

CONTROL ENVIRONMENT AND INTEGRITY MANAGEMENT IN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN GREECE

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Abstract

The education sector should promote ethical principles, values and generally accepted moral norms. Education staff should act as a real exemplar for youth so governance mechanisms that strengthen the control environment of educational units should be in place and should be promoted. Control environment should protect educational units and promote integrity that includes prudent use of resources, how teaching staff treat each other and how the interests of the educational unit are respected since violation of integrity leads to unethical behavior. The purpose of the research is twofold. First, to recognize and analyze the types of unethical behavior among the educational staff of any level of public education units in Greece. For this reason, a web-based questionnaire was deployed based on Kaptein (2003). Respondents rated the frequency of occurrence of different types of unethical behavior that do not promote integrity. Exploratory factor analysis generated 10 scales of unethical behavior primarily related to corruption, fraud and theft, conflict of Interest, abuse of authority, misuse of information, discrimination against colleagues, sexual harassment, indecent treatment of co-employees, waste and abuse of organizational resources

and last but not least, misconduct. Second, to identify elements of control environment that are in place and promote ethical conduct and set the tone at the educational unit level. For this reason, a second questionnaire was sent to the management of selective educational units that attempted to recognize the existence and the application of instruments that promote ethical behavior like a code of conduct, clear reporting lines, a chart of authority and responsibility, whistleblowing reporting lines, etc. Our results could provide the basis for targeted enhancements of the control environment of the various educational units and facilitate the drawing of centralized strategies that will promote integrity through principled-based codes of conduct and clear lines of responsibility, etc. Our research attempts to provide useful results and conclusions for further elaboration and analysis that will, hopefully, promote ethical conduct among the key stakeholders of the educational process, and of course, in any case, will set the basic seeds for ethical conduct from the members of future societies.

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