in the existent training	8	22.9
Companies having not managerial ethics training	27	77.1
TOTAL	35	100

Another study included in our research was about the people who were given managerial ethics trainings. 8 companies possessing managerial ethics codes gave ethical training to all their employees.

Table: 9. Managerial ethics trainings orientation

	n	percentage
Orientated to all employees	15	42.9
Orientated to department managers	3	8.6
TOTAL	18	51.4

During our research we also asked questions related to the content of the ethical training. 9 companies explained general ethical philosophy in the scope of ethical training.

Table: 10. Content of managerial ethics training

	n	percentage
The general code of ethics of the organization	9	25.7
The general code of ethics of the press	5	14.3
The behavior that are not appropriate for the press ethic	1	2.9
TOTAL	15	42.9

3.5. Data Found Related To The Research Hypothesis:

Our research hypothesis is related to the relation between managerial ethics codes and managerial ethics training.

At the end of the analysis a correlation coefficient of 0.28 is achieved. This coefficient shows that there is very small relation between press enterprises having ethical codes and ethical training. In this case we accept that the hypothesis H_0 , suggesting that there is no relation between press enterprises having ethical codes and ethical training, is correct.

It is comprehended that there is not a significant relation between having ethical codes that define the wanted and unwanted behaviour in respect of managerial ethics and the training programs that are created on ethics. (Chi square = 0.95; Fisher exact $p=0.320$)

Evaluation and Conclusion:

Managerial ethics concerns not only the business life (workers/consumers) but all the people and the environment. In this respect, managerial ethics has a significant function in solving and/or obstructing the problems and conflicts during the social- economic process.

The importance and emphasis of the managerial ethics concerning social benefits is the basic dynamics of the improvement of social responsibility consciousness relating to enterprises. Social responsibility perception necessitates on organization that cares about employees, consumers, shareholders and environment in the way that business ethics demands.

As we have mentioned before, there are various researches (academical studies, surveys made by the related institutions) made on profession of journalism under the title of media ethics. But there is not a specialized study on the occurrence and appliance of managerial ethics programs related to the press enterprises' managing procedure. The research we have accomplished in this respect is a unique survey that defines the managerial ethics programs and their applications and the occurrence of managerial ethics training programs related to press enterprises.

As mentioned in the chapters above, it is necessary to have an active contribution of all the employees to the process of managerial ethics programs being realized and applied in an enterprise. Another prerequisite for the successful application of managerial ethics program in an organization is the existence and continuity of the managerial ethics training programs. Without doubt, the existence of ethical codes determined and written by top management does not mean that the enterprise has the culture and application ability related to managerial ethics. It is essential to create ethical codes with a participant way of managing apprehension as well as the organized training program for the success and the application sincerity.

Therefore in our research, besides stating whether the press enterprises have managerial ethics codes or not, we also tried to determine if the press enterprises declaring that they have managerial ethics codes have special managerial ethics training programs.

According to our research it is found out that there is not a significant relation between having ethical codes that define the wanted and unwanted behaviour in respect of managerial ethics and the training programs that are created on ethics. This is also valid for the new personnel.

The outcome of this research is that 27 out of the 35 of the press enterprises contributing to the survey have declared that they have managerial ethics codes but that none of them had special managerial ethics training programs.

Positively, we can put forward at this point a commendation depending on the results of the research: The submission hasn't been carried out sincerely throughout the creation and application process of the managerial ethics program in the press enterprises which declared that they have managerial ethics codes and contribution is not well adopted. The lack of payment for managerial ethics training programs is a confirmation of this conclusion. The fact that only two of the press enterprises having managerial ethics committee also shows the meaning of the application of managerial ethics programs for the press enterprises during the research process. Since, as explained in above chapters the existence of managerial ethics committees is essential in application of managerial ethics programs and the success of the application.

Another important outcome of our research is the statement of people who improve the managerial ethics codes. Thus, in 48.6 (17 companies) percent of the the press enterprises having managerial ethics codes that are the subject of our research has been improved by the top management.

Only 25.7 (9 companies) percent of the managerial ethics codes having press enterprises have improved these codes with the active contribution of their employees.

Throughout the research, we also asked the contributors what was the expected reaction in case of an employee reporting an unethical behaviour. The data reached at the end was interesting: 65.7 (23 companies) percentages of the contributor companies did not know what was going to be done.

As known, press enterprises in democratical societies have an important social function named as the 4th Force. These press enterprises that perform a public service have an important communal responsibility as the formation and socialization of knowledge and news.

In this context, the press enterprises having an important function as informing the public of unethical behaviours and applications in the economical and social world. Thus, it is essential to know whether they have managerial ethics applications or not in their managerial process.

Consequently, to state the accordance of the press enterprises that have the strength to produce political and cultural effect on public, with the managerial ethics concept throughout the management process, will surely have an important influence on the argument of the subject in context of social agenda.

The general conclusion reached after the evaluation of our research is as follows: It is found that only 27 of the 35 national newspapers included in our research have ethical codes, and even these enterprises do not apply or carry out these managerial ethics programs with care and sincerity. It is also found out that these enterprises do not spend enough time on this process and they do not have enough supply in their budget for it and thus, do not have any controls or estimations made on managerial ethics as they do not have a related program.

Besides, press enterprises cannot be considered free from social-economical conditions as all the economical components of the society. Thus it is not possible to think that ethics can change magically all the negative formation at once without having a significant change in social-economical situation.

All the same, as being so effective on social life, press enterprises should pay the necessary importance to managerial ethics and should sincerely and carefully utilize the existent methods through their organizational process.

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