

# Ethical principles in Nizam Al-Mulk's Siyasatnama book in terms of Turkish management history

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Article Info	Abstract
<p><b>Article History</b> Submitted: 14 November 2017 Revised: 30 November 2017 Published: 8 December 2017</p> <hr/> <p><b>Keywords</b> Management Ethical Nizam al-Mulk Siyasatnama</p>	<p>The aim of the present research is to explain the ethical principles of management in Nizam al-Mulk's Siyasatnama book in terms of Turkish management history and to investigate the contributions of managerial ethical principles in Siyasatnama to Turkish management field. The main resource of the research is Nizam al-Mulk's Siyasatnama treatise. As the method, the research is a theoretical study based on literature. Nizam al-Mulk's Siyasatnama book has been regarded as the major managerial work, therefore it was examined with the data collection tool and ethical principles related to the topic were gathered. Research data consist of Nizam al-Mulk's managerial book named Siyasatnama and ethical principles of management mentioned in Siyasatnama. Besides, interpretations and academic studies carried out on Siyasatnama were consulted. Written materials which were taken as the basis of the research were analyzed by using content analysis method. The main reason why the content of Siyasatnama book was analyzed is to explain the obtained data and to determine their relationship with the prominent notions. The ethical principles of management mentioned in Siyasatnama book were determined as the main category of the research.</p>

## 1. Introduction

Nizam al-Mulk (1018 - 1092) is a military strategist, wise and understanding politician and government administrator. In his most popular work, Siyasatnama, he examined the government in terms of political, financial, military, bureaucracy, management, religion, sociology and justice (see Nizamü'l Mülk, 1987; 2014a; 2014b). He gave recommendations and suggestions that lead both his contemporaneous managers and successor government managers of him.

Nizam al-Mulk asserted that the establishment and persistence of a government in the scope of Turkish-Islamic culture and civilization depend on information, skills, wisdom, experience, long-sightedness, lessoning from events, consultation, steady bureaucratic structure and protocol rules. Besides, he stated that personnel should be appointed based on open competition and regular communication/tracking, discipline, security intelligence, punishment and reward systems should be constituted.

Nizam al-Mulk worked as a vizier in times of Ghaznavid State and Great Seljuk Empire and in times of Sultan Cagri Bey, Tughril Bey, Alp Arslan and Malik-Shah who was the son of Sultan Alp Arslan. He worked as a vizier in Turkish governments for at least thirty years in total. Nizam al-Mulk had the political opportunity to apply his dissertations for governmental management during his long vizier duty. After the powerful emperor Sultan Malik-Shah had enacted that a comprehensive report of governmental and social conditions be prepared, Nizam al-Mulk wrote

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his Siyasatnama treatise and won the praise and appreciation of Sultan Malik-Shah. Nizam al-Mulk turned Great Seljuk Empire into the most organized government of middle ages with his precautions and regulations in many areas. Besides, he provided that this government and its organizations acted as a model for other Turkish governments (Canatan, 2009).

Ethics is a branch of philosophy in terms of activity area and it is a philosophical activity that investigates the core and basis of morality. It handles and examines individual's ethical issues in personal and social life. Five basic professional principles are trueness, legality, reliability and occupational devotion (Akarsu, 1998; Aydın, 2003). Organizational ethics is a sequence of principles which ensure that personnel exhibit same kind of behaviors and which demonstrate that some social responsibilities are carried out while the organization fulfils its services to the society. Professional ethics is a sequence of principles which are formed and protected by a specific occupational group. Professional ethics principles command the members, compel them to behave in a particular way, restrict their personal inclinations, exclude incompetent and unprincipled members, organize occupational competition and aim to protect the service ideals. Ethics code is a sequence of purposes and behaviors to which relevant people have to follow in order to stand in a vocational or order kind of group. Ethical codes generally have written and formal quality. But some of the ethical codes may not be written. In ethical codes, standards and values to be possessed in the process of work are clearly stated. The main functions of them are to provide discipline within a particular group and to create necessary environment. Ethical codes generally consist of a set of brief principles. For instance, principal behavior expressions, such as "Each member behaves in the highest honesty and dignity" are involved in ethical codes. Various authors determined the ethical principles to be followed in management as follows: Justice, equality, honesty, trueness, objectivity, responsibility, human rights, humanism, devotion, superiority of law, sympathy, tolerance, secularity, respect, economy, democracy, positive human relations, transparency, rights and freedoms, appreciation of hard work and resistance to illegal commands (Prichard, 1998, cited by Aydın, 2003).

The aim of the present research is to explain the ethical principles of management in Nizam al-Mulk's Siyasatnama book in terms of Turkish management history and to investigate the contributions of managerial ethical principles in Siyasatnama to Turkish management field. The main resource of the research is Nizam al-Mulk's Siyasatnama treatise. The reasons why Nizam al-Mulk has been chosen in the research are as follows: After he was taken service with Seljuks, he worked as a vizier for Sultan Alparslan and Sultan Melik-Shah for nearly thirty years to his death, he was a government man who was fond of science, he established Nizamiye Schools (Akyuz, 2014) and he set an example not only for Seljuq Empire and government managers but also for next Turkish governments and government managers with his Siyasatnama treatise. Also the fact that his recommendations are still being applied is an important factor.

The following questions were handled in the research:

- 1- How does Nizam al-Mulk's Siyasatnama treatise approach to ethical principles in management?
- 2- Which managerial ethic principles are emphasized in Siyasatnama in terms of management?
- 3- What way-method to bring managerial ethic principles in managers is suggested in Siyasatnama?

The aim of the research is to determine the perspective of Nizam al-Mulk in terms of ethical principles in education by examining the details of managerial ethic principles in Siyasatnama.

## 2. Method

### 2.1. Research method

The present research is a theoretical study based on literature. With data collection technique, the research refers to Nizam al-Mulk's Siyasatnama resource which is the most basic management treatise. Accordingly, Siyasatnama was examined and ethic principles in management related to the topic were gathered.

## 2.2. Data collection

Research data are Nizam al-Mulk's managerial book called Siyasatnama and ethical management principles mentioned in Siyasatnama. Also, interpretations and academic studies conducted on Siyasatnama were practiced.

## 2.3. Data analysis

Written materials that were predicated in the research were examined with content analysis method. The main purpose of analyzing the content of Siyasatnama book was to determine the relation of data with notions by explaining them. Ethical principles of management mentioned in Siyasatnama book were chosen as the main category of the research.

## 3. Findings

Table 1 shows the ethical principles mentioned in Nizam al-Mulk's Siyasatnama book related to the features of statesmen with page numbers.

Table 1.

*Ethical Principles related to the Features of Statesmen*

Page Number	Ethical principles related to the features of statesmen
11	Someone who is trustworthy, brave, compassionate, religionist and who treats fairly to his subordinates, searches a common ground, commands people to behave nicely.
49-50	Get on well with people, help your subordinates in their responsibilities, do not hurt the weak, respect scientists, have conversations with the good and avoid the bad.
62	A manager should be merciful and fair. A manager should be generous to his subordinates.

Nizam al-Mulk emphasizes that government notables should be generous, brave, religious and competent in managing human relations with very good communication skills.

Table 2 presents the ethical principles for Government mentioned in Nizam al-Mulk's Siyasatnama treatise with page numbers.

Table 2

*Ethical Principles about Government*

Page Number	Ethical Principles about Government
56	Officials should not be very rich, should not possess private property and they should move to another cities every other year.
57	Intellectual officials who are not cruel should be assigned important tasks.
57	Guilty officials should be punished in order to provide justice in the right way.
79	Officials should take precautions in social issues and follow the situation of the society.
89	Orders of the manager should be fulfilled by the officials
111	Manager should consult intellectual people about governmental issues.
112	Manager should get help from knowledgeable and experienced old people.
114	Manager should give importance to protocol and ceremonies.
119	Authority to assign tasks should be given to a single person and that person should assign people by his own will. These tasks should not be accomplished as long as they are not approved.
127	Governmental issues should be carried out in consultation with knowledgeable and experienced people and decisions should be made accordingly.
169	Governmental managers and notables should be accessible. Community should have the chance to meet them on particular days

Table 2 continued

171	Community should not bring food-drink from their homes and managers should not accept them.
173	Sitting and standing near to a manager should be regulated according to a particular order and protocol.
179	Officials who make small mistakes should not be punished immediately. They should be advised first. If they maintain their mistakes, they should be punished.
189	Officials who accomplish their work should be rewarded without any delay. Others who do not give necessary importance to their duties should be punished.
195	Social-governmental issues should be hurried, decisions should not be given in rush.
195	Gossips, hearsay evidence should be examined deliberately and they should not affect the governmental decisions.
199	Managers and officials who do not perform their duties properly should be replaced with more efficient people.
215	Old and experienced people should be given important positions.
217	Titles should be chosen carefully and they should not be increased unnecessarily. Otherwise, the value of a title may decrease.
229	Two official duties should not be offered to the same person and the same duty should not be offered to two people.
255	Manager-emperor should not increase the positions of subordinates.

According to Nizam al-Mulk, there are particular ethical principles in governmental management. These principles are as follows: the government should be managed with knowledge rather than gossip, formal duties should be distributed to individuals, titles and duties should be given regarding the competencies, experience should be valued, reward and punishment system should be established effectively, decisions should be taken with patience, the operations should be monitored and supervised, there should be an order and contexture and organizing procedure should be given importance.

#### 4. Results and Discussion

Today all public officials have to follow a sequence of rules. Public officials ethical agreement was organized in order to establish ethical culture in public service, determine ethical behavior principles to follow and increase society's reliance to the management of public institutions (Official Journal, 2005). Ethical behavior principles stated in Official Journal are as follows: Public service has more importance than any private profit, public officials have to serve for the society, they facilitate daily lives of the society, meet society's needs effectively and immediately, they should be respectful, transparent, participating, honest, accountable, they should provide public welfare, public officials also follow the superiority of law and service requirements, they should not accept gifts from any real person or legal entity, they should not make any material or moral profit from society, they should not expect any private interest and they should not misspend the material resources.

In order to compare with the items of Official Journal (2005), ethical principles that Nizam al-Mulk mentioned in Siyasatnama are listed below:

- Officials who accomplish their work should be rewarded without any delay.
- Social-governmental issues should be hurried, decisions should not be given in rush.
- Gossips, hearsay evidence should be examined deliberately and they should not affect the governmental decisions.
- Officials who do not give necessary importance to their duties should be punished.
- Managers and officials who do not perform their duties properly should be replaced with more efficient people.
- Old and experienced people should be given important positions.
- Manager-emperor should not increase the positions of subordinates,

- Authority to assign tasks should be given to a single person and that person should assign people by his own will. These tasks should not be accomplished as long as they are not approved..
- Two official duties should not be offered to the same person and the same duty should not be offered to two people,
- Titles should be chosen carefully and they should not be increased unnecessarily. Otherwise, the value of a title may decrease.
- Governmental issues should be carried out in consultation with knowledgeable and experienced people and decisions should be made accordingly.
- Governmental managers should be accessible. Community should have the chance to meet them.
- Community should not bring food-drink from their homes and managers should not accept them.
- Officials who make small mistakes should not be punished immediately. They should be advised first. If they maintain their mistakes, they should be punished.
- An important task should not be assigned to another person,
- Officials should be investigated and deliberately supervised.
- Officials who do not give importance to their duties and who behave cruelly to the society should be punished
- Competent and moral people should be appointed to each duty.
- Reward and punishment system should be suitable for the quality of the job,
- Each person should be given tasks according to their power and success,
- Officials should behave fairly to the society, (Swear word cannot shatter a government, but cruelty can.)
- Candidates for a job should be examined especially in terms of their moral values in order to avoid bribery.

When ethical behavior principles stated in Official Journal (2005) were compared with ethical principles that Nizam al-Mulk mentioned in Siyasatnama nearly a thousand years ago, it can be seen that they coincide with each other in many aspects. That is, Nizam al-Mulk states that the most important principle of government is justice. He indicates that manager should be aware of how society make their living, search for their conditions as much as he can, supervise and monitor officials and statesmen. Also Nizam al-Mulk states that managers should not forgive these four crimes: working for the collapse of the government, having unlawful issues, not protecting government security and collaborating with the enemies. Managers should be very careful when distributing the duties and roles. They should give one duty to two people. If they give two duties to one person, unemployment increase in the society. The best is to distribute the duties and roles in the most appropriate way, to endeavor to provide jobs for everyone and to give the duties to the qualified people (Akyuz, 2014).

Ethical principles to be followed in modern management are *justice, equality, honesty, trueness, objectivity, responsibility, human rights, humanism, devotion, superiority of law, sympathy, tolerance, secularity, respect, economy, democracy, positive human relations, transparency, rights and freedoms and appreciation of hard work* (Pehlivan, 2016). They are mostly related to the personal features of the public official. On the other hand, personal features of manager mentioned in Siyasatnama are *reaching a common ground; being generous (neither stingy nor wasteful), religious, wise, knowledgeable, powerful, conscious; sharing ideas, taking time in making decisions, giving importance to science; being fair, sensitive, social, helpful, respectful, communicative and well adjusted*. These two sequences of principles are quite similar to each other. It demonstrates that Nizam al-Mulk was a qualified statesman who appealed to different periods of history and that Siyasatnama has a great importance in Turkish management system. In that, personal features that Nizam al-Mulk stated such as being religious, respecting intellectual people, consulting to knowledgeable people (Akyuz, 2014) are basic

qualifications sought in ideal managers today. It indicates that Siyasatnama still maintains its place and importance in Turkish management system.

Principles that Nizam al-Mulk stated in Siyasatnama and that guide Turkish management system are career, human relations management based on competence and qualification, an organization system in which physical and human relations can be used effectively, professional ethical principles based on national, moral and personal values.

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## How to cite this article:

Göksoy, S. (2017). Ethical principles in Nizam Al-Mulk's Siyasatnama book in terms of Turkish management history. *Journal of Pedagogical Research*, 1(1), 77-82.