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The Perception of Reporting and Self Censorship of the Press Members: The Example of Cyprus Turkish Journalists

Tijen Zeybek*, Ayşe Gözde Koyuncu

Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences Near East University

ABSTRACT

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Correspondence:

tijen.zeybek@neu.edu.tr

In our day, it is discussed whether or not the media serves its function of announcing the news about government performances (actions) and legal arrangements (setting) which are directly related to the society. In this discussion, the topics of censorship and auto censorship heavily appear. As it is well known, censorship is generally handled as a common problem arising from the hierarchical structure. In a more general definition, it is thought of a result of a downward pressure from several power centres. When looked at from an individual perspective though, the concept of auto censorship manifests itself as a form of censorship in which an individual applies censorship to him/herself without the need for a pressure from above. According to this definition, auto censorship is the reckoning of the journalist with him/herself, and after balancing the public benefits and personal harms of a text he/she wants to write, making a decision not to write it (Kizil, 1998, p 27 - 28). In this study, it is aimed to bring to light the role of auto censorship during the course of pressmen's communication of the information they gathered and their own opinions with the society. With this aim, face to face interviews have been carried out with ten pressmen working in the capital of TRNC, Nicosia, by using semi structured question forms. Half of the participants have been chosen among the public sector and the remaining half from the private sector. The data obtained from the interviews and observations have been analysed. Various findings have been put forward about the attitudes and behaviours of pressmen toward auto censorship during their working hours, whether they were using the mechanism of auto censorship or not, and if they were using the mechanism of auto censorship, what was the extent and frequency of it.

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The issue of censorship is often addressed as a problem arising from various centres of power, such as governments and employers, that is, the hierarchical order. With a more general definition, censorship emerges as a result of a downward pressure from a number of power

centers with the ability to intervene in others or force them to accept their own ideas. With this feature, censorship is mostly discussed in the field of press and over members of the press. Fairchild (1976) defines censorship as "an attempt to control certain news content related to public or personal interests within the public domain". According to Keane (2015), censorship is a tendency to create a reciprocally protective and non-democratic process among and / or within modern capitalist societies. Gene Keane (2015) defined censorship as the suppression of free circulation of information that citizens need about state activities by repressive methods. In this context, constitution, legal regulations, rules that refer to the rights and freedoms, and so on are treated as texts to prevent censorship or possible attempts to prevent the expression of opinions. However, there are also other forms of censorship that do not take its power from a particular power placed over the individual but from external environment surrounding the individual such as family, society and state which are basically social institutions. The attitudes on the sharing of information or freedom of expression of the institutions that are buried in this social structure and that can influence individuals' process of determining attitudes in all areas of life can also have an effect on the individuals. In this context, self-censorship is defined as a person's decision of not writing or telling the content that they want to write or tell after calculating the possible public benefit or personal damage, that is to say, after a process of internal feud (Kızıl, 1998). People develop the attitude of not expressing and preserving some thoughts and opinions with the fear of being contrary to the social institutions or being excluded from them even in the absence of any apparent necessity or concrete threat or oppression. According to Chomsky (1989), censorship practices are internalized by media workers, and journalists start censoring themselves even though there is not a systematic censorship. In this sense, self-censorship can be defined as the self-limiting tendency of a person according to the generally accepted attitudes of the society to avoid a warning or pressure that may come from outside. This tendency can arise from various social traditions and habits or internalizing the censorship experiences of others. In this case, self-censorship as internalized censorship can constitute a major obstacle to the freedom of expression and the use of information. As an invisible obstacle to the dissemination of information and the development of democratic attitudes in the face of different opinions, self-censorship is also considered a factor negatively affecting social development.

Freedom of Press and Democracy

The concepts of freedom of thought and expression and freedom of press have always been addressed together in the press history. There is no doubt that free press means that the members of press have the right to freely express and disseminate their views. In this sense, members of the press must feel safe about using this right. This right is guaranteed in democratic countries by constitution and other laws, but it is also known that there is a constant tension between the ruling power and the press.

Freedom of opinion and expression is a right guaranteed in the constitutions - and almost in all constitutions - which can also be called the text of the most basic compromises in the nation state or modern state formations after the French revolution. Freedom of opinion and expression have also been defined and acknowledged as a right in the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). Accordingly, the ECHR defines this in Article 10 -1 as follows:

(...) Everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers (European Convention on Human Rights, 2016).

Freedom of thought is unique to man and it is not possible to stop the action of thinking theoretically. However, if the thoughts are not expressed loudly, it is not possible for them to reach others and others cannot be aware of these thoughts. In this context, freedom of thought is only for the cases where thoughts are expressed freely. That's why these two concepts are almost always used together. "Freedom of expression is the freedom to turn the ideas, which are abstract, in one's own mind and which cannot be known by anyone unless the person wants, into words that enable it to be known by others" (Akgül, 2012). In the historical process, freedom of expression and freedom of the press are often addressed together. One of the reasons for this is the link of the nature of the relationship between the forms of governance and power structure of countries and the press with the democracy. In this context, embracing and protection of freedom of expression as a right emerges as one of the important dynamics of democratic governance and the development of democracy. However, in the course of time, it is inevitable that there will be changes in the ways in which democracy, a form of political administration, is implemented depending on the changes in society. The concept of democracy finds its meaning in the form of parliamentary democracy and takes its power from elections supposed to be democratic. However, the development of media, and the emergence of radio, television and finally internet led to the massification of communication, which in turn led the media to play an important role in the elections. In these processes, the attitude of the state is generally to take measures to keep the press in check thus that it will not damage its power.

Along with that, the issue of the election race and the provision of free and adequate access to the necessary and sufficient information to the voters have also come to the fore. In order to talk about what promises the parties and candidates will do when they come to power, it is first of all necessary that these promises reach the society. The necessary free atmosphere should also exist not only for them to reach the society, but also they can be freely discussed, criticized and questioned in social strata, groups, non-governmental organizations, cafes, associations and similar places. This emerges as an important dynamics of the process. It is also an important necessity that political parties and political figures who are candidates for election, the programmes and projects that they prepare and their attitudes and thoughts towards particular events reach to the voters in particular, to the citizens in general. Politics connects with society and with voters in the society through communication channels. The most common and useful mechanism in this sense is the media. Potential of the media to create a democratic atmosphere and the importance of this potential emerge at this very point.

The media here means a tool. The purpose is to enable the link between democracy and freedom of expression to find its practical counterpart. The fact that this link is always strong is one of the reasons and requirements of democracy. In this context, it is noteworthy to speak about a formation which was first defined as the press and then as the media. This formation has a historical process parallel and close to the development of democracy. Britain can be considered as a good example of this path. With the development of democratic institutions in Britain in the 18th century, political parties were established and debates started to be carried out on the basis of their views. It is known that there was a constant struggle between liberal

and conservative parties at that time. The heated debate over the general election between these two groups entered in the agenda of the community and affected people. This process laid the groundwork for the emergence of a kind of new journalism and newspaper in which political tendencies were determinative and in this sense opposition journalism also developed (Project for Strengthening the Vocational Education and Training System, 2008).

On the basis of the development in the opposition journalism during the period when the press gained power, proposals towards using this power efficiently for the sake of society are being expressed in parliamentary democracies. Such thoughts refer to the principle of separation of powers -executive, legislative and judicial powers- and bring it to the agenda that the media can play a role as the fourth force in the protection and development of democracy. However, nowadays it is not mentioned much and when it is mentioned, it is only mentioned as an unrealized potential. In the course of time, the press has been transformed into "mass media", mass media into media and media into new media. As the names suggest, it has gained different dimensions and has begun to operate in a variety of areas. However, this development, that is, the fact that the communication activity has become an activity which is held in many different areas, could not prevent them from being collected in one or several hands through big media companies. Thus, the media has turned into an industry. Let alone the possible contribution of freedom and democratization of the society, this has led to the loss of freedom and democratic atmosphere within the institutional structure of the press. Aside from these, there are, of course, publications that are owned by many owners that can be termed relatively independent or autonomous. However, they are very weak and ineffective against the dominant media which is called mainstream media.

(...) The days when the assumption that market competition provides the freedom of communication as a guaranteed thing was believed in are already over. The former 'freedom of the press' idea, revived by market liberals, brings to mind a past that has only remained in the memories:... the days when decentralized market competition was believed to be the antidote of political despotism... Since then, the forms of ownership and control have changed a lot in publishing and on radio-TV. Well-integrated, oligopoly-like bureaucratic structures have emerged (Keane, 2015).

Reaching clear, transparent and accurate news which can enable the voters to monitor the activities of elected governments in democracies has become almost impossible as news, newspaper and the media have become enterprises with owners, many employees that need huge industrial investments. What is more, the media has transformed into a means of coming to power and staying in power, and has started to serve exactly the opposite of what was expected from it. The prevalence of the media and its impact on masses is felt more than ever nowadays. This effect has increased more with globalization. Which news stories take place in the media, which will be kept in dark, which topic will be brought to the agenda when, the manipulation of any news and disinformation which is also known as the information pollution depend on the "general publication principles", which seem to be extremely polite and innocent, of this "media with a boss" with widespread and mass influences. If we were to ask a question like 'so, whose principles are these general publication principles?' we would again come across with the answer of the boss of the media -as the nature of the industry-.

'The tool is the message itself' is not just a simple sentence in terms of the media today. McLuhan suggests that the media did not do less than giving direction to history and civilization (as cited in Laughey, 2010). It is not easy to object to the fact that the media has the potential to direct history and civilization. If that's the case, how and with what discourse does the media do it? More importantly, while the media give direction to the history and civilization, whose or which groups', to put it more broadly, which states' interests does it take into account? The questions are too many and must be many. Even though it is not possible to answer all or a part of the questions - at least in this study -, asking questions will lead us to at least appropriate traces that will lead us to some possible answers.

(...) Today, on the contrary, friends of "freedom of the press" understand: *Communication markets restrict freedom of communication*, it puts obstacles before those who want to enter into the market, allows monopolies, restricts the options, and removes the dominant definition of information from the concept of public utility and brings it closer to a specially owned commodity. In sum, it is imperative to assume that there is a structural contradiction between freedom of communication and unlimited freedom in the market... This is nothing more than an excuse for the companies of gigantic size deciding what citizens will listen to, read, and watch, that is *censoring* (Keane, 2015).

From media and democracy, we must understand telling problems, expressing thoughts, developing opposing, dissenting or alternative ideas, need of medium to discuss these loudly and debating similar issues. Although today's media is often closed to such democratic and liberating demands, this necessity is essential for democracy and social peace. These concepts, along with globalization, preserve their characteristic of being a burning need for regional and world peace. However, there is something to be done for social groups, trade unions, non-governmental organizations, off-centre political parties, academics, scientists or teachers with dissenting views. In short, those who are opposed to the dominant view, who have different analyses and interpretations to re-voice their requests to bring these to the widespread media but do this without repeating themselves and unprepared for it. And that is, as Keane (2015) noted, 'the acceptance of the existence of a structural contradiction between the freedom of communication and the limitless freedom in the market'. Keane speaks of one of the many dimensions, and/ or the most important and fundamental dimension of the problem. Everyone who produces ideas and produces labour in this subject must face the fact that the market logic gives freedom to no actor, apart from its own actors, and that it never neglects its effort to remove even the tiny autonomies (Keane, 2015).

(...) Adorno emphasized that if people feel close to the segments of the society that pin their hopes on for a more egalitarian society, it is necessary to first hope that they will acquire their own language skills in which they can express, talk about and discuss the life from their own perspectives, about the guidance of innovative intellectuals outside of their own social sectors, not the guidance of innovative intellectuals outside of their social segments. Adorno also emphasized that we cannot be the subject of our lives as long as the language we use is not the language produced from our life experiences and meaningful in terms of our social position but is a language that is created by the minority of the ruling elites or the institutions and organizations they have appointed (as cited in Oskay, 2014).

The fact that the media are subject to market rules as a commodity in the disposal of people can have numerous negative effects on societies. These negativities have undeniable influences in political, social, cultural, economic areas and capillary connections that are buried in these areas and are not visible at the first moment. All this needs to be elaborated in detail and discussed on many platforms. If we are talking about the power of a monopolist media that has the potential to make effective broadcasts in a certain number of places, in certain centers, and in communities in a short period of time, and if we are looking for ways to deal with it, it is necessary to analyse, research and evaluate the reality as much as possible, regardless of how frightening and how massive it is. The continuation of this effort both depends on and is a condition of the hope that it will be possible to reach the light at the end of the dark tunnel and keep the ideal of a world in freedom of expression, democracy and peace alive.

In this sense, it is extremely important to face this reality not as a need to compromise with it or to accept it as it is, but, on the contrary, as a need to interfere with it, find ways to transform it, take an active role instead of pathetic acceptance in an effort to maintain our presence as passive interlocutors of the media and understand that even this effort will have an important influence in the liberation of man.

Freedom of Thought and Legal Regulations in the TRNC

In the most general sense, censorship is expressed in dictionaries in the following ways: "pre-supervision of all publications, cinema and theater by the government, strict supervision", "the subjectness of all publications, cinema and theaters to permission, strict supervision" (Turkish Language Association, 2017).

These definitions point to a number of legal regulations put into force by states so that they can have the power to control, supervise and take measures aimed at their own interests from what can or cannot be published to performing arts such as cinema, theatre, ballet, tango etc. However, as mentioned above, the freedoms of expression and information are "guaranteed" in the constitutions of almost all states and in international laws such as the European Convention on Human Rights and similar international laws. The regulation on freedom of thought and expression in the constitution of the TRNC is as follows:

(...)Freedom of Thought, Word and Expression Article 24 (1) Everyone has the freedom of thought and opinion; nobody can be forced to explain their thoughts and opinions. Thought is not a crime. (2) Everyone has the right to express and disseminate their thoughts and beliefs in words, in writing, in pictures or in other ways, alone or collectively. This right covers the freedom to express opinions, receive and impart information and ideas, without the intervention of any official authority and State borders. The use of freedom of speech and expression is necessary and can be subject to the methods, conditions, limitations or punishments which the law puts forth for the good of national security, constitutional order, public security, public order, general health, general morality, or for the protection of the reputation or rights of others or the prevention of the disclosure of a secret or the maintenance of authority or impartiality of the judiciary (TRNC Constitution, 2016).

As can be seen, this rule is described in a relatively detailed and clear manner under the heading of "Freedom of Thought, Word and Expression" in the TRNC Constitution. In

addition, it is also explicitly stated that thought is not a crime. The freedom of the press is arranged in the same Constitution as follows:

(...)Freedom of Press Article 26 (1) The press and publication are free for the citizens and cannot be censored. (2) The state shall take measures to provide freedom of press, broadcasting and information. (3) Freedom of the press and information may be restricted by law to protect public order, national security or general moral values, to infringe the honor, dignity and rights of persons, to prevent inciting to commit a crime, or to enable the judiciary to perform in accordance with its purpose. (4) In order to enable the judiciary to perform in accordance with its purpose, a ban on broadcasting of events cannot be imposed without prejudice to any decisions made by the court or judge, within the limits to be provided by law.

In the first article, it can be seen that freedom of press is constitutionally guaranteed as an uncensorable right for citizens. Article 2 includes the duty of the state to provide freedom of press, publication and information. In the TRNC Constitution, the legislator charges the state in a sense to create a social atmosphere in which this freedom can be experienced through this article. The following articles state that the issue of newspapers, magazines, brochures and books cannot be subject to prior permission and that financial guarantee cannot be an obligation to issue newspapers, magazines and brochures (TRNC Constitution, 2016).

However, how much of these legal and constitutional arrangements can be found in the practice of everyday life is a question that must be answered by scientific research rather than the impression we get through our own life experiences. In this sense, there is a need for in-depth work on the structure of society and the way society dynamics work. No matter how extensive legal arrangements are, what do they correspond to in the everyday life, that is, the "areas of struggle for meaning and power" as Bourdieu (2015) put it? What internal and external influences are people subject to in this area? What kind of given attitudes do individuals interact with on the freedom of expression and the sharing of information in the society they are in and in this sense, what kind of a social identity are they shaped with? Depending on the possible answers to these questions, the answers should be sought to the question of why, in what situations and how often the members of the press apply self-censorship.

Areas of Social Struggle and Concept of Interest

According to Bourdieu (1997),

(...)social life is like a game, except that the rewards are bigger. Social life is not just an area of struggle; it requires constant improvisation. No game can be understood simply by understanding the rules that define it. The game does not only require complying with the rules, it also requires having an understanding of the game, and "understanding" of how to play the game. This is a social understanding ...

Bourdieu (1997) argues that social life is an area where struggles of meaning and power continue. According to him, people need to have an interest to enter into a struggle in this area. Bourdieu explains these interests in four categories; economic capital (money and property), cultural capital (education, cultural goods and services), social capital (acquaintances and relationship networks) and symbolic capital (legitimacy documents) (Swartz, 2001). In this sense, Bourdieu 's concept of capital is far from Marx's concept of capital that creates

exploitation by appropriating the surplus value. It is not related to any other theory of exploitation. Bourdieu's (1997) difference or contribution to this field is that he shows that there is a much wider variety of forms of labour (social, cultural, political, religious, familial) that establish the sources of power and that they are turned into one another under certain conditions and at certain rates.

According to Bourdieu's (2015) sociology, it is important to understand how and on what conditions the individuals and groups use their strategies to accumulate capital, invest and transform various forms of capital into one to protect or upgrade their position within the social order. In this case, it can be said that people generally engage in social struggle not for concepts such as justice, freedom, democracy, etc., but for their own interests. What motivates them to struggle are their interests.

According to Habermas, with the commercialization of the press in the 19th century, public communication became associated with the public relations and advertising and the interaction based on critical thinking disappeared from the public arena. Thus, public arena also disappeared. With this, that is to say, with the commercialization of the print media in the 19th century, consumer culture also began (quot. Dağtaş and Dağtaş, 2003).

Habermas associates the legitimacy of the state to the free discussion of ideas and opinions independent of domination in the public arena and to the formation of the public opinion in this way. In this context, since the 19th century there has been a problem of state legitimacy. According to Habermas, the public arena disappeared. When we look at the period in which we are living, we can observe that the media has industrialized and the news reaching the masses say almost the same thing although there are dozens of communication areas such as TV channels, hundreds of newspapers, news portals broadcasting on the internet etc. The widespread rhetoric from groups that prefer to stay close to the governments that hold the state and the state mechanism, which we refer to as the mainstream media, can be extremely successful in spreading the dominant view to the whole public arena. On the other hand, it can be said that the few media elements in which opposing views and ideas are represented are rather weak against the mainstream media (as cited in Dağtaş and Dağtaş, 2003).

After all this, we can say that in the light of the assertions and determinations we have mentioned above of some thinkers who are thinking about this issue, this study aims to seek answers to the question of what might be the social dynamics behind the self-censorship that people apply when a clear threat from a specific channel is not visible.

Self-censorship as an Obstacle to Information Sharing

Censorship emerges as a concept that many writers and thinkers have given thoughts to throughout history. Censorship and self-censorship are most often associated with the press although they are used in many areas of everyday life. It is known that governments try to take various measures in order to prevent the broadcasting of the news that might undermine their sovereignty and put them in danger. To this end, governments can choose to restrict the freedom of media agencies to make news through laws, regulations and decrees. This attitude negatively affects media employees' decisions to report news or how they report news. In this context, we can talk about the presence of self-censorship where there is censorship and vice-versa. According to Cook and Heiman (2010), there are two types of self-censorship that can be

separated as public and private. In public censorship, a person applies self-censorship under the influence of a publicly practiced censorship while there are factors that influence the internal communication of a person in the private self-censorship (Cook and Heimann, 2010). According to another opinion, "self-censorship is a method to which a culture producer applies to maintain its existence without dissenting the ruling power completely" (Delier, 2012)

According to a research conducted by "Pew Research Center" and "Columbia Journalism Review", in today's new media, self-censorship is a common practice. According to the results of this research, a quarter of the 300 participants stated that they had not reported some events though they were worthy of news or that they had softened their style of writing the news in order to avoid harm to their personal interests (Kohut, Parker, Flemming, & ve Doherty, 2000).

The realization of the society's right to receive information and news depends on the dissemination of the information or the news without any censorship. This function is fulfilled by the media. However, as it has been throughout history, it is also evident today that censorship from various power centres and in various forms can constitute a serious obstacle to the use of this fundamental right.

Methodology

In this study, the attitudes developed by the members of the press while fulfilling their task of informing the society about governments' actions, legal regulations, practices, etc are discussed together with their reasons. In this context, the main purpose of the study is to reveal the role of the self-censorship during the process in which press members use the information they have acquired and share their opinions.

It was decided that qualitative research techniques would be more appropriate in order to provide more detailed findings for the purpose stated. Qualitative research is a "multi-method in focusing; a method that adopts an interpretative approach to the research problem" (Altunışık, Coşkun, Bayraktaroğlu, & ve Yıldırım, 2004). In other words, it is a method that allows the subject to be investigated and observed in its natural environment.

The interview technique, which has an important place in qualitative research methods, serves two basic purposes. The first is to motivate the sourcing person to give a complete and correct answer, and the second is to eliminate his/her biases that come from sources such as social willingness and adaptation. In this regard, interviews are conducted to create a social environment that allows free exchange of information between two people to reveal the participants' interests, opinions, attitudes and behaviours (Balci, 2011).

Therefore, it was decided that using the content analysis method would be more appropriate in this study. Content analysis is a technique used to characterize and compare documents, interview documents, or records (Altunışık et al., 2004). From this point on, the literature on the concepts of censorship and self-censorship was first examined in the study. It should be noted that although there is a lot of research on the concept of censorship in the related literature, it is noteworthy that there have not been many studies carried out related to the concept of self-censorship. This makes this study more important.

Following the examination of the relevant literature, semi-structured interview questions were prepared to measure the views of members of the press on censorship and their

mechanisms of self-censorship (Appendix 1). To ask open-ended questions and get answers, one-hour interviews were held with the participants.

The interviews were recorded and typed and evaluated by content analysis. As the questions were prepared open-ended, the question asked to each participant was reshaped according to the progress of the talk during the interview and the number of questions asked to the participants varied.

Research Group

Within the scope of the study, 10 members of the press, 5 working in a public institution in the capital Lefkoşa and 5 working in the private sector, were randomly selected and interviewed. The reason why the research was carried out in Lefkoşa is that the centres of all media and press organizations are in this region.

The members of the press who participated in the interview included reporters working in press, radio and television, and journalists working in various circles of the media were included in the research. Hence, all of the interviews based on the in-depth research technique were carried out in journalists' own work environments, that is, in the institutions where they worked. The data about the press members who accepted to be interviewed is given in Table 1 below.

Table 1
Research Group

Press Members Participating In The Interviews	Age	Gender	Work Period (years)	Institution
P.M. 1	55	Female	25	Public
P.M. 2	58	Male	32	Public
P.M. 3	48	Male	22	Public
P.M. 4	56	Female	20	Private
P.M. 5	38	Female	15	Private
P.M. 6	30	Male	8	Private
P.M. 7	27	Male	5	Private
P.M. 8	30	Female	8	Public
P.M. 9	35	Male	12	Private
P.M. 10	34	Female	10	Public

Considering the age distributions of the participants, it can be seen that 6 persons are under forty and four are over forty years old. The findings of the interviews are included in the next section.

Findings

In order to reveal the participants' perceptions about their profession, they were first asked what their profession meant to them. All of the journalists stated that their profession was not just a job for them but a way of life. In other words, they attribute meanings to their profession beyond just a job to earn money. In addition, six people stated that they also worked out of working hours since they had a responsibility to regard every event as news in every field of life.

The answers of the participants to the question "What are the criteria that you pay attention to when reporting the news?" included mostly reporting the news accurately, that is, reflecting the truth. To give an example, a participant (P.M. 9) expressed this with the following statements:

(...)The most important criterion that we pay attention to while bringing the news to the audience is that the news is kept away from social concerns, as unbiased as possible and without comments. It is our primary duty to adhere to the ethics of journalism.

During the interviews, the vast majority of the press members (8 people) stated that improper journalism has the risk of being transformed into advertising activities of the power foci. They reported that they had colleagues who performed this kind of journalism -some sort of public relations officer-, and these journalists even described it explicitly as "state journalism". All of the journalists who were interviewed stated that they had serious problems regarding the delivery of the news to the public accurately regardless of public or private institutions. They also pointed out that the problems that arise in news writing can be caused not only by managerial or editorial intervention but also by the journalist's professional inadequacy. Participants attributed this inadequacy to the fact that the journalism profession has come to the fore with ethical problems which caused recently to lose its respectability and credibility. Participants expressed that the new beginners to the profession quickly adapt to the challenges and do not struggle for better journalism in such an environment. One of the participants (B.M. 4) expressed this as follows:

(...)This is related to the education and culture of the person. It is about whom you work for, how you perform your profession. Are you doing it for your boss, for the people, for your party or for your state? There are those who define themselves as 'state journalists'.

As discussed above, the way in which self-censorship is perceived by employees, as well as the censor restricting freedom of reporting news, is important for this study. The interviews on the subject revealed that the journalists transformed censorship into self-censorship by internalizing it. In this sense, censorship does not become a problem for journalists anymore. It has been observed that journalists take into account the possible reactions of the institution they are working in when they make a decision about whether or not to report an event or how to report. Press members do not perceive this as self-censorship; but they regard this as the natural requirement of working for an institution. Just as Chomsky (1989) explains in his book "Necessary Illusions," which examines how power controls thinking in democratic societies, censorship is internalized by journalists and they apply self-censorship to themselves without the need for a direct censorship pressure from above.

It can be argued that this perception is caused by what has been censored by the power foci has become normal and has turned into an internal dynamic in the journalists' perception.

Considering the dynamics and requirements of the profession, the importance of impartiality, objectivity and freedom of expression is indisputable. In this context, the answers given by the participants to the question if factors are effective in meeting these requirements are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2
Factors Affecting the Fulfillment of Profession for the Participants

Effective Factors	Number of Participants
Sensuality	4
Partiality	5
Relationship network of managers or bosses in the organization	10
Inadequacy and reluctance to work seen especially in young generation	3
Journalist's own network of relationships	5
Lack of guaranteed working and low wages	10
Alienation of journalists to their profession	8

As indicated in Table 2, participants mentioned that one of the primary factors influencing the fulfillment of their profession is their 'relationship networks'. Managers' economic and political relations networks are seen as a major obstacle to unbiased and accurate reporting. One of the participants (B.M.1) expressed this as follows:

(...)If you are getting help from the government, advertising revenues from the private sector, and you want to continue receiving it, you do not report negative news about them. You cannot. Personal interests are always on the front ...

All participants emphasized the lack of guaranteed working and low wages. If we add to this the fact that the working conditions of this profession are very difficult and contain risky elements, we can say that the lack of guaranteed working and low wages have an effect which reduces the motivation of the journalists.

To evaluate the items in Table 2 separately for the private and the public sectors, it can be said that the participants working in public institutions stated that it is not surprising, even quite normal for an institution that takes almost all of its budget from the state to act with the concern of not contradicting the attitude of political power in making news and programs. This is because all the members of the press working in private sector as well as in a publicly-funded institution consider *managers' relationship networks* as an effective factor in the fulfillment of their job.

The main topic for journalists working in the private sector is the same, with a slightly different picture emerging and different variables (e.g., partiality, alienation of journalist's towards their profession). Journalists working in the private sector stated that it was understandable that their bosses do not want to have a critical attitude towards the institutions from which they get advertising revenues. Because the media institutions in the private sector also receive financial support from the state, the participants mentioned that it is regarded as normal by journalists that they do not want to have a critical attitude of the political power, and they also stated that they reported news in line with the governments' policies. Participants finally stated that newspapers' financial difficulty would mean that they would be unemployed, and that there were other events that interested the society closely which could be reported instead. It can be inferred from this statement that the participating journalists tend to report on social issues when they cannot report the negativities in government practices. A participant (B.M.5) expressed this situation with the following statements:

(...)The press ethics and the editorial independence of the journalist is as far as the understanding of freedom of the chief editor or the news director of the newspaper... The journalist ranks the third after the boss and managers in the selection of the news. Whether you can report the news you want depends on how much and how the relationships of the newspaper's bosses or managers are affected by that news.

All of the participating journalists working in public institutions stated that contrary to common belief, the representatives of the authorities in these institutions generally did not directly intervene in the news stories. They pointed out that direct interventions are often the result of the inadequacy or inability of the journalist reporting the news. The answers of the participants to the question how the censorship mechanism works in public institutions are summarized Table 3.

Table 3
Attitudes Perceived as Censorship Among Press Members

Attitudes	Number of Participants
Task distribution according to the content of the news	5
Special assignments for the news abroad	5
Making them passive	5
Not being called or sent to private meetings and receptions	5
Attitudinize	5

Although it is considered to be restrictive for journalists working especially in public institutions, in relation to the press freedom of press members, all of the interviewees stated that management is very influential in news writing and selection but it is also very difficult to change a well-written story. At this point, how the news is expressed inevitably becomes important. The journalist publishes his/her news story in consequence of an arrangement in which censoring the news will not be necessary. If a journalist who has internalized censorship has applied to self-censorship advertently or inadvertently, and if he/she has published the story in this way, it cannot be inferred from this that there is not censorship.

In addition, another finding obtained from the interviews was that dissemination of news is a factor that should not be overlooked. A news story that is 'inconvenient' for an institution can be published by that institution only when it is heard by the society somehow. Social media has an important role in disseminating such undesired news. However, as seven of the press members stated, news stories that cannot reach the society and that are 'undesired' for the institution are not published by that institution.

To the question 'Have you ever been sued in your professional life?', all but one of the members of the press who participated in the interviews answered 'no'. Following this response that can be regarded positive, to the question 'Have you ever been in trouble because of any news you reported?', all of the press members answered 'once or twice'. They also stated that this is something common in their profession, they are not affected by this a lot; in other words they regarded this as normal. The press member who had been sued previously expressed that "This does not frighten me because the cases are usually opened to intimidate and after a while they are withdrawn".

These answers can be interpreted in two ways. Firstly, state institutions do not repress journalists and journalists are aware of it. Secondly, journalists may be avoiding the news that could result in lawsuits. When interviews are evaluated in general, it can be concluded that both interpretations are true for journalists in certain periods.

The press members were also asked 'Have you ever thought you'd rather stay away from reporting such news or have you ever changed your mind about making a news story?'. To this question, they mostly (8 persons) answered 'sometimes'. In response to the question 'in what area do they avoid making news, political, social or private?', they answered they usually avoided making political news. Following these responses, they were asked 'What are your reasons for avoiding making news?'. The common point of the answers was that they were concerned that they would be harmed because of the news. It can be inferred from these statements of the members of the press that in some cases they apply self-censorship.

This result is also reflected in another question directed at journalists. We asked the press members the following question: 'Have you ever changed a news story after you have completed it and thought that it would receive reactions from other people?'. To this question, four respondents answered 'yes' while six respondents answered 'sometimes'. The fact that no participant answered 'no' to this question points to the fact that all the participating press members apply self-censorship, though not always, but at times.

All the findings evaluated together indicate that the mechanism of self-censorship is very easily internalized, especially by young journalists. It was observed that six participants under the age of 40 accepted self-censorship as an ordinary part of their profession and did not question this. At this point, journalists find media institutions' reflexes to protect their interests in political power or in other institutions from which they get advertising revenues normal and in doing so, they adhere to the unrecorded rules of management to protect their interests. Both managements and journalists protect the institutions from which they get financial interests while making news. In this respect, they consider it inevitable to arrange their news accordingly and they do not think this is self-censorship. The following statements by a participant (B.M.2) support this finding:

(...)The economic environment to which a newspaper is connected is also influential. They are most effective, and they actually direct it. This is ultimately a matter of bread and butter... I mean, the boss of the newspaper, radio, or television eventually wants to make money. So, if the boss does not make money, the reporter will not be able to get his full salary that month. As is often the case, the journalist will not have health insurance so they will not be able to take their children to the hospital etc...

Journalists working in the private sector think that their employers are right not to publish any negative news about the institutions from which they get revenues (advertising, sponsorship etc.) and not to contradict with the political powers since they also get financial help from them. The private sector employees state that they do not receive any explicit instructions or requests from their institutions. However, they noted that they understand this attitude a short time after being employed and they think this is normal. In other words, they stated that the existence of their institutions depends on this.

On the other hand, journalists over the age of 40 complained about the inadequacy or reluctance of the new generation of journalists rather than censorship or self-censorship. This

experienced group explained with examples that no one wants to be journalists anymore because the new generation actually does not want to work, they usually cut corners and are superficial. They stated that the new generation is better educated than them, some of them have more than one diploma and all of them are equipped with a foreign language, yet they are not interested in social events and they just want to work on the table rather than going out for news. For these competent journalists, this problem seems much more alarming than censorship and self-censorship.

Conclusion

When the relevant literature and interviews are assessed together, it can be seen that in the journalism profession, self-censorship is an attitude that results both from the pressure from managers and journalists' desire to protect their current positions. When the interviews are carefully examined, it was concluded that the journalists apply self-censorship. However, interviewees considered this as an attitude required by their circumstances.

The fact that only one of the journalists was sued, none of them received any harm or was subject to threats can be interpreted as, as one of the participants also stated, that they did not make any news that could result in such outcomes. However, it is necessary to mention once more that they do not consider such journalism as self-censorship. They think this is normal because of their working conditions. Also in connection with this, journalists who see themselves as a supporter of a political ideology describe taking into account the interests of their political parties while making news as emotionalism, partiality and away from being objective.

In this context, it is thought that the perception of self-censorship of interviewed journalists differs from the definition of self-censorship. It can be argued that the self-censorship is internalized and its relationship with the protection of small or large interests is missed. Since they have developed a strong defense mechanism and cannot reconcile the concept of self-censorship with the meaning they have attributed to their profession, they seem to apply to other explanations that are more acceptable for them and that leave them out.

The significance of the media, which has always aimed to inform the society, is indisputable. Of course, members of the press also have a big role in this process. Freedom of expression and impartiality, concepts that are crucial for their profession to function properly can be restricted through censorship and self-censorship. As already mentioned, there is a very limited study in the literature on the concept of self-censorship, which is a different dimension of censorship. Therefore, this study not only contributes to the relevant literature but also reveals the necessity of further research on the subject. In this context, it is of utmost importance to carry out larger scale studies to examine all elements of the media in the future.

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