

Ethical Perspectives and Planetary Sustainability: Exploring the Impact of Economic Factors on Media Students

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The research study examines the complex relationships that exist between financial constraints, moral judgment, and sustainable practices. It looks at how media students' ethical decisions are influenced by economic considerations such as advertising revenue and financial limitations. The study emphasizes the necessity of incorporating sustainability concepts and strong ethics education into media courses in a comprehensive manner. The results indicate that cooperation between educators, media organizations, and legislators, as well as early ethical education for journalists, are essential. The study suggests more investigation into long-term patterns, cultural differences, and the efficacy of programs that encourage media students to make moral decisions. Overall, by giving aspiring journalists the tools they need to handle moral conundrums and environmental concerns, this research helps create a more accountable and sustainable media environment.

Keywords: media education; simulation technique; media ethics; ethical mindset; focus group discussion; advertising revenue; profitability.

1. Introduction

In the dynamic landscape of media education, there is a growing recognition of the need to address the intersection of economic influences, ethical mindsets, and planetary sustainability. As media becomes increasingly intertwined with economic imperatives, understanding the ethical implications of economic decision-making is crucial for fostering responsible journalism and promoting sustainability-oriented media practices (Heise, 2017). Moreover, integrating sustainability principles into media education is paramount for preparing future

media professionals to address global challenges such as climate change, social inequality, and environmental degradation (Annan-Diab & Molinari, 2017).

While traditional approaches to media education have focused on imparting technical skills and industry knowledge, there is a clear need to incorporate ethical considerations and sustainability principles into the curriculum (Mensing, 2010). This necessitates a deeper understanding of how economic factors shape ethical decision-making among media students and professionals. By exploring stakeholders' subjective experiences and perceptions in media education, this study seeks to elucidate the complex interplay between economic influences, ethical mindsets, and sustainability-oriented media practices.

Theoretical frameworks such as Social Learning Theory and Institutional Theory provide valuable insights into how economic influences operate within the institutional context of media education, shaping ethical norms and practices (Anderson, 2014; Hanson, 2002). By adopting a qualitative methodology, this study aims to delve into the lived experiences and perspectives of media students, educators, and industry professionals, allowing for a nuanced understanding of the challenges and opportunities inherent in integrating economic, ethical, and sustainability considerations into media education.

Through this research, it is hoped that actionable insights will be generated to inform curriculum development, pedagogical approaches, and professional standards in media education. By fostering an ethical mindset and a commitment to planetary sustainability among future media professionals, this study aspires to contribute to cultivating a more responsible, ethical, and socially conscious media landscape.

Aim: To investigate the influence of economic factors on the ethical mindsets of media students and its implications for planetary sustainability.

Significance: Understanding this influence can inform the development of more responsible journalism and sustainability-oriented media practices.

Problem Statement: How do economic incentives and calculations impact the ethical decision-making processes of media students, and what are the implications for fostering sustainability in media education?

Research Questions: 1) How do economic factors influence the ethical mindsets of media students? 2) What are the implications of these economic influences on sustainability-oriented media practices? 3) How can media education be tailored to foster ethical decision-making aligned with planetary sustainability goals?

Objectives: 1) To examine the relationship between economic incentives and ethical decision-making processes among media students.

2) To assess the impact of economic influences on the adoption of sustainability-oriented media practices.

3) To propose strategies for integrating ethics education into media curriculum to promote responsible journalism and address planetary sustainability challenges.

2. Literature Review

In the dynamic landscape of education and media, the traditional paradigms are being reshaped by emerging perspectives and imperatives. While conventional approaches have predominantly focused on formal entrepreneurial education for fostering entrepreneurship (Seoke, Mamabolo, & Mtotywa, 2023), there's a growing recognition of the untapped potential of mass media, particularly radio entrepreneurial education, as a catalyst for nurturing entrepreneurial mindsets and intentions. This alternative avenue holds promise, especially in regions where access to formal entrepreneurship programs is limited or inadequate. By leveraging mass media platforms like radio broadcasts, entrepreneurial concepts, and skills can be disseminated widely, reaching a broader audience and potentially igniting entrepreneurial aspirations among individuals who may not have access to traditional educational resources.

In parallel, recent studies have challenged the conventional rational choice models that advocate for deliberate and calculative decision-making (Wang, Zhong, & Murnighan, 2014). These findings underscore such approaches' unintended social and moral consequences, suggesting that engaging in calculative tasks may lead decision-makers to overlook social and moral implications, resulting in selfish and unethical behaviour. In the context of media education, this raises pertinent questions about the influence of economic incentives and calculations on the ethical decision-making processes of media students. Understanding how economic factors shape ethical mindsets among media students is crucial for promoting responsible journalism and sustainability-oriented media practices.

Moreover, a strong correlation exists between specific dimensions of mass media entrepreneurial education, entrepreneurial mindsets, and intentions (Seoke, Mamabolo, & Mtotywa, 2023). The similar correlation exists in women entrepreneurship and implementation of digital media technologies (Gupta, A., & Butt, A. A. (2024). This correlation signifies that entrepreneurial mindsets cultivated through mass media education significantly influence entrepreneurial intentions, offering a viable alternative to traditional educational programs, particularly in resource-constrained environments. By instilling entrepreneurial values and fostering a proactive mindset through mass media platforms, media students may be better equipped to address sustainability challenges and contribute to innovative solutions in their professional endeavours.

There's a growing discourse on the reintegration of ethics into economic theory to foster a more comprehensive understanding of human action (IMF, 2018). This philosophical shift underscores the importance of moral philosophy in shaping economic decision-making, particularly in the context of sustainability challenges. Integrating ethical considerations into economic education can help cultivate a more socially responsible and environmentally conscious generation of economists and policymakers. By incorporating ethical principles into economic theory and practice, students can develop a nuanced understanding of the ethical implications of economic decisions and contribute to more sustainable and equitable economic systems.

Furthermore, media ethics play a pivotal role in shaping the conduct of media professionals and the credibility of media organizations (Media Ethics and Economics, n.d.). Upholding values such as trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, and truth is essential for

preserving public trust and ensuring ethical journalism. However, media organizations often grapple with balancing ethical considerations with economic profitability. In an increasingly competitive media landscape driven by economic pressures, media students must navigate ethical dilemmas while fulfilling professional responsibilities. Integrating ethics education into the media curriculum can give students the tools and frameworks to navigate complex ethical challenges and uphold journalistic integrity in their future careers.

Incorporating sustainability principles into higher education institutions is paramount for fostering a mindset aligned with planetary sustainability goals (Higher Education Institutions and Sustainability, 2021). Education plays a pivotal role in shaping future leaders who can contribute to achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, particularly in areas such as poverty alleviation, gender equality, sustainable consumption and production, climate action, and peace and justice. By integrating sustainability principles into media education, students can develop a holistic understanding of sustainability challenges and explore innovative ways to promote sustainability narratives through media platforms. Equipping media students with the knowledge and skills to address planetary sustainability challenges is essential for fostering a more environmentally conscious and socially responsible media landscape.

Additionally, teaching ethics requires educators to possess familiarity with industry ethics, business knowledge, and relationship-building skills. This ensures that educational competencies are aligned with industry demands, preparing students for ethical decision-making in their future careers. Educators must cultivate an environment that encourages critical thinking, ethical reflection, and open dialogue about ethical dilemmas in the media industry. By providing students with opportunities to engage in ethical discourse and ethical decision-making scenarios, educators can empower them to navigate complex ethical challenges and uphold professional ethics in their media practices.

In conclusion, understanding the economic influences on the ethical mindsets of media students is crucial for addressing planetary sustainability challenges. By integrating ethics into media education and fostering an ethical mindset among future media professionals, we can promote sustainability narratives that contribute to a more environmentally conscious and socially responsible media landscape. Through interdisciplinary collaboration and innovative educational approaches, media educators can empower students to navigate complex ethical challenges and advocate for planetary sustainability through their media practices.

In recent years, the imperative of sustainable development has gained unprecedented attention from various stakeholders, including business leaders, governments, universities, non-government organizations (NGOs), and the media. The urgency for a more sustainable world became evident in the aftermath of the global financial crisis of 2008, which underscored the interconnectedness of economic, social, and environmental systems (IMF, 2018). In response to this imperative, the United Nations (UN) has spearheaded numerous initiatives, notably the Global Compact, to galvanize collective action towards sustainable development (Annan & Diab, 2017). The Global Compact catalyzes fostering collaboration among companies, the public sector, and civil society, emphasizing the importance of a cohesive global strategy for sustainable development.

Education has emerged as a central strategy for promoting sustainable development, as recognized by the UN and its affiliated programs (Higher Education Institutions and Sustainability, 2021). Initiatives such as the Principles of Responsible Management Education (PRME) and the UNESCO Global Action Programme on Education for Sustainable Development have underscored the pivotal role of education in fostering a sustainability-driven mindset (Annan & Diab, 2017). The UN Decade for Education for Sustainable Development (2005–2014) further underscored the commitment to integrating sustainability principles into educational curricula. This commitment reflects a broader recognition that education is foundational for driving transformative change toward a more sustainable future.

Sustainability has become firmly entrenched in global discourse as a guiding principle for individual, societal, organizational, and institutional behavior (Weder et al., 2021b). The debate on sustainability, sustainable development, and attaining the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has permeated diverse fields, including media and communication studies (Higher Education Institutions and Sustainability, 2021). As a powerful disseminator of information and shaper of public discourse, the media plays a pivotal role in shaping perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours toward sustainability issues.

By incorporating sustainability principles into media education, students can develop a nuanced understanding of the complex interplay between economic, social, and environmental factors (Higher Education Institutions and Sustainability, 2021). This understanding equips them with the knowledge and skills to critically analyse sustainability issues, challenge conventional narratives, and advocate for sustainable practices within their professional spheres. Moreover, embedding sustainability education into media curricula cultivates a sense of responsibility and ethical awareness among students, empowering them to leverage their media platforms for positive societal change.

The convergence of sustainability imperatives and media education underscores the need for an ethical mindset prioritizing planetary well-being and social responsibility (Media Ethics and Economics, n.d.). By embracing sustainability principles within media education, universities can prepare future media professionals to navigate the complexities of contemporary society with integrity, compassion, and a commitment to fostering a more sustainable world (Study and Importance of Media Ethics, n.d.).

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Additionally, teaching ethics requires educators to possess familiarity with industry ethics, business knowledge, and relationship-building skills (Neill, 2019). This ensures that educational competencies are aligned with industry demands, preparing students for ethical decision-making in their future careers. Educators must cultivate an environment that encourages critical thinking, ethical reflection, and open dialogue about ethical dilemmas in the media industry (Christians, 2008). By providing students with opportunities to engage in ethical discourse and ethical decision-making scenarios, educators can empower them to navigate complex ethical challenges and uphold professional ethics in their media practices.

In conclusion, understanding the economic influences on the ethical mindsets of media students is crucial for addressing planetary sustainability challenges. By integrating ethics into media education and fostering an ethical mindset among future media professionals, we can promote sustainability narratives that contribute to a more environmentally conscious and socially responsible media landscape. Through interdisciplinary collaboration and innovative educational approaches, media educators can empower students to navigate complex ethical challenges and advocate for planetary sustainability through their media practices.

Framework of Study

The theoretical framework for studying economic influences on ethical mindsets in media education and their implications for planetary sustainability incorporates Social Learning Theory and Institutional Theory.

Observational Learning Mechanism: This mechanism suggests that individuals learn by observing the behaviours of others and modelling their actions. In media education, students observe and internalize ethical behaviours demonstrated by industry professionals, educators, and peers.

Relevance to Media Education: Social Learning Theory is highly relevant to media education due to the nature of learning in this field. Students learn from formal instruction, informal interactions, and media consumption. Observing ethical behaviours in various contexts shapes their understanding of ethical norms and practices.

Application in Ethical Development: The Theory emphasizes the importance of modelling and reinforcement in shaping behaviour. Within media education, economic influences in the industry are powerful models for ethical decision-making. Students may observe how economic factors influence the ethical decisions made by professionals and incorporate these considerations into their ethical frameworks.

Applicability to the Study

Students in media education environments often observe and internalize ethical behaviours modelled by industry professionals, educators, and peers.

Economic factors within the media industry, such as profit motives and market pressures, serve as influential models for ethical decision-making.

Understanding how economic factors shape ethical modelling and learning processes among media students is crucial for promoting ethical behaviour and sustainability-oriented media practices.

Alignment with Organizational Context: Institutional Theory explores how institutions shape behaviours and practices through normative, regulative, and cultural-cognitive mechanisms. In media education institutions, norms and structures influence the integration of ethics and sustainability principles into curriculum design, pedagogical approaches, and professional standards.

Focus on Norms and Structures: This construct emphasizes the importance of normative and regulative structures within organizations and society. Economic factors, such as funding sources and industry standards, significantly shape institutional practices and priorities.

Consideration of Cultural-Cognitive Factors: Institutional Theory also considers cultural-cognitive factors, such as shared beliefs, values, and symbols, that shape institutional behaviour. Economic influences create cultural-cognitive schemas influencing media students' perceptions of ethical behaviour and professional norms.

Pertinence to the Study

Institutional norms and structures significantly influence integrating ethics and sustainability principles into media education.

Economic factors heavily influence institutional practices and priorities within media education institutions.

Cultural-cognitive schemas shaped by economic pressures influence media students' perceptions of ethical behaviour and professional norms.

Social Learning Theory provides insights into how media students acquire ethical behaviours and decision-making through observation and modelling. By observing the ethical conduct of industry professionals, educators, and peers, students internalize these behaviours and incorporate them into their ethical frameworks. This theory underscores the importance of providing positive models and reinforcement within media education environments to promote ethical behaviour aligned with sustainability goals.

Institutional theory, on the other hand, sheds light on how economic influences shape the institutional context of media education. Economic factors, such as funding sources and industry standards, significantly impact media education institutions' norms, structures, and priorities. These economic pressures create cultural-cognitive schemas that influence students' perceptions of ethical behaviour and professional standards. Understanding the institutional context of media education is crucial for identifying barriers and opportunities for promoting ethical decision-making and sustainability-oriented media practices.

These theories offer complementary perspectives on the interplay between economic influences, ethical mindsets, and sustainability-oriented media practices within media education. By integrating these theoretical frameworks, researchers and practitioners can

develop holistic approaches to addressing ethical dilemmas and promoting responsible journalism aligned with planetary sustainability goals.

3. Research Methodology

In this study, the researcher aimed to investigate the intricate relationship between economic factors and ethical decision-making processes among media students, focusing on sustainability-oriented media practices. The objectives were threefold: firstly, to examine how economic incentives influence ethical decision-making among media students; secondly, to assess the impact of economic influences on the adoption of sustainability-oriented media practices; and finally, to propose strategies for integrating ethics education into the media curriculum to promote responsible journalism and address planetary sustainability challenges. The researcher employed a qualitative approach to achieve these objectives, utilizing focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews. Through these methods, the researcher delved into the perspectives and experiences of media students regarding ethical dilemmas and the role of economic factors in shaping their decisions. Additionally, the researcher reviewed existing literature on ethics education and sustainability in media curricula to inform recommendations for integrating ethical education into media studies. By addressing these objectives, the study aimed to contribute valuable insights to the discourse on media ethics, sustainability, and education, with implications for academia and industry.

Objectives	Methodology
To examine the relationship between economic incentives and ethical decision-making processes among media students	Qualitative research using focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews to explore how economic factors influenced ethical decision-making.
To assess the impact of economic influences on the adoption of sustainability-oriented media practices	Analysis of Qualitative data collected from focus group discussions and interviews to identify the extent to which economic factors influenced sustainability-oriented media practices.
To propose strategies for integrating ethics education into media curriculum to promote responsible journalism and address planetary sustainability challenges	Review of existing literature on ethics education and sustainability in media curriculum; developed recommendations based on research findings and expert insights.

This study employed a methodological approach incorporating simulation, precisely the Mask-Ed technique, and high-reliability simulation experiential learning. These methodologies were chosen for their effectiveness in developing tools for assessing and fostering an ethical mindset among participants. Simulation provides a controlled environment where participants can engage with real-life scenarios safely and structured, exploring ethical dilemmas and developing ethical decision-making skills. The Mask-Ed technique involves participants wearing masks representing different characters or roles, enabling them to step into the shoes of others and gain insights into diverse perspectives.

The research approach adopted was qualitative, aiming to explore and describe the behaviors, perceptions, experiences, and emotions of both students and teachers regarding media ethics within the context of journalism education. Qualitative research is well-suited for capturing rich, nuanced data that can offer deep insights into complex phenomena such as ethical decision-making. By employing an exploratory-descriptive approach, the researcher sought to uncover patterns, themes, and underlying meanings inherent in participants' experiences, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter.

The study was conducted in Delhi NCR, India, which was chosen for its vibrant media landscape and diverse educational institutions offering journalism and mass communication programs. Specifically, participants were recruited from the Journalism & Mass Communication program at Amity School of Communication, Amity University, Noida. This setting provided a rich context for exploring media ethics within the Indian media industry and academic environment.

The participants included students in the program, representing a range of ages and backgrounds, and media educators from the same institution who possessed expertise in teaching media ethics. The study aimed to capture perspectives from multiple stakeholders involved in journalism education, including students and teachers. The participants were selected based on their interest in media ethics and eligibility to contribute meaningfully to the research.

Reflexivity of the Research

Maintaining reflexivity throughout the research process was crucial to ensure the integrity and validity of the findings. The researcher actively monitored their biases, assumptions, and preconceptions to prevent them from influencing the research outcomes. By adopting a reflexive stance, the researcher aimed to approach the study with openness and impartiality, allowing for a more objective exploration of the research questions and phenomena under investigation.

Simulation

The simulation component of the study involved careful planning and execution to create an immersive and realistic learning experience for participants. This included setting clear rules and guidelines for the simulation activities, establishing relationships between participants and simulated characters, and specifying the operational procedures for conducting the simulations. The researcher facilitated focused group interactions where journalists from the industry were invited to share authentic experiences of ethical dilemmas they had encountered in their professional practice. These real-life scenarios provided valuable learning opportunities for participants to apply ethical concepts and principles practically. Additionally, the researcher developed essential ethical concepts tailored to the needs of contemporary journalism, ensuring that the simulation activities were relevant and engaging for the participants.

4. Method

Using simulation techniques in this study is a robust methodological approach to address various facets of ethical decision-making among media students. Each purpose outlined in the table below aligns with specific strengths of the simulation method, thereby contributing to a comprehensive understanding of ethical mindset development. Simulations effectively remove ethical dilemmas, fostering an environment conducive to expressing ideas, feelings, and attitudes. Furthermore, they provide invaluable opportunities to navigate trauma situations with the guidance of experienced journalists, ensuring preparedness and skill enhancement. Participants collect dynamic data and gain live experiences by simulating real-life scenarios, facilitating deeper learning and skill acquisition. Moreover, simulations enable the exploration

of diverse opinions and concepts, fostering collaboration and generating insightful outcomes. Additionally, they facilitate trend identification through enhanced participant association, contributing to a nuanced understanding of ethical decision-making trends. Overall, integrating simulation techniques in this research methodology enhances the richness and depth of insights into the ethical perspectives of media students, thereby advancing knowledge in media ethics and education.

Table 1The strength of the simulation technique

Purpose	Strength of the method
Remove Ethical dilemma	Elicit ideas, feelings, perceptions, and attitude
Covering trauma situation	Gain assistance from experienced journalists
Professional, ethical boundaries	Responsibilities towards source, responsibilities towards public.
Real-life situation	Dynamic data collection and live experience are needed.
Sample opinion, explore concepts	Synergistic effect, generating insight
Trend identification	More association among participants to identify trends

The provided table offers a comprehensive analysis of the various purposes and strengths associated with using simulation techniques in teaching ethical mindsets to media students while also considering the economic aspect. This study examines how simulations can effectively address ethical dilemmas, provide support in handling trauma situations through the guidance of experienced journalists, and overcome professional and ethical boundaries. Moreover, it explores how simulations can recreate real-life scenarios to facilitate dynamic learning experiences, promote deeper exploration of opinions and concepts, and foster increased collaboration among participants to identify trends in ethical decision-making contexts—all within the framework of economic considerations. By delineating the specific purposes and strengths of each simulation scenario, the table serves as a valuable resource for understanding the multifaceted benefits of incorporating simulations into media ethics education while also acknowledging the economic implications and constraints that may influence the implementation of such techniques. It underscores the versatility of simulation methods in catering to diverse learning objectives and facilitating immersive learning experiences that enhance students' ethical decision-making skills and critical thinking abilities within the broader economic landscape of media education.

Intuiting the Study

Intuiting the study, the primary focus lay in comprehensively understanding the perspectives and ethical mindsets of the participants, aiming to delve into the intricacies of their decision-making processes. From their unique vantage points, the phenomenon described by the students served as a crucial lens through which the researcher evaluated and sought to influence behavior. To facilitate this exploration, open-ended questions were employed during the focus group discussions, leveraging the role of the researcher as an instrument to meticulously collect data through receiving, recording, transcribing, and reviewing the dialogue. Sample size and methodology

In terms of sample size and methodology, the study comprised 32 media students aged 19 to 24, encompassing both genders, alongside four teaching faculty members. Using a non-probability and purposive sampling technique, prospective participants who met the eligibility criteria were shortlisted. The research spanned from August 2021 to mid-October 2021, during which interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) was employed to unravel the students' personal experiences. This method allowed the researchers to identify, analyze, and code

themes emerging from their narratives while maintaining self-awareness to mitigate personal biases.

Focus group discussion

Focus group interviews were chosen when conducting focus group discussions, inviting students to four distinct settings, each comprising eight participants. Before the discussions, participants were encouraged to express their thoughts individually, fostering an environment conducive to diverse perspectives. Emphasis was placed on ensuring equitable participation, with each participant granted equal time and opportunity to contribute respectfully. The study unfolded over two months, with discussions conducted from August 2021 to October 2021. Questions followed a semi-structured format, transitioning from general to specific inquiries while maintaining confidentiality. Employing a combination of grand tour and mini-tour questions, the researchers navigated the discussion terrain, progressively eliciting information from the general to the, thereby enriching the understanding of the participants' perspectives and ethical decision-making processes.

Table 2 Focus group interview

Aspect	Context
Focus Group and Semi-structured Interview Technique Interview – Semi-structured Questions	i) Probing – Verbal & Non-Verbal ii) Exploring iii) Silence iv) Prompting v) Summarizing
Questions	Grand tour and Mini-tour questions.
Analysis of data	i) Comprehending ii) Synthesizing iii) Theorizing

The provided table offers a structured breakdown of the methodological aspects employed in the study "Economic Influences on Ethical Mindsets of Media Students: Implications for Planetary Sustainability." Each element is contextualized within the broader research framework:

Focus Group and Semi-structured Interview Technique

Interview – Semi-structured Questions: The researchers utilized semi-structured interviews to engage with participants, employing probing techniques such as verbal and non-verbal cues to elicit comprehensive responses. This approach facilitated in-depth exploration of the participants' perspectives on ethical mindsets in media education.

Exploring, Silence, Prompting, summarizing: Within the semi-structured interviews, various techniques were employed to enhance data collection and analysis. These included exploring participants' responses, allowing for periods of silence to encourage reflection, prompting for additional information, and summarizing key points to ensure clarity and validation.

Questions: Grand tour and Mini-tour questions: The researchers utilized a combination of grand tour and mini-tour questions during the interviews. Grand tour questions provided a broad overview of the topic, while mini-tour questions delved into specific aspects, allowing for a nuanced exploration of economic influences on ethical mindsets.

Analysis of Data: Comprehending, Synthesizing, Theorizing: The data collected from interviews and focus group discussions underwent rigorous analysis. This process involved

comprehending the richness of the qualitative data, synthesizing key themes and patterns, and theorizing about the implications of economic influences on ethical decision-making processes among media students. Through this analytical framework, the researchers gained more profound insights into the complex interplay between economic factors and ethical mindsets in media education.

The researchers meticulously employed a methodological framework to comprehensively explore the intricate dynamics between economic factors and ethical decision-making within media education. The research approach combined elements of focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews, offering a versatile platform to engage with media students and educators effectively. Through semi-structured interviews, the researchers facilitated open-ended dialogues, utilizing probing techniques such as verbal and non-verbal cues, exploration of responses, strategic use of silence, prompting for further details, and summarization to elicit comprehensive insights into participants' ethical mindsets.

Furthermore, using a mix of grand tour and mini-tour questions within the interviews enabled a nuanced exploration of various aspects of ethical decision-making in the context of economic influences. While grand tour questions provided a broad understanding of the overarching themes, mini-tour questions delved into specific dimensions, allowing for a detailed examination of participants' perspectives.

The subsequent analysis of the gathered data followed a rigorous process, commencing with a comprehensive comprehension of the qualitative data to grasp the richness of participants' narratives. Through synthesizing key themes and patterns, the researchers discerned commonalities and discrepancies in participants' viewpoints, thereby uncovering more profound insights into the interplay between economic factors and ethical mindsets. Moreover, the researchers theorized about the implications of economic influences on ethical decision-making processes among media students, contributing to a deeper understanding of sustainability-oriented media practices.

Throughout the study, the researchers were facilitators during focus group discussions, ensuring the smooth flow of dialogue and equitable participation among all participants. Additionally, colleagues were entrusted with capturing observational notes to supplement the data collection process. The discussions were meticulously recorded, and participants were encouraged to maintain their cameras to document verbal and nonverbal reactions, enriching the dataset with contextual insights.

In essence, the methodological rigor employed in this study facilitated a comprehensive exploration of the complex relationship between economic influences and ethical mindsets within media education, offering valuable insights into fostering sustainability-oriented media practices. By systematically employing these methodological approaches, the researchers navigated the multifaceted terrain of ethical decision-making in media education, shedding light on the intricate relationship between economic influences and ethical mindsets among students.

5. Data Analysis and Interpretation

The focus group discussions conducted in this study were instrumental in gaining diverse perspectives on ethical journalism and training for ethical behaviour, aligning closely with the overarching theme of economic influences on ethical mindsets in media education for planetary sustainability. Through these discussions, journalists engaged with students, providing valuable insights and clarification on ethical dilemmas while observing verbal and non-verbal communication cues to prevent bias and ensure an objective understanding of the participants' viewpoints. To enhance the rigor of the analysis, reflexivity, bracketing, and intuition were employed to mitigate preconceived notions and biases, ensuring the credibility and validity of the findings.

Upon transcription, the responses from the focus group discussions were meticulously coded using keywords and open codes, enabling a structured approach to data analysis. The methodology adopted a concept-driven coding approach, facilitating the categorization and organization of information according to emerging concepts and ideas, directly addressing the research objectives.

The data analysis underwent several stages, beginning with data cleaning to ensure accuracy and transparency, followed by data immersion to familiarize researchers with the content. Initial thoughts and insights were documented through reflective journaling, allowing for the capture of critical observations and ideas for further analysis. Subsequently, the data were chunked into manageable segments, enabling a more systematic examination, further complemented by data clustering to identify patterns and connections within the segmented chunks.

Finally, the analysis culminated in data interpretation and presentation, where the findings were synthesized coherently to offer a comprehensive understanding of the economic influences on ethical mindsets in media education and their implications for planetary sustainability. This structured data analysis approach underscores the methodological rigor employed in this study, ensuring robust findings that contribute to the broader discourse on sustainability-oriented media practices.

Table 3 Data analysis

Aspect	Context
Data Coding Approach	Concept Driven
Data Analysis Technique	Focus group discussion, Simulation
Data Analysis Plan	Objective Oriented
Data Types	Transcription and observational notes.
Data Analysis Process	Data Cleaning Data immersion Data Chunking Data Clustering Data Interpretation and Presentation

The table provides an insightful breakdown of the data analysis process employed in the study "Economic Influences on Ethical Mindsets of Media Students: Implications for Planetary Sustainability." Each aspect of the data analysis methodology is contextualized within the broader research framework:

Data Coding Approach: The study utilized a concept-driven coding approach, which involved categorizing and organizing the collected data based on emerging concepts and ideas. This approach ensured that the analysis remained closely aligned with the research objectives, allowing for systematically exploring the data.

Data Analysis Technique: The primary data analysis techniques included focus group discussions and simulations. These methods provided rich qualitative data sources, allowing for an in-depth examination of participants' perspectives on ethical mindsets in media education and their relation to economic influences.

Data Analysis Plan: The data analysis plan was objective-oriented, extracting meaningful insights and patterns from the collected data. By aligning the analysis with specific research objectives, the study aimed to generate findings contributing to a deeper understanding of the research topic.

Data Types: The data consisted of transcriptions from focus group discussions and observational notes taken during simulations. These data types comprehensively covered participants' responses and interactions, enabling thorough analysis and interpretation.

Data Analysis Process: The data analysis process involved several key steps:

Data Cleaning: Ensuring the accuracy and reliability of the collected data by removing any inconsistencies or errors.

Data Immersion: Familiarizing researchers with the content of the data through thorough examination and exploration.

Memoing: Documenting initial thoughts and insights through reflective journaling, providing a foundation for further analysis.

Data Chunking: Breaking the data into smaller, manageable segments facilitates systematic examination.

Data Clustering: Identifying patterns and connections within the segmented data chunks to uncover meaningful insights.

Data Interpretation and Presentation: Synthesizing the findings coherently to offer a comprehensive understanding of the economic influences on ethical mindsets in media education. This step involved interpreting the analysed data and presenting the results in a format that is accessible and informative.

Overall, the structured data analysis approach outlined in the table highlights the methodological rigor employed in the study, ensuring robust findings that contribute to the broader discourse on sustainability-oriented media practices.

The data analysis in the study was guided by a narrative and analytical framework aimed at exploring the significant themes identified during the assessment. This approach facilitated the development of a structured coding scheme to analyse the qualitative data obtained from participants systematically. One of the critical methods employed in the data analysis was the deductive coding of qualitative data. This involved assigning codes to various expressions, words, numbers, and figures extracted from the textual information provided by the participants. The coding process encompassed multiple elements, including verbal and visual

expressions, thoughts, experiences, ideas, and themes. Each component was carefully categorized and coded to correspond with specific coding classifications, allowing for comprehensive analysis and interpretation.

Initially, all responses were assigned initial codes as open codes, capturing the raw data in its unprocessed form. Subsequently, the data underwent cleaning and clustering to identify common patterns and themes, transforming initial codes into axial codes. Selective codes were identified through further refinement and narrowing down of the data, highlighting the most pertinent and meaningful aspects of the qualitative data. The culmination of this data analysis process resulted in the creating of a structured table presenting the identified selective codes. The figure below serves as a visual representation of the procedure of the qualitative data analysis, offering insights into the central themes and patterns observed in the participants' responses. By systematically applying deductive coding techniques, the study uncovered nuanced insights and contributed to a deeper understanding of the research topic.

Figure 1 Qualitative Data Analysis Procedure, source: Creswell (2007)

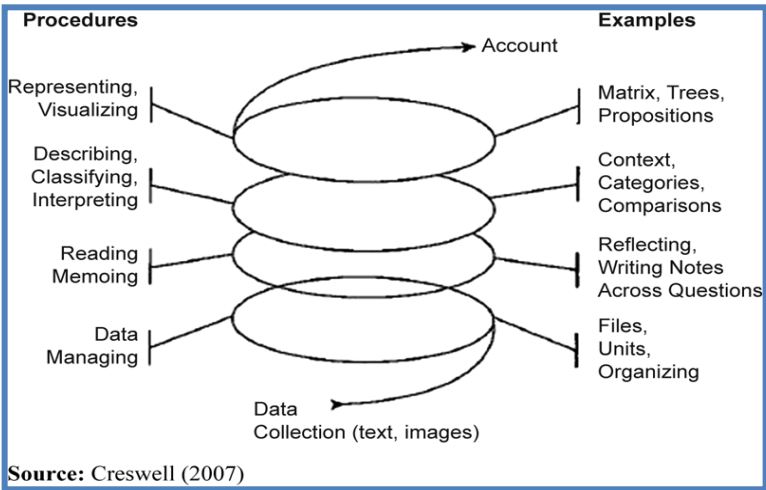


Table 4 Developing an ethical mindset among students

Open Code	Axial Code	Selective Code
Calculative decision	Positive outlook	Developing ethical mindset
Social and moral responsibilities		
Ethical actions		
Utilitarian mindsets	Unintended consequences	
Rational choices		
Aesthetic judgments		
Spirituality	Dimensions of Learning Ethical Journalism	
Optimism		
Contentment, individual responsibility		
Truth-telling		
Professionalism	Skills required	Ethical Media education requirements
Harmony and balance		
Digital humanity and digital ethics		
Value-sensitive behaviour	Opportunities	
Moral Commitments		
Ethical discussions		
Professionalism, expertise		

Open Code	Axial Code	Selective Code
Moral standard	Challenges	
Professional obligations		
Trauma coverage		
Ethical responsibilities and cultural diversity		
Status & Roles with freedom of speech		
Inexperience		
Participation	Tools for Media educators	Efficacy of skills for ethical mindset
Transparency		
Academically driven		
Responsiveness		
Professional orientation	Prerequisite for ethical journalism	
Freedom to make decision		
Availability of time to research		
Credibility		
Flexible working hours		
Capability to make political decisions		
Solution-Focused	Innovation Policy	Sustainable Environment
Technology-Based Approach		
Industrial Transformation		
Sustainable Production and Consumption	Priority setting	
Environmental Quality		
Role of Government	Capacity building	
Knowledge about changes		
Educating and training workers and managers		
Economics and expenses		
Reduced income from advertisers	Financial Constraints and Considerations, Government Advertisements and control	Revenue and Profitability
Budget (infrastructure, employees, marketing)		
Investments and salaries		

The table visually represents the hierarchical progression of qualitative data coding, showcasing the sequential transition from open codes to axial codes and ultimately to selective codes. The responses are categorized into broad thematic categories in the initial open coding stage. These categories include topics such as "Developing an ethical mindset," "Required skills," "Challenges," "Prerequisites for ethical journalism," "Innovation policy," "Creating a sustainable environment," and "Capacity building." During the axial coding stage, the initial categories are further refined, allowing for the establishment of interconnections and relationships between various concepts.

Within the context of "Ethical Media education requirements," various sub-themes can be identified, such as "Value-sensitive behaviour," "Moral commitments," and "Professional obligations." These sub-themes play a significant role in shaping the ethical framework of media education. In the final stage of the research process, known as the selective coding phase, the focus is on isolating and highlighting the most relevant codes to the study. This phase involves carefully examining the data and identifying the codes that best capture the essence of the research findings.

By selecting and emphasizing these key codes, researchers can effectively convey the most important aspects of their study. The codes employed in this study encompass vital themes such as "Ethical actions," "Opportunities," "Challenges - Trauma coverage," "Efficacy of skills for ethical mindset," and "Sustainable Production and Consumption." These codes were

selected based on a thorough analysis of the qualitative data, allowing for a comprehensive and in-depth exploration of the fundamental elements identified in the research.

The economic aspect is also woven into the analysis, considering financial constraints, revenue and profitability concerns, reduced income from advertisers, budget allocations, investments, and salaries. This integration of economic considerations enriches the understanding of how economic influences intersect with ethical mindsets and sustainability efforts within the media education landscape.

6. Findings

The study's findings illuminate the intricate relationship between economic incentives and ethical decision-making processes among media students, underscoring the complex dynamics at play in contemporary journalism. Furthermore, the research provides valuable insights into the impact of economic influences on adopting sustainability-oriented media practices, offering recommendations for fostering environmentally responsible journalism in the face of economic constraints.

Relationship Between Economic Incentives and Ethical Decision-Making Processes

The study delved into the intricate relationship between economic incentives and ethical decision-making processes among media students. It explored how financial pressures, advertising income, and other economic factors influence the ethical considerations of aspiring journalists. Through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, the research uncovered various scenarios where economic incentives often conflict with ethical principles. For instance, media students described cases where they felt compelled to prioritize financial gain over ethical reporting standards due to organizational pressures or market demands. Economic considerations play a pivotal role in shaping journalistic practices in contemporary media landscapes. The findings highlight the multifaceted nature of ethical decision-making, where media students must navigate between economic imperatives and ethical responsibilities. The study elucidates the complexities of balancing financial sustainability with ethical integrity within media organizations. The research findings provide detailed insights into the economic influences that impact ethical decision-making processes among media students. These influences may include corporate ownership structures, advertising revenue models, market competition, and budget constraints. By examining real-life scenarios and ethical dilemmas media students face, the study sheds light on the nuanced dynamics in contemporary journalism.

Impact of Economic Influences on Sustainability-Oriented Media Practices

The study comprehensively analysed how economic influences affect the adoption of sustainability-oriented media practices. It examined the role of economic constraints, profit-driven motives, and organizational priorities in shaping sustainability initiatives within media organizations. The study elucidated the challenges and opportunities associated with integrating sustainability principles into media operations through case studies and empirical research.

Economic factors often present barriers to implementing sustainability-oriented practices within media organizations. The findings underscore the need for a paradigm shift in media business models to prioritize sustainability alongside profitability. The study contributes to the broader discourse on corporate social responsibility and environmental stewardship in the media sector by uncovering the impact of economic influences on sustainability initiatives.

The research findings offer detailed insights into how economic considerations influence decision-making regarding sustainability practices in media organizations. These considerations may include cost-benefit analyses, resource allocation strategies, and aligning sustainability goals with business objectives. The study provides valuable recommendations for fostering environmentally responsible media practices by examining the interplay between economic incentives and sustainability initiatives.

Strategies for Integrating Ethics Education into Media Curriculum

The study proposed innovative strategies for integrating ethics education into the media curriculum to promote responsible journalism and address planetary sustainability challenges. It emphasized the importance of early ethical education for media students and advocated for incorporating sustainability principles into media courses. The study identified best practices and pedagogical approaches for fostering ethical decision-making skills among aspiring journalists through stakeholder consultations and expert interviews.

Ethics education is essential for cultivating a culture of responsible journalism and equipping media students with the necessary skills to navigate ethical dilemmas. The findings highlight the significance of integrating sustainability principles into the media curriculum to prepare future journalists for the ethical challenges of the 21st century. Ethics education can empower media students to become agents of positive change in society by promoting critical thinking, ethical reasoning, and environmental awareness.

The research findings offer detailed recommendations for designing ethics education programs that align with the evolving needs of the media industry. These recommendations may include interdisciplinary coursework, experiential learning opportunities, and case-based pedagogies emphasizing real-world ethical dilemmas. By incorporating sustainability principles into the media curriculum, educational institutions can foster a culture of ethical responsibility and environmental stewardship among future media professionals.

Overall, the expanded findings comprehensively explain the complex interplay between economic influences, ethical considerations, and sustainability practices in media education. They underscore the importance of proactive measures to bridge the gap between economic imperatives and ethical responsibilities, emphasizing the role of education in promoting responsible journalism and addressing planetary sustainability challenges.

7. Discussion and Conclusion

This study sheds light on the intricate relationship between economic incentives and ethical decision-making among media students. It offers valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities of promoting responsible journalism and addressing planetary sustainability concerns. The findings underscore the significant influence of economic factors, such as

advertising income and financial constraints, on media ethics. This highlights the need for a holistic approach to media education that integrates robust ethics education.

Discussions surrounding the study emphasize the importance of early ethical education for journalists and the role of media educators in fostering a sustainable mindset. It also highlights the evolving nature of the journalism profession and the need for media organizations to balance economic realities with ethical responsibilities.

Moving forward, strategies are needed to promote ethical consciousness and instruction among media practitioners while addressing broader societal issues related to sustainability. This includes advocating for policy changes, enhancing media curriculum, and supporting media educators' skill development.

This study contributes to the ongoing discourse on media ethics, sustainability, and economics, offering valuable insights for educational institutions, media organizations, policymakers, and other stakeholders. By recognizing the complex interplay between economic influences and ethical decision-making in media education, stakeholders can work towards an economically viable and ethically responsible media sector, ultimately contributing to a more sustainable and equitable society.

Media education must include comprehensive ethics programs to equip students with the knowledge and skills to navigate ethical dilemmas under economic pressure. Collaboration between educators, media organizations, and policymakers is crucial to developing policies and initiatives that prioritize ethical journalism while acknowledging economic constraints. Additionally, media education should integrate sustainability principles, empowering students to consider environmental factors in their journalistic endeavours. Further research is needed to explore long-term trends, cross-cultural variations, and the effectiveness of interventions promoting ethical decision-making among media students. Finally, supporting students with technological literacy and digital ethics training will help them responsibly navigate the complexities of digital media environments.

In conclusion, this study unveils the intricate dance between economic realities, ethical decision-making, and fostering sustainable media practices in journalism education. By equipping future journalists with robust ethics education and integrating sustainability principles, educational institutions can empower them to navigate ethical dilemmas with integrity. This approach cultivates a media landscape that upholds journalistic truth while contributing to global environmental goals. Ultimately, this fosters a future where responsible journalism thrives in harmony with a sustainable planet.

While this study explores the link between economic factors and media students' ethics, limitations exist. A small sample and specific demographic limit generalizability. Self-reported data may be biased. The one-time data collection misses potential changes. Contextual factors and long-term effects also require exploration. Future research addressing these limitations can strengthen our understanding of economic influences on ethical decision-making in media education.

The media ethics study suggests future research to track changes in ethical behaviour over time (longitudinal studies), examine how ethics decisions vary across cultures and education (comparative analysis), assess the effectiveness of ethics training (intervention studies),

explore student experiences with ethical dilemmas (qualitative exploration), and analyse the impact of digital media ecosystems and policy's role in mitigating economic pressures (policy analysis). This broader research agenda can deepen our understanding and promote responsible journalism.

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