

# ROMANIANS PERCEPTION ANALYSIS REGARDING UNETHICAL BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

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## Abstract:

*To hold an ethical conduct means to always act with a high moral character. Moral issues are those that target individual about what is good to do and what not. Ethical issues are diverse: employee conflicts of interest, corruption, bribing and taking bribes, sexual harassment, unauthorized payments, employees' private space, environmental issues, occupational safety, pricing policy, discrimination of any kind. The article title „Romanians perception analysis on unethical behavior management” aims to showcase how individuals perceive contemporary society unethical behavior and the extent to which they adhere to such behavior. The starting point of the article is represented by the fact that corruption affects people's lives.*

*Ethics are being presented in the theoretical part, and the practice is done by a research focused on the analysis of secondary sources, and the instrument used for this part is the questionnaire. The database was taken from an European site and from an International one, both sites specializing in surveys. Research findings highlighted the fact that corruption is widespread and exerts influence on the individual.*

**Keywords:** *ethics, ethical behavior, moral, bribery*

**JEL Classification:** C83

## 1. Theoretical aspects

The etymology of the word "ethics" comes from the Greek word "Ethik" (Aristotle) which means knowledge and "ethicos" meaning "morality" or "morals". The latter is a derivative of the word "ETHOS" (Homer) which means homeland, primordial, birthplace, character, habits, meeting place, house. Ethics appeared as a result of all the factors that were related to human cultural development. Before the emergence of writing, ethical attitudes showed man how to manage conflicting elements, such as "good" and "evil". In the Romanian Dictionary, the edition published in 1975, ethics is defined as "the science dealing with the study of moral principles, with their laws of historical development, the contents of their class and their role in society; all rules of good conduct of a particular class or society.

Ethical behavior must start at the top. To improve the ethical climate and reduce conflicts between personal ethics and organizational requirements, some changes are necessary in two main areas: managerial concept and managerial actions (Duțescu B, 1980). Among the many ways the unethical behavior is manifesting, the analysis of corruption was chosen, and this approach is not random but is based on the fact that among the recommendations from the EU through the 2020 European Strategy stood the diminishing of corruption.

The starting point on defining ethics is to indicate what 'wrong' means and to enumerate the means by which the consequences of this evil can be avoided. Ethics is not only a way of analysis. Society in general is subjected to the operation of any ethical system. In this way, all social relations include ethics. "It is human nature to be well behaved" (Flonta M, 2005) The causes of unethical behavior:

1. Gain (desire of obtaining maximum profit) leads to many temptations, especially when a substantial gain is anticipated;
2. Conflict of roles - many ethical dilemmas that arise in organizations are actually forms of conflict of roles that get to be resolved unethically (D Christmas, 2005);

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3. Strong competition for scarce resources may stimulate unethical behavior, both by stimulating game business and illegal acts of trade (Flonta M, 1995);

4. Personality. People strongly oriented towards economic values are more prone to unethical behavior than others (Donaldson, 1989).

## **2. Research Methodology**

Goal- Little information on Romanians view of ethical behavior required the making of this research based on the analysis of secondary sources. Data was collected from two sites: the World Values Survey and ec.europa.eu. The instrument used was the questionnaire and the interview method used (face to face and by telephone). The sample is representative in both cases. The questionnaires were applied to Romanian citizens of different ages, different professions and different sex. The database of the two sites was used, and the information was processed in Excel.

### **Objectives**

1. Finding out how Romanians relate to the world and also how they perceive the expression “doing good for society”.

2. Observing the degree of which the corruption is spread.

3. Identify the most common forms of corruption.

4. Finding out their perception of how those guilty of corruption, abuse of power, giving and taking bribes are treated.

### **Assumptions**

H1. Most Romanians see themselves as belonging to the world;

H2. A small number of respondents perceive corruption as highly spreading;

H3. The most widespread form of corruption is to benefit family or acquaintances in public institutions.

## **3. Results**

The data is structured on two levels:

1. The individual’s sense of belonging to the world and ethical behavior way of life.

2. The spread and the forms of corruption.

I. Individual affiliation and the degree of similarity in terms of ethical behavior

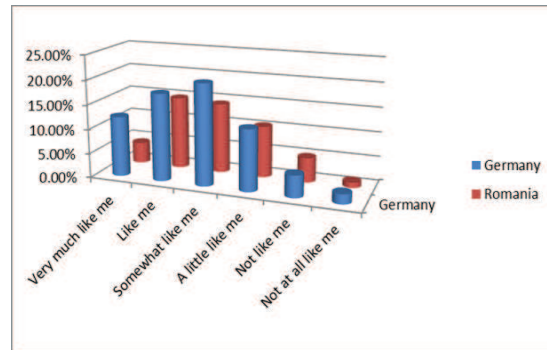
For this level a comparison was made between Romanians and Germans. The choice is not random, its foundation was the gap in living standards.

Please think of a person representative of your life, a model.

1. To what extent do you resemble your model regarding the expression “doing good for society”.

**Table 1. The similarity between respondents and model regarding “doing good for society”**

TOTAL		
	Germany	Romania
Very much like me	12.3%	4.3%
Like me	17.8%	14.8%
Somewhat like me	20.6%	14.3%
A little like me	12.5%	10.5%
Not like me	4.5%	5.0%
Not at all like me	2.0%	1.1%
Missing; RU,DE: Inappropriate response	*	*
No answer	28.9%	49.8%
Don't know	1.3%	0.2%
(N)	(3,549)	(2,046)
Mean	2.79	3.01
Standard Deviation	1.27	1.20
Base mean	(2,476)	(1,024)



**Figure 1. The similarity between respondents and model regarding “doing good for society”**

Source: <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/wvs.jsp>

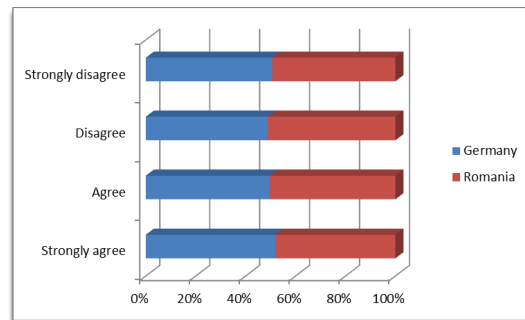
Both in the case of the Romanian respondents and of the Germans ones we found that the majority thinks that they have a similar ethical behavior to their model.

Present your opinion about the following statement:

2. I see myself as a citizen of the world

**Table 2. The individual- on being a citizen of the world.**

TOTAL		
	Germany	Romania
Strongly agree	22.0%	20.4%
Agree	38.6%	39.6%
Disagree	26.7%	28.0%
Strongly disagree	8.6%	8.4%
DE:Inapplicable; Missing; RU: Inappropriate respons	*	*
No answer	0.5%	0.3%
Don't know	3.7%	3.2%
(N)	(3,549)	(2,046)



**Figure 2. The individual - on being a citizen of the world**

Source: <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/wvs.jsp>

Over 50% of Romanians and Germans perceive themselves as belonging to the world.

## II. The spread of corruption and its manifestations

### 3. How common is corruption in our country?

**Table 3. Spreading corruption**

Answer	Percent
Verry common	57
Widespread	34
Quite rare	-
Very rare	-
I don't know	9

Source: [http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/flash/fl\\_374\\_fact\\_ro\\_ro.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_374_fact_ro_ro.pdf)

Over 90% of Romanians see the corruption as being very common.

### 4. Which form of corruption is most common?

**Table 4. Forms of corruption**

Answer	Percent
Advantaging acquaintances in business	36
Advantaging acquaintances in public institutions	42
Fraud	14
Bribe	5
Illicit fees	4

Source: [http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/flash/fl\\_374\\_fact\\_ro\\_ro.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_374_fact_ro_ro.pdf)

Among the manifestations of corruption in Romania respondents consider that the most common one is advantaging family or acquaintances in public institutions.

### 5. In the last 12 months have you witnessed any corruption case.

**Table 5. Witnessing corruption cases**

Answer	Percent
Yes	14
No	79
I don't know	7

Source: [http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs\\_397\\_fact\\_ro\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_397_fact_ro_en.pdf)

14% of respondents said that they witnessed a corruption case in the last 12 months.

### 6. Show your agreement/ disagreement regarding the following statement

**Table 6. Opinion on the punishment of those guilty**

Answer	Percent „ Agree,,	Percent „ Disagree,,	I don't know
The guilty are punished in minor corruption cases	66	24	10
The guilty in bribery cases are punished	47	43	10

Source: [http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/flash/fl\\_374\\_fact\\_ro\\_ro.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_374_fact_ro_ro.pdf)

7. Is your daily life affected by corruption?

**Table 7. The extent to which corruption affects the lives of individuals**

Answer	Percent
Totally agree	57
Totally disagree	33
I don't know	10

57% of the respondents said that they feel affected by corruption.

8. Do you know where to report corruption?

**Table 8. Knowing the place for reporting corruption**

Answer	Percent
Yes	46
No	43
I don't know	11

Source: [http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs\\_397\\_fact\\_ro\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_397_fact_ro_en.pdf)

In terms of reporting abuse situations regarding ethical behavior Romanians are divided between those who know and those who do not know where to report, and the spread between the two is small.

9. Have you given extra money to doctors or donations to hospitals?

**Table 9. Giving undue benefits**

Answer	Percent
Yes	28
No	67
I'm not answering	5

Source: [http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs\\_397\\_fact\\_ro\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_397_fact_ro_en.pdf)

The majority of the respondents say that they never gave undue benefits to doctors

10. Older people have more political influence?

**Table 10. The political influence of older people**

	Number of cases	%
Strongly agree	253	16.8%
Agree	513	34.1%
Disagree	424	28.2%
Strongly disagree	156	10.4%
No answer	15	1.0%
Don't know	142	9.5%
(N)	(1,503)	100%

50% of the respondents say that they agree with the statement saying that older people have more political influence.

## Conclusions

Reasoning and ethical judgments are not often easy to achieve, and this is amplified by the fact that the situations are not always clear and, in this context, the principles or the ethical criteria do not always meet the agreement or consensus, even the ones of the specialists. Ethics appears to most people as something subjective, amorphous, ill-defined and therefore useless. This lack of confidence in ethics is not just an unfortunate fact but a real danger, because without common agreement on ethical principles, ethics is subjected to every individual's interpretation and the trust therefore is undermined. An ethical dilemma is a situation where it is necessary to choose a point of view or another. In some cases choosing one of the options favorable to one side or the other may be considered unethical.

The Romanian when referencing himself to the model of ethical behavior of the most representative personality, declares himself similar. Of the three hypotheses at the beginning of this research, the first hypothesis and last hypothesis do verify, while the hypothesis number two does not verify. The first hypothesis is verified because the individual identifies himself as a citizen of the world. The second hypothesis does not verify because a high percentage of Romanians who participated in the research believe that the corruption is at a high level. The last hypothesis does verify because most respondents think that the most common form of corruption is to benefit family members or friends in public institutions.

Most respondents find that the elderly have more political influence. A big percent of Romanians claim that they have never given undue benefits to doctors. Only 28% of Romanians according to the survey claim to have been present in a situation when a form of corruption was taking place. In conclusion the unethical behavior such as corruption is affecting the lives of individuals.

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