9th International Strategic Management Conference

Perceived Academic Code of Ethics: A Research on Turkish Academics

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Abstract

Ethics is a difficult and controversial concept. Many businesses and nearly all professions have a code of ethics. The existence of a code of ethics in a profession means that unethical behaviour may not be allowed or tolerated. Thus, members of a profession do not display their unacceptable behaviour. Code of ethics for academics is distinct from moral codes that may apply to the culture, education, and religion of a whole society. Academics play the role of educators, researchers, administrators, consultants, professional colleagues, and professors. This article tries to identify a code of ethics for academics in their role as educators/teachers. There is a lack of Turkish academic code of ethics. Thus, the research sample is consisted of 100 academics employed in both public and private universities in Istanbul. We used the five point scales of "The Statement on Professional Ethics" for academics developed by AAUP and refined by AOM and AMA. Based on the analysis, we identified the hypernorms related to academics in their role as educators. Thus, behaviours deemed ethically unacceptable by the community of academics in Istanbul, Turkey were identified and discussed.

1. Introduction

In recent years, the fast pace of development, globalization and the information society have been affecting people, societies and companies. There is more of a necessity for general moral principles now as results of these social changes. The term "ethics" is not new; it has, however, been more spoken, discussed and studied recently and has, in its various aspects, been the subject of several theses.

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Ethics is the standard that determines what is right and what is wrong (Kurtz, 1999). According to Miesing and Preble (1985) "ethics are frameworks for human conducts that relate to moral principles and attempt to distinguish right from wrong". Ethics can be defined as the "inquiry into the nature and ground of morality, in which the morality is defined in the context of moral judgments, standards, and rule of conduct" (Mason, Bearden and Richardson, 1990). The ethical code provides a set of rules or principles that must be followed, and non-compliance can result in, among other actions, expulsion from the association (Bullock and Panicker, 2003). Some scholars accepted the differences between terms of codes of practice, code of ethics, and codes of conduct (Wood and Timmer, 2003; Pater and Van Gils, 2003). On the other hands, in most studies they have been used the same meaning. All definitions refer to some ethical standards of a group or an organization or a profession.

Many businesses and nearly all professions have a code of ethics. Virtually, all professions have codes of ethics. Even if all of them don't have written code of conduct, they have an agreed set of code of conduct exists in practice. Business ethics is a set of rules that stipulating how businesses and their employees ought to behave (Gbadamosi, 2004). Professional ethics is a group of principles for professionals in the same business curbing their personal inclinations, regulating competition between them, aiming to protect professional ideals (Sirgy, Johar and Gao, 2006). Working on the area of professional ethics is primarily educative: to inform members of the higher education community about principles of professional ethics and to encourage their observance (www.aaup.org). Therefore the principles for the professional ethics shape the duties of members of a certain occupational group to each other and to society. According to Vee and Skitmore (2003), professions are not exempt from the ethical codes of society. Additionally, they should act with a set of principles and attitudes that control the way the profession is practiced.

The American Association of University Professors (AAUP) has a code of ethics for academics. Academics deal with teaching, research, service and administration (www.aaup.org). According to Dill (1982); as an academic profession, teaching is an "art"; that the basis for selecting teaching strategies, evaluation techniques, even perhaps the goals of instruction. Rather equating teaching with an artistic choice defines away a crucial aspect of the teaching role. The teacher (educator) shapes not clay but human beings, and consequently faces dilemmas involving concepts such as justice, equity, and the moral basis for teaching conduct more directly such as an artist does. Furthermore, equating teaching with art tends to trivialize discussions of the basis for professional choice or professional obligation.

Most studies about academic ethics focus on American codes, but in the last decades, an increase of literature on ethical codes of academics in other countries can be observed. In the relevant literature, it seemed that there is a lack of research on the ethical codes of Turkish academics. Thus, the aim of this study is to determine the code of ethics followed by academics in their role as teachers (or educators) in universities in Istanbul, Turkey.

The article proceeds in the following manner: first, we briefly review what professional ethics is and the literature regarding code of ethics for academics. Second, we explain in detail the method of data collection and analytical procedures. Within this concept, we also review the questionnaire general ethical guidance for academics provided by The American Association of University Professors (AAUP) and refined by The Academy of Management (AOM) and The American Marketing Association (AMA). Finally, we provide the research findings and summarize the contributions to relevant literature and academic profession.

2. What Is Professional Ethics?

A profession has been described by Whitbeck (1998) as "an occupation that both requires advanced study and mastery of a specialized body of knowledge and undertakes to promote, ensure or safeguard some matter that significantly affects others" A profession has the following characteristics (Dill, 1985): It has exclusive powers to recruit and train new members as it sees fit. It has exclusive powers to judge who is qualified. It is responsible for regulating the quality of professional work. It has high social prestige. It is grounded in an esoteric and complex body of knowledge.

Professional ethics is principles, rules, standards or codes of conduct set by people in a specific profession. The task of professional ethics is to identify moral standards and assessments, judgments and concepts, characterizing people as representatives of a particular profession (Schur, 1982). Thus, professional ethics deals with potential problems confronting members of a profession and their impact on others. Being a member of a profession implies that should be attributed treated fairly not only to clients but also colleagues and the public (Vee and Skitmore, 2003). Ideally, code items should be very specific and value-based (Robin et al., 1989). Useful codes are clear, comprehensive and enforceable (Raiborn and Payne, 1990). A professions code of ethics is a visible and explicit enunciation of its professional norms, its moral dimension, and its collective conscience. It also can be *aspirational* in providing ideals (notions of right and wrong) to which practitioners should strive; *educational* in providing commentary and interpretation to demonstrate means for resolving ethical dilemmas encountered in the profession; and/or *regulatory* which in providing detailed rules to govern professional conduct and prescribe grievance procedures due to the inadequacy of laws as a remedy and the advantages to business of this approach over government regulation (Frankel, 1989; Weller, 1988; Preble and Hoffman, 1999).

The main reason why professional ethics exists is the necessity of acting in accordance with the same principles all around the world for the people in the same occupational group. Many occupations have their own professional codes determining the standards of occupational behaviour. The main goal of these codes is self-criticism and self- development. In this regard, professional ethics limits arbitrary behaviours whilst practicing a profession and guides professionals towards the behaviour necessary for the moral principle of the subject occupation (Colin and Schultz, 1995). A professional code of ethics sets out the standards of conduct that apply within a domain or discipline. This serves the function of creating a common set of standards that define norms of behaviour for professionals within a domain or discipline, thus safeguarding both the integrity as well as the reputation of the discipline (Bullock and Panicker, 2003). The concept of ethical norms is developed by the local community in terms of hypernorms. According to Donaldson and Dunfee (1994), hypernorms are ethical norms considered highly legitimate and obligatory. They are second-order moral concepts because they represent norms sufficiently fundamental to serve as a source of evaluation and criticism of community generated norms.

3. Code of Ethics for Academics

The statement on professional ethics that follows was originally adopted in 1966. Revisions were made and approved by the Association's Council in 1987 and 2009. The American Association of University Professors has recognized that membership in the academic profession carries with it special responsibilities (Schurr, 1982; Fisher, 2003). The issues of the implementation of ethics can be addressed by applying social contract theory (Weller, 1989; Sirgy, Johar and Gao, 2006; Gao et al., 2008). Social contract theory asserts that each community has its own ethical norms. The essence of this theory for the development and implementation of an ethical code is its emphasis on the role of consensus among the individuals potentially abiding by the code. Donaldson and Dunfee (1994) have argued that communities determine what is appropriate or not, bounded by time and space. In other words, what is appropriate for one community in a certain time and space may be different for other communities bounded by a different

time and space (Sirgy, Johar and Gao, 2006; Gao et al., 2008). Guided by Donaldson and Dunfee's (1994) notion of sources of evidence for hypernorms, we believe that evidence for hypernorms related to educators can be established from a variety of sources. Examples include; widespread consensus among educators as to what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour of educators, widespread consensus among students as to what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour of educators, widespread consensus among professionals (practitioners) as to what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour of educators, codes of ethics from associations of university professors such as the AAUP, and codes of ethics of related academic societies such as economics, management, psychology, sociology, and public administration.

If codes are developed and implemented correctly, they play an important regulatory role (Higgs-Kleyn and Kapelianis, 1999). The functions of codes are: as an enabling document, source of public evaluation, professional socialization, enhance profession's reputation/public trust, preserve entrenched professional biases, deter unethical behaviour, support system and adjudication (Frankel, 1989). The American Association of University Professors (AAUP) has a code of ethics for academics in their role as educators (www.aaup.org) A code of ethics is an effective educational guide for educators, especially those who lack experience and tenure in academia (Dean, 1992). Several professional associations for educators, including AOM and AMA, have developed codes of ethics to aid in accountability (Dean, 1992; Sirgy, 1999; Sirgy, Johar and Gao, 2006; Gao et al., 2008).

3.1. The Academy of Management Association Code of Ethics

The governing board of the AOM, the largest academic association of management educators, appointed an "All-Academy Task Force on Ethics" in 1988 to investigate potential ethical codes or statements for its membership. The task force proposed a code of ethical conduct, the Academy of Management Code of Ethical Conduct (AMCEC) that was eventually approved in 1990 by the organization's governing board and voting membership of the Academy (Bell and Bryman, 2006). In December 2005, an ethics task force developed and recommended a revised code with additional input from the Academy's Board of Governors, journal editors, and individual members who have contributed ideas and suggestions over the last decade or so (Petrick and Scherer, 2005).

3.2. The Academy of Marketing Association Code of Ethics

The Academy of Marketing Science (AMS), an international society of marketing educators, initiated an effort in the late 1990s to explore the possibility of developing a code of ethics for marketing educators worldwide. The American Marketing Association (AMA) has a code of ethics for marketing practitioners, but not for marketing academicians. A code of ethics for marketing educators was thought to be an effective educational tool and guide for marketing educators, especially those who lack experience and tenure in marketing academia (Gao et al., 2008).

Some researchers also examined the code of ethics for the academic profession such as engineering (Gotterbarn, 1999), accounting (Brooks, 1989; Raven, 1994; Collins and Schultz, 1995) and law (Jamal and Bowie, 1995). In addition Siegel et al. (1995) examined the internal auditors' code of ethics and Wiley (2000) also studied about ethical standards for human resources management professionals.

This paper builds on previous work by Sherrell et al. (1989), Mason et al. (1990), Sirgy (1999), Kurtz (1999), Malhotra and Miller (1999), Ferrell (1999) and Sirgy et al. (2006) in dealing with issues of codes of conduct of marketing, educators. It also builds on previous work by Gao et al. (2008) dealing with issues of codes of conduct of management educators and Sirgy, Siegel and Johar (2005) dealing with issues of codes of conduct of accounting educators.

Gao et al. (2008) examined the codes of The Academy of Management, The American Marketing Association, The American Psychological Association, The American Sociological Association, The Marketing Research Association, The Council of American Survey Research Organizations, The Qualitative Research Consultants Association, The American Association for Public Opinion Research, and The Direct Marketing Association. The code of ethics for educators in their role as educators includes the same terms as the AOM and AMA (Ferrell, 1999). As long as human beings are frail and free, that is as long as humans may choose an action that is unethical, academics as with all other professions will need standards such as the AOM code of ethics to enlighten their intellects and heroes to strengthen their wills (Gao et al., 2008).

4. Methodology

There is a lack of research on the ethical codes of academics in Turkey. Therefore, the general *purpose* of the present study is to display behaviors considered unethical by academics in their role as educators in the both public and private business universities in Istanbul. In other words, we try to display unethical behaviours perceived by academics who worked in universities in Istanbul, Turkey.

In order to achieve the aims of the paper, we used some statistical methods as explained below for displaying unethical behaviours concerning educators' roles as perceived by academics. We also hypothesized the significance of the differences between the ethical/unethical behaviours. We therefore propose:

Hypothesis 1. There is a significant difference between the score of 2 (unacceptable) and 1 (very unacceptable) and the score of 3 or above on a scale varying from 5 (very acceptable) to 1 (very unacceptable).

In other words, our sample mean differs significantly from the value of 3. So, for each subject, we can compute the difference between the two scores and test the null hypothesis that the population means difference is 0.

4.1. Data Analysis Techniques

Data were obtained directly from the academics through the questionnaires, which mean primary source data were used in the research. Data obtained from questionnaires was analyzed through the SPSS statistical packet software (v.18).

For identifying behaviours that most academics agree are clearly unacceptable (i.e., hypernorms), based on the Gao et al. (2008), we accepted three standards in identifying the "hypernorms" (i.e., unethical behaviours) for academics: (1) *a mean of 2 or below* and a combined frequency percentage of 75% for judges rating a behaviour as either 2 (unacceptable) or 1 (very unacceptable).

Gao et al. (2008) and Sirgy et al. (2005 and 2006) added the size of the standard deviation to provide more confidence in their findings. Thus, we also used "*a standard deviation of less than 1.0*" as a second criterion to ensure that unacceptable behaviours judged as hypernorms have a high level of consensus among respondents; a standard deviation of less than 1.00 is judged as a conservative criterion reflecting a high degree of consensus.

According to Hardesty and Bearden (2004), the essence of the *complete method* is to retain items that are chosen by a certain percentage of judges as completely representing unethical behaviours. In our case, complete representation is indicated by a score of 2 (unacceptable) and 1 (very unacceptable) on a scale varying from 5 (very acceptable) to 1 (very unacceptable). Thus, items would be retained if at least 78,8% of the judges rated an item as at least somewhat representative of the construct.

In addition, using the statistical test explained below, we tested the significant level of the hypothesis through one sample t-test. When we want to compares the mean score of a sample to a known value (3 on 5 point scale), *the one-sample t-test* should be used. So we used this test if there is a significant difference between the values of 3and below.

For testing differences between gender and the perceived academic code of ethics and differences in age and the academic code of conduct perceived by academics, *the independent t-test* was conducted. Also *correlation analyses* were used for testing in order to establish if a relationship exists between 'years of experience in education' and 'academic title' and one's perceived academic code.

4.2. Sample

The data used have been collected from the academics by e-mail and face to face communication using the questionnaire explained below. The sampling frame of the research consists of 100 randomly selected academics from business faculties of both public and private universities in Istanbul. The sample size is one of the research limitations.

The demographic profile of the sample respondents is as follows: The sample involved educators with varying occupational titles (69.7% associate and full professors, 23.9% assistant professors and instructors, and 5.2% "others"). They all had doctoral degrees (100%), with an average of 10,30 years teaching experience (median: 9 and mode: 9); there was an even split between males and females (50% males and 50 % females). The participants had a mean of 40,04 years old, the median was 39, and the mode was 38. Also, they all were employed in public and private business schools.

4.3. Instrument

In this study, the "Statement on Professional Ethics" developed by AUIP and refined by AMA and AOM was taken as a basis, making use of and the part of the multi-faceted scale dealing with code of ethics for academics in the role of educators. The scale is divided in seven sections based on the roles of academics as educators, researchers, administrators, consultants, professional colleagues, and college professors. All the items in the questionnaire were accompanied by five-point rating scales. Among these seven different parts of the scale, we used only the "academics as educators" part of the scale.

Questionnaire was divided in two sections. The first section contained 32 statements reflecting a code of ethics for academics in their role as educators. These statements were derived from several sources as explained above. For the content validity of the survey; professionals and academics studying on these issues assessed the content of questions and statements in terms of Turkish conditions. Accordingly, based on expert opinions, we removed two questions on the original statement.

The first section of the scale was measured using a five-point rating scales with anchors 1: I believe this is very unacceptable and 5: I believe this is very acceptable. The second section contained 10 demographics items. A set of demographic questions relating to the respondent's gender, age, years of experience in education, and academic title or position, were also included to examine differences in individual characteristics between the cohorts. The questionnaire has 42 items in total.

Although reliability and validity analysis of the scale has been done before by many other researchers, we calculated the Cronbach's alpha score for the 32 items. The Cronbach's alpha score obtained was 0,862 which indicate that the scale is reliable, adequate and stable. There is no need to factor analysis for construct validity, because the scale was designed for measuring one variable.

5. Data Analysis and Findings

Although the other researchers in the literature have used combinations of several methods such as sum-score, standard deviation and complete ratio, we used all these methods to analyze our findings. The results of the analysis are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Sum, Mean, Standard Deviation, and Complete Ratio Scores of Unethical Behaviours Based on Consensus of Academics

Statements	Sum	Mean	Standard Deviation	Complete Ratio %
25 Engaging in unbecoming behavior with students (e.g., drinking alcoholic beverages until feeling intoxicated).	102,00	1,0968	,29725	100
17 Grading students inconsistently.	115,00	1,2105	,43503	98,9
29 Submitting a graduate student paper to a journal for the only purpose of getting a review and then passing on the review to the student without acknowledging the source.	124,00	1,3191	,49105	98,9
3 Informing students that attendance is not a factor in grades and then using attendance as a grade criterion when a student misses classes.	126,00	1,3263	,62641	96,8
27 Tell "off-color" jokes in class to liven things up and gain students' approval.	129,00	1,3723	,60436	95,7
1 Informing students they will be tested with one type of exam and then giving them another type of exam.	112,00	1,2308	,51805	95,6
9 Treating students in class less favorably based on their gender, religion, ethnicity, race, nationality, age, sexual orientation, or physical/mental disability.	124,00	1,3053	,65353	94,7
28 Not show up repeatedly for office hours.	146,00	1,5368	,71176	94,7
24 Teaching students one's own concepts and models, not those that are representative of the literature.	139,00	1,4632	,69666	90,5
7 Expecting sexual favors in return for better grades or support.	141,00	1,5000	,92457	90,4
22 Accepting meals, entertainment, and/or gift from a publisher whose goal is to influence textbook adoption decisions.	150,00	1,5789	1,28476	89,5
16 Not explaining to a student the reasons for receiving a certain grade.	156,00	1,6596	,86202	89,4
32 Not administering student evaluations because teacher anticipates negative student evaluations.	148,00	1,5745	,76888	89,4
2 Deviating significantly from the course syllabus given to students at the beginning of the semester.	155,00	1,6667	,85126	89,2
13 Disclosing students' grades to administrators who do not have official business with students' grades and transcripts.	154,00	1,6559	,66748	89,2
14 Disclosing students' grades to faculty colleagues who do not have official business with students' grades and transcripts.	160,00	1,7021	,68517	87,2
4 Having a romantic relationship with a student in one's class.	138,00	1,4526	,93135	86,3
30 Exaggerating or misrepresenting a student's skills and competence in writing a letter of recommendation for the student.	168,00	1,7872	,70134	86,2

Table 1(Continue): Sum, Mean, Standard Deviation, and Complete Ratio Scores of Unethical Behaviours Based on Consensus of Academics

Statements	Sum	Mean	Standard Deviation	Complete Ratio %
11 Requiring students to purchase textbooks and other classroom materials that are costly and unaffordable of the course, course requirements, grading procedures, and other issues of course implementation.	165,00	1,7368	,84060	84,2
18 Failing to assume responsibility for the safety of students in the conduct of field trips and study abroad programs.	161,00	1,7500	,84678	80,4
8 Treating students in class more favorably based on their gender, religion, ethnicity, race, nationality, age, sexual orientation, or physical/mental disability.	167,00	1,7766	1,04885	78,7
12 Disclosing students' grades with students' identity to other classmates.	177,00	1,8830	,94876	78,7
31 Developing a course syllabus and other teaching materials inconsistent with the college's standard description of the course.	208,00	2,1895	1,15127	69,5
23 Accepting relatives as students in one's class.	182,00	1,9783	,96052	68,5
15 Disclosing students' grades to their parents without the explicit permission of the student.	218,00	2,3191	1,02876	57,4
10 Not providing students with a course syllabus at the beginning of the semester that spells the nature of the course, course requirements, grading procedures, and other issues of course implementation.	247,00	2,6000	1,17056	53,7
5 Persuading students to join professional associations when there is a personal or professional incentive for the teacher.	292,00	3,1398	1,22998	33,3
26 Advising students to take courses to prepare them for exciting jobs (e.g., job in large advertising agencies) knowing that chances are very remote in securing such jobs and not informing students about the chances.	294,00	3,0947	1,20349	29,5
6 Persuading students to subscribe to trade journals and magazines when there is a personal or professional incentive for the teacher.	287,00	3,0860	1,19470	28
19 Choosing one's own textbook and/or other course materials for classroom use.	307,00	3,3011	1,05072	22,6
20 Choosing a textbook and/or other course materials authored by a friend.	299,00	3,1474	,98896	22,1
21 Choosing a textbook and/or other course materials authored by a departmental colleague.	307,00	3,2316	,90451	16,8

Highlighted items in gray are unethical behaviours as agreed on academics. We were identified by three criteria (sumscore: mean >=2, complete ratio method: ratio >=78,7% (for one item 68.5%), and standard deviation < 1,00).

As seen in the Table, there are sum, mean, standard deviation and complete ratio values for all statements. All statements which engage with unethical conduct based on the consensus of academics have mean scores more than 3,00 and have standard deviation scores less than 1,00 (and also have sum scores less than 180). Additionally, the complete ratio scores showed that the items completely representing unethical behaviours were rated as such by at least 78.7% of the academics. Consequently, only twenty statements of thirty-two items can be accepted as perceived unethical behaviours by academics in Istanbul. The statements are shown in Table1.

With regard to testing hypothesis 1, the one sample t-test results that are shown in Table2 indicate that the mean of the variable perceived ethical codes for this particular sample of academics is 1,9307 with a standard deviation of 0,37, which is lower than the test value of 3. This is a statistically significant score lower than a rating of 3 on the 5-point scale.

T value is -25,006, $p<0,05$. Because of the negative t-values, we would conclude that the group of academics has a significantly lower mean on the ethical code than 3 (t= -25,06; p.=0,00). This is the expected result because the value should be a mean of 2 or below for displaying unethical conduct. In other words, academics judge this statements at lower than average point (3).

Table 2: One Sample T-Test Results

	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
ETHIC	-25,006	98	,000	-1,06935	-1,1546	-,9841

As seen in Table 2, the direction of the mean-difference is negative (-1,07), so it can be said that there is a significant difference between the score of 1 or 2 and the score of 3 or above. As a result, there is a significant difference between the two groups. Therefore these results showed that hypothesis 1supported.

The independent samples t-test indicates that there is no statistically significant difference between *gender* and academic code of conduct perceived by academics. According to correlation analysis, there is no statistically significant relationship between *ages* of respondents and perceived academic code of conduct. Besides, there is no significant relationship between *years of experience in education* and academic code of conduct. It is also no significant relationship between *academic title* (or position such as professor, tenor etc.) and academic code of ethics.

6. Conclusion and Discussion

Establishing a code of ethics for academics raises serious concerns regarding professional autonomy. Some university professors fear that the establishment of a formal code of ethics will create undue vulnerability to student complaints and will threaten academic freedom. Others have argued that a profession that demonstrates it can monitor itself is less vulnerable to external regulation (Kitchener, 1992). A carefully constructed professional code of ethics can provide protection for the faculty against unwarranted erosion of power or improper demands from outsiders (Fisher, 2003). Human relations are important, especially for academics as educators. On this ground, it is important for them to decide how to behave students. Notwithstanding the fact that teaching can be called an art, academics in their role as educators, also as a profession, should have a code of ethics.

In our research we try to provide some ethical information about educators' behaviours considered universally unacceptable by the business educators' community (i.e., hypernorms). According Gao et al. (2008), Sirgy et al. (2005, 2006) a code of ethics should not be developed solely based on a survey applying the social contract theory to gauge faculty assessment of the ethical unacceptability of certain behaviours. Thus, our study represents an attempt to identify hypernorms of academics who worked in universities in Turkey.

Regarding the testing of hypothesis 1, the one sample t-test results showed that these unethical behaviours have a statistically significantly difference below the score of 3 on a 5-point scale, so

hypothesis1 is supported.

After the mean score, standard deviation and complete method analyses, the results of the study have identified certain behaviours deemed unacceptable by the vast majority of survey respondents. These behaviours are organized in terms of the academics' role as educators. The hypernorms related to academics as educators are identified and behaviours deemed ethically unacceptable by the community of academics in Istanbul, Turkey are shown in Table 1.

According to our findings, the act of engaging in unbecoming behaviour with students (e.g., drinking alcoholic beverages until feeling intoxicated) is accepted as being unethical behaviour by 100% of academics. It is reasonable to expect this finding because there is no tolerance for such behaviours in Turkish culture. The second most commonly perceived unethical behaviour is grading students inconsistently. In addition, it was found that educators consider not explaining to a student the reasons for receiving a certain grade as being unethical behaviour. This perception might be come from the Turkish collectivist culture (Hofstede, 2001; www.geert-hofstede.com). Correspondingly, Questions 1, 3, and 24 can be considered to relate to misleading students. According to Hofstede's (2001) national culture dimensions, in Turkish culture, relationships have a moral base and this always takes priority over task fulfilment. These results are also the similar to other researches' (Sirgy, 1999; Sirgy, Siegel and Johar, 2005; Sirgy, Johar and Gao, 2006; Gao et al., 2008) findings.

In addition, it is reasonable to expect that discrimination based on gender, religion, ethnicity, race, nationality, and age etc. would be considered an unethical behaviour as perceived by Turkish academics because Turkey, especially Istanbul which is a vibrant, multi-cultural and cosmopolitan city, has a multiethnic culture. For this reason, it makes sense that the academics should have tolerance for diversity.

According to the results, there is no ethical problem in choosing a textbook or other course material that was authored by a friend or by a departmental colleague, but it is viewed as unethical to require them to purchase costly and unaffordable textbooks or course materials. Other studies' (Sirgy, 1999; Sirgy, Siegel and Johar, 2005; Sirgy, Johar and Gao, 2006; Gao et al., 2008) samples did not consider this behaviour as unethical. It could be speculated that the present economic conditions in Turkey is the most important reason for perceiving this behaviour as unethical.

The most striking result is that disclosing students' grades to administrators who do not have (or who have) official business with students' grades and transcripts (Q13 and Q14) is statistically accepted as being unethical behaviour by academics, but disclosing them to their parents without the explicit permission of the student is not considered to be an unethical behaviour. It is anticipatable, however, because Turkish culture has some of the typical features of a collectivistic society (Hofstede, 2001).

The contributions of this study is to draw up a table of behaviours that academics of all branches evaluate as right or wrong in their role as educator. In addition, we provide a template survey document that can be extended and/or adapted to capture input from other stakeholders (e.g., students, employers). Moreover, it is important to describe ethical behaviours in accordance with academics' perceptions. We tried to display especially their perception, because they are the most important stakeholder with regard to the subject of academic codes of ethics.

However; the subject of ethics is a sensitive one. Ethical issues are difficult and complicated to investigate. One can never be sure that respondents are not giving socially desirable responses. Therefore, it is difficult to assert whether or not the responses obtained reflect the true and sincere opinions and likely practices of the respondents (Gbadamosi, 2004). Although some hypernorms identified as a consensus on what constitutes unacceptable behaviours (e.g. having a romantic relationship with a student in one's class), it is a one of the behaviours common in universities. Thence, identifying an academic ethical code is important for the quality of education that is provided. It is a view that hypernorms related to business educators can be identified using criteria such as widespread consensus among business

educators as to what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour among academics in their role as educators.

As a result of this article, we are now able to create a framework for the contents of professional codes of ethics. We have indicated a statement of the code of ethics for academics, employed in universities in Istanbul, in their role as educators. Because of sample size limitation, this article has featured a study for giving an idea of how academics identify which behaviours are ethical or unethical in their profession, in other words, which behaviours academics think are ethical/unethical or acceptable/unacceptable in their profession. For future studies, it is suggested that the study be conducted with a bigger sample.

Overall, despite the study limitations, we feel that the findings of our study make an important contribution to the existing literature on academic ethics in Turkey. We hope that the ethics committees of universities will consider our study results in the development, revision, and implementation of their own codes of ethics.

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