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ЕЖЕМЕСЯЧНЫЙ НАУЧНЫЙ ЖУРНАЛ

Медицинские новости Грузии
საქართველოს სამედიცინო სიახლენი

GEORGIAN MEDICAL NEWS

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GMN: Georgian Medical News is peer-reviewed, published monthly journal committed to promoting the science and art of medicine and the betterment of public health, published by the GMN Editorial Board since 1994. GMN carries original scientific articles on medicine, biology and pharmacy, which are of experimental, theoretical and practical character; publishes original research, reviews, commentaries, editorials, essays, medical news, and correspondence in English and Russian.

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GMN: Медицинские новости Грузии - ежемесячный рецензируемый научный журнал, издаётся Редакционной коллегией с 1994 года на русском и английском языках в целях поддержки медицинской науки и улучшения здравоохранения. В журнале публикуются оригинальные научные статьи в области медицины, биологии и фармации, статьи обзорного характера, научные сообщения, новости медицины и здравоохранения. Журнал индексируется в MEDLINE, отражён в базе данных SCOPUS, PubMed и ВИНТИ РАН. Полнотекстовые статьи журнала доступны через БД EBSCO.

GMN: Georgian Medical News – საქართველოს სამედიცინო სიახლენი – არის ყოველთვიური სამეცნიერო სამედიცინო რეცენზირებადი ჟურნალი, გამოიცემა 1994 წლიდან, წარმოადგენს სარედაქციო კოლეგიისა და აშშ-ის მეცნიერების, განათლების, ინდუსტრიის, ხელოვნებისა და ბუნებისმეტყველების საერთაშორისო აკადემიის ერთობლივ გამოცემას. GMN-ში რუსულ და ინგლისურ ენებზე ქვეყნდება ექსპერიმენტული, თეორიული და პრაქტიკული ხასიათის ორიგინალური სამეცნიერო სტატიები მედიცინის, ბიოლოგიისა და ფარმაციის სფეროში, მიმოხილვითი ხასიათის სტატიები.

ჟურნალი ინდექსირებულია MEDLINE-ის საერთაშორისო სისტემაში, ასახულია SCOPUS-ის, PubMed-ის და ВИНТИ РАН-ის მონაცემთა ბაზებში. სტატიების სრული ტექსტი ხელმისაწვდომია EBSCO-ს მონაცემთა ბაზებიდან.

WEBSITE

www.geomednews.com

К СВЕДЕНИЮ АВТОРОВ!

При направлении статьи в редакцию необходимо соблюдать следующие правила:

1. Статья должна быть представлена в двух экземплярах, на русском или английском языках, напечатанная через **полтора интервала на одной стороне стандартного листа с шириной левого поля в три сантиметра**. Используемый компьютерный шрифт для текста на русском и английском языках - **Times New Roman (Кириллица)**, для текста на грузинском языке следует использовать **AcadNusx**. Размер шрифта - **12**. К рукописи, напечатанной на компьютере, должен быть приложен CD со статьей.

2. Размер статьи должен быть не менее десяти и не более двадцати страниц машинописи, включая указатель литературы и резюме на английском, русском и грузинском языках.

3. В статье должны быть освещены актуальность данного материала, методы и результаты исследования и их обсуждение.

При представлении в печать научных экспериментальных работ авторы должны указывать вид и количество экспериментальных животных, применявшиеся методы обезболивания и усыпления (в ходе острых опытов).

4. К статье должны быть приложены краткое (на полстраницы) резюме на английском, русском и грузинском языках (включающее следующие разделы: цель исследования, материал и методы, результаты и заключение) и список ключевых слов (key words).

5. Таблицы необходимо представлять в печатной форме. Фотокопии не принимаются. **Все цифровые, итоговые и процентные данные в таблицах должны соответствовать таковым в тексте статьи**. Таблицы и графики должны быть озаглавлены.

6. Фотографии должны быть контрастными, фотокопии с рентгенограмм - в позитивном изображении. Рисунки, чертежи и диаграммы следует озаглавить, пронумеровать и вставить в соответствующее место текста **в tiff формате**.

В подписях к микрофотографиям следует указывать степень увеличения через окуляр или объектив и метод окраски или импрегнации срезов.

7. Фамилии отечественных авторов приводятся в оригинальной транскрипции.

8. При оформлении и направлении статей в журнал МНГ просим авторов соблюдать правила, изложенные в «Единых требованиях к рукописям, представляемым в биомедицинские журналы», принятых Международным комитетом редакторов медицинских журналов - <http://www.spinesurgery.ru/files/publish.pdf> и http://www.nlm.nih.gov/bsd/uniform_requirements.html В конце каждой оригинальной статьи приводится библиографический список. В список литературы включаются все материалы, на которые имеются ссылки в тексте. Список составляется в алфавитном порядке и нумеруется. Литературный источник приводится на языке оригинала. В списке литературы сначала приводятся работы, написанные знаками грузинского алфавита, затем кириллицей и латиницей. Ссылки на цитируемые работы в тексте статьи даются в квадратных скобках в виде номера, соответствующего номеру данной работы в списке литературы. Большинство цитированных источников должны быть за последние 5-7 лет.

9. Для получения права на публикацию статья должна иметь от руководителя работы или учреждения визу и сопроводительное отношение, написанные или напечатанные на бланке и заверенные подписью и печатью.

10. В конце статьи должны быть подписи всех авторов, полностью приведены их фамилии, имена и отчества, указаны служебный и домашний номера телефонов и адреса или иные координаты. Количество авторов (соавторов) не должно превышать пяти человек.

11. Редакция оставляет за собой право сокращать и исправлять статьи. Корректур авторам не высылаются, вся работа и сверка проводится по авторскому оригиналу.

12. Недопустимо направление в редакцию работ, представленных к печати в иных издательствах или опубликованных в других изданиях.

При нарушении указанных правил статьи не рассматриваются.

REQUIREMENTS

Please note, materials submitted to the Editorial Office Staff are supposed to meet the following requirements:

1. Articles must be provided with a double copy, in English or Russian languages and typed or computer-printed on a single side of standard typing paper, with the left margin of 3 centimeters width, and 1.5 spacing between the lines, typeface - **Times New Roman (Cyrillic)**, print size - 12 (referring to Georgian and Russian materials). With computer-printed texts please enclose a CD carrying the same file titled with Latin symbols.

2. Size of the article, including index and resume in English, Russian and Georgian languages must be at least 10 pages and not exceed the limit of 20 pages of typed or computer-printed text.

3. Submitted material must include a coverage of a topical subject, research methods, results, and review.

Authors of the scientific-research works must indicate the number of experimental biological species drawn in, list the employed methods of anesthetization and soporific means used during acute tests.

4. Articles must have a short (half page) abstract in English, Russian and Georgian (including the following sections: aim of study, material and methods, results and conclusions) and a list of key words.

5. Tables must be presented in an original typed or computer-printed form, instead of a photocopied version. **Numbers, totals, percentile data on the tables must coincide with those in the texts of the articles.** Tables and graphs must be headed.

6. Photographs are required to be contrasted and must be submitted with doubles. Please number each photograph with a pencil on its back, indicate author's name, title of the article (short version), and mark out its top and bottom parts. Drawings must be accurate, drafts and diagrams drawn in Indian ink (or black ink). Photocopies of the X-ray photographs must be presented in a positive image in **tiff format**.

Accurately numbered subtitles for each illustration must be listed on a separate sheet of paper. In the subtitles for the microphotographs please indicate the ocular and objective lens magnification power, method of coloring or impregnation of the microscopic sections (preparations).

7. Please indicate last names, first and middle initials of the native authors, present names and initials of the foreign authors in the transcription of the original language, enclose in parenthesis corresponding number under which the author is listed in the reference materials.

8. Please follow guidance offered to authors by The International Committee of Medical Journal Editors guidance in its Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals publication available online at: http://www.nlm.nih.gov/bsd/uniform_requirements.html
http://www.icmje.org/urm_full.pdf

In GMN style for each work cited in the text, a bibliographic reference is given, and this is located at the end of the article under the title "References". All references cited in the text must be listed. The list of references should be arranged alphabetically and then numbered. References are numbered in the text [numbers in square brackets] and in the reference list and numbers are repeated throughout the text as needed. The bibliographic description is given in the language of publication (citations in Georgian script are followed by Cyrillic and Latin).

9. To obtain the rights of publication articles must be accompanied by a visa from the project instructor or the establishment, where the work has been performed, and a reference letter, both written or typed on a special signed form, certified by a stamp or a seal.

10. Articles must be signed by all of the authors at the end, and they must be provided with a list of full names, office and home phone numbers and addresses or other non-office locations where the authors could be reached. The number of the authors (co-authors) must not exceed the limit of 5 people.

11. Editorial Staff reserves the rights to cut down in size and correct the articles. Proof-sheets are not sent out to the authors. The entire editorial and collation work is performed according to the author's original text.

12. Sending in the works that have already been assigned to the press by other Editorial Staffs or have been printed by other publishers is not permissible.

**Articles that Fail to Meet the Aforementioned
Requirements are not Assigned to be Reviewed.**

ავტორთა საქურაღებოლ!

რედაქციაში სტატიის წარმოდგენისას საჭიროა დაიცვათ შემდეგი წესები:

1. სტატია უნდა წარმოადგინოთ 2 ცალად, რუსულ ან ინგლისურ ენებზე დაბეჭდილი სტანდარტული ფურცლის 1 გვერდზე, 3 სმ სიგანის მარცხენა ველისა და სტრიქონებს შორის 1,5 ინტერვალის დაცვით. გამოყენებული კომპიუტერული შრიფტი რუსულ და ინგლისურენოვან ტექსტებში - **Times New Roman (Кириллица)**, ხოლო ქართულენოვან ტექსტში საჭიროა გამოვიყენოთ **AcadNusx**. შრიფტის ზომა – 12. სტატიას თან უნდა ახლდეს CD სტატიით.

2. სტატიის მოცულობა არ უნდა შეადგენდეს 10 გვერდზე ნაკლებს და 20 გვერდზე მეტს ლიტერატურის სიის და რეზიუმეების (ინგლისურ, რუსულ და ქართულ ენებზე) ჩათვლით.

3. სტატიაში საჭიროა გაშუქდეს: საკითხის აქტუალობა; კვლევის მიზანი; საკვლევი მასალა და გამოყენებული მეთოდები; მიღებული შედეგები და მათი განსჯა. ექსპერიმენტული ხასიათის სტატიების წარმოდგენისას ავტორებმა უნდა მიუთითონ საექსპერიმენტო ცხოველების სახეობა და რაოდენობა; გაუტკივარებისა და დაძინების მეთოდები (მწვავე ცდების პირობებში).

4. სტატიას თან უნდა ახლდეს რეზიუმე ინგლისურ, რუსულ და ქართულ ენებზე არანაკლებ ნახევარი გვერდის მოცულობისა (სათაურის, ავტორების, დაწესებულების მითითებით და უნდა შეიცავდეს შემდეგ განყოფილებებს: მიზანი, მასალა და მეთოდები, შედეგები და დასკვნები; ტექსტუალური ნაწილი არ უნდა იყოს 15 სტრიქონზე ნაკლები) და საკვანძო სიტყვების ჩამონათვალი (key words).

5. ცხრილები საჭიროა წარმოადგინოთ ნაბეჭდი სახით. ყველა ციფრული, შემაჯამებელი და პროცენტული მონაცემები უნდა შეესაბამებოდეს ტექსტში მოყვანილს.

6. ფოტოსურათები უნდა იყოს კონტრასტული; სურათები, ნახაზები, დიაგრამები - დასათაურებული, დანომრილი და სათანადო ადგილას ჩასმული. რენტგენოგრამების ფოტოასლები წარმოადგინეთ პოზიტიური გამოსახულებით **tiff** ფორმატში. მიკროფოტოსურათების წარწერებში საჭიროა მიუთითოთ ოკულარის ან ობიექტივის საშუალებით გადიდების ხარისხი, ანათალების შედეგის ან იმპრეგნაციის მეთოდი და აღნიშნოთ სურათის ზედა და ქვედა ნაწილები.

7. სამამულო ავტორების გვარები სტატიაში აღინიშნება ინიციალების თანდართვით, უცხოურისა – უცხოური ტრანსკრიპციით.

8. სტატიას თან უნდა ახლდეს ავტორის მიერ გამოყენებული სამამულო და უცხოური შრომების ბიბლიოგრაფიული სია (ბოლო 5-8 წლის სიღრმით). ანბანური წყობით წარმოდგენილ ბიბლიოგრაფიულ სიაში მიუთითეთ ჯერ სამამულო, შემდეგ უცხოელი ავტორები (გვარი, ინიციალები, სტატიის სათაური, ჟურნალის დასახელება, გამოცემის ადგილი, წელი, ჟურნალის №, პირველი და ბოლო გვერდები). მონოგრაფიის შემთხვევაში მიუთითეთ გამოცემის წელი, ადგილი და გვერდების საერთო რაოდენობა. ტექსტში კვადრატულ ფხიხლებში უნდა მიუთითოთ ავტორის შესაბამისი N ლიტერატურის სიის მიხედვით. მიზანშეწონილია, რომ ციტირებული წყაროების უმეტესი ნაწილი იყოს 5-6 წლის სიღრმის.

9. სტატიას თან უნდა ახლდეს: ა) დაწესებულების ან სამეცნიერო ხელმძღვანელის წარდგინება, დამოწმებული ხელმოწერითა და ბეჭდით; ბ) დარგის სპეციალისტის დამოწმებული რეცენზია, რომელშიც მითითებული იქნება საკითხის აქტუალობა, მასალის საკმაობა, მეთოდის სანდოობა, შედეგების სამეცნიერო-პრაქტიკული მნიშვნელობა.

10. სტატიის ბოლოს საჭიროა ყველა ავტორის ხელმოწერა, რომელთა რაოდენობა არ უნდა აღემატებოდეს 5-ს.

11. რედაქცია იტოვებს უფლებას შეასწოროს სტატია. ტექსტზე მუშაობა და შეჯერება ხდება საავტორო ორიგინალის მიხედვით.

12. დაუშვებელია რედაქციაში ისეთი სტატიის წარდგენა, რომელიც დასაბეჭდად წარდგენილი იყო სხვა რედაქციაში ან გამოქვეყნებული იყო სხვა გამოცემებში.

აღნიშნული წესების დარღვევის შემთხვევაში სტატიები არ განიხილება.

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PROFESSIONAL ETHICS OF PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTITIONERS IN THE CONTEXT OF DIGITALIZATION

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Abstract.

In the ever-evolving landscape of public relations (PR), the significance of

professional ethics has become increasingly pronounced, particularly in the digital age. This article embarks on a journey to synthesize the dynamic evolution of professional ethics in public relations and underscores the pressing need for its application in contemporary communication landscapes. Exploring the core values and principles that underpin ethical practices, the study extends to the alignment of these principles with fundamental human rights.

A focal point of this article is an examination of the findings derived from research conducted among Armenian public relations practitioners, offering valuable insights into the challenges posed by the digital age. In this era of rapid digitalization, the traditional ethical codes that once governed the realm of public relations are facing unprecedented challenges.

The classic ethical standards, while foundational, are now confronted with a shifting landscape shaped by the proliferation of social networks and online communication platforms.

This article scrutinizes the practitioners' perspectives on the development of ethical standards, exploring questions of geographical and contextual relevance in the face of technological advancements. As the digital age transforms the dynamics of communication, the limitations of traditional PR ethics become increasingly apparent. The discussion highlights the intricacies of professional ethics within the realm of social networks, shedding light on the nuanced ethical considerations that emerge in this digitalized era.

Amidst this exploration, a crucial issue emerges — the imperative for the preservation of ethical standards in public relations. The article contends that the challenges posed by digitalization necessitate a revision of the conventional PR ethical code. While the foundations remain relevant, there is a pressing need for an updated ethical framework that can effectively navigate the complex ethical terrain presented by social networks and digital communication channels.

In conclusion, the article endeavors to provide a comprehensive understanding of the evolution of professional ethics in public relations, emphasizing the transformative impact of digitalization. By examining the standpoints of Armenian public relations practitioners, it sheds light on the challenges faced in this digital age and advocates for a proactive approach to adapt and enhance ethical standards in response to the dynamic communication landscape.

Key words. PR, PR ethics, ethical codes, digitalization, human rights, social networks, public relation practitioners, communication in digital era, enhancement of ethical standards.

Introduction.

The professional ethics of public relations constitute a structured framework of specific norms and principles designed to facilitate social communication grounded in principles of good faith, honesty, transparency, and mutual understanding [1]. The challenges inherent in the establishment of ethical principles and delineating the criteria that govern them are primarily rooted in the diverse array of problems and individual situations. What may be deemed acceptable in one instance could be considered unacceptable in another. Moreover, customs and the evolving social order over time introduce additional complexities in defining and enforcing ethical norms of behavior [2].

The nascent stages of public relations in the United States were marked by a myriad of ethical concerns. During this period, E. Bernays, acknowledged as the American theoretician and often referred to as 'the father of public relations,' coined the term 'the cursed era' to characterize the ethical challenges prevalent during his tenure. Press agents during this era were preoccupied with garnering publicity at any expense, contributing to the development of the unethical reputation associated with contemporary public relations. The formal integration

of ethical considerations began around 1906, marked notably by Ivy Lee's articulation of the 'Declaration of Principles,' signifying a pivotal moment in the establishment of ethical guidelines within the field [3]. His pronouncement marked a transition in public relations into the 'Information Model' era, underscoring the paramount significance of veracity and the provision of accurate information.

The Athens Code, first adopted in 1965 and subsequently amended in 1968 and 2009, serves as the inaugural codification of ethical conduct for members of the International Public Relations Association (IPRA), delineating ethical guidelines for public relations professionals globally. Numerous professional organizations and associations within the realm of public relations have instituted a code of ethics and/or conduct. Exemplary instances include the Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR) [4] and the Public Relations Consultants Association

(PRCA) in the United Kingdom. The CIPR, for instance, has promulgated a comprehensive fourpart document that encompasses a Code of Conduct. Similarly, the PRCA has established a Professional Charter applicable to all its members,

complemented by specific options tailored for professionals engaged in public affairs and health-related domains [5].

Henceforth, the predominant codes governing the professional ethics of public relations encompass the Athens Code (Athens, 1965) [6] the Rome Statute (Rome, 1991) [7] the Code of Professional Conduct for Public Relations established by the PR Institute (England, 1986) [8] the Code of Conduct ratified by the Russian Association (PACO) (Moscow, 1991) [9] the Code of Conduct endorsed by the International Public Relations Association (IPRA) (Venice, 1961) [10] among others [11].

In accordance with the definition embraced by the International Public Relations

Association (IPRA) during the 2019 assembly in Yerevan, public relation is characterized as a decision-making management practice aimed at fostering relationships and interests between organizations and their respective publics. This is achieved through the dissemination of information utilizing reliable and ethically sound communication methods. **Research Problem.**

In the contemporary landscape of public relations, the onset of the digitalization era presents a pressing challenge to the traditional foundations of public relations ethics. The established ethical codes that have long guided the practices of public relations professionals now face significant inadequacies because of the dynamic and complex nature of digital communication platforms, particularly evident in the challenges and situations arising within social networks.

The classic PR ethic, once considered a robust framework for ethical decision-making, is proving insufficient in addressing the nuanced ethical dilemmas posed by the digital age [12]. As communication channels evolve and social networks become integral to public relations strategies, practitioners encounter novel ethical complexities that demand a revision of the existing ethical paradigm.

A discernible ethical deficit is vividly illustrated by the problems and dissatisfactions that permeate the fabric of social networks, acting as tangible markers of the inadequacy of conventional ethical frameworks. The pervasive issues within social networks encompass a spectrum of concerns, including but not limited to misinformation proliferation, heightened privacy considerations, deliberate manipulation of information, and the rapid dissemination of unverified content [13]. These issues collectively contribute to a complex ethical terrain that challenges the very essence of public relations ethics in the digital era [14].

The evolution of PR is intricately intertwined with the transformative shifts in communication platforms, shaping the very nature of the profession. Traditional ethical frameworks that have guided PR practices in the past have seamlessly adapted to the communication platforms of their time. However, as the profession undergoes a profound digital transition, the existing ethical paradigms face unprecedented challenges.

Research Methodology.

This research, situated within the broader context of sociological inquiry, endeavors to unravel the intricate dynamics of professional ethics, particularly in the context of the evolving digital landscape within the domain of public relations. The study aims to discern the primacy of professional

ethics and its consequential significance, accounting for the varying professional positions of individuals actively immersed in public relations across diverse organizational settings. Employing an in-depth interview methodology, the research engaged with 20 public relations practitioners affiliated with noteworthy Armenian organizations, offering a rich tapestry of insights into the complex interplay between professional ethics and the ongoing process of professional digitization.

Examining the multifaceted experiences of public relations practitioners, the research seeks to unravel the sociological dimensions inherent in the adoption and adaptation of professional ethics in the digital age. By exploring the narratives of professionals from diverse organizational backgrounds, the study aims to provide a nuanced understanding of the sociological factors that shape ethical considerations within the realm of public relations. The evolving nature of professional digitization, intertwined with individual professional standings, serves as a sociological lens through which the research scrutinizes the contextual relevance and implications of ethical practices.

The choice of in-depth interviews method adds a qualitative depth to the investigation, allowing for the exploration of individual perspectives, experiences, and the social dynamics that influence ethical decision-making. By focusing on Armenian public relations practitioners, the research not only contributes to the broader discourse on professional ethics but also brings a cultural and contextual specificity to the sociological examination of the evolving digital landscape within a specific professional domain.

This sociological inquiry aims to enrich the understanding of the intricate relationship between professional ethics and the ongoing process of professional digitization within public relations. Through a sociological lens, the study offers insights into how individuals at various professional echelons navigate and negotiate ethical considerations in response to the transformative forces of digitalization, contributing to the broader sociological understanding of ethical dynamics in professional settings [15-18].

Research Findings.

1. Ethical Dilemmas and Compromises: The research unveiled a myriad of ethical dilemmas encountered by public relations practitioners, shedding light on instances where adherence to ethical standards is compromised. These instances often arise due to the absence of internal ethical regulations within organizations or the necessity to collaborate with other professionals, leading to compromises in upholding ethical standards. As one respondent lamented, "Sometimes I am compelled to engage in scholarly ethics because it does not garner interest from my employer," revealing the nuanced challenges faced in balancing professional responsibilities and ethical considerations. This finding underscores the complexity of ethical decision-making within the field of public relations and emphasizes the need for clear delineation of ethical boundaries in professional practice.

2. Influence of Professional Background on Ethical Propensity: The study unearthed a noteworthy correlation between individuals' professional backgrounds and their

propensity to contravene ethical standards in public relations. Contrary to expectations, professionals with alternative professional backgrounds, such as journalism, exhibited a greater inclination towards compromising ethical principles compared to those with formal education in public relations. This finding underscores the nuanced interplay between professional training and ethical decision-making, suggesting that diverse professional backgrounds may influence individuals' ethical propensities within the field of public relations. One of the interlocutors elucidated, "As a journalist, I frequently encounter situations where I must compromise certain ethical principles to execute public relations strategies that resonate with the public." This insight underscores the need for tailored ethical training and guidance that addresses the unique ethical challenges faced by practitioners with diverse professional backgrounds, thereby fostering a culture of ethical integrity within the public relations.

3. Challenges in Social Networks: The research highlighted the challenges faced by public relations practitioners in maintaining ethical standards within social networks, emphasizing the pervasive nature of ethical dilemmas in digital communication platforms. From the dissemination of false information to character defamation and unfair competition, practitioners navigate a complex ethical terrain fraught with challenges that are exacerbated by the uncontrollable nature of information dissemination online. One of the respondents aptly summarized, "Preserving professional ethics in social networks poses considerable challenges compared to the non-virtual domain, often hindered by the uncontrollable nature of information dissemination." This finding underscores the imperative for public relations practitioners to develop nuanced strategies for navigating ethical challenges within digital communication platforms, emphasizing the importance of proactive measures to safeguard ethical integrity in online interactions.

4. Incorporating PRSA Code of Ethics into Social Media Policies: Recognizing the challenges posed by social networks, the study advocates for the incorporation of principles outlined in the PRSA Code of Ethics into social media policies as a proactive measure to guide ethical decision-making processes. By aligning organizational policies with established ethical standards, practitioners are provided with a clear framework for ethical conduct within social media communication platforms. This finding underscores the importance of organizational commitment to upholding ethical standards in digital communication and emphasizes the role of industry guidelines in guiding ethical behavior in online interactions. As organizations grapple with the complexities of digital communication, integrating ethical principles into social media policies emerges as a crucial step towards fostering a culture of ethical integrity within the profession.

5. Historical Trajectory of Public Relations in Armenia: The research examined the historical trajectory of public relations in Armenia, revealing a positive shift towards more deliberate and ethical models of communication over time. However, occasional instances of ethical violations underscore the ongoing need for vigilance and adaptation to evolving ethical standards, particularly in the context of digital communication. As one respondent noted, "In social networks, particularly during emergency situations in the country, there are instances

where the emotional sentiments of the public are leveraged for the advancement of organizational campaigns, a circumstance that warrants genuine concern." This finding highlights the importance of continuous efforts to uphold ethical integrity within the profession, particularly in response to the challenges posed by digital communication platforms.

6. Professional Codes and Ethical Principles: The study elucidated the foundational role of professional codes in public relations ethics, emphasizing the commonalities and principles governing professional conduct across diverse contexts. From the Rome Statute to codes endorsed by international associations, these codes articulate positive obligations and responsibilities towards colleagues, clients, and the public relations field. This finding underscores the importance of established ethical frameworks in guiding ethical decision-making processes and behaviors within the profession. As practitioners navigate complex ethical dilemmas, adherence to professional codes provides a compass for ethical conduct, fostering a culture of integrity and accountability within the profession.

7. Values Inherent in Public Relations: Central to public relations ethics are core values such as protection, candor, loyalty, and justice, which underpin interactions with stakeholders and emphasize honesty, truthfulness, and respect for personal privacy. This finding highlights the intrinsic connection between professional values and ethical conduct, underscoring the importance of upholding these values in all aspects of public relations practice. As practitioners navigate ethical dilemmas, adherence to core values serves as a guiding principle for ethical decision-making, fostering trust and credibility in professional relationships.

8. Adherence to Human Rights Principles: The research emphasized the integral role of human rights principles in public relations ethics, highlighting the importance of upholding principles articulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. As public relations practitioners navigate complex ethical challenges, adherence to human rights standards becomes not only a moral imperative but also a practical necessity to safeguard human dignity and promote ethical conduct. This finding underscores the interconnectedness of ethics and human rights, emphasizing the importance of ethical integrity in upholding fundamental rights and freedoms in all aspects of public relations practice.

9. Challenges in the Digital Age: The study elucidated the evolving landscape of public relations ethics in the digital age, highlighting the challenges posed by the proliferation of the Internet and social media platforms. From hate speech to misinformation and privacy violations, practitioners grapple with a myriad of ethical challenges exacerbated by the digitalization of communication. This finding underscores the urgent need for a proactive and strategic response to address these challenges, emphasizing the importance of adapting ethical frameworks to align with the demands of the contemporary communication landscape. As public relations professionals navigate the complexities of digital communication, a nuanced understanding of ethical considerations becomes paramount to ensure ethical integrity and credibility in professional practice.

10. Social Media Commission and Ethical Guidelines: Recognizing the challenges of digitalization, the study

advocated for the establishment of a Social Media Commission by the PRSA's Board of Ethics and Professional Standards as a proactive measure to address ethical challenges in social media. By formulating guidelines for ethical public relations practices in social media, the commission aims to mitigate negative occurrences and cultivate behavior aligned with stakeholders' best interests. This finding underscores the importance of industry-led initiatives in guiding ethical behavior in digital communication platforms, emphasizing the role of collective efforts in upholding ethical integrity within the profession. As public relations practitioners navigate the complexities of digital communication, the establishment of ethical guidelines and standards becomes imperative to ensure ethical conduct and credibility in online interactions.

11. Ethical Dilemmas and Compromises: While professionals in public relations strive to uphold ethical principles, instances have been uncovered where they bear witness to breaches of professional ethical standards and, at times, are compelled to circumvent them. These breaches often involve the dissemination of subjective or inaccurate information, sometimes due to the absence of internal ethical regulations within the organization or obligatory collaboration with other professionals associated with work-related duties.

Conclusion.

The research findings underscore the nuanced ethical landscape within the field of public relations, particularly in the context of the evolving digital age and the challenges posed by social networks. It is evident that professionals in public relations encounter ethical dilemmas, compromises, and challenges, ranging from breaches of ethical standards to the complexities of navigating social networks. The influence of diverse professional backgrounds and occasional violations of ethical values further accentuates the need for a robust ethical framework that aligns with the demands of the contemporary communication landscape. The challenges presented in maintaining professional ethics within social networks, as highlighted by experts, emphasize the pressing need for the development and updating of public relations ethics tailored for digital platforms. The inherent volatility of information dissemination and the prevalence of issues such as misinformation, character defamation, and unfair competition underline the urgency of a proactive approach to address these challenges. Incorporating the principles outlined in the PRSA Code of Ethics into social media policies is a step in the appropriate direction. However, the research suggests that a more comprehensive overhaul of PR ethics is required to effectively guide ethical decision-making processes and behaviors within the realm of social media communication platforms. The historical trajectory of public relations in Armenia reflects a positive shift towards more deliberate and ethical models of communication. Nonetheless, sporadic instances of ethical violations highlight the need for continuous vigilance and adaptation to evolving ethical standards, especially in the digital age. In the face of the challenges posed by the proliferation of the Internet and the complex ethical terrain within social networks, the adherence to human rights principles emerges as a guiding orientation and code for public relations professionals. Upholding principles articulated in the Universal

Declaration of Human Rights emerges not only a moral imperative but also a practical necessity to safeguard human dignity and navigate the intricacies of the digital communication landscape. The creation of a Social Media Commission by the PRSA's Board of Ethics and Professional Standards serves as a proactive measure, emphasizing the industry's commitment to addressing the challenges of digitalization. The ongoing examination and formulation of guidelines for positive ethical practices in social media are indicative of a collective effort to mitigate negative occurrences and cultivate behavior aligned with the best interests of stakeholders. In essence, this research advocates for the evolution and enhancement of PR ethics to align with the digital age and, specifically, the challenges posed by social networks. Until such an updated ethic is established, human rights principles stand as a crucial compass to navigate the ethical complexities within the evolving landscape of public relations. This strategic approach is imperative to ensure the integrity of the profession, protect the interests of stakeholders, and foster a communication environment that prioritizes ethical considerations in the digital era. In the realm of communication professionals confronted with ethically intricate circumstances necessitating guidance or orientation, it is imperative to bear in mind the cardinal principle of medical ethics, encapsulated in the Latin maxim, "Primum non nocere," signifying "First, do no harm." Traditionally attributed to Hippocrates, this dictum assumes a paramount role in the ethical framework for public relations (PR) specialists, serving as a pivotal and foundational directive. For PR practitioners, adherence to the following tripartite tenets emerges as crucial:

1. Do not harm the society in which you live.
2. Do not harm the organization you work for.
3. Do not harm to the profession you represent.

In essence, these imperatives underscore the imperative for communication professionals to align their actions with the overarching ethos of ethical responsibility, mirroring the essence of the Hippocratic principle in navigating the intricate terrain of public relations.

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