

# Attitudes of University Librarians and Information Scientists towards the Draft Code of Library Ethics to Present a Model for Final Library Ethical Codes

Mahsoomeh Latifi<sup>†</sup>, Fatemeh Zandian<sup>‡</sup> and Hasan Siamian<sup>†‡</sup>

<sup>†</sup>Public library administration Office, Feisal-e Danesh Street, West Taleghani Boulevard, Bandar-e-Abbas, Hormozgan Province, Iran.

[Mercede\\_latifi@yahoo.com](mailto:Mercede_latifi@yahoo.com)

<sup>‡</sup>Tarbiat Modares University, Department of Library and Information Sciences, Tarbiat Modares University, Tehran, Iran.

[zandian@modares.ac.ir](mailto:zandian@modares.ac.ir)

<sup>†‡</sup>Mazandaran University of Medical Sciences, School of Paramedical Sciences, Sari, Mazandaran, Iran. Email:

[Siamian46@gamil.com](mailto:Siamian46@gamil.com)

**Abstract:** *This research performed to survey attitudes of Iranian Academic librarians and faculty members towards the draft code of library professional ethics for Iran. The researcher used the survey research methodology for this study. The researchers used two questionnaires for the analysis in this study. The researcher collected, analyzed, and reported data for a population of university librarians 445 in 33 governmental universities in seven provinces and 62 faculty members of library and information sciences from throughout governmental libraries. The questionnaire designed based on draft code for professional ethics of Iranian Library and Information Sciences Association used for data. According to the results of Mann Whitney U Test and Kruskal-Wallis test, there isn't meaningful differences between the views of faculty members with regard to sex, age, work experience, education, type of employment, since the meaningful level more than 0.05 mentioned in all items. Accordingly, hypothesis 1 was rejected. According to results of Mann Whitney U Test and Kruskal-Wallis test, and Independent One-Sample T-Test, there isn't meaningful differences between views of the academic librarians with sex, work experience, type of employment and job status. Since the meaningful level in all cases is more than p-value 0.05, accordingly hypothesis 2 was rejected.*

**Keywords:** *cod of ethics, faculty members, Academic librarians, attitude*

## I. INTRODUCTION

A code of ethics is a statement of generally accepted standards for judgment and conduct that addresses responsibilities unique to a profession. Although culture necessarily implies ethics, ethics do not necessarily imply culture (Hall 1997). In the 1970s, changing responsibilities and increased complexities for archivists created a need for a comprehensive code of ethics (Horn 1989). Every profession has a complex body of knowledge, standards of admission to the profession, and a need for public confidence (Vanasco 1994).

Librarians, in particular, value their need for having a clear guiding philosophy as an important work value (Allen 1998). To guide members' behaviors, professional associations and organizations establish codes of ethics. These codes aim to deal with ethical issues that are not addressed by the domain of codified law but that should not be left to the domain of free choice. A code of ethics is a formal statement of the profession's values regarding ethical behaviors. The code of ethics focuses on principles and values that govern the behavior of a person or group with respect to what is right or wrong. These codes support a more ethical work environment. They also set high standards against which individuals can measure their performance and express the value system of the profession to those outside the professional organization (Vanasco 1994). Froehlich (1997), for example, realized the need for an ethical framework for the activities of librarians and information professionals, as well as the need to delineate shared values for library and information professionals worldwide due to globalization, the growth of national and international electronic networks, and the growing number of professionals (Shachaf 2005). The Code of Conduct indicates the standards of behavior expected of a member of the Association. It sets out, in general terms, the standards and duties which it is reasonable to expect a professional to observe. This can be used as a point of reference when dealing with disciplinary procedures against members. This is intended to protect the profession, individual practitioners, and their clients (UK Library Association Council and the Annual General Meeting 1983). The emphasis on professional ethics is one of the achievements in the development of modern libraries. Professional codes of ethics reflect basic professional philosophy, professional spirit and professional guidelines. Yongzhong (2004) thinks that the basic ethic principles for library information services should include public access, fairness, privacy, intellectual property, perfect services, humanistic concerns, etc. Professional ethics, a contemporary topic of conversation among faculty members and library and information sciences professionals (Yongzhong 2004).

Librarians are imbued with lofty ideals of service to people through books and other records of knowledge, a service they believe is their best way to serve humanity, enrich people's lives and attain self actualization.

Through the years the profession of librarianship has developed, and a codification of ideal practices and relationship has become necessary to guide the practitioner in maintaining standards of ethical behavior in his relation with state and society, with clients, with profession and colleagues, with agency, and with oneself (Professional Regulation Commission of the Republic of the Philippines 1992). The hypothesis of the research:

- 1) There is significant difference between faculty members' views on professional ethics in the sex, age, work experience, education level, gender and type of employment.
- 2) There is no significant difference between academic librarians' view about the professional ethics with regard to age, work experience, education level, profession, gender, organizational position, and type of employment.

## II. METHODS

The researcher used the survey research methodology for this study. The researchers used two questionnaires (Faculty members and academic librarians) for the analysis in this study. The researcher collected, analyzed, and reported data for a population of university librarians 445(88%) in 33 governmental universities in seven provinces and 62 (12%) faculty members of library and information sciences from throughout governmental libraries. The researchers used quantitative techniques to report the results of the study. Analysis and interpretation of the data follows the principles described in Social Statistics (Fox 1998), Statistical Methods for Psychology (Howell 2009), and Tests and Assessment (Walsh and Betz 2000). For example, when determining the strength of the association between the variables, the researcher used the standards set forth by Fox (1998).

## III. Results

The results of the analysis showed that Faculty members' view is as an ideal moral. They believe that all components related to professional ethics for fulfilling of final code of professional ethics must be considered, because code of professional ethics must be complete and due to responsibility towards their, responsibility to colleagues, responsibility to users, professional responsibility, responsibility toward the organization, and responsibility towards other specialists in other courses. Thus, the transposition of these components can not be as reason not only is relevant because of its importance or significance of one over another, but also, it must be prepared and have a good guarantee by Iranian Library and Information Sciences Association for executing of this code of professional ethics. Academic Librarians stated that, they agree with

the components that offered in the questionnaire. They believe that, the executive of this code of ethics is low. Mann Whitney U Test used for analyzing differences of Hypothesis, 1, 2 and 3. Kruskal-Wallis test used for analyzing significant differences of hypothesis, 1 and 2. Independent One-Sample T-Test used for analyzing significant differences of hypothesis 1. According to the results of Mann Whitney U Test and Kruskal-Wallis test, there isn't meaningful differences between the views of faculty members with regard to sex, age, work experience, education, type of employment, since the meaningful level more than 0.05 mentioned in all items. Accordingly, hypothesis 1 was rejected. According to results of Mann Whitney U Test and Kruskal-Wallis test, and Independent One-Sample T-Test, there aren't meaningful differences between views of the academic librarians with sex, work experience, type of employment and job status. Since the meaningful level in all cases is more than p-value 0.05, accordingly hypothesis 2 was rejected.

## REFERENCES

- Allen, G. (1998). "Work values in librarianship." Library & information science research **20**(4): 415-424.
- Fox, W. (1998). Social statistics, Microcase Corporation.
- Hall, B. J. (1997). "Culture, ethics, and communication." Ethics in intercultural and international communication: 11-41.
- Horn, D. E. (1989). "The development of ethics in archival practice." American Archivist **52**(1): 64-71.
- Howell, D. C. (2009). Statistical methods for psychology. USA, Wadsworth Pub Co.
- Professional Regulation Commission of the Republic of the Philippines. (1992). "Code of Ethics for Registered Librarians." Retrieved 31 August 2011, from <http://archive.ifla.org/faife/ethics/filicode.htm>.
- Shachaf, P. (2005). "A global perspective on library association codes of ethics." Library & information science research **27**(4): 513-533.
- UK Library Association Council and the Annual General Meeting (1983). "Preface to The Library Association's Code of Professional Conduct." from <http://archive.ifla.org/faife/ethics/lacode.htm>.
- Vanasco, R. R. (1994). "The IIA code of ethics: An international perspective." Managerial Auditing Journal **9**(1): 12-22.
- Walsh, W. B. and N. E. Betz (2000). Tests and assessment, Prentice-Hall, Inc.
- Yongzhong, S. (2004). "A Study of Library Professional Ethics [J]." The Journal of The Library Science In China **4**.

<i>Components</i>	<i>Mean Ranking</i>			
	Faculty Members	Components Priorities	Academic Librarians	Components Priorities
Responsibility towards their	4.50	3	4.13	1
Responsibilities toward colleagues	4.43	4	3.66	4
Responsibility to users	4.60	1	4.22	3
Responsibilities toward the profession	4.52	2	2.77	3
Responsibilities toward organizations	4.21	7	3.43	6
Responsibilities toward other professions	4.38	6	3.59	5
Responsibilities toward society	4.39	5	4.06	2

Table 1- Comparison of faculty and academic librarians' view on professional ethics