



# The Ethics of Media through the Arab Electronic Press Sites as Digital Communication: Mediating Role of Supply Chain

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The discourse of press goes through the press websites with the problem of moving away from the formation of its legislation and media ethics serves as the arbiter and adjudicator in classifying the quality of discourse, based on the professional indicators which can be used to predict the future of press sites in terms of impact and reception. The current study aims to identify the problems of dealing with media ethics in the new communication environment and to diagnose the nature of the relationship of this communication through Arab press sites in the context of media ethics along with the mediating role of supply chain. The study has reached a number of conclusions concerning the absence of media ethics in some discourse through the Arab press websites for various reasons including the spread of the apparent hate discourse and incitement, the phenomenon of discourses politicization, re-manufacturing the reality, the adoption of the structural language excitement and exaggeration, the widespread phenomena of non-mention of the information sources and of framing and surface treatments. This study has summarized a scientific vision of all the phenomena and causes that stand in the way of adherence to the ethics of media.

**Key words:** *Media ethics, press sites, digital communication.*



## Introduction

Media is a message and an industry, the message derives its strength of survival and prestige from the ethics of the profession, an industry, also their excellence, credibility and continuity relate to how close they are, and as such it has become increasingly important because staying away from it has "a negative impact more than its positives and benefits." (Al-Shamaliya, 2014). The supply chain in media industry also plays a vital role in the improvement of its ethics. Making discourse through press sites is not just about technology, as some people imagine, and the technology is considered in one of the following three cycles: Text, technique and interaction, technological amazement and improvised use are not made simply by professional media; therefore, the absorption of these variables and competition with professional tools increases the importance of press sites and makes them more credible, with attention by the audience and enriched dialogue and democratic process benefits (Al-Labban, 2015).

Here, the problem of media discourse and its making began to weaken its communication with professional ethics in the light of digital communication, was the nature of the changes and problems caused by communicative globalization in journalism the reason for this? Or are there other causes? Whatever the problems and causes, this study attempts to examine the press discourses in the Arab press sites via the internet environment and their relations with media ethics to diagnose and characterize the reality and diagnose the practices phenomena and underlying causes; to provide a vision that can enable the press to follow media ethics. The significance of the study lies in the fact that it diagnoses the extent to which the discourse in Arab press sites are close or far from the principles and rules of media ethics, and as such it could determine whether these discourses are politicized or intended to contribute to the roles, functions and mission of the media profession.

The study attempts to answer the following questions:

- What are the problems of dealing with media ethics in the new communication environment?
- What is the nature of the relationship of communication discourses through Arab press sites with media ethics?
- What is the role of supply chain in the media industry and improve the ethics of the media industry?

The current study aims to:

- Identify the problems of dealing with media ethics in the new communication environment.



-Diagnose the nature of the relationship of communication discourse through Arab press sites with media ethics.

-Identify the supply chain impact on the ethics of the media industry through Arab press sites with media ethics.

### **Literature Review**

The study is based on the theory of frameworks that provide solid results in the field of press coverage and its relationship to media ethics and impact of supply chain on the ethics, the study tried to innovate in this theory by adopting the observation tool and not as usual in media studies using the content analysis tool; the study in this area needs to monitor the nature of the practice and the problems that occurred and its proximity or distance from the ethics of the media, Therefore, the aim of study is to describe the nature of professional practice in press sites and try to provide a philosophical vision that contributes to enable communication discourse to approach or cling to the ethics of media.

Researchers in the field of media ethics have worked hard and their research trends have been concerned with analysing the ethics of media work in the traditional and electronic media environment, including (Sadiq, 2006). A trend based on theoretical and media analysis of moral values, the trend based on the analysis of media codes of honour as an introduction to the study of media ethics, the trend based on the analysing role of media academies in teaching media ethics and the impact of the information revolution on them, the trend based on the analysing of media values and ethics in the new media environment, the trend based on the analysis of the ethical practices and rules of media websites.

This study is different to previous studies in the method of research, the observation tool is used to identify the extent of approaching or moving away from the principles and rules of the ethics of the media profession in the press discourses through press websites, the quantity did not make of its interests, focusing on certain themes has enabled the development of descriptions that are close to reality and a scientific vision of empowering media ethics in the press discourse.

### **The Ethics of Media (Theoretical Approach)**

Ethics is seen as a normative science looking at what human behaviour should be, it is interested for answering the questions on the subject of the higher goodness of humanity, the right and the duty, the right and the wrong (Rashwan, 2004), it consists of very general standards in a society and apply to all people regardless of their role in social institutions or their professions (Al-Shamaliya).



As for media ethics, are ethics related to the media profession, which is the set of rules and duties governing the profession of journalism or are the various principles that a journalist must adhere to while performing his duties (Al-Quhit, 2009), or the standards and controls that a journalist adheres to while practicing for his profession. These standards relate to writing, presenting facts, and the journalist's relationship with other parties (journalist's relationship with sources and institutions) (Al-Sanjari, 2015).

The media ethics differ from the law, ethical principles determine what you should do, it is based on personal, professional, social and moral values, and arise from proper thinking, it is written by journalists themselves (within trade unions) or by media organizations, represent a voluntary collective commitment, ethics are different from the law in that it is created by the professional groups themselves within the framework of the so-called self-regulation, the laws that determine what you can and can't do in a particular situation, it can be applied to some journalistic practices by the courts, the judiciary and the law (Sharif, 2014). The ethics of media have been determined by the rules of professional conduct that explain to the journalist what is for him and to himself, the rules are (Bassiouni, 2012). Secure freedom of the media and the press, free access to objective information sources, accuracy, honesty and non-distortion of presentation of facts, the right to knowledge, objectivity and impartiality, responsibility to public opinion, its rights and interests towards national, racial and religious communities, nation, state, religion and the maintenance of peace, integrity and independence, the need to refrain from defamation, false accusation, slander and violation of private life, right of reply and correction, respect of professional confidentiality. Journalists make mistakes; there are three main categories for their mistakes: information mistakes, professional mistakes, political mistakes (favouritism) all which must be promptly corrected despite asserting the journalist's right to freedom of expression, which entails moral responsibility for the consequences of the mistake. (Saad, 2015)

The penalties in the Arab world, which are stipulated in the law of each country, vary favour, forced apologies and rectification to the fine and the prison sentence for different periods and may reach a temporary or even final closing of the media involved (Ibid). Covenants of honour and codes of conduct face major problems leading to their non-application, including restrictions imposed by society, constraints within the work, some governments have enforced laws to restrict journalism, currently, this subject of controversy among journalists and those interested in the press freedom. The issue of ethics remains controversial, attracting and tightening between journalists and governments because each party believes that the other party has not fulfilled its obligations to the other. These discussions are compounded by digital communication (Al-Sharif, 2013).



## **Problems of the New Communication Environment and the Ethics of Media**

The new communication environment in the Arab world has a chaos of information and career, uncontrolled professional and ethical communication, "challenging political, social and economic pressures"(Andrea Press, 2012), it was enabled by the absence of a contemporary legal text to accommodate rapid technological changes, the neglect of an infringement on personal and moral freedoms, because, there is no awareness of the possibility of prosecuting those who infringed the rights of others; so media ethics are now seen as idealism that cannot be applied in practice and it is considered approaching them is an unreality. In the light of the new media, the speed and timeliness in the press coverage is one of the criteria in achieving the victory in the field of communication and media, which has often gone credibly communication channels are references of the Arab and international media. In this age, the need to create all the fields of life, this necessitated to appear of the applied ethics, which is seen as a set of practical ethical rules, it aims to regulate practice within the various fields of science, technology, associated social, economic and professional activities, it also tries to solve the moral problems posed by those fields, not based on ready and absolute moral standards, but depending on what is reached by deliberation and consensus on the ethical treatment of special cases, complex or intractable (Al-Shamaliya).

In the light of the digital media, there was a need for ethics to address the modern issues which are raised from the new media, including: borrowed identities, electronic bullying, the hyperlinks issue, blogging, digital photography, the digital infringement of the intellectual rights of others, the protection of individual privacy, the limits of freedom of opinion and expression, the power of advertising, the authority of money over substance, the ideology of the owner, the limits of the entertainment, the new environment is free from rules and regulated governing the ethics of electronic media work. Finally of concern is that the system of media work ethics prevailing in the traditional media environment is not compatible with the current electronic media environment. Some research proposes that the fundamental change that should be in the ethics of the media is in three areas: a new vision of the nature of the media ethics, then applied ethics governing the media practices, and third, the ethics of global media, it means, principles and standards must determine or define the universality of the media in terms of access and influence (Hussein, 2015).

According to an opinion, the media ethics we adopt influences how we react to difficult questions, we need a mentality that allows us to connect the old and the new, to retain valuable values from the past and accept the valuable and new ways of communication, the new ethics relates primarily integral, completely of newsrooms and new concepts in how journalists use social media and that ethics must radically prepare itself for a global age (Ibid). The difference in the way of dealing with media ethics in the new era has many aspects, such as the possibility of paying the media institution to obtain exclusive information or not, such as allowing or disallowing the journalists to use social media; the editorial policy of some media organizations

stipulates that bribery and integrity issues are never tolerated in respect of financial matters out of the public respect, and stresses this consideration and progress on the speed of transmission of news and information, however, many other media organizations do not see this as a mystery some media schools are studying how to obtain information from staff in any way in order to discover the facts or record a media (Al-Ittihad Electronic Newspaper, 2015).

It is also believed that it is a solution to rely on the civil sense of the media as it can help to discover the secret of the great communication game of institutions controlling the global media (Al-Miqdadi, 2007). A journalist is not free at all in virtual space, acting as he likes without restriction, as many believe, for two basic reasons: The journalist belongs to an institution that is eager on its image and position in society, the public on the one hand, the social responsibility of the journalist on the other hand as a social actor who plays fundamental roles in society that require him to act responsibly.

### **The Media Ethics through the Arab Press Sites**

In no way does the Arab Scene reflect on the nature of the press writing associated with it, these ideological conflicts and clashes are also reflected in the nature of the various press discourses. It is interesting to note that the reflection of deterioration, disintegration and modern Arab wear creates patterns of journalistic writing, to reconfigure those patterns again, despite of its claim of criticism, change and restructuring, this results in unprecedented violence in the contemporary press writings, and about the divisions, conflicts and sharp clashes (Hamami; Saad al-Din). It seems to the readers of the laws of the Arab countries regulating the work of journalism, ethical charters and conduct codes of professional means of communication, the communication environment is moving in the direction of protecting the media career in a particularly and systematic in private, but problematic looks in specific terms for freedoms, the intentions of not issuing real legislation contribute to enable the journalist in perform his professional, the ethical message and discourses "Surrounding knowledge and shackling it from all possibilities of work and creativity in an independent intellectual space" (Al-Rezn, 2007) on the one hand, media policies govern the contents of the media on the other.

In other words, the problem lies in the state firstly, and the philosophy of media owners secondly; because, the laws are legislated by the legislative institution, charters and codes of conduct are made by the media organizations. The Arab press websites are experiencing a crisis of trust with the recipient, an intellectual conflict and a crisis of ethics in the practice of the career, is the product of government pressure, the advertising widespread, the owner's philosophy, the variables imposed by the new communication environment are a product of abundant, intense competition and the predominance of recreational function, commodification of culture. This has cast negative effects on the principles of the media ethics.



## **Supply Chain and Ethics of Media**

The supply chain practices is playing a vital role in the improvement of the ethic in the media industry. The supply chain process required an efficient process that provide the effective tools to the organization and employees are bind with this process that is the reason they are not compromise with their ethics towards their responsibilities that also enhance the communication level among the employee within the organization. Thus, this study is going to check the mediating role of supply chain among the ethics of the employees and their communication level among the employees and with their managers that enhance the performance of media industry in the country.

## **Hypotheses Development**

This study has developed the following hypotheses with respect to above mentioned literature on the ethics and supply chain practices.

**H1:** These is a positive association among the business ethics and the communication environment in the media industry.

**H2:** These is a positive association among the social ethics and the communication environment in the media industry.

**H3:** Supply chain practices has positive mediation among the nexus of business ethics and the communication environment in the media industry.

**H4:** Supply chain practices has positive mediation among the nexus of social ethics and the communication environment in the media industry.

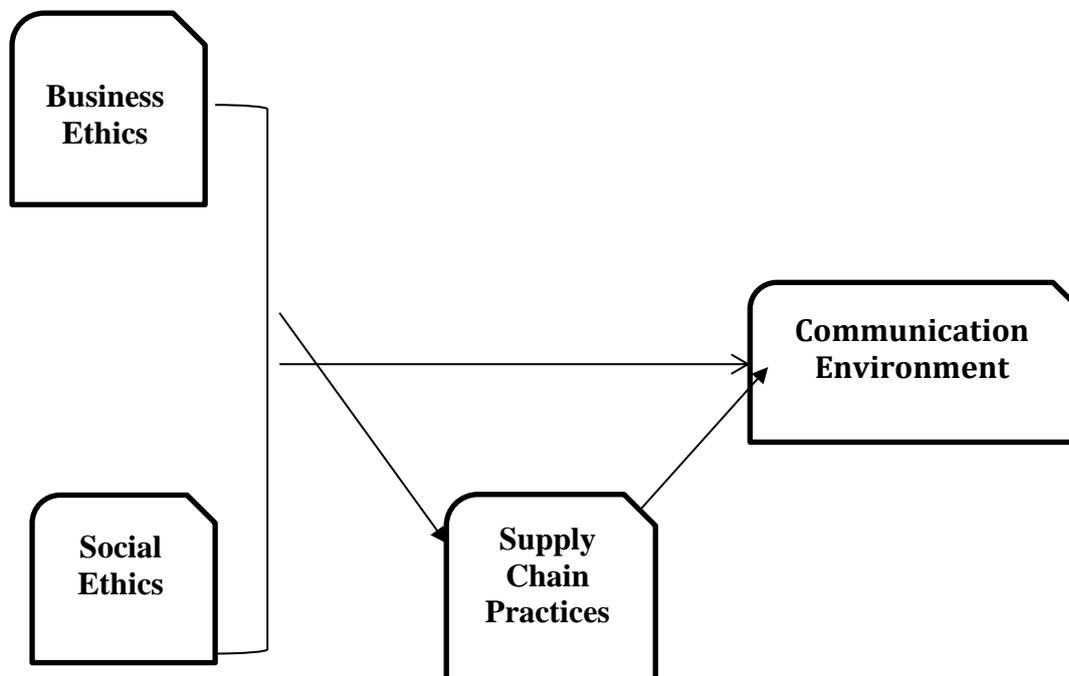
## **The Methodology of the Study and Its Tools**

This study is a descriptive study which is based on the observation tool in examining the communication discourse published in the press sites of the communication institutions in the Arab world to reach descriptions and generalizations about their approach to media ethics, in other hand, research used this tool to diagnose what constitutes an approach or violation of media ethics by observing the following: Hatred and accusations in the press discourses, the limits of employment of press and television images, balance in the presentation of news-related parties, the nature of the consultation of events and problems in the press discourses, the limits of renewal , accreditation of writers or local people and the nature of their relationship with other communication institutions; Limits of adoption of emotional or mental discourse in specific issues how to deal with religious and political issues within the borders of one country. The community of study was represented by the press discourse for various press arts through the press websites for the period (2003-2019) as the Arab region has spread a proliferation of

the press websites and the accompanying political events social and cultural changes, communicative phenomena necessitated the study of media ethics, which is an important pillar of the legislative of the press discourses. The data were collected through questionnaires with 380 questionnaires distributed but only 270 returned with a 71.05 percent response rate. The business ethics (BE) has 18 items, social ethics (SE) has 20 items, supply chain practices (SCP) has 10 items and communication environment (CE) has 10 items. These variables are presented in Figure 1 below.

**Figure 1:** Theoretical Framework

### Theoretical Framework



### Findings

The findings show the items relationship that is known as convergent validity and statistics show that valid convergent validity and high correlation among items because standards are fulfilled such as loadings are not smaller than, AVE values are not lower than, Alpha values are higher than 0.70 and composite reliability (CR) values are not less than 0.70 and these values and statistics are highlighted in Table 1 below.

**Table 1:** Convergent Validity

<b>Constructs</b>	<b>Items</b>	<b>Loadings</b>	<b>Alpha</b>	<b>CR</b>	<b>AVE</b>
Business Ethics	BE1	0.594	0.962	0.961	0.583
	BE10	0.711			
	BE 11	0.819			
	BE 12	0.791			
	BE 13	0.836			
	BE 14	0.827			
	BE 15	0.793			
	BE 16	0.803			
	BE 17	0.711			
	BE 18	0.800			
	BE 2	0.582			
	BE 3	0.685			
	BE 4	0.799			
	BE 5	0.695			
	BE 6	0.828			
	BE 7	0.813			
	BE 8	0.784			
	BE 9	0.803			
	Social Ethics	SE1			
SE10		0.790			
SE11		0.765			
SE12		0.832			
SE13		0.799			
SE14		0.828			
SE15		0.810			
SE16		0.803			
SE17		0.717			
SE18		0.786			
SE2		0.827			
SE20		0.767			
SE3		0.796			
SE4		0.848			
SE5		0.837			
SE6		0.825			
SE7		0.829			
SE8		0.804			
SE9		0.716			
Communication Environment	CE1	0.574	0.920	0.934	0.588

	CE10	0.787			
	CE 2	0.766			
	CE 3	0.842			
	CE 4	0.643			
	CE 5	0.811			
	CE 6	0.799			
	CE 7	0.783			
	CE 8	0.816			
	CE 9	0.804			
Supply Chain Practice	SCP1	0.829	0.935	0.946	0.663
	SCP10	0.571			
	SCP2	0.860			
	SCP3	0.850			
	SCP4	0.818			
	SCP5	0.870			
	SCP6	0.861			
	SCP7	0.850			
	SCP8	0.775			

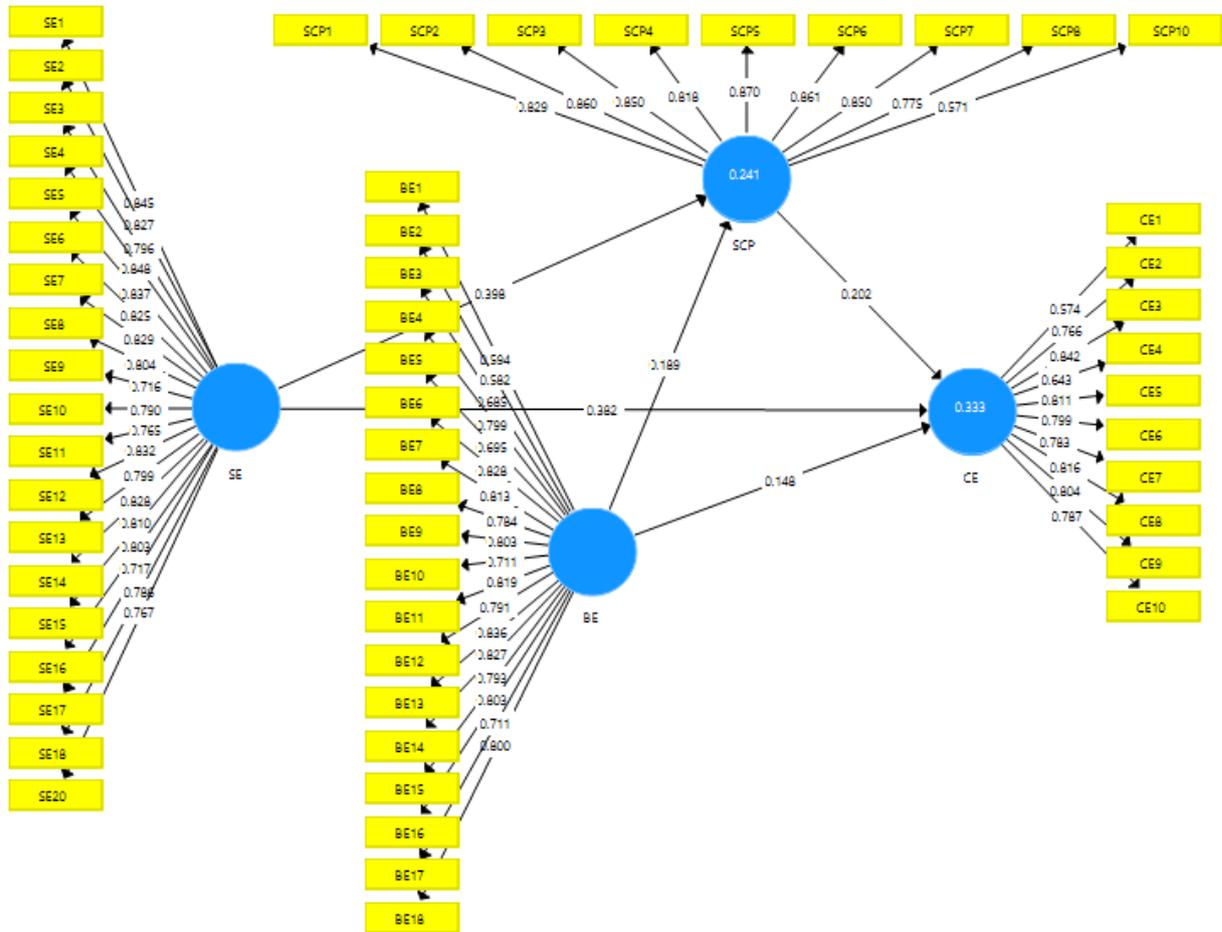
The results also show the constructs relationship that is known as discriminant validity and statistics show that valid discriminant validity and no high correlation among constructs because standards are fulfilled such as the values of Heterotrait Monotrait ratios are not bigger than 0.90 and these values and statistics are highlighted in Table 2 below.

**Table 2:** Heterotrait Monotrait Ratio

	BE	SE	CE	SCP
BE				
SE	0.230			
CE	0.261	0.539		
SCP	0.243	0.479	0.450	

The Measurement Model Assessment is presented in Figure 2 below.

**Figure 2:** Measurement Model Assessment



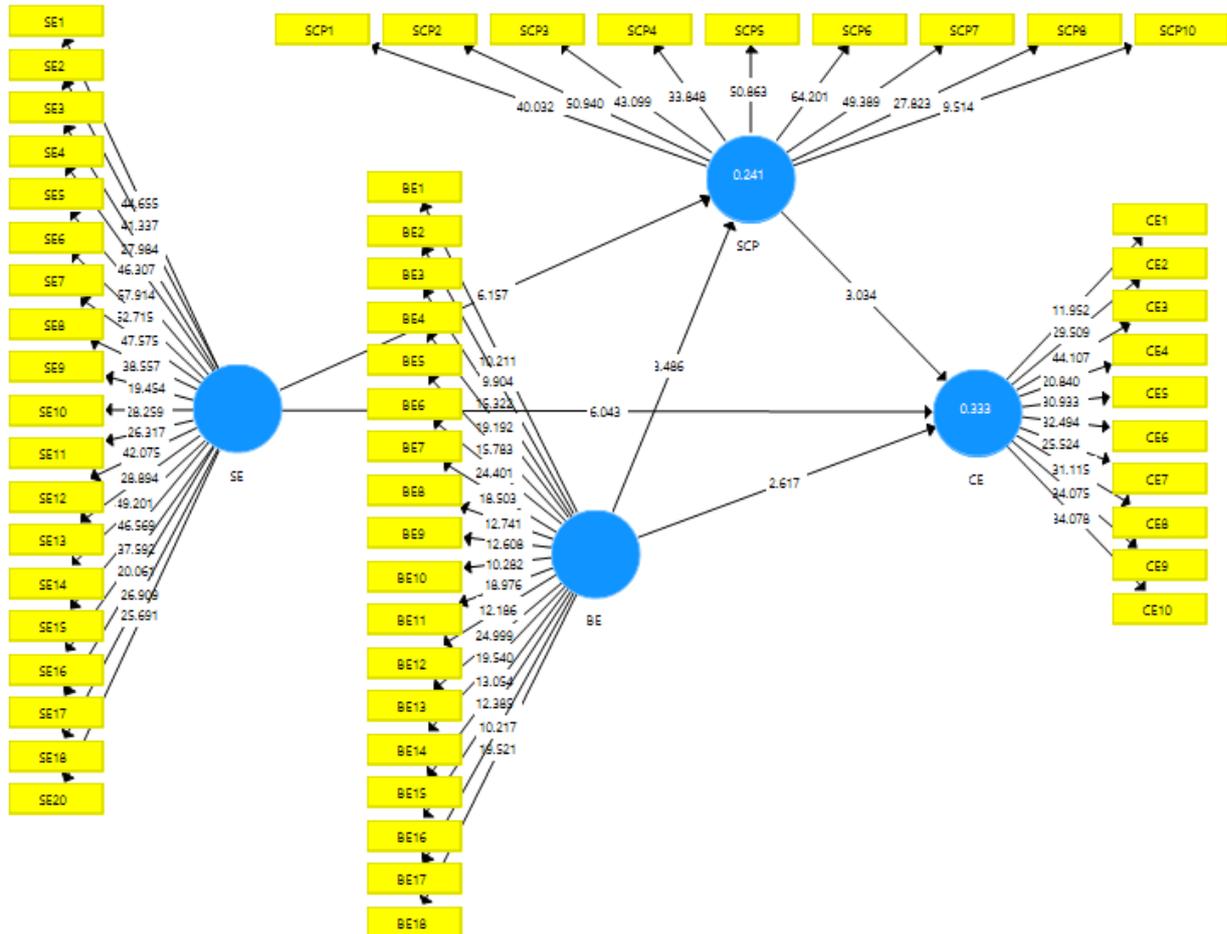
The path analysis indicated that business and social ethics have positive association with the communication environment and thus H1 and H2 are accepted. Furthermore, supply chain practices have positive mediation among the links of business ethics, social ethics and communication environment and thus H3 and H4 are accepted. These values and statistics are highlighted in Table 3 below.

**Table 3:** Path Analysis

	<b>Beta</b>	<b>S.D.</b>	<b>t-values</b>	<b>p-values</b>	<b>L.L.</b>	<b>U.L.</b>
BE ->CE	0.148	0.058	2.568	0.006	0.064	0.242
SE -> CE	0.382	0.065	5.896	0.000	0.244	0.478
SCP -> CE	0.202	0.069	2.908	0.002	0.085	0.311
BE -> SCP-> CE	0.038	0.019	2.022	0.023	0.008	0.070
SE -> SCP -> CE	0.080	0.029	2.739	0.004	0.035	0.132

The Structural Model Assessment is presented in Figure 3 below.

**Figure 3: Structural Model Assessment**



## Discussion

The ethics of media industry plays a vital role in the communication environment of business because highly effective communication and high performance in supply chain practices and process bind the employees to behave ethically and this is the reason supply chain has increased the impact of ethics on the communication environment of the media industry. One of the most contentious issues in media ethics is the matter of neutrality, which means fairness and balance in content, non-participation in the preparation of this content, whether individuals or institutions, and no previous expressed thoughts in favour or against any particular entity mentioned in the press materials. This standard is required for journalists and demands a more credible role be played by the media, but some argue that impartiality cannot be fully applied on the basis that journalists always have a certain view on what they write, but that does not prevent the advice strongly presented in this regard: the need to rise above personal opinions and if not possible, to express self-position, can only highlight the diversity of opinion (Ibid). One of the researchers points out that the risks associated with the ethics of media work in the



digital communication space are multinational media groups that have the authority of politics, media and financial to control communication issues in virtual space.

## **Conclusion**

By observing the professional performance of the Arab press sites, the study has reached a number of conclusions concerning the ethics of the media profession and the following observations are made:

- Hate discourse and accusations were issued through many sites of the press institutions between countries, governments and peoples for ideological, religious, political or historical reasons, most of the press organizations act as the manufacturer or exporter of these discourses through various journalistic arts.
- Supply chain practices and process bind the employees to behave ethically that is the reason supply chain have increased the impacts of ethics on the commination environment of the media industry.
- In many press sites the employment of press television images and reproduction in accordance with the objectives of its messages and philosophy through its press discourse, often, the potential of the press and television image are employed by investing or fabricating specific footage and angles so that mental images are instilled without the need for evidence.
- In many press sites, the selection of specific sources and people representing one direction, not all trends related to an issue or event, in the case of hosting multiple parties, the opposing party will be weakened or weakened by allocating limited time, adopting provocative questions and many interruptions, use non-verbal language to signify disagreement or mockery.
- Some press sites invested in small events, existed in all countries of the world by certain people who only represent themselves, turning them into problems and issues, internationalizing and generalizing them as dangerous phenomena through carrying out organized press campaigns.
- The spread of the phenomenon of paid voices in the adoption of some writers and analysts who make discourse consistent with a policy of certain means of communication for a price, which causes misinformation and abuse of the media ethics.
- The spread of pens and deferred voices, so the media policy of press sites effects the way those who communicate with and think about dealing with various events, issues and phenomena, in order to produce a compelling discourse for what they want with respect to their philosophy and interests,



- The press discourse, focusing on praise and complement, achievements and positive news only.
- In some press sites the spread of the phenomenon of emotional discourse, often puts accuracy, honesty and objectivity in danger, especially in the press coverage of the political and social issues of states, governments and peoples that are the target of their press campaigns, not with the aim of reform or finding solutions but to distort and present mental images contrary to reality by the communication space.
- The spread of the gagging phenomenon discourses of the press sites, especially with regard to political and religious issues within the borders of one country has been considered as prohibition and this is contrary to the principles of media ethics and the right of communication, regardless of internal political, religious and security issues, in contrast to a focus on the same subjects for countries that differ or intersect with it.
- That the adoption of the structural language in most of the press discourses through the websites and away from persuasive discourses that rely on proof, arguments and evidence, these are indicated of the phenomenon prevalence of surface treatments depth in various topics.
- The spread of the phenomenon of unknown sources in most security issues, this harms the ethics of media profession and causes the spread of undocumented news source.
- The phenomenon of selectivity in addressing various topics of press discourses through websites that do not present reality as it is, but what the means wants, this violates the principles of the media ethics.
- A clear estrangement from some writers in various journalistic arts about the ethics of the profession through the adoption of methods of excitement, exaggeration, generalization in titles, introductions and the rest of the details, expressing opinion in the press news which is considered the professional mistakes.
- The phenomenon of UN indicates to the sources of information in some letters of press sites, this is contrary to the status of honesty, which is one of the principles of the media ethics.
- The phenomenon of framing of certain topics, events or statements is deliberated intentionally, based on this, organized communication campaigns to achieve goals incompatible with the media ethics.
- The reliance of the press discourse through websites on the opinions of rulers and decision makers has weakened over time from its credibility, it causes in the future cutting between the receiver and the means of communication.



## **Recommendations**

If the ethics of media was in the age of digital communication undergoing the plight of the changes imposed by communicative globalization, labour market requirements, the ways in which a journalist can follow media ethics and adhere to its rules and behaviours would be itemized as follows:

- Freedom of opinion and expression considered a right of the journalist and the public; so the abandonment of the ideological press rhetoric, and the adoption of balanced press treatments are the fundamentals of the ethics media.
- A requirement to present the facts and events as they really are, and not reframing it by selecting certain themes, contributes to approaching truth and honesty, which is one of the basics of restoring the trust of the recipient in the Arab electronic press sites.
- The adoption of credible media sources in the press discourse contributes to the upgrading of the Arab electronic press sites at the recipient.
- Avoidance of re-creating the press and television image in a manner inconsistent with the media ethics, the truth must be present in the text and image, avoid employment images to achieve certain goals.
- Avoidance of unknown sources in various subjects, except to a very limited extent for the purpose of protecting sources of information, and attribute information to sources.
- Minimise the excitement and exaggeration in press discourse through the electronic press sites.
- Abstain from the phenomenon of the structural language, the phenomenon of aligned and the adoption of treatments in the various journalistic arts through the electronic press sites.
- Use predominance of the mental grooming in various journalistic topics through websites because it is more credible with through the time.
- Invite all journalists to abide by international and regional conventions related to journalistic work ethics and introduce relevant international organizations in case of harassment in their journalistic work.
- Persuade the international organizations of the United Nations to call on all Arab countries to strengthen the independence of the media by issuing legislations and laws that allow the exercise of free media.



- Persuade the international organizations of the United Nations to invite all Arab countries to unconditionally finance the media means and enable journalists to motivate media ethics independently.



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