Chapter 7
Media Ethics:
Evaluation of Television News in the Context of the Media and Ethics Relationship

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ABSTRACT

This chapter provides an overview about media ethics that is very important for the news. Today, the rapid development and diversification of mass media tools have also accelerated the works in the field of communication ethics. Media responsibility, issues occurring in media, and public utility issues have come to the central position of communication ethics. Looking at the ethical codes in the media, it is seen that a large part of them are created for printed media, and the information about television is limited. The purpose of this study is to focus on the ethical issues that arise starting from the production stage of the television news with a holistic perspective in the context of the relationship between media and ethics by considering the ethical codes in the media and to offer solutions devoted to an ethical understanding of journalism. Within the scope of this study, the qualitative research method included the content analysis for the news about Princes Diana and Prince Harry as samples.

INTRODUCTION

Ethics is a system that reminds the important rules of moral system and should be valued every area. When looked at the dictionary meaning of the word "ethics" it is seen the corresponding expression "*Science of value judgments with regard to morality, virtue and making distinction between good and evil. All the morality principles which form the basis of one's behaviour. Moral, moral-related, morality,*

customs science, moral science" (turkcesozlukler.com). The concept of ethics is defined as the branch of philosophy that searches for the quality and origin of the concepts categorized as good-bad or right-wrong, which are among the moral values existing among individuals. Looking at the origin of the word ethic, it is assumed that it derives from the word *ethos* in Greek and also comes from the word "ethicus", which is a Latin word (Tutar & Yılmaz 2003, p. 53).

It is seen that this word is used in different ways. Its first use in Greek means habit, custom or moral law. Ethical values do not emerge by an authority mechanism, these values emerge as a result of experiences created by the human relationships and human mind during the course of time. In this respect, when we look at the communication ethics due to the relationship between the media and ethics, it is possible to express that the professional ethics, i.e. a whole set of rules in a certain profession area, can only be realized when the people performing this profession adopt these values both mentally and behaviourally and it cannot be valid as a result of external pressure and imposition (Girgin 2000, p. 144). The focus of our study is the relationship between media and ethics as well as the communication ethics in the context of professional ethics and evaluation of television news in ethical context. The fact that information flow has become very important nowadays and the information flow is transferred very fast regardless of the time and space barriers, the mass media tools are diversified in parallel with the developing technology and the information is spread instantly on digital platforms, and the potential to reach millions of people at the same time has increased the importance of communication ethics and made it one of the issues that should be seriously discussed.

The media, which has such an effective and decisive potential in social life shall take into account certain ethical rules and inform the masses in an accurate manner while producing a content that is considered as a source of information, especially news, and does not leave its potential under the auspices of certain interest groups only when the media professionals performing actively in this area adopt and comply with the certain ethical rules (Eroğlu & Atabek 2006, p. 1). The evaluation of television news in the context of ethics, the relationship between media and ethics and awareness of the production processes of television and television news, which is one of the most widely used mass media tools, are important for understanding the study.

The main focus of this study is to draw a frame of the ethical issues in media as television news. It is the target of this chapter to underline the relationship between media and ethics by considering the ethical codes in the media and besides to offer solutions devoted to an ethical understanding of journalism. There are various subheadings as "The Concept of Ethics and Using Ethics – Morality Concepts", "The Relationship between Media and Ethics and Ethical Violations in Media", "Television and Its Functions", "Media and News Production", "Television News and News Production Process", "Ethical Violation During New Production Process", "News Examples Involving Ethical Violation", "News about Private Life of Princess Diana" and "News about Private Life of Prince Harry" for a holistic view.

The Concept of Ethics and Using Ethics – Morality Concepts

The concept of "ethics" is considered to be the guiding and commanding rules of human life in all communities, while the specific ethics rules depend on the religious beliefs, social norms, historical conditions, and economic philosophies of the culture it is in all times. For this reason, it is important to consider the system in which the standards are applied when referring to ethical principles (Matelski 1995, p. 11). Ethics is a discipline that deals with the rules and values that form the basis of the individual and social relations of a human being, which is essentially a social entity, within the discipline

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