Abstract

Palestinian economy has been facing different types of restrictions that prevent it from developing. There are three main sectors serving the Palestinian population: the public sector, local and international NGOs, and the private sector. The private sector seeks maximizing profit, that's why violations and unethical Behavior are more likely to happen within this sector. For that, Labor departments have set the Palestinian Labor Law which defines and organizes the working environment and basic rights of workers. There are no studies that document existence of codes of ethics in this sector.

Top managers can be leaders for the enterprises they work for. Even if they don't plan to, they are considered as role models for the positions they occupy. For that their ethical actions and trends can have its effect -either formally or informally- on setting the ethical behavior in the organizations they work for.

This study aims at exploring ethical behavior in Palestinian large-scale enterprises since these enterprises or companies are considered of more significant effect to the Palestinian economy than small or medium scale enterprises. It also concentrates on top managers' ethical Behavior as evaluated by their subordinates.

Findings of this study indicate that there is limited ethical awareness among Palestinian Large Scale Enterprises. As evaluated by their subordinates, top managers act ethically. The main results also show that the organizational culture is a stronger driving force for ethical behavior than the organizational structure. This is a logical result, as respondents find that

their organizational culture forms a part of the wider Palestinian culture which normally overlaps and penetrates their internal organizational environment. Another reason is that none of the targeted companies have a separate written code of ethics.

The researcher concludes that respondents do not always express what they really think. Top managers are more honest in answering the questions. One of the major recommendations that the researcher think will help in getting more accountable results is to make semi-structured interviews instead of using questionnaires especially when searching a sensitive subject.