



# A New Perspective on Media Ethics

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## ABSTRACT

Regarding the media's deep impact on current human live, it can be resembled as an intelligent social-cultural institute. And, considering on its targeted and active communications with its self-management capabilities on its processes, we can call the media as a living organism similar to the human. Therefore, with understanding the ethnical characteristic of a communicative human and implementing theme on the media, we can explore the media's ethical responsibilities, and we can explore the relationships between ethic and media from the Anthropology aspect. In this article, we will investigate the Media with the recognitions of two concepts morality and Ethics. Also, I will search in the category of dimensions and fields of ethics in the media. Based on this, the fundamental principles influencing media ethics and effective non-media factors in its construction and role are researched and relying on the normative theory of social responsibility, the category of media ethics goes beyond the concept of individual ethics and journalistic ethics, separate from the broad and pervasive ethical dimension. It should be considered and comprehensive research should be done in the field.

### Methodology

The latest resources about Media Ethic and "Journalism Ethic" from International Encyclopedia of Communication "have been utilized as base of the above two concepts. Also, with reviewing of the other valid resources, new conceptual framework has been offered in this paper for ethical researching in Medias' area and codification of the regulation of the professional ethic.

### Keywords:

A New Perspective on Media Ethics, journalism ethics, practical ethic, Professional philosophical ethics, Institutional ethics

### Introduction

Considering how the media should deal with the questions posed to media researchers, including journalists, public relations practitioners, bloggers, media technical support specialists, from an ethical point of view, along with other professional issues, value judgments of media audiences. Considers the content and performance of the media. As a media actor, what does it mean to be responsible? How can journalists balance the need for information sensitivity with the responsibility of providing an accurate and comprehensive picture of

events? In the field of public relations, what to do when the interests of business customers conflict with the values of the public service profession and the principle of transparency? How can newspaper readers and TV viewers expect news organizations to inflict the least psychological damage on the public during news coverage without auditing the news? Also, the discussion about the philosophical ethics of the media in the moral application and research of the framework for religion has been discussed and enlightened

### **Historical background of the philosophy of ethic**

Philosophy of ethics is one of the relatively new topics in ethical issues that has attracted the attention of ethicists in the last half century as an independent discipline. Many believe that it first sprouted in 1903 with the publication of George Edwards Moore's book *Ethics*. There is no doubt that such discussions existed in the labyrinth of philosophical and moral books and have been one of the most important concerns of thinkers in the field of ethics. Violation of the Law, to Locke (1704-1632) on Religious Tolerance, Hume (1776-1711) on Suicide, Jeremy Bentham (1848-1748) on the French Declaration of Human Rights, Mill (1873-1806) On gender equality, Nietzsche (1844-1900) on punishment, John Dewey (1859-1952) on democracy in America, and Sartre (1905-1980) on genocide in Vietnam can be traced.

### **Utilization of a new perspective on ethics in the media**

According to one classification, the philosophy of ethics includes three branches: meta-ethics, normative ethics, and applied ethics. However, some consider applied ethics as part of normative ethics. They bring forward. But normative and applied ethics naturally have a more specific appearance in different circles of society. Thus, it can be said that the general principles mentioned in the previous topic play an important role in research and theorizing media ethics, but at the same time, they show their importance in specific values in different functional parts of new media. Media professions must always be committed to public service, media work must be clear, simple, and transparent, basic steps must be taken to minimize harm to others during the work of the media profession, and the audience must be allowed to ask, at these intersections that the need for ethics in media activities becomes apparent. Most cases of media ethics involve events or decisions in which two or more general moral values are confronted, and the media actor must make one of those values in a specific decision based on a logical and rational pattern and give priority. Research in the field of

media Ethical studies of media deal with issues such as the formation and evolution of ethical standards and norms, how ethical orientation affects professional behavior, and the presuppositions and necessities of legal decisions and policies.

### **Normative theories in the media**

In the field of media ethics, various and sometimes normative competing theories have been proposed to invite the media as a moral actor to adhere to certain principles, each of which follows certain philosophical principles and approaches. These theories draw on the findings of Dewey, Lippmann, and others who, while not directly addressing ethical issues, have argued that media systems should have defined roles in society. Referring to the views of John Locke and other Enlightenment thinkers, Merrill argued that the ethical framework of the media should be based on the principles of the "First Complement" of the liberal ideals of liberalism and journalistic independence. On the other hand, Christens and his colleagues believe in a socialist model of media ethics that emphasizes the media's commitment to reinforcing social values and fostering civic commitment. Much of the literature on media ethics, derived from the socialist approach, draws on the work of philosophers such as Taylor and Sandel and Habermas' social theories and his idea of the need for a public sphere to create social harmony and reinforce moral discourse. They do. Apart from philosophical approaches, most theorists in the field of media ethics try to distinguish the boundaries of their speech from the teachings of media ethics.

**Dennis McQuail** has introduced a new applied typology to address this issue. He observes the link between the mass media and society as a product and a reflection of how each media is formed in each society, but nevertheless holds common features to the media institution in all societies, these commonalities influenced by normative theories. Is expressed. There are theories about what the media should or is expected to look like. The answer to this question includes various forms of social

research, criteria for judging and passing new laws.

**McQuail** offers six types of normative theories on the structure and function of the media, based on normative theories of the press first introduced by Sibert in 1956 in the form of four categories.

Authoritarian theories, free press, social responsibility, Soviet media, development media, and democratic media participation are each based on different philosophical principles about the role of the media, different values and norms in the field. They take responsibility.

Among these, the theory of social responsibility is the basis for theorizing about the ethics of new media and the theory of social responsibility considers the independence of the media with commitment to society and its theoretical foundations are based on the assumption that the media should In the field of information and culture, and providing a platform for the presentation of various views, be committed to advancing democratic policies; the emphasis on maximum independence for the media while coordinating the fulfillment of obligations to society is the basis of this theory. According to this normative theory, a compromise must be established between the three principles of individual freedom, free choice and freedom of the media, and the commitment of the media to society.

**McQuail** presents the ethical and professional requirements that influence the work of the media in the form of the seven basic principles derived from this theory.

First, the media must accept and fulfill certain obligations and duties to society.

Second, In order to fulfill these commitments, you must pay attention to the criteria of news professionals such as truth, accuracy, objectivity and balance.

Third, by accepting and fulfilling the desired obligations, the media must engage in "professional self-discipline" within the framework of existing laws and institutions.

Fourth, the media should avoid as much as possible what leads to crime, violence and

disorder in the country or the desecration of minority groups.

Fifth, the media as a whole should be pluralistic and reflect the diversity of ideas in society and provide access to different views and ensure the right to be held accountable.

Sixth, the society and the audience have the right to demand the observance of professional standards in journalistic activities based on the social obligations and responsibilities of the media.

Seventh, journalists and media professionals must be accountable to society, employers, and the market. Ethical Frameworks in Media Sociology from a New Perspective Since ethics is primarily concerned with individuals' efforts to solve problems Field and experimental studies in the field of media ethics pay attention to the individual level of analysis and are therefore a branch of media sociology. Research in this area focuses on the media, their understanding of responsibility and the decision-making process and its consequences. Researchers in the field have sought to examine the value systems and ethical perspectives of journalists and public relations managers, and to study the ethical growth and development of journalists compared to other professions. Most field research in this field is based on structured surveys and interviews. Since work on news media is interpersonal and subjective in nature, theorists point out that the manifestation of individual and professional norms and values can be seen outside of new media; this issue continues to provoke collective debate about the extent to which content is biased. As a result, research on media decision-making, at least among journalists, focuses on professional norms and concepts that directly address the ethical and ethical aspects of media work.

Ganz, for example, addressed how journalists "decide what is news" but his chosen subject inevitably required an examination of the individual and cultural values that he thought could be embedded in the news content. Which some social psychologists see as a sign of journalists' "moral ideologies." Schumacher and Riz emphasize that organizational and programmatic constraints can minimize or

neutralize the impact of individual beliefs, values, and attitudes about media content.

Extra-media factors affecting professional ethics were used in the initial conceptualizations of work ethic and job ethics, but in the new concept it includes the institution's ethical responsibilities to the environment, which also includes the individual's responsibilities in the job. In this sense, professional ethics, as the moral responsibilities of an institution or firm, such as individual and professional ethics, observes objective relations and includes practical and applied guidelines, and objective and professional ethics issues are mainly cultural, because organizational culture is strongly influenced by the influence of public culture, for example in the field of media, trust is an important factor in organizational culture. In other words, professional ethics requires multifaceted trust that must be sought outside the organization and in the context of culture.

And because the correlation between theory and practice is important in ethics, the relationship between news and other fields and aspects influencing information is an important issue of professional ethics in the field of media. This is how Clifford Christens explains the same external media factors influencing the ethical order of journalism in the International Encyclopedia of Communication.

### **Commercial Interests**

Today, media companies are among the founders of the largest types of global business. Disney, Bertelsmann, General Electric, Microsoft, Fox News, Nokia, Samsung, and Sony are among the companies that even target the global economy. It is clear that to adapt this volume of activities of economic institutions to the standards of social justice, one must pay attention to the category of corporate social responsibility. Influential ethics in social justice is now based on the most popular aspects of new information technologies.

### **Truth**

Commitment to the truth is a criterion in journalistic ethics. Truth is a generally accepted

norm in the field of media profession, which is also an acceptable and reliable language for journalism. But achieving this professional goal has been and is practically impossible. But achieving this professional goal has been and is practically impossible. Economic constraints, temporal urgency, and personal considerations often affect the reliance on truth in news casting puts. Thus far, the mainstream of news coverage has generally been defined as an objective stream. In this type of journalism, the news of the exact presentation of events is clear and professionalism is considered a sign of neutrality. Accordingly, journalistic ethics is based on non-biased reports and neutral data, the accuracy, accuracy, balance, impartiality, neutrality, objectivity of realism are its principles. In this approach to reporting, the objective is not merely a technique, but a moral one to keep the journalist away from value judgments. The problem is that the framework for telling the truth in the accurate transmission of information has become very narrow due to the social and political complexities, and objectivity in the conventional process of producing and disseminating news is practically hidden. A more complex phenomenon that has influenced the conventional framework of realism is the category of revelation. Disclosure is something that will have the right meaning and direction in two ways: first, to have a theoretical framework for telling the truth, and second, to act practically with realistic sensitivity to news coverage.

### **Cultural Diversity**

Today, indigenous languages and ethnic tendencies have found a new position during the globalization process, and religious fundamentalist approaches have emerged throughout the world. Under these circumstances, the globalist approach that has been a dominant issue after the Cold War and as a new source of social credibility has affected all social institutions, including the media, when faced with ethnic self-awareness and in the process, the development of cultural pluralism is challenged. In this challenge, social responsibility highlights a kind of individualistic ethic of law in relation to the "common good" in

which the public sphere is recognizable in a diverse range of societies and forms a plurality of ethnic worldviews to shape social bonds. Accept; A plurality that is the result of cross-rival, sustained currents, and at the same time can, with the active participation of all of them, regulate and accomplish the common good.

### Privacy

Public opinion in expressing how news is broadcast, considers the issue of invasion of privacy as the first issue in media ethics, at least in Western cultures. Despite the technical complexities of jurisprudence and the distinctions between crime and quasi-crime, incomplete definitions of the private sphere are still insufficient. For example, so far, the distinction between newsworthy topics and baseless rumors or personal curiosity has not been easy. In such a situation, the ethics of journalism in the private sphere relies on some ethical principles based on the personalities and values of the social liberator in disseminating information. In fact, the private sphere is a moral good because the protection of personal information is an essential element of human individuality. However, the private sphere cannot be an absolute concept because each person has social and political responsibilities, and individuals on the other hand need the private sphere for the sake of their individuality; But on the other hand, for the sake of social existence, they also need public information about each other.

### Media T-ehnology

Harold Inis see social change as accompanied by changes in media, so technologies are not neutral, and change from one type of media to another is accompanied by changes in how societies are organized and how people think. Following in the footsteps of Inis and Marshall McLuhan of the Toronto School and media ecologists, they have studied various media technologies from cuneiform to the Internet to gain a deeper understanding of their characteristics. In the age of digital ethics, media should list tasks that fit the unique characteristics of a network system, search engines, and computer databases. This ethical

framework, at its most effective, must focus on social structures to recognize that political and cultural formulations are fundamentally different in online and offline situations. In fact, cyber-terrorism, cyber warfare, and other immediate new threats to social order do not exist without digital infrastructure. In this area, representational ethics has a new orientation, now gender, race, ethnicity and religion have become symbolic in cyberspace without a name and symbol, sometimes it is a new subject and sometimes it extends the ethics of the past to complex and unknown levels.

### A shift from the ethics of individual journalists to the ethics of institutional media

As mentioned in the previous sections, ethical performance in journalism is the product of a combination of individual and collective motivators and external and internal factors. Extensive and rapid developments in the field of communication have highlighted collective and institutional roles in the field of social responsibility than in the past. Therefore, it must be said that the ethical requirements in journalism now require the formation of special organizations in the world of media to fulfill its philosophy of ethics. So far, the core of media ethics has been individual journalists, but these individual journalists operate within institutional, national, and international media systems. In a globalized world, media ethics must be discussed not only professionally but also institutionally, nationally and internationally.

The core and norms of ethics in individual, institutional, national and international existence are not necessarily the same, so it is simply impossible to derive a single ethical principle from their sum of them. Dr. Majid Tehranian has listed the core of media ethics, which are the norm at the individual, institutional, national and international levels, in a table that can be considered a basis for recognizing the similarities and differences in these four areas.

**From a new perspective, global media ethics can be examined in terms of four categories of critical responsibilities and freedoms:**

First, freedom from government and institutional pressures and audits;

Second, the freedom to perform professional duties in the field of awareness, education and entertainment of the people at the highest possible quality level;

Third, responsibility for the professional duties of accuracy, correctness, impartiality and respect for human dignity and rights;

Fourth, responsibility for promoting the democratic values of freedom of expression, free flow of information, equal access to media and information, diversity and pluralism, balance, transparency and accountability.

Relying on this concept and examining the content of the ethical regulations of the journalistic profession at the national, regional and global levels, Dr. Kazem Motamednejad establish an appropriate ethical framework for journalism on the following four important areas:

#### 1. Public awareness

Given that the main mission of journalism in responding to the right of all to receive objective information about collective life, to have freedom of expression and criticism, and to freely reflect public opinion through various news media, it is their duty to inform them at the top of the newspaper profession. There is a painting.

#### 2. Freedom of the press

The basic condition for journalistic activity to be realized is the right of everyone to know the news processes and issues of public opinion, to ensure the practical independence of the journalist and to strengthen and guarantee the prestige of the journalistic profession. Therefore, defending journalists' freedom of information, interpretation and criticism is one of their main duties.

#### 3. Tell the truth

The fundamental duty of a journalist the social mission of the resume profession requires that the journalist always be at the service of discovering and telling the truth. According to this principle, journalists have a duty to cover what really happened and there is no lie in it.

#### 4. Respect for individual dignity and privacy

Paying special attention to the personal dignity and private lives of individuals is a necessity of

doing journalism properly and preventing the development of press crime, especially insulting and defaming individuals. Therefore, in all cases where the publication of an article or news item through the press or radio and television may harm the dignity of individuals, they should be entitled to correction or the right of reply. In other words, whenever the media raises an issue against a person, he has the right to comment on it, and the press, radio and television are obliged to reflect that response.

These are general principles that can determine ethical and legal directions in professional, organizational, governmental and international relations and rules, and based on them, formulate and regulate binding and related ethical laws and charters.

### **The field of media ethics research**

Media ethics is not an abstract concept; it is a practical category that is more relevant today in the field of ethics than in the field of ethics philosophy. In this area, normative patterns are more influential than any other factor, which in itself is more due to the determination of the roles of external media factors.

Media ethics is now a category that goes beyond the individual and professional responsibilities of journalists, so it is necessary to pay attention to ethical frameworks and professional ethical models at the institutional, national and international levels. In this context, based on new problems and variables, the principles of ethical and professional issues should be applied and a dynamic should be established that can include multiple and diverse media spaces from oral communication to written communication, electronic communication and virtual communication. Make it possible to advance those principles in the form of professional, civic, national and international institutions.

### **Conclusion:**

This article discusses the changes and ethical principles of the media from a new perspective and from the focus of journalists to the focus of institutions, including media institutions, governments and international institutions, and based on that, a framework for ethics. Applied in

the form of professional ethics, a framework based on the four principles of public awareness, freedom of the press, truth-telling and respect for individual dignity and privacy in a variety of media spaces is explained and presented in the context.

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