

Revising the Korean Newspaper Advertising Code of Ethics: An Empirical Investigation Leveraging Expert Interviews and Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) Surveys

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Abstract

The Code of Ethics for Newspaper Advertising in Korea, first implemented in 1976 and subsequently revised in 1976, 1996, and 2021, is a critical regulatory instrument for the country's advertising sector. However, the specialized domain of "advertising ethics," particularly the "code of advertising ethics," remains under-explored. This research addresses this scholarly gap, providing an empirical analysis of the 2021 amendment's revision trajectory. This study employs a robust methodological approach, integrating expert interviews and small-group AHP-based surveys. This approach allows for a comprehensive understanding of the revision needs, referencing existing ethical codes studies, and comparing similar ethics codes nationally and internationally. The research further investigates key challenges such as personal data protection and copyright issues in the rapidly evolving digital media landscape, while preserving the existing code's inherent value. The findings are expected to significantly contribute to the emerging field of advertising ethics in Korea, offering practical implications for future code revisions.

Keywords: code of ethics, newspaper advertising, advertising regulation, advertising ethics

1. Introduction

The severe financial crisis that affects newspaper companies is threatening the sustainable operation of the press, which functions as a key public institution in modern democratic societies. According to a report by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) global consulting firm, the scale of the global newspaper industry (53 countries) was \$107.9 billion (approximately 118.7 trillion won) in 2019, down by 3.5% from the previous year [1]. In particular, since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the financial conditions of newspapers have deteriorated significantly, and large mainstream media outlets also feel the negative impact. Due to the prolonged pandemic conditions, the amount of newspaper advertising was drastically reduced, and various cultural sponsorship projects were canceled, while overall sales in 2020 decreased by more than 40-

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50% compared to 2019 [2].

Profits from advertisements were a major source of income for newspapers, but as the number of online specialized publications increased, the competition for advertising expenses exacerbated the financial crisis of newspaper companies. Various experiments are underway at home and abroad to overcome media crisis conditions such as audience disengagement and a decrease in ad revenue, by introducing a "cover, report and distribute" method based on cutting-edge technology. If you look at the sales structure of the newspaper industry in 2019, it consists of 50.2% paper subscription revenue, 35.1% of paper advertisement revenue, 10.5% digital advertisement revenue, and 4.2% of digital subscription revenue [1]. If indirect forms of advertising/marketing such as sponsorship of cultural events are included, it's estimated that more than half of the newspapers' financial resources come directly from advertisements [3]. Eventually, the trend of newspaper dependence on advertising can be expected to continue for a considerable time.

The financial deficit does not end with the problems of individual newspapers. Budget cuts make it difficult to produce high-quality articles, which naturally leads to a decline in readers' trust in the newspaper. In the "Digital News Report 2020"[4], South Korea ranked the lowest among the 40 countries surveyed with just 21% media credibility. It was the lowest in the same report in 2019 with 22%, as Korea has been at the bottom every year since it was included in the survey [1]. The level of social criticism of the advertisements that newspapers have been indiscriminately executing to overcome their financial problems has increased, which seems to have further undermined trust in newspapers. Although sustained efforts by related organizations such as the Korea Newspaper Ethics Committee have reduced the frequency of these ads, concerns remain over ethical problems, especially in online newspapers.

Due to non-face-to-face work and classes, consumers' online activities are rapidly increasing, so unethical advertising [5] is feared to cause real social problems [6]. Ads with speculative content and false information have caused many economic losses. For instance, children who lack advertising literacy are more susceptible to ads' negative effects like nutritional imbalance and impulse buying [7-8]. False and exaggerated advertisements are also on the rise during late-night hours or weekends and holidays when related agencies are less active, making it difficult to summon the advertising manager for legal and ethical violations. Repeated negative ads can make consumers feel uncomfortable, even if there is no direct harm. According to the Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs "2019 Processed Food Consumer Attitude Survey," 51.5 percent of respondents thought false or exaggerated ads for domestic health functional foods were inconvenient [9].

Nowadays, as media is flooded by false and sensational newspaper advertisements, it is crucial for newspapers to provide commercial information that complies with advertising ethics, to gain the readers' trust. Newspaper advertisements are no exception to the three ethical elements pursued by the media - accuracy of information, transparency, and community building [10]. Advertising ethics "is a field that deals with ethical judgments about right and wrong that accompany advertising activities as a whole, including the production and distribution of ads through media, and effectiveness" [11]. Except for some studies on advertising practitioner ethics and advertising laws [12], the media environment requires more research on advertising ethics. Based on current literature, policy changes like revising the "Code of Advertising Ethics" were difficult. This study used case studies from related fields, academic research on advertising ethics, and domestic and international ethics to revise the 2021 "Code of Ethics in Newspaper Advertising". This study combines ethical knowledge with media/advertising to increase applicability. From a media/advertising perspective, we synthesized and analyzed academic research and the industry's "Code of Advertising Ethics" to determine the "content and areas necessary for the change of the Code". We also conducted a literature review to identify newspaper advertising issues after newspapers went digital. Next, in-depth interviews with media experts and

small-group quantitative research using the AHP technique determined the importance of each detailed item of the Code of Ethics, which was reflected in the revised "Code".

2. Literature review

2.1. The domestic newspaper advertising ethics code

The "Newspaper Advertising Ethics Code" and "Newspaper Advertisement Ethics Guidelines" comprise Korea's newspaper advertising ethics code. In November 1976 and April 1996, the "Code of Ethics and Practice for Newspaper Advertising in Korea" was revised. As of March 2021, the periodical registration management system of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism applies the Code to tens of thousands of daily advertisements in more than 13,000 Korean newspapers. As online newspapers proliferate and public tastes change, the code's importance grows. Due to the importance of newspaper ads in newspaper operations and the acceleration of digitization, ownership/responsibility/regulation of advertising messages that are difficult to integrate with the existing newspaper advertisement paradigm and related legal/ social/ operational issues are emerging. The newspaper advertisement ethics code must be updated to reflect rapid changes in digital media technology and consumer culture.

2.2. The background for revision of the Code of Ethics for Newspaper Advertising in Korea

2.2.1. Digital Media Technology and Online Newspaper Advertising

Domestic newspaper advertising is experiencing unprecedented financial difficulties and constitutional changes due to the devastation of the traditional advertising industry accelerated by the 4th Industrial Revolution and the tectonic shifts taking place throughout society after the COVID-19 epidemic. As competition in the newspaper advertising market heats up, unusual advertising techniques (e.g., provocative, or deceptive messages, background ads, or advertisements that are difficult to distinguish from editorial article content) aimed to attract readers' attention are on the rise, prompting concerns related to advertising ethics. In line with these changes in the media market and digital media technology, there is a growing need to revise the Code of Ethics for Newspaper Advertising.

Since 2010, for example, the number of article-type advertisements mixed with text and retargeting advertisements, that track and expose target customers to ads, has increased significantly, however, it is not easy to regulate and supervise them under the 1996 "Newspaper Advertising Ethics Code". The article-type advertisements which the industry calls "native advertising" [13] are a combination of "native" and "advertising" that refers to digital advertising which delivers marketing messages in the form of journalistic content [14]. Native advertising is a hybrid format advertisement that exquisitely combines the advantages of the "advertorial" (advertisement type that borrows the form of a print media article) and "infomercial" (content type advertisement that uses broadcast media).

Native advertising has high informational utility for consumers, but it can also use consumer deceptive elements according to the advertiser's intention for similar reasons [15] to the articles, so caution is needed. Children, adolescents, the elderly, and low-SES people who lack advertising literacy may mistake native ads for articles. Advertising may taint the media's credibility [16]. Online, reports and editorials are often confused. The U.S. Wall Street Journal (WSJ) has clearly distinguished "facts" from "opinion" articles on its website since 2021 [17]. To improve press credibility, the distinction between articles and advertisements must be addressed. Based on U.S. Federal Trade Commission (FTC) guidelines, a study found that native

advertisements had visual cues that were hard for consumers to recognize or displayed ad labels in inconspicuous locations [18]. Newspaper companies must address deceptive native ads as media trust declines [19].

Ad tech advances advertising execution methods. RTB (Real-Time Bidding) has improved online newspaper ad transactions and campaign operations for advertisers. However, digital ads violate privacy [20]. Retargeting ads use media users' personal information to follow and drive purchases for days to weeks after they leave a newspaper's website. Personalized ads require consent before execution, but there is concern that this part is ignored or oversimplified. Retargeting and customizing ads for cognitively vulnerable users can also be dangerous. Finally, video and image copyright. Advertising messages can be broadcast nationwide in real-time, but it is hard to track whether the infringed content is in the ad, and most of the time, the content owner is unaware of the copyright infringement.

2.2.2. Changes in consumer culture

As consumers choose their content to avoid ads, it's harder to grab their attention. "Attention economy"—the idea that "attention is money" [21]—emerges as media currency. Newspaper ads in Korea cannot be pre-reviewed, so their subjects are unclear. Even when related organizations like the Korea Newspaper Ethics Committee find ethical issues in advertisements, they can only issue warnings due to market inelasticity. However, corporate image management strongly influences marketing activities as consumers' voices grow louder and their complaints spread through social media and related consumer groups [22]. Corporate advertising also ties into profit-seeking and image management [23-24]. Consumers now reject unethical ads. Given the growing importance of advertising ethics, newspaper advertising ethics must be updated immediately.

2.2.3. The Code of Ethics for Advertising at home and abroad

Since the domestic Code of Advertising Ethics was first published by Hankook Ilbo in 1959 [15], various media advertising agencies have maintained it, but almost no organization actively used or revised it. It is either difficult to find advertising ethics guidelines on the websites of many advertising-related organizations, or they are not disclosed to the general public. The reason for this may be that the advertising industry has been busy surviving amid excessive competition, and economic recession, and unable to raise the ethical standards of advertising over the past decades. However, considering the recent trend of both private companies and public institutions emphasizing "ESG management "(Environment protection, Social contribution, and ethical Governance) by both private companies and public institutions, it is expected that the re-establishment and compliance with advertising ethics will gain more importance.

Many media-related organizations abroad have codes of ethics in advertising, but they are generally based on the regulations of the ICC Advertising and Marketing Communications Code. Founded in 1920, ICC is the world's largest international organization related to corporate commerce, active in revitalizing international trade activities and resolving international commercial disputes. ICC's "Code of Ethics in Advertising" is widely accepted by many advanced countries including Korea, as the international standard [25]. The ICC "Code of Ethics in Advertising" was revised relatively recently (2018) and has high practical value in the revision of the "Code of Ethics in Newspaper Advertising", which is the focus of this study.

2.2.4. Prior research related to advertising ethics and the conditions of the Code of Ethics for Advertising

Domestic research related to advertising ethics is very limited, and studies related to the characteristics of newspaper media are rare. First, the topic of advertising ethics is rather under-represented compared to other fields of study in media studies/ advertising studies (e.g., audience advertising effects). Next, it is necessary to review the basic concepts of “ethics” and “code”. Ethics is the morality that human beings must abide by, while morality refers to rules or norms of behavior that members of society must abide by in light of conscience, social public opinion, and customs [26]. On the other hand, law (code) is a heteronomous and compulsory norm enacted by the legislator, that seeks justice, purpose, and stability. Starting in 2021, the government-imposed fines of less than 2% of the related sales or 500 million won on advertisers and influencers violating the “Marketing and Advertising Act”, such as back-advertising on SNS, or on content that does not specify that it is an advertisement [27]. When existing ethics do not work, “legal enforcement” is implemented.

Ethics refers to universal values of society, but the limitation lies in the difficulty to use it in specific domains, including advertising. For this reason, each professional domain proposes an ethical system suitable for a specific context and documents it under the name of “code of ethics”. The ICC also recognizes the difference between “law” and “ethics” mentioned above and makes this clear in its Code of Ethics. This study attempted to revise the “Code of Ethics for Newspaper Advertising” by diagnosing the concept of the “newspaper ethics code”, reflecting and synthesizing the opinions of related experts. The table below summarizes the conditions [28] of the revised “Code of Ethics for Newspaper Advertising” to be presented through this study in the context of newspaper advertising.

Table 1. Criteria for good concepts and their application in the Code’s revision

Criteria for a good concept	Description of criteria	How to apply to the Code of Ethics
Determinacy	Should be able to accurately and briefly explain a particular phenomenon through clear conceptualization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Should cover ethical issues in advertising - Should be able to determine whether it falls under the Code’s provisions - Follows the MECE (Mutual Exclusion and Inclusion of Concepts) principle
Uniformity	As a tool for the communication of information, it should be able to communicate unified content between the transmission and reception subjects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Should easily communicate information related to ethical decisions between academia/ industry/ governmental organizations, or within review bodies.
Degree of abstraction	An appropriate level of abstraction is required, whereas if it is too abstract it appears less realistic, and if it is too specific the subject of explanation is limited.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In the current Code, excessively detailed and descriptive definitions are less abstract and scalable. - Since the Code cannot be frequently revised according to changes in advertising technology and media, it is necessary to make it ‘open to interpretation’ rather than a code with detailed and specific contents.
System	It should be possible to have a comprehensive system of knowledge along with related concepts (other codes of ethics in advertising).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Newspaper advertising must be systematically incorporated along various media (e.g., mobile, offline) and various technologies (e.g. IoT) in adjacent fields.

※ MECE: Mutually Exclusive (ME) & Collectively Exhaustive (CE).

3. Research question

Amid the declining competitiveness of newspaper media advertising, the struggle for newspapers to attract advertisements is fierce. This environment prompts market players to publish provocative and unethical ads, which eventually leads to a vicious cycle of loss of trust in newspapers and undervaluation by readers. Therefore, a movement of self-regeneration among newspaper companies based on the “Code of Ethics for Newspaper Advertising” and industry joint efforts is essential. Faced with this problem, the authors decided that it was necessary to inform the positive influence of newspaper advertisements, which are useful commercial information for consumers and important support for the newspaper industry. Moreover, it was expected that domestic newspaper companies would reinforce advertising ethics so that newspaper ads could be chosen by advertisers and consumers. Specifically, the purpose of this study is to present the direction of revision for the existing “Code of Ethics for Newspaper Advertising” (1976) by reflecting the changing “media/reader (consumer)/advertiser” environment. With these research objectives in mind, the current study attempted to answer the following research question:

RQ. What should be the direction of revision for the Code of Ethics for Newspaper Advertising?

4. Research method

To obtain primary data suitable for this study, one-on-one in-depth interviews were conducted with stakeholders in newspaper advertising to identify various issues related to the re-establishment of the Code of Ethics for Newspaper Advertising. Next, a small group online survey (based on the AHP analysis tool) of newspaper advertising practitioners - experienced in newspaper advertising execution and deliberation - was conducted to confirm the ranking of the importance of detailed items and tried to reflect them in the revised Code. Next, a draft of the domestic “Code of Ethics for Newspaper Advertising” was presented by synthesizing the qualitative and quantitative results obtained in this study. The final draft was finalized and announced on May 25, 2021, through the consultation process of the Newspaper Advertising Ethics Revision Committee.

4.1. In-depth interviews

In this study, the rough opinions of the “stakeholder group” on newspaper advertising ethics served as basic data for the revision of the “Code of Ethics for Newspaper Advertising” by synthesizing and classifying and synthesizing the contents by category. A series of individual in-depth interviews were conducted to identify the stakeholders’ “frame of perception” regarding newspaper advertising ethics [29]. The face-to-face in-depth interview is a qualitative research methodology that uses conversation form to collect and analyze the interviewee’s “unfiltered statements”, to explore the surfaced awareness including the background, process, and backstory of a specific phenomenon. Based on grounded theory, this study chose a semi-structured interview method for exploratory purposes [30-31]. The table below summarizes the contents of the interviews.

Table 2. Summary of in-depth interview questions

Interview Question Category		Details of Question Content
1	Ethical Issues Related to Newspaper Advertising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Issues from the standpoint of readers (consumers) - Issues from the standpoint of newspaper companies (media companies) - Issues from the standpoint of advertisers (and advertising agencies)
2	Opinions on the direction of revision of the Code	- Comprehensive view of advertising ethics of consumers/ media companies/ advertisers (incl. changes in consumer behavior and media technology)
3	The Role of the Revised Code of Ethics for Newspaper Advertising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The status and role of the Code - Additional open answers related to Section 2

In this study, it was expected that responses with high implications for the research results could be presented according to the characteristics of each participant's job or affiliated institution. Therefore, the final information provider was selected through judgment sampling, which deliberately selects an interview subject that reflects the relevant group well. Specifically, stakeholder groups for newspaper advertisements were divided into five groups and related experts were invited for interviews. A total of six people from a total of five groups were targeted: media operators (one person from both large and medium-sized newspapers executing newspaper advertisements), advertisers who purchase newspapers advertisements (one person), related associations (one person from the Korea Newspaper Advertising Ethics Committee) as mediators, consumer groups (one person), and academia (one person majoring in advertising ethics and legislation).

4.2. Small Group Online Survey

An online survey was conducted including the AHP (Analytic Hierarchy Process) tool to identify and synthesize the importance given by practitioners to each item in the “Code of Ethics for Newspaper Advertising”. A total of 15 respondents with extensive experience in newspaper advertisement execution/review participated in the AHP survey, including two interviewees who also attended the in-depth interviews.

Table 3. Characteristics of survey respondents

Category		Frequency	Ratio (%)
Gender	Male	13	86.7
	Female	2	13.3
Age (avg.)	48.40 years old (SD=2.98)		
Work experience (avg.)	20.0 years (SD=9.51)		
Work department	Professor in Media/ Advertising-related depart.	2	13.3
	Newspaper executive	7	46.7
	Newspaper advertising review expert	5	33.3
	Executive of a media-related company	1	6.7
TOTAL		15	100

AHP is a methodology that can solve the complexity of decisions related to a specific agenda through an opinion synthesis system. AHP has the advantage of being able to compare importance even among disparate items with different units of measurement and instrumentation. In addition, even if there are a small number of respondents (5 or less), it is possible to calculate relative importance and priority, so it is highly utilized in academic and practical fields. Specifically, after organizing the decision-making factors that respondents must decide on, AHP statistically calculates the relative importance of each factor [32]. This study used a 9-point scale item questionnaire, and the results were synthesized using an arithmetic-geometric mean [33].

This study followed the four-step process of AHP [34]. First, the evaluation factors for decision-making and decision problems were stratified. The “Code of Ethics for Newspaper Advertising” has already been structured, so most of that structure has been reflected. All elements must be mutually independent, and a reasonable interpretation is possible when there is a total of nine or fewer evaluation elements in the same class [33]. Accordingly, most of the Code contents before the revision were reflected in this study, whereas items with high overlap were merged and simplified to derive the final hierarchical structure. Through the above process, a hierarchical structure consisting of the final goal, evaluation factors, and sub-evaluation factors was established [35]. Second, detailed evaluation factors consisting of hierarchical structures were repeatedly evaluated by survey participants through a 9-point scale paired comparison [33]. Third, the reliability of the response was statistically verified through a consistency ratio (CR). According to Saty (1990), if the CR value is less than or equal to 0.1, the response is consistent, and if it is greater than or equal to 0.2, it is acceptable but a pairwise comparison must be performed again. In this study, all pairwise comparison items showed CR values below 0.2, thus confirming acceptable consistency [33]. Fourth, the priority of the target area was calculated, and the weight and importance of the comparison items were identified based on the results [35]. Finally, the aggregate results were interpreted based on the calculated priorities.

5. Results and Discussion

5.1. In-depth interview

The results of the in-depth interviews are summarized as follows. First, the overarching opinion was that, in the changing environment, the role of the revised “Code of Ethics for Newspaper Advertising” is to

emphasize "company autonomy" and create "an advertising culture". Although the Code is not legally enforceable, the majority of respondents agreed that its original purpose should be preserved to reflect the characteristics of the ethical code based on "autonomy and participation". There was also an opinion that additional regulations to the rooftop would harm newspaper advertisements becoming competitive against advertisements published in other media. On the other hand, some opposed newspaper advertisements should be given responsibility more strictly than newspaper articles.

The advertisement pages of newspapers are usually used for commercial advertisements, and autonomously, for opinion advertising. Opinion advertising refers to an individual, company, or group targeting a specific or unspecified number of people through paid advertising media to express the advertiser's thoughts on politics, economy, society, and culture to gain understanding and sympathy from readers. Essentially, advertising tries to shape public opinion, behavior, or attitude in the direction that advertisers expect [36]. In this study, the overall view was that newspapers could not be held primarily responsible for opinion advertisements that are not confused with newspaper articles. Therefore, most respondents agreed there was little need to directly specify the contents of opinion advertisements in the "Code of Ethics for Newspaper Advertising".

There were many voices concerned about the increasing number of advertisements that directly or indirectly depict women as sexual objects and proliferate sexual content in online newspaper advertisements. Most respondents agreed that it was necessary to increase the intensity of ethical surveillance and enforcement as the market structure inevitably favors an increase in online media life due to non-face-to-face daily life and unethical advertisements containing obscene content.

Some pointed out that unethical advertising is prevalent because of the growth of the ad network (internet advertising relay business) industry, where it is difficult to determine who is responsible for unethical advertisements. As transnational ad networks are becoming more common and sophisticated, the roles and subjects of advertisement production and distribution in online newspapers are being separated. This part refers to the difficult issue of asking for responsibility when ethical problems arise concerning specific advertisements. Many respondents pointed out it is worth emphasizing the "responsibility in the distribution of advertisements", rather than specifically including it in the "Code of Ethics for Newspaper Advertising".

Moreover, even the motivation and purpose of executing newspaper advertisements should be considered from the advertiser's point of view. Since content reliability is highly valued, the reason why newspapers run ads is that consumers' trust can increase the attractiveness of advertisements. Some respondents pointed out that inappropriate ads in the newspaper prompt companies not to run their commercials along such ads.

5.2. Small group survey

Based on the issues related to newspaper advertising ethics that were discussed in the in-depth interviews, this study conducted a survey of newspaper advertising practitioners using the AHP tool to identify the relative importance of each item in the "Code of Ethics for Newspaper Advertising". It is necessary to confirm the importance of the items in the current code that experts agree with and readjust the parts to be emphasized and their order according to the degree of importance.

As a result of the AHP analysis (Table 4), Article 4 stating that "Newspaper advertisements must be truthful and must not mislead readers with exaggerated expressions" was evaluated as the most important among the advertising ethical codes. In terms of detailed provisions of the Code, the regulation of false advertising was evaluated as the most important. Among the interviewees were working-level experts related to newspaper advertising, therefore they were able to gauge expert concerns about "false advertisements" which are rapidly increasing in recent years. In the survey using AHP, the part about "false advertisement" was judged to be the

most important, and this point coincides with the actual number of reviews. The limited concern about the "defamation of national dignity" shows this kind of ad is rarely posted on the actual page.

Table 4. AHP results for newspaper advertising practitioners

Code of Ethics for Newspaper Advertising				Newspaper Advertising Ethics Guidelines			Comprehensive Analysis	
No.	Content	Importance	Rank	Selection items	Importance	Rank	Importance	Rank
Art.1	Newspaper advertisements should benefit readers and have information value	0.185	4	Unscientific or superstitious advertising is prohibited	0.266	2	0.2663	7
				Advertisements that incite speculation are prohibited	0.336	1	0.3358	4
				Advertisements not recognized by an official relevant body are prohibited	0.241	3	0.2410	8
				Advertisements that undermine advertiser trust are prohibited	0.157	4	0.1569	13
Art.2	Newspaper advertisements must not harm public order and morals or damage the dignity of new products.	0.212	3	Advertisements that discriminate against race, gender, or any other group are prohibited	0.238	2	0.2381	9
				Advertisements that damage the reputation of others are prohibited	0.216	3	0.2159	10
				Advertisements that may negatively affect children or young people are prohibited	0.274	1	0.2742	10
				Advertisements that disturb public morals are prohibited	0.148	4	0.1481	15
				Advertising that insults national dignity is prohibited	0.124	5	0.1237	16
Art.3	Newspaper ads must not violate the relevant laws and regulations.	0.295	2	Advertising that infringes on portrait rights is prohibited	0.340	2	0.3400	3
				Advertising that disturbs public order is prohibited	0.313	3	0.3130	5
				Advertising on state diplomacy and secrecy is prohibited	0.347	1	0.3469	2
Art.4	Newspaper ads must be truthful and not mislead readers with exaggerated expressions.	0.307	1	Exaggerated advertising is prohibited	0.149	4	0.1487	14
				False advertising is prohibited	0.459	1	0.4589	1
				An ad that can be confused with articles are prohibited	0.213	2	0.2133	11
				Advertising that lacks responsibility for/ content is unknown is prohibited	0.179	3	0.1791	12

If the "Code of Ethics for Newspaper Advertising" is revised according to the above criteria and previous literature in qualitative/ quantitative research, the scope of change is as follows: a) Add necessary parts that

are not in the current code and remove unnecessary parts; b) Emphasize areas that should be emphasized in the present Code or diminish the emphasis on less important aspects, and finally c) Change or rewrite the order of the Code for practical purposes or better understanding. Considering that the current Code was written in 1976, inappropriate expressions from a modern point of view need to be changed.

The main strategy of this study was to improve the readability and understanding of newspaper companies as ethical users and minimize changes and reduce confusion by maintaining consistency with the committee's review process of the existing Code. We reflected on the agenda emphasized in the in-depth interviews and pointed out important items based on the AHP analysis results. Overall, the direction of revision of the “Code of Newspaper Advertising Ethics” proposed by this study is shown in the table below.

Table 5. The current Code of Newspaper Advertising Ethics and direction of revision

No.	Summary of the Current Code	The direction of the Code's revision
Art.1	Newspaper advertisements should benefit readers and be reliable. 1) Unscientific and superstitious 2) Encouragement of speculation 3) Accredited, competent authority;	* Emphasis on the role and meaning of newspaper advertising * Emphasis on the reliability of commercial information in newspaper advertisements * Prohibition of advertising content or form that hinders readers from obtaining information * Content related to field expert impersonation
Art.2	Newspaper advertisements must not harm public order and morals or damage the dignity of newspapers. 1) State military and diplomatic secrets 2) Disgusting, obscene, ugly, cruel content 3) Misleading content to children and adolescents 4) Glorification of criminal behavior 5) Obstruction of public morals and public harm 6) Defamation of national dignity	* Partial emphasis on how to express other content than the advertisement (i.e.: suggestive/ obscene expressions that cause discomfort, etc.) * Addition of new discriminatory content based on nationality, race, gender, region of residence, etc.
Art.3	Newspaper advertisements must not violate relevant laws and regulations. 1) Slander or obstruction of another person or business 2) Invasion of privacy 3) Embarrassment of suspects in criminal cases 4) Violation of the rights of others	* Use of personal information for marketing purposes without the reader's consent (social media information request and retargeting advertisement, etc.) * Emphasis on freedom of expression premised on responsibility * Concision increased by merging the contents of changes in the current Art. 2, Par. 1 with Art. 3
Art.4	Newspaper advertisements must be truthful in their content and not mislead readers with exaggerated expressions. 1) False or uncertain representation 2) The responsibility of the advertiser is not known 3) Confusion with editorial articles and expressions 4) The exploitation of public loopholes 5) Not officially accredited information	* Expression of responsibility for the advertisements' target audience * Prohibition of false, comparative advertisements without objective grounds which promise gifts/ guarantees

The revision was made systematically according to the process of reviewing the three areas 1) content of the code, 2) wording, and 3) emphasis and rearrangement of the Code content. The “Newspaper Advertising

Ethics Revision Committee" which consists of five executive-level experts from newspaper companies and Code review committee members, announced the final draft in May 2021 after several consultations and a process of adjustment, based on the direction of revision proposed in this study.

6. Conclusion

Ads are cultural content that both reflects and changes society [37]. Therefore, this great influence requires great responsibility. However, recent newspaper advertisements are losing credibility as commercial information deviates from ethical standards, lowering integrity. Domestic newspaper media's advertising culture hasn't matured yet, and advertising policies aren't enough to handle the rapid rise in online newspaper ads. Based on this study, reducing communication confusion caused by the current Code should increase newspaper advertisements' administrative and industrial value.

This study has limitations despite academic and policy contributions. First, time and manpower constraints limited in-depth interviews with experts. The expert interviewees average 17.2 years of newspaper advertising experience, which may offset some of the limitations. This study used AHP methodology to find a direction for revising the "Code of Newspaper Advertising Ethics" despite the small sample size. In future studies, more in-depth interviews and expert survey subjects are needed. This study interviewed and surveyed newspaper advertising practice and deliberation experts. The size and diversity of advertisers makes generalization difficult, even though some were interviewed. Readers and advertisers must be included in advertising ethics studies.

Next, the media, which informs citizens and is a public good of civil society, should work with domestic and foreign advertising ethics organizations to improve advertising ethics in our society. Advertising professionals face pressure from colleagues, supervisors, advertisers, and readers as members of media organizations [38]. According to overseas studies, advertising professionals face many ethical dilemmas [39]. Advertising ethics may conflict with media commercial interests, which may clash with the organization's performance priorities [39-40]. Thus, advertising ethics training should help practitioners make ethical decisions in such situations. Finally, to "present a blueprint for mid-to-long-term development direction" and boost newspaper advertising's marketing power, relevant promotion alternatives and key promotion projects must be prioritized.

Among the areas of advertising/media research, advertising ethics is the least popular. Companies are also only concerned with the functionalistic aspect of advertising. On the other hand, there is a greater social need than ever for research on advertising ethics. Advertising ethics scholars are burdened in the process of conflict and reconciliation [41] over the two main perspectives on advertising as either a socio-cultural component or a means of achieving marketing goals. This study is expected to spark further research into advertising ethics by scholars in advertising/media and related fields.

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