Marketing-Ethics in Swedish Universities

- Perceived importance and implementation of ethics in marketing courses

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Abstract

As a result of recent corporate scandals, a stronger environmental movement and increased transparency of companies’ overseas activities, the demand of higher ethics has impacted all of society. With a current situation where companies need to be viewed as responsible, fair and more ethical in order to compete, new initiatives towards extensive Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is taken on a daily basis. When even oil companies such as BP are taking steps to be perceived as more green no one can doubt that something is changing.

With this trend of increased ethical standards and requirements throughout society, we have conducted a research where we investigate the role of universities related to these issues. Our aim was to find out what importance Sweden’s universities give to ethics within marketing education and, if this importance is reflected in how it is implemented in the courses.

Our approach to answering these questions was to interview representatives of four different Swedish universities. We chose interview subjects that were involved in the planning and execution of marketing courses. We used a qualitative research method in order to not only see the level of implementation of ethics, but also to get to know the underlying thoughts determining how it is implemented.

Our analysis showed us a rather unanimous way of thinking between the universities. What we found was that the universities do indeed view ethics as something important that should be implemented in education as well as in business. On the actual implementation however, the responses we got showed that it didn’t precisely reflect the importance given to ethics. The need of more ethics was not only visible in the analysis but also to some degree verbalized by some of the respondents.
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Appendix A-B
1. Introduction

This part will show the background to, and a discussion of our chosen research. In this section the research question will be presented and the purpose of it explained further. Also we will here give an explanation of our limitations due to the time and cost of the research.

1.1 Background

In recent years the view on business ethics has changed in many ways. The stakeholders of many companies are driving this change further every day. Increasingly higher ethical standards are nowadays desired and demanded by many consumers. Because of this, being ethical has become a comparative advantage that can prevent your customers from going to a competitor. Also, due to changes in public opinion one can expect that legislative measures might be taken in order to comply with this force. Therefore companies must be attentive and try to stay ahead of legislation to prevent unexpected problems and costs while at the same time satisfying all their stakeholders. Due to the globalization process we now have a good insight in companies and organizations activities, both at home and overseas. Not too long ago this insight was limited only to organizations close to us, but even there low levels of transparency stood in the way. This is one reason that ethics is nowadays given much importance, and the incentives driving companies to improve their ethical standards are continuously getting stronger. One example of causes for increased demand of better ethics in previous years, are the high profile accounting scandals such as Enron and WorldCom. In these cases both the law has been broken and the ethical responsibilities have been disregarded (Maguad & Krone, 2009:209).

The recent financial crisis in 2008 also raised a few ethical questions. Financial institutions were gearing heavily, which was very profitable in the short-run, but soon turned out to be a disaster. What they were neglecting was that the financial market is actually in place to help fund or raise capital for companies in other industries, for example, such as the auto-industry. When the financial institutions start to shake and even fall as they did during the autumn in 2008 they are threatening the liquidity in all markets. Because what happened was a “confidence crisis” no-one wanted to lend money to others, because of the uncertainty of default. Therefore the financial institutions have a responsibility to be responsible in their business and not to take too high risks, which they cannot afford. An example, are loans that were made without really following the 20 percent down payment rules (news.yahoo.com). In addition there is the risk of “moral hazard”, when the financial institutions were rescued by governments and taxpayers. What is meant by moral hazard is that there is the risk of financial business people thinking they could take a reckless amount of risk since they probably are going to be rescued anyway, if things go bad. (Howells & Bain, 2008:58) This crisis we believe resulted in a peak in the long lasting trend of increased demand for corporate and individual responsibility, and even though this crisis has now passed, the ethical questioning it has created still remains alongside the ethical issues that existed prior to the crisis.

Another main reason is the environmental aspect. People are slowly shifting their demand towards products and services that can offer a lower environmental impact than their competitors. The producing companies are seeing this trend and realizing the competitive advantage of being, or at least being perceived as, environmentally responsible. A problem that has arisen with this strive to be viewed as “green” is the more commonly occurring Greenwashing we can see in the marketing of companies and their products. Greenwashing is defined by Gundersen (2008) as: "...the act of misleading consumers regarding the
environmental practices of a company or the environmental benefits of a product or service” (Gundersen, 2008:1). The amount of actual Greenwashing is hard to estimate because it is hard to define and prove. But when even companies as BP, in the years before the recent environmental disaster in the Mexican Gulf, was using terms such as “green” in their marketing, there is not many who would claim Greenwashing doesn’t exist at all. In order to avoid this kind of ethical misbehavior we need marketers with a strong ethical foundation. But where are these ethical standards supposed to come from? Our ethics are to a large extent created during our upbringing but because of this they differ between individuals. As some of these individuals than engage in business studies, the universities have an opportunity to address and improve these ethical standards further. It can be argued that as educators of future marketers universities has a social responsibility to produce marketers that will behave responsible as they practice what they have learnt in their education.

1.2 Problem discussion

Since ethics is becoming a more frequently discussed and important issue we find it interesting to investigate how the Swedish universities try to keep up with this trend. Our personal set of ethics are created and changed during most of our lifetime and our education takes up a large part of that time, a time where many of us evolve and get to know ourselves. Therefore we view the universities role in creating responsible marketers for the future as important. Not only is it important to provide courses in marketing ethics, but also to try to integrate it in all marketing education to ensure that ethical thinking always exists in the back of the mind of students. If a separation into just marketing and just marketing ethics is made the importance of always using ethics when practicing marketing might be lost.

1.3 Research question

How important does Sweden’s universities consider marketing ethics, and is the importance given to it reflected in its representation in marketing courses?

1.4 Purpose

The aim of our research is to investigate how Business Schools at Sweden’s universities view the importance of marketing ethics and how they approach it in the education, both with written (formal) requirements and implied (informal) requirements. With this we want to establish if the importance given to ethics is reflected in the implementation of it within the marketing courses. What we aim to achieve with this is to increase awareness and raise some questions about the social responsibility universities have in educating the future marketers.

1.5 Limitations

Out of Sweden’s universities we have chosen to interview representatives of four of them. The reason we chose four is that given the limited amount of time we have, we deemed this to be the most appropriate number in order to be able to conduct interviews with a sufficient dept. By sufficient depth we mean an interview that not only measures how much weight has been given to ethics within the marketing courses but also what the thoughts were behind the chosen representation of ethics. When choosing the universities to interview we started by sending out requests to most of the universities, and among the ones showing an interest in participating we chose four that were spread over Sweden. The research covers undergraduate
level because we believe this to be more relevant in our mind, due to the fact that all students study at this level.

1.6 Preconceptions

Prior to engaging in this research we assumed that universities of Sweden at least to some degree try actively to bring ethics into the subject of marketing. However the fact that many universities have electable courses in marketing ethics, might have the effect that the ethical aspects are neglected within the rest of the marketing courses they provide. We believe that they share our view of ethics as something important not only within marketing, but that the degree of which ethics have been implemented into the courses might not perfectly reflect this perceived importance.

1.7 Background of the authors

The authors are two undergraduate students from Umeå University. As this research is written they study at year four on the International Business Program with a focus on business administration. The authors’ interest in marketing ethics has developed gradually through their business studies but was really ignited after a course in the subject. After this course they wanted to know more about how ethics were perceived by, and taught at universities.

1.8 Research outline

Chapter 1 – Introduction
This part will show the background to, and a discussion of our chosen research. In this section the research question will be presented and the purpose of it explained further. Also we will here give an explanation of our limitations due to the time and cost of the research.

Chapter 2 – Method
This chapter will state what theoretical methods where used in the research. Furthermore we will briefly discuss why we chose the methods we did and how we interpret them. In this chapter the reader will also be informed about the preconceptions we had prior to the studies.

Chapter 3 – Theory
In this chapter we will present theories that we have found on ethics from a wide point of view. These theories are mainly related to ethics in education and ethics within business. The purpose of this theoretical background was mainly to be used as an aid for creating our interviews and also as the main tool used when analyzing our empirical results.

Chapter 4 – Empirical findings
In this chapter we will present a summarized and translated version of each of the four interviews we conducted. These summaries are based on the transcripts of the interviews and the information they contain has been read and approved by the four interviewees.

Chapter 5 – Analysis
In this chapter we will break down the empirical data collected in our interviews and compare them against each other in order to find similarities and differences between them. The information we derive by doing this will then be linked to the theoretical framework provided in chapter three.
Chapter 6 – Conclusions
In this chapter we will present our conclusions drawn from the findings resulting from the analysis. These conclusions will have a focus on the differences and similarities between the implementation and underlying thoughts about ethics presented by the interviewees from the different universities we studied.

Chapter 7 – Future studies
In this chapter we will briefly discuss what future studies we see a need for after finishing our own research.
2. Method

This chapter will state what theoretical methods were used in the research. Furthermore we will briefly discuss why we chose the methods we did and how we interpret them. In this chapter the reader will also be informed about the preconceptions we had prior to the studies.

2.1 Literature selection

To aid us in the search for the right articles and journals for our thesis, we used the search engines provided by Umeå University Library. In the business studies database we found good use of Business Source Premier and Emerald Fulltext. Furthermore we made simpler searches on Google to find basic information, such as definitions, but it also proved to be very helpful with finding articles. We also made searches on Google Scholar, which is more focused on academic work than regular Google. The Language used was mainly English, but also Swedish on a few occasions. The key words and phrases that was used where: ethics in marketing education, corporate citizenship, corporate social responsibility (CSR) business ethics, ethics education, ethics education effects, greenwashing, filosofi etik, philosophy ethics, etik i samhället, ethical theory in philosophy. We searched for ethical concepts in philosophy and society in the beginning because we believed it could be helpful. However, later on in the process we thought it would make us lose focus on what was most important in our theory section. To find literature we searched in the Umeå University Library’s Album, mostly to find books about marketing ethics, ethics and methodology. Our key words used where: marketing ethics, ethics in philosophy, methodology and research method.

2.2 Ontology

When looking at the ontological nature of an organisation or culture, there are two significant viewpoints we can choose from. There is the idea of objectivism, which sees the social entity that is an organisation or culture, as an external entity that can look unchangeable for the person operating with it (Bryman & Bell, 2007:22). In other words we can almost see it as a very independent actor on its own. Since we do not share this view of social phenomena we have chosen constructionism, another part of ontology. While still recognizing the influential part of a social entity, constructionism sees a social phenomenon as something that develops through interaction between social actors. Hence, it will not be pre-determined, but instead will keep on changing through time (Bryman & Bell, 2007:22-23). Because the world and our understanding of it are continuously changing, people face new problems and need to adapt. In turn this will affect and evolve the principles of the organisation or culture, in which the social actor exist (Becker in Bryman & Bell, 2007:22-23).

2.3 Epistemology

In philosophy epistemology is study of knowledge and asks what necessary conditions there are for knowledge, which source does it derive from, are there any limits and how it is structured (plato.stanford.edu). More broadly speaking it is about what one would consider as acceptable knowledge within a certain practice, as mentioned by both Saunders et al (2009:112) and Bryman & Bell (2007:16). There are two different ways or positions that could be applied, which are positivism and interpretivism. Saunders et al (2009:113) mentions that when following the view of positivism one will adopt a position very close to the one in natural science. However, can and should the social world be studied in the same way as...
entities in natural sciences? In other words is the way of natural science research applicable on the social world, is a question being asked by Bryman & Bell (2007).

2.3.1 Positivism

In epistemology positivism is a position that calls for imitating the philosophy of method used in natural science, when conducting a study of social reality. For some it is a term that could be connected with superficial data collection, according to Bryman & Bell (2007:16). The researcher would see himself as external to the data collecting process, the idea is to be having distance to the collecting process and make it as value-free as possible (Saunders et al, 2009:114). Then it is assumed that the subject is not affected or will for that matter affect the researcher (Remenyi et al in Saunders et al, 2009:114). Another thing that is important is that in positivism one will use hypothesis, developed from theory, to test against the data collected. As a researcher one will also be more interested in facts and quantifiable observations than impressions, which suits better when making a statistical analysis. (Saunders et al, 2009:114) Because of the nature of a positivist view we see it as unfit for the purpose of this paper, and have chosen an interpretivist view instead. The main reason being that in a positivist view the researcher sees himself as external to the data collecting process. This will be impossible for us since we will conduct interviews, which will be discussed later on in this chapter.

2.3.2 Interpretivism

According to Bryman & Bell (2007) many of those who disagree with the whole idea of positivism share a similar view. When it comes to people and institutions or mainly social sciences it is fundamentally different from what is examined in natural science. Hence, the way of conducting research must be revised when trying to study the social world. (Bryman & Bell, 2007:17) The people critical to positivism will argue that the social world is full of complexity, which cannot be explained by generalisation, as we find in natural science, for example (Saunders et al, 2009:115-116). Therefore we have interpretivism as a contrast to positivism. This position focuses more on the understanding of behaviour rather than seeking an explanation as one do in positivism (Bryman & Bell, 2007:18). Saunders et al (2009:116) argues that something crucial when taking an interpretivist position is to also take on an empathic stance. Where one has to try to understand the research subjects social world from their point of view. Since it is argued that interpretivism is well suited for research of business and organisational behaviour (Saunders et al, 2009:116), it feels natural for us to adopt this epistemological view in our research. Especially, since we are studying a social entity such as a university and are going to conduct semi-structured interviews where different questions could arise. The key term is also understanding, because our goal is to understand how our interviewees view marketing ethics education.

2.4 Research approach

One of the most common research approaches is deduction (Bryman & Bell, 2007:11), and it is especially dominant within natural science (Saunders et al, 2009:124). In deduction one starts with the theory and then continues with the observations and collecting of data. Through the theory one will develop a hypothesis (or several) to be tested against the empirical findings in the study. Another approach is induction, which in contrast to deduction derives its theory from observations rather than testing a hypothesis. (Bryman & Bell, 2007:14) After the data collection follows an analysis of the data, which will later lead to the
formulation of a theory (Saunders et al, 2009:126). In this research, however, we have chosen to go with a deductive approach; this was done by first collecting and reviewing existing theories, and from these constructing the questions that we used in our data collection. The data found was then analysed and then used to answer our research question, of whether or not the representation of ethics in marketing courses reflects the importance given to it.

2.5 Choice of method

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate to what extent Swedish universities integrate ethics into their marketing courses. This study could be performed using a quantitative approach, where various measurements would give us an idea of to what extent ethics are represented within the courses. But since the importance of ethics and its place in business are perceived differently between individuals, we have decided to use a qualitative approach where not just the representation of ethics are examined but also the underlying thoughts determining it. These thoughts we plan to derive from the answers we get in our interviews where the questions are formed so that they require further explanations to the interviewees’ way of thinking. This qualitative research will be conducted using semi-structured interviews with representatives of some universities, involved in the planning and execution of marketing courses. We use the semi-structured interviews because they give us the freedom we need to adapt our questions in order to create a more discussion type data. With these interviews we can then observe the importance given to ethics, as well as the approaches to implementing it within the courses. We chose to conduct our interviews by telephone (with one face to face exception) because this way is the most convenient given our limited amount of time and also it reduces cost.

2.6 Qualitative research

Qualitative Research does unlike Quantitative Research focus on words and not numbers. Most qualitative research uses what is called an inductive approach where a theory is derived from the actual research. Defined from the view of epistemology this kind of research would apply to what is called interpretivist, where the social world studied is analyzed from how it is viewed by those within it. (Bryman & Bell, 2007:402-403). In this research we will analyze the social world as it is viewed by those within it, but we have chosen to use a deductive approach where the actual research is based on theories we have found on the subject. A qualitative research generally consists of six steps. These are; to create a research question, selecting subjects for interviewing, collection of data, interpret the data, deriving concepts and theories and concluding the findings. (Bryman & Bell, 2007:406-407). Even though a quantitative approach could have been used to answer our research question, we chose the qualitative approach in order to further investigate the underlying thoughts of the degree in which the universities has chosen to implement ethics. In other words a quantitative approach could have answered what importance and level of implementation ethics have, but not why this was the case.

Maintaining a solemnly qualitative approach is often hard without slipping towards a quantitative analysis and conclusion. In this thesis we have tried our best to focus on the qualitative aspects of our empirical findings. However since we had four cases we sometimes had to resort to more quantitative approaches in order to show the similarities resulting in the final answer to our research question. However the focus have remained on the underlying thoughts of our respondents resulting in the current situation at the universities, rather than just describing the situation itself.
2.7 Semi-structured interview

The type of interview we have chosen to use is a semi-structured interview. In this kind of interview we will use a list of questions that cover all the issues we want to discuss with the interviewees from our chosen Universities. In a semi-structured interview we have the freedom to alter the order in which we ask the questions, alter the questions themselves and add or deduct questions depending on the answers we get from the interviewee. If using a structured interview we would have preset questions asked in a specific order and then used a generalized coding of the answers. Using this form of interview would not allow us enough room for discussion of and adaption to the interviewee’s answers. The qualitative answers resulting from the interview have to be recorded and transcribed so that they can be properly analyzed. (Saunders, 2009:320).

2.8 Summary of research strategy

To summarize the research strategy it consists of the following: A deductive approach using a constructionist position in ontology, an interpretivist position in epistemology, and which will be qualitative by the use of semi-structured interviews to collect our data.

2.9 Cross-sectional design

This kind of design entails collecting data from several cases. This is done in order to enable the researcher to find variations. Usually the more cases one use for the collection of data the more variations can be found. In this research these cases are the four universities that we have chosen to interview. In a cross-sectional design research, all data is preferably collected at a single point of time. Depending on the subject of research the time interval appropriate can differ but should preferably be kept as short as possible. (Bryman & Bell, 2007:55)

We chose to use this design because we wanted to cover as many aspects as possible with our interviews. Even though many answers to the interview questions would be similar the underlying thoughts was likely to differ. Hence a cross-sectional design would give us more examples of the underlying thoughts behind the implementation of ethics in the courses.

2.10 Data collection

When doing research one can choose to use secondary data which means reanalyzing data collected for purposes other than answering our research question. Another approach is to use so called primary data. This is data that you have collected yourself for the sole purpose of answering your research question. (Bryman & Bell, 2007:246-247). A factor determining which of these approaches to use is the availability and quality of the data. Another is the cost of obtaining the data.

For this research we have decided to use a combination of primary data and secondary data. The reason for this is that there is much available data from previous studies concerning the subject of ethics that we can use. Also, by doing this we are able to review a wide spectrum of theories on ethics giving us a firm foundation to stand on prior to analyzing the primary data collected. The reason that we need primary data is that the research question cannot be answered just using previous studies; therefore we need to collect further data filing the gaps left by the secondary data.
We do realize that using secondary data has its weaknesses. One of these is for example that these sources might not be up to date. So when using articles that are of more significant age such as Friedman (1970) we have kept this in mind when using the information found in that article. But to the greatest extent possible we have tried to use more recent articles where these have been available and relevant. Another weakness is when the original source is not available and the information is taken from secondary source. This does create a chance of the data being misinterpreted by this source. We have taken this into consideration and avoided using information from such sources as much as possible.

2.11 Practical method

In order to ensure a high quality of our research we took all the methodological knowledge mentioned above into careful consideration when preparing for, and performing our empirical study. This is how we proceeded:

First we did some basic research on all the major universities in Sweden to see if they were suitable for our study. This resulted in a number about twice the size of our intended number of interviews. We then contacted all of these universities to see who was the most suitable person to interview at each university. After this we proceeded to contact these persons by email (see appendix) in order to find our desired, four participants for the study. After our first contact attempt we found five possible interviewees. Out of these we chose four that happened to be well geographically spread across the country. This is fact was however omitted in the study, but could be positive in that it might eliminate things such as local trends.

We do realize that by volunteering for the study, so called self-selection sampling (Saunders, 2009:241), these interviewees might have been biased in the sense that they had a personal interest in the subject or thought their university was better than average concerning ethics. On the other hand, this can only be speculated in, and choosing interviewees that did not want to participate was impossible.

Before conducting our interviews we sent our questions to the respondents (see appendix). This was done so that the respondents could prepare themselves with all the necessary information needed to properly answer our questions, information that they might not have had if they were unprepared. Even though the level of preparedness differed between the respondents we are confident that this procedure still raised the quality of the answers and reduced the risk of non-responses.

We then performed our four semi-structured interviews. The two of us using a speakerphone conducted the three telephone interviews. The general questions asked where the same in all interviews, but we also used follow-up questions where this could clarify answers we deemed to be insufficient. In the fourth interview conducted in person was also performed by the two of us. The questions were asked in exactly the same manner as the telephone interviews in order to limit favorable/unfavorable aspects of using a different method of interviewing. All the interviews were recorded and then carefully transcribed to preserve the quality and nature of the information we received.
2.12 Questions

The questions we used for the interview were open questions. There are both advantages and disadvantages to using open questions and these has to be looked into alongside how the different kind questions fits the nature of the research. The advantages of using open questions are; that the respondents’ answers can be open, unexpected, revealing of the respondents knowledge and exploring new sides to the issue. The negative aspects of open questions are; that they are time consuming to manage, take more effort for the respondents and they must be recorded. In our research we could have used closed questions but we decided to use open questions since these will give us much more depth and knowledge of the underlying reasons to the ethical aspects of each university’s marketing courses. (Bryman & Bell, 2007:258-259)

2.13 Telephone interviews

Conducting several non-standardized interviews over a large area takes time and can be very costly. A way of getting around this is to use the Internet or a telephone to do conduct these interviews. The disadvantage of a telephone interview is that there is no face-to-face interaction that is particularly important when establishing trust. A lack of trust can be essential to the result of an interview containing sensitive questions. Also the answers are harder to interpret when the body language if the interviewee cannot be read. Furthermore there is the technical aspect of recording the interview. Taking sufficient notes during a longer interview is very difficult and there is a risk of missing important parts of the answers. An audio recording is the best solution to this problem given there are no problems or malfunctions in the technology used for the recording. (Saunders, 2009:349)

In spite of the disadvantages of a telephone interview this is our method of choice. Doing interviews with universities spread over Sweden doing a face-to-face interview would be far more costly and time consuming for us. The issue of trust is however one of the main disadvantages for us. Our questions are in our opinion not of high sensitivity but clarifying this would be easier in a face-to-face situation. Our way of coping with this is by prior to the interviews sending our interviewees the questions and an explanation of our intentions with the interviews. The technical issue we will solve by using a phone with speaker function allowing both of us to participate and then recording the entire interview with a laptop with clear and tested recording abilities.

Apart from the telephone interviews we have conducted, we have also made one interview in person and not over telephone. This interview was with the representative from Umeå University. The reason that we chose to do this interview in person is that we live in Umeå and could perform this interview as efficiently as the interviews over telephone without any extra cost. We did take into account that this could be favorable for Umeå University since this will allow a different kind of interaction and possibly more trust than the telephone interviews. After carefully considering these facts we finally decided to do the interview face to face. Apart from the fact that it would feel unreasonable to call a person sitting in the same building as we did, we were convinced that since we would ask the exactly same questions in the same order and treat the answers the same way, Umeå University would neither gain nor lose to the extent that our results would be affected.
2.14 Transcribing qualitative data

The norm when conducting non-standardized interviews in qualitative research is to record the interview and then transcribe it. To transcribe is to write down what has been said as it was said. This is done in order to recreate the interview as vividly as possible to enable a better analysis and to help future readers getting a clear picture of the interview. This process is very time consuming and can take up to ten times the length of the actual interview. After being transcribed the material is sent back to the interviewee for a final check and approval. (Saunders, 2009:485)

2.15 Anonymity

Anonymity is a concept that origins from the idea that research participants should not be harmed due to their involvement. Research that is harmful to participants is generally frowned upon and possible harm should be minimized to the extent that it is possible. (Bryman & Bell, 2007:133). Since the interviews we have performed are of low sensitivity we have used a limited version of the anonymity concept. The main purpose of this has been to keep the interviewees names from being directly connected to the research. However the interviews contain information that can be used to find out who the interviewees are, but this information was given to us voluntarily and has been shown to and approved by our interviewees after the interviews were transcribed. We do not see any harm to the interviewees in someone actually finding out who they are. Another reason for using this limited version of the anonymity concept instead of not having anonymity at all is that we want to gain some of the trust that is generally lost when performing a telephone interview. This lets the interviewees know that we are not interested in causing any personal harm to them.

2.16 Data processing

After we made the transcriptions of the interviews for the appendix, we wrote a summary of their context where we also filtered them to make them more accessible for our readers. Doing this also gave us an opportunity to connect the answers that were related to each other so that the results would become clearer.

2.17 Trustworthiness

The quality of a quantitative business research is determined using reliability, validity and generalizability as measures. A qualitative business research, however, needs different measures than reliability and validity. The measures used instead are trustworthiness and authenticity. Trustworthiness consists of four different parts; these are credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. An additional criteria to trustworthiness is authenticity. (Bryman & Bell, 2007:410)

2.17.1 Credibility

Credibility is something ensured by conducting research in a proper and commonly accepted manner, and by having the findings validated by the people studied in the social world. (Bryman & Bell, 2007:411) The credibility of this paper was ensured by using a research method that we believe is well-known and commonly excepted. As for the validation by the people studied in the social world it was limited to sending our interview transcripts for approval by the respondents. In order to further strengthen our credibility we performed a
triangulation where we compared our respondents’ answers to the course syllabuses and list of course literature, to see if the answers were supported.

2.17.2 Transferability

Transferability is established by using a so-called “Thick description”. A thick description is when the small social group studied is carefully described in order to help readers assessing to what extent the research is transferable to another context or time. (Bryman & Bell, 2007:413) As for reader’s ability to make judgments about the transferability of our results to other universities, we have made this easier by describing the courses analyzed and what level they are at. However, for transferability in time we believe the trends in society, concerning ethics, might make the same findings improbable, e.g. ten years from now.

2.17.3 Dependability

Dependability is something ensured by recording all steps in the research and then making these recordings easily accessible. (Bryman & Bell, 2007:414) The dependability of this paper has been ensured, for example, by making our interview questions and e-mail correspondence available in the appendix.

2.17.4 Confirmability

Confirmability is something ensured by being as objective as possible when collecting and analyzing the data. (Bryman & Bell, 2007:414). This has been ensured by basing our comments on theoretical and empirical findings rather than our own personal believes. By doing this we as authors remain as objective as possible in this research.

2.17.5 Authenticity

The Authenticity include that all different views of different interviewees are treated and represented equally. Authenticity is also determined by to what extent the research subjects get a better understanding of the issues touched upon, give them a better view of the other subjects point of views and given them incentives to change. (Bryman & Bell, 2007:414). In this paper the four respondents were all treated and represented equally. Furthermore, we believe our respondents increased their awareness of ethics in education, and helped them identify their strengths, weaknesses and limitations in the subject.
3. Theory

In this chapter we will present theories that we have found on ethics from a wide point of view. These theories are mainly related to ethics in education and ethics within business. The purpose of this theoretical background was mainly to be used as an aid for creating our interviews and also as the main tool used when analyzing our empirical results.

3.1 Ethics

3.1.1 Definition of ethics

In order to make the content of this paper more relevant and easy to understand, we have started the theoretical chapter with giving you a definition of the concept as we see it.

Ethics is a term that’s meaning most people have a basic understanding of. But when asked to define the term the answers would be numerous. Since the term ethics plays a large role in this paper we have carefully assessed and chosen what definition to use. The definition we use claims that ethics is an;

“Investigation into the basic concepts and fundamental principles of human conduct. It includes study of universal values such as the essential equality of all men and women, human or natural rights, obedience to the law of land, concern for health and safety and, increasingly, also for the natural environment” (www.businessdictionary.com).

3.1.2 Immoral, moral and amoral management

These three different views of the responsibilities of companies will give you a better understanding of the arguments for and against integrating ethics into business. These will later help in further classifying the standpoints of our respondents.

The three main ethical management models that exist are immoral management, amoral management and moral management. An immoral management is one that does whatever it takes to gain from every opportunity with a conscious and active disregard of ethical aspects. Amoral management however is often viewed as something in between moral and immoral management. This common view is not really accurate. Amoral management has a view of business as an area void of moral and ethical principles, where often the opinion is that following the law is all that can be expected of a business. When talking about different types of management, moral management is considered the best kind. Moral management represent a high set of ethical standards and the operations connected to it can simply put be described as fair. This kind of management is a good recipe for success because of the fact that a management with good moral standards also has a positive influence on its employees and strengthens the organization from within. The ethical codes and standard set within an organization are only as strong as the management follows them. Unless these ethical standards are properly communicated, realistic and enforced they will not be effective. If maintained for a longer period of time however, a climate will be created where not only managers but also their subordinates strive to maintain these standards. (Maguad et al, 2009:211-212) Someone who is often mentioned in connection with similar ideas as amoral management is the well-known economist Milton Friedman. Friedman who states in an article from the New York Times (1970): "there is one and only one social responsibility of business—to use it resources and engage in activities designed to increase its profits so long as it stays within the rules of the game, which is to say, engages in open and free competition.
without deception or fraud.” (Friedman, 1970)

### 3.1.3 Creation of moral and ethics

In order to understand the importance of having ethics in business and marketing education, it is important to understand how and where our personal set of ethics is created. This section is devoted to accomplish this.

Whether or not our personal set of moral and ethical standards is something we are born into or create as we grow up can be debated. Even though many of our distinctions between what is right and wrong differ a lot between different cultures, from a wide perspective they are also very much alike. Societies spread all over the world have experienced similar problems during their creation and in their strive to overcome this the outcomes have been similar all over the world. But still it is not possible to completely disregard the fact that there are still many differences between cultures and looking even closer it becomes clear that differences we are to some extent born into our values, moral and ethical foundations. Our background does matter and will affect us. However the individual differences in our values are created from the way that we learn to interpret the standards of the society that surrounds us. Our experiences do also matter to the personal moral values we end up with. (Brenkert, 2008:6)

This fact is a reason to assume that our education, which consumes a large portion of our lives, does play a role in the creation of our moral foundation.

### 3.2 Ethics vs. law

This section will further look into the often very complicated relationship between ethics and law. As everyone knows the law must be followed, but what about ethics? And could there be any problems of only focusing on the legal aspects of business.

The question whether or not companies have further obligations than merely obeying laws, rules and regulations, is highly relevant for the discussion within this paper. As mentioned in Maguad et al (2009), the class of amoral management has the point of view that following the law is all that can be expected by managers and companies. To the contrary the “Moral management” has a view that companies and managers do indeed have further responsibilities than the minimum required which is to follow the law.

These two schools of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), also called Corporate Citizenship, are further discussed in Schwarts & Carroll (2003). Here the Concept of CSR is further defined and its relation to law is examined. A clear way of showing the relation of CSR and law chosen here is through the “Pyramid of Corporate Social Responsibility” by Archie Carroll (1991). This pyramid shows different levels of corporate responsibilities and the stakeholder expectations upon them.

| Be a good Corporate Citizen: | Philanthropic | Desired |
| Be ethical: | Ethical | Expected |
| Obey the law: | Legal | Required |
| Be profitable: | Economic | Required |


This model depicts a very simplified model of the actual situation. However it does explain...
the fundamentals of the relationship. In this model of obligations in ascending importance, it becomes visible that law is the minimum requirement and that ethics start where law ends. It should be added that this model is very simplified and that there are many issues with it that has been discussed (Shwarts et al, 2003).

Another important connection between law and ethics is within education, as law studies also have an important part in business education in countries like the United Kingdom. The areas of most significance are Contract and Employment law. At a first glance the contract laws looks as if they can guarantee honest business activities along with strong moral values. However, unfortunately that is not the case and it is possible that it might encourage to the complete opposite. In contracts it is required that both parties are fully aware and have agreed upon what they are engaging in. This contract only concerns those two parties and a third party basically cannot object to it. Hence, this can produce the notion of a private sphere where the contracts or business exists and does not have any effects on society. Which surely is not the case, but it is a problem even though there are laws protecting third parties in most severe cases. (Macfarlane, 1995:33) We ought not to either forget that contract law sometimes also assume that every agent involved is at equal strength and has the same bargaining power. This is very untrue when it comes to monopolistic marketplaces with a lack of competing individuals or firms. (Macfarlane, 1995:34) It could almost be argued that contract theory can encourage the implementation of game theory into business. This basically means that in business, as in game theory, everyone is somewhat aware of deceit being common and expected. It is simply not seen as a part of the private morality sphere, those rules does not apply. (Carr in Macfarlane, 1995:35)

3.3 Current ethical trends and failures

Trends and failures of ethics in today’s society is something that universities must take into consideration regarding their own teachings in ethics. When a student starts his education of for example four years, the ethics he learns there has to be similar to the ethical standards of his employer four years from now. Also teachers today must be aware of previous ethical failures in order to prevent their students from repeating these. This part of the theory will examine current ethical trends and discuss some cases where ethics have failed.

3.3.1 Trends

Sustainable development, Corporate Citizenship, and Corporate Social Responsibility are three concepts that, in the last two decades have been receiving more and more attention. Not only are these concepts becoming more common but that are also evolving. In the U.S. for example, the birth of CSR was simply a result of companies needing to comply with environmental regulations etc. The concept later changed and became a tool used to reduce risk, lower costs and improve public opinion. (Baylor Business Review, 2009:7).

For the consumers the importance of CSR is growing and thus its effect on their purchase decisions as well. As more and more companies strive to be perceived as socially responsible, the reports of cases where these efforts have been misleading also increase. As this wheel spins more companies have begun to realize that being perceived as responsible is no longer enough and that they actually have to be responsible. Collectives such as the Business Ethics Leadership Alliance are now forming, where corporations all over the world agree to follow certain principles of CSR. (Tillmann, 2009:77).
In academic databases the concepts of sustainable development, Corporate Citizenship, and Corporate Social Responsibility are now between 10 and 45 times more common than they were in the early 90’s. (Barkemeyer, 2009:70). A more concrete example of this is that in any global newspaper today, you have a 50% chance of encountering the word “sustainability”. (Barkemeyer, 2009:77) The effects this has on actual companies should be significant due to the fact that this can be considered a measurement of public concern, which is one of the main external factors affecting companies’ behavior. Other main factors are regulations and competition, but as these are likely to be affected by public concern too, the power of this concept further strengthens. (Barkemeyer, 2009:72).

Another trend that has emerged in later years is one that might seem contra intuitive to many. This trend is located within financial institutions where the former (sole) goal of high return on investments, is starting to shift into a situation where both return and sustainability has become a criteria. You can nowadays choose to invest in funds, containing only sustainable companies. The main reason for this trend is the changes in the requirements of investors, and since there is an increase in demand for this kind of funds, some financial institutions will take the opportunity to supply them. (Benijts, 2008:30) As sustainability not only creates an “ease of mind” but also tend to reduce risks, the presence of the concept in investments make more sense. An example of a risk that can be reduced through being sustainable is avoidance of lawsuits and other costs that may arise from harming the environment etc. (Baylor Business Review, 2009:7).

Even though few would disagree to the fact that the current trends in concepts such as sustainability and CSR are good, there are some trends in this area that are not. One of these trends is greenwashing, which is something we can see more and more often today. The concept has been visible since the 1970’s when the environment started to become an issue, but as this issue has become an increasingly discussed topic, so has the occurrence of greenwashing. The concept of greenwashing can simply be explained as being “misleading marketing about the environmental benefits of a product” (Walsh, 2008:47), where being perceived as “green” is used as a marketing tool that more or less doesn’t reflect the reality. (eco-buyer beware). Throwing in words such as green, environmentally friendly and non-toxic might just be the thing needed on order for a potential consumer to pick your product over your competitor’s. Greenwashing can take many forms. The TerraChoice website (www.terrachoice.com), has listed what they call the “seven sins of greenwashing”. These sins are:

*Hidden trade off:* When positive environmental issues are highlighted and negative aspects hidden.

*No proof:* A claim that cannot be proven or disproven due to lack of information.

*Vagueness:* A claim that sounds good but necessarily isn’t.

*Worshipping false labels:* Making the consumer believe that the product has been approved by an environmental certification.

*Irrelevance:* A claim that put emphasis on something good about the product, where the contrary would be highly unlikely.

*Lesser of two evils:* Highlighting a good aspect of a bad product.

*Fibbing:* A claim that is completely false.

(Spaulding, 2009:10)
3.3.2 Failures

Ethical studies originate from ancient Greece. It was also here that ethics was first included in legal writing for governing business practice in the *Magna Carta* of year 1215. To what extent business practice today follows generally accepted ethical standards is currently subject of debate. Since the end of the last and in the beginning of this millennium there has been cases of large-scale ethical failures such as the World Com and Enron scandals, where not only ethical misconduct was the issue but also laws were broken. These cases are just two of the largest among many other cases where fraudulent behavior has led to different kinds of losses to many stakeholders. The effect of this kind of misconduct is not only that it sets a bad example to others but also that it creates a culture of distrust. (Holme, 2008:249). Globalization and more transparency have led to increased insight in the behavior of companies not only at home but also around the globe. The result of this is that more companies are revealed as being engaged in activities perceived as unethical and sometimes even contrary to their stated social responsibility. One cause of this is the fact that what is considered as wrongful behavior in one part of the world, might be accepted in others. (Tillmann, 2009:77-78). This is a prime example of a situation where factors such as regulations are of little importance and companies have to rely on their ethical standards. If these ethical standards aren’t sufficient, the effects might be a fall in the perceived company or brand image.

3.4 Corporate Social Responsibility

A concept deeply related to business ethics is Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). We think theories on this concept are very relevant to this paper and use it in our evaluation of the university representatives’ perceived importance of ethics. The growing amount of CSR we can see today is not only an important trend related to the presence of ethics in business, but also an indicator of the fundamental shift in the values of our society.

CSR is a growing trend among many companies today. Some main reasons for this growth are a number of corporate scandals and increased environmental awareness but also that emerging patterns of increased profit have been observed. CSR is also called Corporate Sustainability and Corporate Citizenship. (Fox, 2007:43). In order to analyze CSR we have chosen three different definitions of the concept. We have the opinion that since these definitions do not contradict each other, using all three will better cover the many aspects of the concept. CSR can be defined as “a company’s obligation to exert a positive impact and minimize its negative impact on society” (Pride & Ferrell in Tillmann et al., 2009:4). The World Business Council for Sustainable Development gives another definition of the term. They define CSR as “contributing to sustainable development by working to improve quality of life with employees, their families, the local community and stakeholders up and down the supply chain.” (Fox, 2007:45). A third definition we have found claims that “CSR involves taking actions which reduce the extent of externalized costs or avoid distributional conflicts” (Heal, 2005:393). The meaning of the latter definition is that when corporate interests are different from the social interests the situation is not acceptable from all points of view. The meaning of CSR in such cases is that executives genuinely take on these inconsistencies between corporate and social interests and try to eliminate or at least decrease the unaccepted social costs. (Heal, 2005:388-389). The distributional conflicts mentioned in the definition above refers to a number of cases that got a lot of media attention a couple of years ago. One example of such a case is the exposure of NIKE’s use of child labor and the wages they paid overseas which were only a fraction of the products market value. (Heal, 2005:392).
Engagement in extensive CSR is in the belief of many a costly undertaking. But many examples do in fact show the opposite. The oil company BP for example, decided in 1997 to take a different path then their competitors when they in the environmental debate accepting evidence of global warming and admitted that they are part of the problem. In an attempt to redeem themselves they took action to decrease their own emissions and also engaged in emission trade. As a result they ended up with a higher income of about 600 million dollars. (Heal, 2005:390). Other studies does support claims that CSR in fact can create positive financial returns, but in many of them the correlations found are not very strong. The way these positive results are achieved through CSR is basically that it creates extra value that leads to stakeholder goodwill. This in turn, affects things such as customer loyalty, better and happier employees and community support etc. These factors all have an impact on profit. To the contrary there are also many studies showing no correlation between the two, and discussions about the issue are far from settled. (Demacarty, 2009:396) It should be noted in this case however that when an oil company start taking environmental responsibility and publicly announce this fact, it could be considered as Greenwashing. The Greenwashing sin of “lesser of two evils” (Spaulding, 2009) is to highlight good aspects of a bad product, and as few would attempt to argue that oil is an environmentally friendly product, highlighting such aspects of it might seem strange.

There are other benefits of CSR apart from the possibility of financial gain. For example CSR can be a good way of preventing future lawsuits and thus lowering risk. Also CSR helps creating a good image of the company. A company with a good reputation is more likely to have a good relationship with the regulating authorities. Such a relation can give the company more respect in debates and influence in decisions that concerns their activities. A positive image or successful branding of the company can also be crucial to customer decisions where there is little or no difference in the products themselves. (Heal, 2005:394-396). This supports the findings in Demacarty (2009) where correlations between CSR and aspects such as these are further discussed. Things such as goodwill are likely to affect profit, and by adding this aspect between CSR and profit the correlation between the two will probably become stronger. Heal (2005) further argues that customers are more probable to choose the product of a company they trust than the product of one they don’t trust if quality and price is similar. Engagement in CSR can also affect the organization from within. Attracting highly skilled workers becomes easier since people in general, would rather like to work for a company, which has activities they can feel proud of. It is also shown that socially responsible organizations are better at keeping their employees than others and also, they tend to keep their employees more motivated. (Heal, 2005:394-396).

3.5 Business education

3.5.1 Ethics course or integrated ethics?

Here we will discuss arguments of having ethics integrated to ordinary business courses or have it as a separate one. This will highly relevant to the purpose of this paper because it can provide an indication to how important ethics is thought to be in education. Since, there are different views on how to best implement ethics into the business education. Is it, for example, treated as something additional to the core subjects, or is ethics and business viewed as interlinked.

There is debate on whether or not business ethics should be taught in a separate ethics course or if it should be integrated into regular business courses. An argument for integrating the
ethics into ordinary business courses is that students tend to not use the knowledge they have attained in an ethics course in other business courses. (Oddo, 1997:293) The same conclusion is reached by Snoeyenbos (1992:19) where it is argued that incorporating business ethics into other business courses is a better course of action than to have a separate ethics course. Another argument, provided by Macfarlane (1995:35), is that ethics are needed as a balancing dimension in all subjects, if business education is to change and make a shift of attitudes in the market. This is slightly touched upon by Desplaces et al (2007:84), who provide findings that those students who remembered or recalled ethical discussions in core courses, showed increased moral competence, meaning how capable a person is of making moral decisions and judgements (Kohlberg in Desplaces et al, 2007:74). However, there was no significant difference when it came to moral reasoning, which concerns what people individually or collectively believe is the right moral behaviour (Richardson in Desplaces et al, 2007:74). Although, it should be remembered that Desplaces et al (2007) was not researching difference between integrated ethics and separate ethics courses, but rather to find out if ethics discussions affect moral competence or reasoning.

On the contrary to such conclusions it is also argued that most business teachers do not have a sufficient knowledge about or training in the subject of ethics in order to teach it confidently to their students. (Oddo, 1997:293) Some argue that there is not enough room in the courses for adding more ethics. However, Oddo, (1997:294) argues that Ethics should not be regarded as something you “add on” to a course but rather something you address together with the issues discussed in the course. Furthermore it is argued that lack of knowledge on ethics should not discourage teachers to address ethics when teaching. Sometimes it is simply enough to make the students aware of ethical problems in what is discussed and let them address these problems using their own set of principles. (Oddo, 1997:294)

3.5.2 Students’ attitudes towards ethics in education

As the students are the final consumers of education, their views on the subject of ethics should also be represented when evaluating its importance. We will in this part discuss theories found on the subject. However, we believe that further investigation should be made in this area, but due to our limited time and resources we could not perform such.

The common belief is that teaching ethics is one of many responsibilities parents have for their own children. However, due to much unethical practice of business in many areas there have emerged criticisms on the business education. The education has been accused for not using the clear influence they have on their students. (Murray in Shannon et al., 1997:1059) This is one of the reasons for a study by J. Richard Shannon and Robert L. Berl. They wanted to investigate student attitudes on ethical issues, what they thought about the ethical aspect in their marketing courses. At the same time they divided students into groups to see if there was any difference, for example, students who had studied a business ethics course and students who had not. (Shannon et al., 1997:1059-1060) The results showed that students thought the ethics brought up in class leaned towards being weak and inadequate. One of the conclusions drawn is that there is much room for improving the way and amount of discussing ethics in marketing. The same goes for marketing literature used in courses. An indication of that could be that twenty-five percent of the respondent could not say if the ethics brought up during their marketing courses were adequate or not. Because then it is possible to believe that ethics is totally missing in that education. However, it is not known whether the student took the course a long time ago and simply do not remember, or the fact they did just not study enough. Even if there is ethics in the marketing books it is very important how it is presented,
because to make an impact it should be throughout the book and not only a chapter in the end. Then it will not be brought up until the end of the course. One thing that could be very positive if the literature included ethics is discussions during lectures. Active discussions in classrooms are very sought after by lecturers because it helps improve the learning for students. Due to the fact that ethics is subject to various opinions it will automatically bring discussions to the lectures. Students believe that ethical discussions are important when it comes to marketing classes, and also that if ethics is brought in to education it would improve future business practices. (Shannon et al., 1997:1073)

The interest for marketing ethics is clearly there among students, out of the population sixty percent wanted to take an ethics course if provided, while twenty percent might consider it. They also thought that a course in marketing ethics should exist in marketing majors. However, it is believed that if such a course would be offered that it is best to apply it very early in the education. By so doing it will give students a good understanding of ethics in marketing before starting to study other topical courses. Because then the ethical discussions could spill over to these courses as well. (Shannon et al., 1997:1073)

3.5.3 Questioning business education

In this section we have chosen to look into the business education itself, if there might be any problems or not, concerning ethical thinking. The question of what is it students are being taught, in a deeper meaning, is asked.

Business ethics has become more and more discussed topic overall during the last decades, but it has had little impact on the business curriculum in universities. (Tasker, Packman, Wolfe in Macfarlane, 1995:32) In fact there has not been a significant change. It could be alarming when there are those who believe that business students, through their education, will find a greater need for unethical thinking, when compared to non-business students (Lane and Schaupp in Fraedrich et. al, 2005:28). What they learn is a sense of winning as the most important thing, and these values do not resonate well with ethical believes in business and society. (Schaupp and Parsons in Fraedrich et. al, 2005:28) However, there are those that reports on no significant difference in ethical values at all between business and non-business students. Instead there could be variations between gender and age (Arlow in Fraedrich et. al, 2005:28). Desplaces et al (2007) also asks the question if the business education in some way contributes to the moral competence or incompetence, and if it could lead to certain behaviours that could be found in scandals like Enron. Which could be a valid question, considering they actually employed 250 people with MBA’s every year during the 1990s, according to Mintzberg (2004) (in Desplaces, 2007:74). When researched it was found that not many undergraduate or postgraduate courses where ethics has been taken into account. Instead it is something students themselves have to choose as optional courses outside the standard curriculum, if they want to study business ethics or Corporate Social Responsibility. Referring back to section Ethics course or integrated ethics, the preferred way for teaching ethics was to integrate it into other business courses, argues Snoeyenbos (1992) and Oddo (1997). Instead the core curriculum does not encourage much debate about the business system, when it comes to values and problems with it. (Smith et al. in Macfarlane, 1995:32) A good illustration of the lack of debate of ethics and values in business studies comes from a business ethics lecturer, and a quote from one of his students. It was her final year of her degree and after the lecture she said “That is the first time anyone has suggested that business is about anything other than making money!” (Trezise in Macfarlane, 1995:33)
The current subjects that dominate the business curriculum could also have an influence on student’s attitudes toward business, if not balanced with ethics. Economics and law are those subjects that have a large part in the curriculum, when it comes to education in the United Kingdom. (Macfarlane, 1995:33) When considering law we would like to refer back to what is mentioned about the perception of law that might appear in business education. This was touched upon in the section ethics versus law. Another problem with focusing on law is mentioned by Dean et al (2006:16), when discussing critic against ethics training courses that focuses on policy and law. This is something that will not highly improve students’ moral reasoning. Instead to really help students they should be taught about morality and ethics to become more ethical. (Dean et al, 2006:16) Looking at economics, however, there are two differentiations to look at and that is positive economics and normative economics. Where normative is about what ought to be and positive is about facts, what really is, and are not concerned with values at all. This is not far from what Carroll (1998:4) says about two philosophical moral branches, when discussing good Corporate Citizenship. What he thinks managers should be able to recognize is the descriptive ethics and normative ethics. Where descriptive have the same definition what is and normative what should be. Then according to Carroll (1998:4) a good corporate citizen should focus largely on the normative aspect of ethics. The strong focus on the positive approach, which is in essence more “scientific” and quantitative focused than the rejected normative approach, could have possibly have led to a bias within the business studies according to Macfarlane (1995:33). When it comes to the idea of perfect competition, income generation instead of income distribution and the overall picture of the Western free market economy can be signs of the dominant position of positive economy. (Lee in Macfarlane, 1995:33) It has also led to the common belief that income is an indication of quality of life instead of considering social and economic factors that affect all individuals. With this you can say that students either if they want or not learn to accept the central values of capitalism, which is, for example, profits, free competition and a market with very little governmental interference. Another problem is the focus on private costs from business instead of looking at the whole picture, the societal cost. (Macfarlane, 1995:33)

Macfarlane (1995) points out that as long as the business education looks like this in the United Kingdom or anywhere else, there will not be much escaping from this view of business as a separate zone. When considering the law aspects of the education. This will also affect the use or implementation of ethics, instead of discussing business practices it could be taught to students as an important tool in marketing. Neither will it get a more central role in the business curriculum; but only remain in the periphery as optional courses. (Macfarlane, 1995:35) There are, however, universities that have changed their education. An example is in the US, where Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University introduced a new entry course for MBA students. Here, a little more than a week before ordinary classes begin, they discuss values and Corporate Social Responsibility. (Sachdev in Dean et al, 2006:17) Also good example is The Mendoza College at Notre Dame, where they fully integrated ethics into the curriculum with required ethics courses for instance. (Woo in Dean et al, 2006:17)

3.6 Effects of ethics education

This is also a very relevant part when it comes do decide the importance of having ethics integrated in business education. If the effect is not sufficiently high, the argument for not implementing ethics quickly becomes stronger.
The influential importance that education has on individuals might be indicated in a research made by Boonghee Yoo and Naveen Donthu (2002). They went out to look at if there is any correlation between a student’s marketing education, his or hers individual cultural background and his or hers marketing ethics. In other words how does ones formal and informal education affect ones marketing ethics? The idea that is taken into consideration is one by Sparks and Hunt’s (1998:105) from one of their studies that found an indication that marketing ethics is taught. Aware of this they put into their hypothesis the assumption that students that have a higher level of education also have improved marketing ethics, due to greater understanding of the subject. Furthermore, they will become more accustomed to the rules, codes and norms of behaviour in marketing, leading to a better marketing ethics. However, it should be noted that this concerns ethics within the field of marketing. (Yoo et al., 2002:93) What Yoo and Donthu (2002) finally found in their research was that the level of marketing education a student had did affect their marketing ethics, though it was not as great a difference as one would have thought. At the same time other influences also played their part, such as cultural values. From this they suggest that more focused marketing ethics education should be given to improve marketing ethics amongst students, and to help them with more ethical decision-making. (Yoo et al., 2002:99)

An quasi-experimental research was made by Douglas R. May, Matt Luth and Catherine E. Schwoerer (2009) were they tried to find out if a business ethics course would have any significant effect on students. They focused on three variables or measurements, which were; moral efficiency, moral meaningfulness and moral courage. Their hypotheses were that students that underwent a business ethics course would have increased values in all three variables mentioned. This was then compared to students that did not have business ethics training, the so called control group (May et al, 2009:4). What they found was that there was a significant difference in the three variables for students that had studied business ethics compared to the control group. They ranked the variables after the largest change; moral efficiency, moral courage and moral meaningfulness. To explain further moral efficacy concern the confidence and ability a person can have dealing with ethical issues. Moral meaningfulness measures how important ethics is in a person’s life, and the willingness to address ethical issues even though there can be negative consequences is called moral courage. (May et al, 2009:2-3) However, they do point out as an idea for future research that a study about long-term effects of business ethics education. As well as a cross-cultural study, should be made (May et al, 2009:6).

In a research made by John Fraedrich, John Cherry, James King, and Chiquan Guo (2005) there was a rather mixed result about the effects of ethics education. They found that there was a change in moral maturity after students were exposed to ethics instructions. This means that there are indications on improved moral reasoning than previously. However, it did not show any other significant effects. What they could conclude was that the question of ethics education impact is more difficult to answer than saying yes or no (Fraedrich et. al, 2005:32). What Fraedrich et. al (2005:32) suggest is that ethics education possibly leads to a more self-aware student who can critically judge one’s own behaviour.

When discussing the effects of ethics education on student one might consider there to be a possible bias. Maybe people take a course in ethics because they are more ethically aware in the first place, or have a great deal of knowledge about moral philosophy from the start. The reason for studying might be simply to find out some answers to many difficult questions, is something discussed by Einar Marnburg (2003:406). However, there was no proof for this to have any effect on people’s moral behavior, according to Marnburg’s (2003:410) own
findings from Norway. He found no correlation between knowledge in moral philosophy and the use of ethics in decision-making. In other words it helps people with the rhetoric about moral subjects, but lacks the effect on moral actions. He therefore stresses (without going into specifics) that business schools should focus more on moral actions with their business ethics courses and not just moral reasoning. Because this is the case when it comes to other subjects like marketing and accounting, for example. Here the students learn how to use the tools they are given and to make the proper decisions. It also needs to be future oriented, to help students when faced with new obstacles (Marnburg, 2003:410).
4. Empirical Findings

In this chapter we will present a summarized and translated version of each of the four interviews we conducted. These summaries are based on the transcripts of the interviews and the information they contain has been read and approved by the four interviewees.

4.1 Umeå University

The interviewee is an Assistant Professor who is also in charge of the marketing section at Umeå School of Business. This position he has had since the beginning of 2009 but has been a lector since year 2000. He has been working at Umeå University since 1988.

When we ask what his role is in the planning/execution of the marketing courses at Umeå University, he responds that as the head of the marketing section he is the one in charge, but he has delegated the main responsibility of the course planning to a coworker at the department, but he is still sharing the main responsibility. The main work with planning and content of the courses is however shared by the members of the marketing section. Every year he and the other lecturers of the marketing courses discuss literature, changes, updates and new issues that need to be touched upon.

We proceed by asking the interviewee a little bit about his views and values in order to get a better insight in his position of ethics within marketing education.

On the question of whether companies are obligated to just follow the law or if they have an additional ethical responsibility. He answers that even though following the law is enough in order not to get a prison sentence or get fined, this is not enough. He uses the point of view of doing business with another company. Here he argues, that things such as safety and trust is very important, but also that the company in question has a moral and ethical standard that you as an individual can agree with. He adds that the law can never cover every aspect and is just setting a minimal standard of what is acceptable and that there are always some cases where a company’s approach does not meet the ethical standards that are generally accepted. To conclude, he says that he does indeed believe that companies must have a further ethical responsibility. On whether a good set of ethics is an important quality of the individual practicing marketer or whether the law and the company’s ethical codes are enough he replies that he think they are. He further argues that he believes it is important for each individual realize that if the company you are working for doesn’t share your beliefs and standards, maybe you shouldn’t be working for them. He adds that companies themselves off course must have some form of ethical standards, but for the individual it is important that these are the same as your own. In situations where this is not the case, this will in the long run become unbearable.

We ask the interviewee if he believes that the ethics practiced today is sufficient or if he sees a need for improvement. He answers that he believes that many companies today do have a good ethical standard, but that there of course exists bad apples. In his opinion there are many branches that tend to be a bit more “flexible” in their thinking than others. As an example of good ethical behavior he uses Bodyshop because of their image of having clear thoughts about being environmentally conscious and being transparent through clearly showing where their products come from. Other companies, he adds, there is very little talk about except for the occasional questioning about where and how products are actually produced, referring to child labor in India etc. He also points out that the general overview of the behavior is hard to get and is dependent on what level you view it at. If it is Sweden, Europe or the world you are
talking about. Here he brings up cultural differences of ethics such as bribes. Is it ok to bribe someone in one country but not in another, he asks. If you are doing business in a country where it is custom to pay bribes, is this then ok even if you are Swedish and would not consider doing this at home? He believes that this is a very complex issue.

We proceed by asking him about his view on the importance of discussing ethics in marketing courses on A, B and C level. He says that he sees ethics as an aspect involved to some degree within the entire studies of a student, or that it at least should. This especially when you are talking about convincing people, changing attitudes or doing research. He mentions aspects such as keeping registers of opinions and cross checking registers. He concludes that ethics is a very natural part of marketing that should be present in the education. On if they have any demands of discussions on ethics within the courses he tells us that in the A-course the ethics are integrated and is present in the course literature. In this literature both ethical and moral aspects are touched upon in for example issues concerning environment and so on. At the c-level they have a course focusing entirely on marketing ethics. This course is only focused on discussing ethical issues within marketing. He also mentions a course he taught called International Business Culture and Communication, where the focus was on cultural problems where ethical issues also were addressed. We ask him if he knows if lecturers discuss ethics to a large extent in the courses, without pressure from above. He says that it is hard for him to know this, but that since marketing is a subject where recent events are relevant, he believes that whenever current issues concerning marketing and ethics are in the spotlight these often get discussed within the courses. So on whether the ethics discussed in the courses are formal or informal, he says that some of it is represented formally for example on the A and C level, but that another part of it occurs naturally within all the courses. But he does add that the ethics isn’t represented to a large extent in the syllabus of the courses. As he mentioned earlier they do have a course that is only concerned within marketing ethics. This course is included in programs at C-level in marketing in connection with a course in services marketing.

We ask the interviewee if ethics is one of the criteria used when choosing course literature. He replies that they have many criteria end that ethics is one of them. He does however add that if ethics isn’t touched upon in the course a book would not be ruled out as literature for lack of it. But lack of ethics in the literature can always be solved by for example adding articles on the subject. Finally he tells us that it is preferred that ethics is represented in the literature because of the fact that it is a natural part of marketing.

On whether or not there are any requirements of including ethics in the examination of the marketing courses, he tells us that within the marketing ethics course there are of course ethical questions on the exams. For the other courses the examination is supposed to reflect the literature and since ethics is represented in most of them there is a reason to expect some ethical questions on the exams for example in the A-course, but there may not be such questions in the examination of all courses. But to include ethical questions in all marketing exams is not a requirement.

We then ask the interviewee if he believes that the students get a sufficient knowledge of marketing ethics after completing their studies at Umeå University. He replies that as the head of the marketing section, as a teacher and as part of a team working with education, the goal is always to provide the best possible education, that covers as much as possible and is as complete as it can be. The problem he says is the limited time that you have. If he could he would like to include more ethics as well as more of other things. But with the limited time
and resources they have, the best they can do is to provide an optimized mix where at least everything is to some extent represented. So in his opinion they are doing as much as they can to find a balance that is reasonable, which is all that can really be expected.

On the question of whether or not he has seen a change in the amount of ethics taught since he was a student, his reply is a clear and strong yes. He thinks it has become a big difference. The subject has been brought out into the light a lot more since he was a student. At that time the ethical aspects were more implicit and just assumed but not talked about. This was only as far back as around 1986 so he says that the difference is really big. He continues to tell us about a course he had where they had a course literature called "Sälj!". According to him, this literature was like a joke with some rather inappropriate suggestions on how to behave in business situations. According to him the current level is completely different. On when the main change took place he says he is not sure but that he believes it was just after year 2000 or at least within the last 10 years. This change was seen both in society and in the education he says, since education is a reflection off trends in society in general.

We ask him what the goals are with the ethics in the marketing education and what points that is especially important for the students to learn. He answers that from his personal point of view, one of the most important aspects is to make sure that the students always take this aspect into consideration and that they grow into realizing their own limits of what is acceptable and what is not and how to act in order to feel good about themselves.

According to the interviewee he has not met any requests of more ethics from students. From the course evaluations he has read the ethics are not represented to any extent worth mentioning. He adds that business students think mainly about more tangible subjects and that ethical aspect is not thought of in that way.

We finish the interview by asking the interviewee if there is something he would like to add or if he has any other thoughts around the subject of ethics. He again mentions the importance of helping the students to evolve in the thinking and knowledge about their own personal sets of ethical standards. He adds that in reality there is never a clear green or red lights of what is right and wrong and in almost all cases someone will have a different opinion. The hard part about teaching ethics he says is this fact, that you cannot tech students what is right. The only thing you can do is improving their way of thinking about these issues. He mentions an ethical case he uses when teaching, about a company giving medicine to people suffering from the war in Bosnia. The company had to bribe their way into the warzone in order to get the medicine to those who needed it. When the auditor of the company realized this he was facing an ethical dilemma. The company had good intentions, but was at the same time putting more money into the hands of those at war. There is no clear answer to whether they were right or wrong in doing this.

4.2 Interview with a person at the Mid Sweden University

The interviewee is a professor in business administration with a focus on marketing. He has been working at the Mid Sweden University since 2004 but has been a professor in marketing since 1993. As for education he has his degrees up to a doctorate and a senior lecture from Uppsala University.
When asked what role he has in the planning and execution of marketing courses he replies that he is the course coordinator in business administration and is thereby a part of the board where the course layouts are discussed.

We proceed to ask the interviewee a little bit about his own views and values in order to better understand his position on ethics in marketing education.

On whether companies are obligated just to follow the law or if they have an additional ethical responsibility he clearly expresses a belief that companies shouldn’t operate on the border of what is legal and that they do have an additional ethical responsibility. His motivation for this answer is that for everyone in our society the law is just a minimum of what is acceptable and that everything that is legal isn’t necessarily appropriate. He adds that this applies for people, organizations and government entities as well. He further tells us that he does believe that good ethics is an important quality of practicing marketers and that the law and the companies’ ethical codes aren’t enough and he repeats what he said before about these merely being a minimum standard that often isn’t enough. According to him marketers need to have good judgment of their own. When asked if he believes that the ethics of practicing marketers today is enough he tells us that it is hard to form an opinion not having a better knowledge of the marketers general behavior. But he also adds that he is a member in The Swedish Market Court and that he there on a regular basis encounter cases where the ethical behavior of one of the parties is questioned. Sometimes these cases lead to a conviction and hence it is evident that failures in good ethical behavior do occur, but he also emphasizes that he see no general misbehavior among marketers.

We then proceeded to ask him about his personal view on the importance of discussing ethics in marketing courses at A, B and C level. His response is that it is indeed important and because of that ethics should be integrated into the courses. He tells us that this integration doesn’t mean that they have any required discussions about it but that it is integrated into many issues such as marketing legislation and opportunism for example when concerning agents responsibilities. So even if it is not required, ethics are discussed anyway.

The ethics at Mid Sweden University aren’t just integrated into their marketing courses but have also become a course of its own. The interviewee tells us that starting this semester they will offer a marketing ethics course. The course only takes place in the summer and is not a part of the regular programs. The reason that there is no marketing ethics course within the programs is that there the ethics is integrated to the other marketing courses.

On whether ethics is used as criteria when choosing course literature the interviewee tells us that it generally isn’t. The literature is chosen to fit the substance of the course and only ethics are included there it used as a criteria. For example when the marketing law and marketing practice is taught in the A courses, their relations to ethics demand its presence in the literature. Also he adds that as general societal issues and environmental issues are getting more attention, one can relate these to ethical aspects for example on how current generations has a responsibility towards the future ones.

The interviewee tells us that there is not any requirement of having any questions about ethics in the examination but that the substance of the course might require such questions.

We ask the interviewee if he believes that the students get a sufficient knowledge about marketing ethics after finishing their studies at the Mid Sweden University. He responds that
it is very hard to know that. But as Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) gets a larger role in current debates and in the media he can see possible reason to put more focus on the subject in the future. But he emphasizes that he certainly does not consider the ethics a weakness for the University but that they might have to adapt to the trends of society on the matter. He tells us that he has seen a clear increase in the importance given to ethics since he was a student. He even perceived that ethics were barely mentioned at all. And he also sees that it has gotten a much more weight in discussions today compared to earlier. We ask him if he has observed this change is mostly within society in general or within education. He answers that it is mainly within society but due to that it has also created a new awareness that ethics really does matter in education. On whether the students think that they get enough ethics all we find out is that the interviewee hasn’t received any requests of more ethics from them.

The next issue we discuss is the goals that the Mid Sweden University has with the ethics in the marketing courses. The interviewee tells us that the university teaches according to the Bologna model. Three of the things mentioned in this model are knowledge, skills and evaluation skills. One aim of the evaluation skills that is taught is to improve the student’s good judgment. He tells us that the aim of the university is to teach these three aspects and to create some kind of ethical compass for the students.

We round up the interview by asking if there are some other thoughts about the subject that he wants to add. The thing he chooses to discuss at this point is how he has observed a lack of ethics in the educational system in general. The area where this observation has taken place is within Microeconomics, where a lot of the models are has a focus on profits and competition. These models, he says, projects a view of people that is rather questionable from an ethical point of view. He continues by pointing out that within Business Administration, there is a much larger use of a behavioral point of view and a focus on human interactions. Within this area, things such as cooperation, loyalty and sustainability play an important role. He adds that Adam Smith who is called “The father of modern economics”, was aside from an economist also a moral philosopher and because of this there is a long tradition of mixing ethics and economics to fall back upon.

4.3 Interview with a person at Växjö University

Our interviewee got her doctorate in 1980 at Linköping University, and the main subject was industrial organisation. She is now heading the marketing department at Växjö University, which has been her position since 2006. Her background at the university stretches four and a half years compared to the total of ten years of working in the academic world. She is working with fifteen other people from the department, and has written the curriculum for two bachelor programmes and one master programme.

On the question of her thoughts of companies’ obligations and responsibility in society, she said that they clearly have a responsibility above the juridical sphere. That is a certainty. She also wanted to mention that she was currently a member of the board at ECPAT, an organisation that are working on combating commercial and sexual exploitation of children. What they mainly have been working on is to develop different ethical guidelines and systems, which could be used for Corporate Social Responsibility by firms, especially for the finance, travel and telecommunications industry.

It is very important to have your own ethics and values to be a human being, and that means to follow the law is only the basics of all obligations. Because the law, in many cases, is not
powerful enough, therefore you have to take your own responsibility, a personal responsibility for what you are doing. We then asked her if she thought that was the case even if the company already had made codes of ethics for employees to follow, is it still important to follow your personal values. The response was that of course it is important to follow your personal values and take responsibility. As mentioned earlier as a human you need to have ethics.

Reflecting on the ethics practiced by marketers generally today she thinks it need to be improved, without a doubt. They need to know much more generally. Many of the students at her university have an ethical interest, but she admits that she think the amount of time it gets in class is too little. After that we asked if she sees a lot of shortcomings in society with the ethics in marketing. The answer was that there is, and she believes that the companies in many cases are responsible for their actions, for their own as much as for their suppliers and employees. Her perception was that they should be held responsible for what they do.

We then moved on to our third set of questions depicting her view on ethics in education and how it was integrated in her university.

Whether or not it was important to address ethics in marketing courses on A, B or C-level, she thought that it was most very good to try to put it in every aspect of all the courses. However, she did not see a need for separate marketing courses that focuses on ethics only.

When asking about ethics being brought up or integrated in the university’s marketing courses, she stated that they have loose requirements for it being taught. However, they are not very good at following those requirements at the moment. Because they are currently working on a lot of changes to the marketing education in many aspects, and therefore ethics will follow short of other priorities. Meanwhile there are discussions on ethics, which has been brought up by both students and teachers. She herself has had many students writing a thesis on the subject, and it can be about fair-trade, co-branding with non-governmental organisations as a few examples.

At the university there are no courses purely based on marketing ethics, instead it is integrated in the ordinary marketing courses. Ethics is not really a factor when choosing what marketing literature to use and it is not required for students on examination. Instead they have, as before mentioned, a requirement for it to be part of the overall education.

On the question of whether or not their students get enough knowledge about ethics in marketing, she believes that it needs more focus than it has at the moment. While still not preferring separate courses in ethics, she wants ethics to get a more obvious role in the ordinary marketing courses.

Since her time as a student, which began 1967-1968 in Lund, she has seen an increase in the awareness of ethics within marketing. When she was a student it was not brought up at all. We then asked if she saw this increase reflected in society and education or just in one area, and she thinks it is reflected in society overall. As an example there was no mention of Corporate Social Responsibility until fifteen years ago. After that we wanted to find out when she felt this interest for ethics really started to increase. For her own part, working in the private sector for twenty five years as vice president of a daughter company to Telia, it started to get more relevant when they began to work together with ECPAT. Then they looked at
what ethical implications could become present due to Internet, for example. This was in 1998 and probably that was when she really understood the importance of it all.

We then asked what goals they had for students with including ethics in their courses. The problem was that they did not have any clear goals, and she thinks they should have better ones than at the moment. She then continues with that she thinks they should get students to reflect themselves, and make them aware of their ethical responsibility they have and how they affect society in general. Another thing is to get them to recognise the already existing ways to go about implementing Corporate Social Responsibility in different areas. Also that they will not be alone with thinking ethical questions are important when they enter the market. We followed up the answer by asking if that was something they were working on to implement, connecting to when she said that they were making large changes on the marketing courses. However, that was mostly an explanation for not being able to include ethics in their courses, as much as they would have wanted. Anyway it is good to mention that it is not only her personally want to see an improvement; they also have a demands from the heads of the university to address these issues. So that is why ethics have to play a larger role in the education than what is the case today. However, from students themselves there has not been a clear request for more marketing ethics, but there are a few students who do ask some questions about it.

The last question the interviewee gets to add or talk about what she wish for regarding ethics within the universities marketing courses. Her hope is that it will be an important part of the education that has to be addressed throughout. The problem is to be able use ethics in marketing education when a lot of research around theory has to be made, to give students a clearer picture of what it is about, and better define marketing ethics. As a student you should actually be able to study how to handle different ethical aspects when it comes to, for example, branding and how to build trust. For instance, it is important to not only communicate to the consumer that you use Corporate Social Responsibility, but also in reality apply it.

We made a follow up question asking if there was something else in general that she wanted to mention about ethics. She began talking about her work with ECPAT and that they had had a discussion about creating a certifying system for companies. Unfortunately, there is not much research about the matter, even though it should be. Research about how to create a system, where a third party can guarantee that firms live up to the ethical standards as they say they do. We then asked if she thought that the certifications and branding that existed today where insufficient. She believes that it is because they are not built on clear certifications. As an example she mentions that if H&M is going to tell their customers they do not use child labour they have nothing to back it up with, if they mention it themselves. However, if they were to work with a non-governmental organisation that did not only put a certifying brand on their products, but also made inspections of their factories. Then it would build trust with consumers, and they affect the reality for workers in countries where they have their production. With a system like this they would be able to prove that they do as they say, instead of using lip service.

4.4 Interview with a person at Lund University

The interviewee has an educational background of Business and economics at Lund University, where he also got his doctorate. He is one of three people who are responsible for the marketing education at his university. This position he has had for two years now, and he
started working here in 2001. He basically takes care of most parts of the marketing courses on A, B and C-level, where they currently are making several changes. Then he also lectures on one D-level course, but he has no part in the planning on that level.

Responding to the question about companies obligations and responsibility in society, he says that they have also have an ethical responsibility. The juridical part he sees as a minimum level, but at the same time in marketing those views are already quite central in a way. For example, that we see the customer and customers’ needs as important and so on. However, we also consider the larger picture, so you can say the customer first, but also the society, at least as second.

When asked about importance of marketers own ethics he think it is their own responsibility. The law and company codes he believes to be insufficient. It is always the worker himself/herself to take responsibility for their actions. That is why one educates oneself for instance too be able to make own judgement, and to understand and think even as the company. Possibly as the company itself does. If they do not then an educated marketer would probably act on his/her own ethical values and principles.

On the general ethical practices of marketers today he thinks that it works pretty well. At the same time there is room for improvements, but in certain aspects he thinks it is sufficient. However, if we look at the Corporate Social Responsibility conducted in the third world countries, he does not believe companies can solve many problems better than they do today. Instead he thinks it is up to the governments, because neither companies nor customers have the insight or incitements needed to make improvements. He continues that in the end it is the customer who decides, but they have too little insight and understanding of the matter. Therefore if we look at H&M and ICA, for example, that has been accused for using the third world. If they did not change and started to do what was expected of them the customer would simply choose someone else. However, due to a belief stated earlier the customer needs guidance, and that is where he thinks we need the political system. As a follow up to this statement, we asked if he meant that those aspects of the market, needs more regulation. He answers that that is what he believes, and that the ethical practices by marketers are almost as good as they can get.

We then moved on to our third set of questions depicting her view on ethics in education and how it was integrated in his university. Beginning with asking his opinion of how important ethics is in marketing courses at A, B and C-level. He says it is important throughout though it should not take to big part of the education, but it is one of many aspects of it. The time for a marketing education is relatively short. You only have one and a half semester for digging deeper into marketing, which means that ethics cannot really have much more time than one week.

Next question was about how much ethics is brought up in the marketing courses and how integrated it is. He mentions that they have one module on A level, where almost one fifth of all discussions are about ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility. Then later on B-level they have it as optional, where one can dig deeper into different subjects, and choose Corporate Social Responsibility for instance. That represents around half a month amount of work. On C-level it is practically the same when you write your thesis, you can choose ethics as a topic. So if you are interested in ethics and so on, you can basically make it fifty percent of your education. To clarify we asked if the first course he mentioned (A-level) was an ordinary marketing course within the curriculum or if it was separate. The course where a
separate one and is based on a book by Björn Axelsson, which addresses many areas within Swedish marketing. Previously there has always existed a course discussing companies and society or companies and marketing law. However, this is something they had removed and instead they offer topics like corporate responsibility and business ethics. When asked about if it is brought up in class generally, he says that he has little insight on the matter, although discussions about ethics are surely welcomed. Reflecting on own experience on the courses where he lectures it is very uncommon. He continues to say that he tries to focus on customer and customer satisfaction, because they are his areas, outside of that he do not know. However, it is not really common for students to bring it up.

When asked about if they have any specific marketing ethics courses, obligatory or separate, he says that there is not really any specific for pure marketers. The most obligatory they have is the module on A-level, which he mentioned earlier, and that represented one fifth of a month. We then asked if they had any other courses than on A-level, which he answered that they do not, at least not obligatory. However, thinking about a little more he says that he has lectures in how to use Corporate Social Responsibility as a competitive tool. This is, for example, when doing product or brand positioning. Otherwise they believe that ethics should be in the backbone of students as well as teachers.

On the question of whether or not ethics is part of choosing course literature, he starts of by saying that might be the case. There was a discussion about it when deciding to use “No Logo” by Naomi Klein as an important choice of literature. Because they wanted to illuminate ethics and use it as a balance to the market forces, instead of letting them think it could solve everything. We asked which course this might concern and he said it was the course mentioned for A-level. He continues saying that according to the number of pages “No Logo” is as thick as the basic marketing book by Björn Axelsson, so looking at page amount it has a pretty large part of the course. However, when it comes to lectures it has about one fifth of influence. He think it might have to do with a lot of reflecting research recently on consumption and society, which probably have been a driving force behind the decision and interest of ethics. After that we asked if ethics was addressed during examinations, but that was not the case.

When asked if he thought students get enough ethics from their education at the university, he feels that it is pretty decent. He thinks it is enough for them to get insight and be able to decide on their own, to be aware of the responsibilities. When you look at everything else the students have to learn about marketing, he does not think it could take more space. However, that is up to every individual to decide. They provide them the basics, and if someone has the interest then they can make ethics almost fifty percent of their marketing education.

We continued the interview by asking if he had seen any increase of ethics within marketing. He thinks the increase has been very apparent since he was a student. It was probably around 2002-2003 where it has become very large in both science and literature. We wondered what he thought could have contributed to that. He believes it has to do with the globalisation and that people in general become more aware about scandals that happens in other places. The world has become smaller and many things affect us all. Unfortunately if he looks at the research he and others have made about Corporate Social Responsibility, it can become clear that it is very egocentrically motivated, not only from the company’s side, but also from the consumers. Companies do it to build their brand names and to move units, and consumers benefit from it when it comes to product safety. They want to be sure of not getting exposed to any toxic, as an example, and that is what is most important to them. Because of his
research, we asked if he has seen the growth of Corporate Social Responsibility mostly as a marketing tool, than a company’s desire to do the right thing. He said that he think it is basically a marketing tool, and then starts to talk about what he remembered from when he began his studies in the beginning of the 90s. Then they talked a lot about emissions etc., and when discussed the big executives would usually just laugh. He remembered, especially, Runar Andersson at Trelleborg who said that if people did not think they had good enough environmental standards, then they would just close down the factory. After that they would probably move to another country like Holland or Belgium, and that will mean a loss of a couple of thousand jobs. Today, however, you can see that all companies have some kind of environmental profile. This is something that he himself has observed when been working a lot as a consultant. He says he has seen that it derives from the companies own core values. Therefore he believes it is more about the company’s own values, than the use of a sales argument. He continues that he himself has published an article where he shows how it could be used as a sales argument. However, there is very little research about how to use it in ones branding at the moment, but it is starting to increase.

When asking about what goals they had for their students with ethics in marketing, he said they did not have any specific goals. Instead they have it as a certainty, not any goals exactly, but there are many discussions about ethics. Probably if it was not brought up by itself and if we did choose to use it then goals would possibly be more clarified. At the moment though there is no apparent outlines to follow, instead we always try to find a balance.

We then asked if they have got any requests, from students, about more ethics in their marketing education. He told us that he couldn’t recall that they have, probably because it is a free choice any student can make. However, he wants to mention that there are many students who are interested in marketing ethics and write a thesis about it. It happens quite often that he gets to guide students through that process, so the interest for ethics is there.

Finally, with the last question we wondered if he had anything more he wanted to add, or if there was anything he wanted to see change with ethics in marketing courses. He said that probably what he wants to see a change in is about what he mentioned earlier. It is possible that the market does not have the strength and capacity to be able to solve all problems, as in the case of public goods like lighthouses and lampposts. He believes more in regulatory measures, subsidies and other instruments, but how it would be applied or conducted he is not sure of. Maybe also the companies could work with the political system in a way. He also tells us that it probably works in the way of, “Things that are not seen nobody cares about”. If everyone closes their eyes and do not say anything then it is seen as ok. However, he hopes that this will not be the case in the long run. Meanwhile, as mentioned earlier, he believes that it is much up to the politicians to put an end to it.

4.5 Syllabuses

In order to ensure as strong results as possible, a review of each university’s syllabus have been performed. The purpose of this was to see if the presence of ethics in the syllabus reflects the answers from our interviewees in the matter. A further investigation of the course literature was also performed in order to see if ethics had a clear representation in the books as well.
4.5.1 Umeå University

Umeå University has three relevant courses in marketing that was investigated. Here we found that ethics was in fact represented in all course outlines, and one of the books was highly related to the subject of ethics.

**Marketing A:** Ethics represented in course content as one out of four main areas.


**Service Marketing and Marketing Ethics:** A module consisting of two courses. Ethics is represented within this entire module but only slightly touched upon in Service Marketing and deeply discussed throughout the Marketing Ethics course.


4.5.2 Mid University

Mid University have two relevant courses that was investigated. Here ethics was only present in one of the course outlines, and in two books.

**Marknadsföring A:** Ethics is not verbally represented in the course outline.

**Marknadsföringens etik (summer course):** Ethics is highly represented in the course outline. The course is however not mandatory for any program but only elective as a summer course.

Recommended course literature including ethics: Svensson, C.A., Den svenska marknadsföringslagstiftningen, Studentlitteratur, 2004

Svensson, C.A., Praktisk marknadsföringsetik, Studentlitteratur, 2006

**Internationell Marknadsföring:** Ethics is not verbally represented in the course outline.

4.5.3 Växjö University

Växjö University has three relevant courses that were investigated. Here no representation was found in the course outlines or in the literature.

**Grundläggande Marknadsföring, delkurs 2:** Ethics is not verbally represented in the course outline.

**International Marketing:** Ethics is not verbally represented in the course outline.

**Relationship and Service Marketing:** Ethics is not verbally represented in the course outline.
4.5.4 Lund University

Lund University has two relevant courses that were investigated. Here ethics was slightly represented in one of the course outlines and in one of the books.

Att förstå Marknadsföring A, grundnivå: In the course outline ethics is not clearly mentioned, but after the interview with Lund University we have come to understand that a part (1/5) of this course is dedicated to ethics.


Business to Business Marketing: Ethics is not verbally represented in the course outline.
5. Analysis

In this chapter we will break down the empirical data collected in our interviews and compare them against each other in order to find similarities and differences between them. The information we derive by doing this will then be linked to the theoretical framework provided in chapter three.

5.1 Background

We have conducted four interviews with representatives from different Swedish universities. What these four interviewees have in common is that they all have a large role in planning and execution of marketing courses. Most importantly for us their responsibility lies with the A, B and C-level of marketing, which is our main focus. This leads us to assume that their knowledge and opinions presented in the interviews has an actual impact on the marketing courses of their university. Our questions were constructed so that they would both give us their personal views on ethics in general, and also their views as a representative of their university.

Due to the limited anonymity we have decided to use, we will not use the names of the interviewees. Instead they will be referred to as the location of their university. Hence they will be called: Lund, Växjö, Umeå and Mid Sweden.

In the first part of the interview we wanted to find out what educational background, and what current positions they have at the Universities. We wanted to investigate their background and current positions in order to better understand their answers, and insure that they do in fact have a major influence on the shaping of marketing courses. Below we have provided a short summary of the background of the interviewees and their current roles:

- **Lund** – is a business school graduate from Lund University, one of three persons responsible for the marketing education on undergraduate level. He has worked at Lund University since 2001, and has had his current position for about 2 years. Is also lecturing a marketing course on D-level.

- **Växjö** – got her doctorate in 1980 at Linköping University in industrial organisation. She has been the head of the marketing department at Växjö University since 2006, and has been working at the University for a Total of four and a half years. Her experience working in the academic world stretches ten years back. She is currently working with fifteen other people at the department, and has been responsible for writing the curriculum for two bachelors and one master programme.

- **Umeå** – is a lector and research assistant at Umeå University. He is also in charge of the marketing department at Umeå business school (USBE), a position that he has had since the beginning of 2009. Overall he has worked at the University since 1988. He is in charge of the planning and execution of marketing courses. However, some of the work is shared between the members of the marketing department.

- **Mid Sweden** – is a professor in business administration with a focus on marketing. He has been working at the Mid Sweden University since 2004, but has been a professor in marketing since 1993. As the course coordinator in business administration, he is a part of the board where the course layout is discussed.
5.2 Personal views

In the second part of the interview we wanted to see how the interviewees themselves view ethics within business marketing and education. The focus here was the interviewees’ personal values and not necessarily their views as representatives of their University.

5.2.1 Corporate responsibility

On whether companies have an obligation restricted to just following the law, or if they have an additional ethical responsibility, all four respondents gave similar answers. They clearly express a view that the law is nothing else but a minimum standard for companies to follow. This view is shared by Shwarts and Carroll (2003). They visualize the relation between the two in the pyramid of Corporate Social Responsibility. Where ethics is something that is expected from companies, while obeying the law is required. For a better illustration we can refer to Tillman (2009) who argues that since legislation may differ between countries. Companies that are multinational must therefore rely more heavily on their ethical standards, than on the laws in the least demanding legislative environment. According to Mid Sweden everything that is legal is not necessarily appropriate, and this applies both to people, organisations and government entities. As Macfarlane (1995) expresses that third or weaker parties are easily neglected. And we see the importance of ethics here in order to make sure that all parties are treated fair. Umeå argues that, even though following the law is enough in order to avoid convictions of crime and fines, this is not enough. From a business-to-business point of view it is important to feel trust and safety, which can be determined by the other companies’ ethical and moral standards.

These answers by the interviewees can be compared to the theory of moral, amoral and immoral management. Their answers clearly share the view that moral management is the way to go about, where management represent high ethical standards and their activities can be described as fair. This may seem obvious to many but the view of business as amoral is more common and serious than many realize. (Maguad et al, 2009:211). An example of this is Friedman (1970) who takes a somewhat amoral stand when it comes to businesses social responsibility, and mentions that they should focusing on increasing profits while following the rules of the game.

5.2.2 Responsibility of individual marketers

On the subject of individual marketers ethical responsibilities in relation to the law, and ethical codes of the company they work for, we again received a fairly unanimously answer. Växjo thought that it was very important as a human being to have own ethics and own values. The law is again, as with companies, just the minimum of all the obligations a marketer has to follow. Umeå argues that the individual of course need to have his/her own personal set of ethics, and that these need to be similar to the company’s ethical standards, in order for the marketer to work there in the long run. Lund thinks that is why one educates oneself, to be able to make individual judgements, that everyone has to have their own personal set of ethics and stick to this in practice of marketing even if the company has lower ethical standards.

What we can see is that all respondents in some way or form believe the ethics of individual marketers is important. At the same time, however, we believe it is possible to identify some differences in their responses, and that is how they view the situation. Umeå mentions that the
ethical views of a company and an employee of that company have to be similar in order for a bearable employment, which we interpret as suggesting that there has to be a fit or mutual understanding between the company and its employees, when it comes to ethics. At the same time Lund, Mid Sweden and Växjö seem to approach the question in another way, namely by seeing the individual marketer with his/her ethics as an extension of the companies own ethical codes and guidelines. Mainly because they think these ethical codes and the laws often are insufficient, mentioned by Lund and Mid Sweden. Perhaps Växjö expresses this view the best when mentioning that individuals have a responsibility where other standards fail.

5.2.3 Current ethical behaviours of marketers

On whether the ethics in marketing practice today is good enough or if it needs to be improved, the answers of the interviewees were varied. Växjö thinks that it, without a doubt needs to be improved and that marketers should have better knowledge about ethical aspects of their work. Lund believes it is as good as it can get in certain areas, surely everything can be improved, but at the moment he sees no problem with it. In the end it is the customer who decides, and if a company does not live up to their expectations they choose another one. We believe this view of amoral companies is relatively problematic, and that all responsibility cannot be ascribed to the customers. As our theory implies in, for example Schwarts and Carroll (2003), companies are expected to be responsible to a higher degree. However, Lund himself can see a problem with his view, especially in situations where the customer does not always have insight in the ethical behaviours of a company. Mid Sweden emphasises that he sees no general misbehaviour amongst marketers, but adds that as a member of the Swedish Market Court, he encounters ethical failures on a regular basis. Umeå tells us that he believes many companies today do have good ethical standards, but that there always are a lot of “bad apples”. This seem to suggest that if everyone are following the rules it will work well, by which he could mean that there is nothing fundamentally wrong with the standards of the profession. This view also seems to be the one of Lund and Mid Sweden when looking at their answers. However, as our theory implies there are trends such as Greenwashing, which are indications of some marketers today to some extent are engaging in questionable practices.

Umeå then adds that the overview of ethical behaviour also depend on what level it is viewed. On a national level certain behaviour is accepted, but when viewed across cultures this behaviour might be considered unethical. This we believe is a very interesting point, which touches upon something both the authors and readers should be aware of and that how you view ethical behaviour probably to a great extent depends on where and how you look at it. In addition, another aspect that is relevant to this topic is underlying reasons for observed trends of ethical failures as mentioned in Tillman (2009) Globalization and increasing transparency has given us a better insight in the activities of companies. As a result a high number of observed failures do not necessarily mean that the failures are increasing, only that they are easier to see. To the contrary the increased transparency may be an incentive for companies to act better.

In other words, for example, your personal interest or your occupation might make you see things others do not or view things in another way. We believe that this has probably influenced our respondents view on the topic quite significantly, especially Växjö who is a member of ECPAT whom are working with ethical issues, probably encountering and being more conscious about the “bad apples” than most of us. This can be one reason for her, with her response, showing a greater concern about current ethical behaviors of marketers than our
other respondents. However, this underlying motivation is difficult to verify since Mid Sweden, as recently mentioned, is a member of the Swedish Market Court, but still he sees no misbehavior in general. The reason for this answer though is that he thinks it is difficult to generalize.

5.3 Ethics in marketing education

5.3.1 Importance of ethics in marketing courses at A, B and C-level

All interviewees thought it was important to have ethics in marketing courses at undergraduate level. Umeå says that ethics is something that should be represented in the entire education of a student. Ethics is a natural part of marketing and therefore should be included in marketing courses. This view is shared in high degree by all representatives, however, Lund do not think it should take too much space in the education, considering the amount of time one have to study marketing. Växjö says that she believes in integrating ethics into all courses, and do not see the need for a separate marketing ethics course.

Our interest in this question derives from the belief in Shannon et al. (1997), where it is said to be best for students to encounter ethics in earlier marketing courses. Then they will have the ethical aspect with them once moving on to more topical subjects, and even here they could bring up discussions about ethics. (Shannon et al., 1997:1073)

5.3.2 Requirements of ethics in marketing courses

On whether the representation of ethics in the marketing courses is formally required or if it occurs naturally the answers are very different between the interviewees. As we have seen in the theory there are different ideas on whether it is good to integrate ethics into ordinary courses, or if it is better to have one separate ethics course. An example for arguments against having it included into ordinary courses is that it will draw attention from the core subject, and that lecturer does not have time or know-how to teach ethics. Others that argue for it is Snoeyenbos (1992) and Oddo (1997) who says that one rarely uses the ethical knowledge learned from ethics courses in ordinary business courses. Macfarlane (1995) also sees the need for ethics, as he calls it, as a balancing dimension in all courses. Mid Sweden tells us that they have no requirements of ethical discussions but that they occur naturally anyway. Mid Sweden does have a summer course in marketing ethics, where the ethical aspects of course are required to be discussed. Umeå tells us that ethics are integrated and represented in the literature A-course, and that they also have a course in marketing ethics on C-level where the presence of ethics is formal. In conclusion he says that ethics is only formally represented at the A and C-level, but much of it occurs naturally in the rest of the courses. Växjö does have loose requirements that ethics to some degree should be discussed in the marketing courses. She however adds that due to a current process of changing the marketing courses the ethics might be neglected to some extent at the moment. Växjö does not at the moment have a course in marketing ethics and instead focuses on integrating ethics in the regular courses. Lund responds that they do have a module on the A-level, which brings up marketing ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility. They also have optional courses on B-level, and points out that everyone is free to have it as a topic when writing their c-thesis. When it comes to discussion of ethics in business courses, it is showed by Desplaces et al (1997) that students who recall or remember discussions of ethics also show increased moral competence.
We also investigated if ethics was used as criteria for choosing course literature and if they had any requirements of including ethics in the examination. From the theory we have learned that ethics in the marketing literature used for the course can help in starting discussions on lectures. Discussions that are making students more active and thus improving their learning and understanding. (Shannon et al., 1997:1073) Mid Sweden says that ethics is not generally used as criteria for the literature but adds that if the course substance contains ethics it should also be represented in the literature. In the examination he again refers to the course substance as the main determent of the exam questions. Umeå on the other hand does have ethics as one of many criteria for course literature He adds that lack of ethics will not result in abandoning the literature, but rather add to it, for example, with articles. On the exams, he like Mid Sweden, answers that the examination is supposed to reflect the literature. Since ethics is represented in most literature one can expect it to appear in exams as well. In Lund they did add ethics into account when choosing to use “No Logo” by Naomi Klein in one of their A-level courses. They wanted to use it as a balance to the market forces and to illuminate ethics for the students. However, whether it was used in exams the answer was no. In the case of Växjö, they did not have ethics as a factor when deciding literature, and there are no specific requirements of questions on ethics during exams. Instead they focus on implementing it on the overall marketing education.

5.3.3 Do students learn enough of marketing ethics?

On whether or not the interviewees believe their students learn enough about ethics, the answer where substantially different. The difficulties with the question, however, are how you measure what is enough. Looking at the section “effects of ethics education” where there are different variables like moral reasoning and moral competence. The other question that then also is being asked is what is it that one wants out of ethics education. However, this research is about understanding what the representatives from the universities believe, and not explaining what is the actual outcome from the ethics that is being taught. Lund thinks that it is enough for their students to get insight and become aware of their responsibilities. Taking into account everything else they have to learn he think that ethics cannot take much more space. Umeå argues in a similar way. Given the limited time of marketing education the best they can do is to provide an optimal mix of the many topics that should be included. He adds that he would like to see more ethics in the courses as well as more of other topics, but given the time they have he believes they have achieved an optimal mix. Therefore he cannot justify giving ethics more space. Mid Sweden tells us that given the larger role that, for example, topics such as CSR get in current discussions, he can see possible reasons for increasing the focus that ethics get today. However, he emphasises that he do not consider their current representation of ethics as a weakness for the university. Meanwhile Växjö, still not favouring separate marketing courses in ethics, think they have to little ethics integrated in their courses at the moment. She wants ethics to get a more obvious role than it currently has in ordinary marketing courses. Lund and Umeå argue that they cannot give any more room to ethics, they do not look at it in the way as argued in (Oddo, 1997:294) that ethics are not added, merely intertwined with existing subjects. The best way to answer the question of whether or not students learn enough about ethics could be to make a deeper investigation of what the students themselves believe is the case. As we could not make a sufficient investigation about this question in our paper, due to our limited time and resources. Instead we will mention this as a suggestion for future studies in our last chapter.

When asked none of the interviewees have encountered any articulated requests from any of their students. Lund believes that might be because students can, if they want, choose
themselves to include ethics in their education. They are in a way given that option, when considering the optional courses. Umeå argues that a reason for this is probably that students tend to focus mainly on more tangible subjects and that ethics is not thought of in the same way.

5.3.4 Change in presence of ethics

All four interviewees have seen a large increase in the presence of ethics, both in education and society. This view is to a large extent supported in our theories. For example, according to Barkemeyer (2009) terms such as sustainable development, Corporate Citizenship and CSR are in databases today up to 45 times more common than in the early 90s. According to Tillmann (2009) there are trends such as the creation of collectives reaching all over the world, where the corporations involved agree to follow certain CSR standards. Mid Sweden tells us that when he was a student ethics was barely mentioned at all. Mainly he has observed this increase in the societal debate, but the weight of it in education has also increased. Umeå has also seen a big difference, when he was a student the concept of ethics was more implicit and rarely discussed. He tells us that what he has observed the main change has taken place in the last ten years. The change has mainly been in society, but also as a reflection in education. Växjö says that ethics was not mentioned at all when she was a student. Going back to herself, ethics became more relevant when she started to work with an organisation called ECPAT. They looked specifically on what ethical implications that could occur due to Internet. Lund also thinks it is much more ethics present today in marketing than when he was a student, where probably the largest increase was around 2002-2003. To illustrate the change he says that when he was a student ethics was treated as a laughing matter.

The confident and unanimous responses from the interviewees leave us little reason to doubt this change has indeed happened. This fact is also mentioned in much of the literature studied prior to the interviews. For example in Heal (2005:388-389), both reactions to corporate scandals and higher environmental awareness is given credit for this change. Also the increased attention given to CSR is a cause of positive trends in business ethics. In Heal (2005:390) success stories of engagement in CSR such as the case of BP explain why CSR is not only attractive for improving the company image, but that it can also generate higher income. This was, however, written before the BP oil spill of 2010; at that time BPs CSR engagement was in fact beneficial for them.

5.3.5 Goals of marketing ethics

When we ask what goals the universities has with the ethics the answers vary. Mid Sweden refers to one of three skills mentioned in the Bologna process. This is the skill of evaluation, which includes improving the student’s good judgement. Apart from this he adds that it is important to help the students to create an ethical compass of their own. Umeå tells us that from his point of view the most important thing is to make sure that students always have the ethical aspect in the back of their mind. Also they must get to know their own limits and definitions of right and wrong in order to feel good about the choices and decisions they make in the future. Växjö says that their current goals on the matter are rather unclear and should be improved. She however feels that one of the most important things is that the students learn to reflect about ethical aspects on their own, and to realize their responsibilities and the effects of their choices. Another important aspect she says is that students must realize that they will not be alone in thinking about ethical matters when they start to work, and that methods of increasing for example companies CSR are being implemented as we speak. Lund tells us that
they do not have any specific goals, though there are a lot of ethical discussions, but they do not have any clear outlines to follow.

5.4 Comparison of claimed representation of ethics with the representation in course syllabuses

Here the answers of our interviewees on the representation of ethics will be compared to the level of representation mentioned in the course syllabuses and literature.

5.4.1 Umeå University

On the subject of how much ethics is represented in the education, our interviewee from Umeå University said that it was represented to some extent in most marketing courses and in the literature. When the outlines for the marketing courses and the recommended literature was investigated this was confirmed. In fact it was represented in all three course outlines and in two of the recommended books.

5.4.2 Mid Sweden University

Here the interviewee says that ethics is not formally represented in the marketing courses or required in the literature, but that it is discussed to some extent anyway. The exception is the summer course in marketing ethics where the representation is required in the course and literature. When this was investigated we could confirm these statements. Ethics was only represented in the outline and literature of the summer course.

5.4.3 Växjö University

Here our interview tells us that they have loose requirements on the presence of ethics in the marketing courses and adds that these are poorly followed. She further explains that ethics should be integrated in all marketing courses rather than having a course only focusing on marketing ethics. According to her ethics is not required in any of the literature of the courses. When we investigated the course outlines and the literature we could find no representation of ethics at all. This does to some extent confirm the interviewees’ statement that the only requirements that could exist are loose and informal.

5.4.4 Lund University

Our interviewee here clearly expresses a view that ethics should have a very limited amount of space in marketing education, more specifically “one week”. He says that ethics is only required to be represented as 1/5th of the marketing course on A-level. These statements are to some extent confirmed by the investigation of course outlines. However this “1/5th” is not expressed in the course outline. Ethics was however represented in the course literature.
6. Conclusions

In this chapter we will present our conclusions drawn from the findings resulting from the analysis. These conclusions will have a focus on the differences and similarities between the implementation and underlying thoughts about ethics presented by the interviewees from the different universities we studied.

The results of our four interviews were not only interesting but also surprisingly similar between the four respondents. Instead of being defensive and biased to give the “right” answer the four respondents were positive and surprisingly self-critical.

6.1 Qualitative comparison

From this table you can easily observe and compare the answers we got to the main questions used as a base for our conclusions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question/University</th>
<th>Umeå</th>
<th>Lund</th>
<th>Mid-Sweden</th>
<th>Växjö</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Does corporations have a further ethical responsibility than following laws etc?</td>
<td>Yes they do, the law is just a minimum.</td>
<td>Yes they do, the law is just a minimum.</td>
<td>Yes, they do have additional responsibilities</td>
<td>Yes they do, companies have clearly higher responsibilities than the law.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Does marketers as individuals have a further responsibility than following laws etc?</td>
<td>Yes they do. Also your company must share your ethical views for a bearable employment.</td>
<td>Yes, everyone is responsible for his or her own actions. The law and codes of a company is insufficient.</td>
<td>Yes, good ethics is an important quality of practicing marketers and the law and the companies’ ethical codes aren’t enough.</td>
<td>Yes, individuals have a responsibility where other standards fail.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Is the current ethical behavior of marketers good enough?</td>
<td>It is overall good, but there are some “bad apples”. It also depends on where and how you look.</td>
<td>It works pretty well, but can be improved.</td>
<td>Generally it is good, but there are cases of unethical behavior.</td>
<td>There is, without a doubt need for improvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Is ethics important in marketing education at A,B and C level?</td>
<td>Yes, it is and should be involved in the entire studies, since it is a natural part of marketing studies.</td>
<td>It is important, but should not take too much time. 1 week ethics in 1,5 semester of marketing is enough.</td>
<td>It is indeed important and therefore ethics should be integrated into the courses.</td>
<td>It should be put in every aspect of all courses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Do you have formal requirements of ethics in marketing courses?</td>
<td>To some degree formal but it also occurs naturally.</td>
<td>Only on the A level</td>
<td>There are no required discussions about it but it is integrated into many issues.</td>
<td>There are some formal requirements that aren’t followed good enough, due to changes being made.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. Do students learn enough marketing ethics?

| Due to limited time, ethics only get a certain amount of space. More would be better, but an optimized mix is all that they can provide. |
| They are taught enough in order to make their own decisions and to know their responsibilities. |
| It is not a weakness they have, but due to the trends in society it should get more focus in the future. |
| Ethics need more focus than it is getting at the moment. |

7. What trends have you seen regarding ethics?

| He has seen a great increase of ethics in education and society |
| He has seen a clear increase since he was a student. |
| There has been a clear increase in the importance given to ethics since he was a student. |
| There has been an increase both in society and in education. |

8. (Goals of marketing ethics?)

| One of the most important aspects is to make sure that the students always take this aspect into consideration. |
| They have no specific goals with ethics since it occurs naturally. |
| One aim is to improve the student’s good judgment through their evaluation skills. It is also to create an ethical compass for the students. |
| No clear goals. Only to make the students aware of and reflect upon their ethical responsibilities. |

In these answers we have found patterns from which we have drawn our conclusions. Since our aim with the study is to see how “Business Schools at Sweden’s universities view the importance of marketing ethics and how they approach it in the education” we have here chosen to treat the universities as a group rather than individual subjects. This is a conscious choice made after we analyzed the answers and found patterns making a generalization possible. With the qualitative information found in our answers we can now draw conclusions about the general view of the importance of ethics and how well it is represented.

6.1 Importance of ethics

How important marketing ethics is considered by Sweden’s universities, cannot be derived from the answers to a single question of our interviews. But by looking at some of the answers together however, we can get an appropriate appreciation.

Furthermore, since our respondents are either involved in, or responsible for the layout of marketing courses we view their personal interest, knowledge and thoughts on the subject as highly relevant. This is due to the impact these personal preconceptions might have on the decisions made by the respondents when forming courses and allocating time.

If we start with corporate responsibility, the interviewees unanimously tells us that companies definitely do have further obligation than just abiding the law. They refer to the law as a minimum standard of what is acceptable and add that just following the law is not enough. The respondents answers on this question are very similar to what we found in Carroll (1991), in Shwarts et al, (2003:504), on the relation between ethics and law, where the law is again
described as a minimum of what is required, but still not enough for corporations to be considered as socially responsible on its own.

The view of the respondents can here also be seen as a belief in the need for Moral management where a high set of ethical standards is employed and the company’s activities can be described as fair. Accordingly, moral management is considered the best of the three views. (Maguad et al, 2009:211-212).

Secondly we have the importance of ethics for the individual marketer. Here again we get very similar answers from the respondents. The answers mainly express the importance of having a good set of personal ethical standards. However, there are certain aspects of the responses that seem to differentiate amongst the respondents, or in other words they seem to view the situation differently. The main difference is that Umeå believes that the individual and the company must have approximately the same ethical values in order to function, while the others see the individual’s ethics as an extension of the company’s ethics where these are insufficient.

When discussing the current behavior of practicing marketers we got slightly varying responses from our respondents. While Umeå, Lund and Mid-Sweden view the overall behavior as good with some bad exceptions that should be addressed, Växjö expresses a greater concern, stating that there is in fact a need for improvement. One explanation for this is that she has been involved in other ethical projects on the side, giving her a deeper insight in the current situation. On the other hand Mid Sweden has been involved in the Swedish Market Court, also giving him a deeper insight in current ethical behavior. But he remains in the perception that the majority of marketers are practicing with acceptable ethical behavior.

About the perceived importance of ethics within marketing courses at an undergraduate level, all respondents once again had thoughts similar to a high degree. For example; Umeå and Växjö underlined the importance of ethics within the entire education and in all courses.

After reviewing these answers it becomes clear that the interviewees do in fact see ethics as something very important. Neither had an amoral approach to ethics in education nor in business.

6.2 Representation of ethics

We did not have one single question giving us the answer to how much ethics is represented in the courses. Here again the answer must be derived from the answers on a few different questions. The answers to these questions have been triangulated by looking at the formal syllabuses for the marketing courses at each university and also by briefly looking at the course literature for those courses.

On whether there were any formal requirements of ethics in the marketing courses, we got different answers. Mid Sweden tells us that they do not have any requirements but that ethics still is represented informally. Umeå responds that they only have requirements at A and C-level to a limited extent but here also it occurs naturally in most of the courses. Växjö says that they currently only have some vague requirements but that the current neglect is due to a process of change and that proper requirements will be set up when it is done. Lund respond that they have some requirements at the A-level and adds that depending on choices of the
student they can have courses with a higher amount of ethics also on B and C-level (By C-level he refers to writing thesis on the subject of ethics).

Two of the four universities do have a course only on marketing ethics. These two are Umeå and Mid Sweden. Mid Sweden however only offers the course in the summer at the moment. Växjö says that she cannot see a need for separate courses on ethics and would rather have it implemented in regular courses.

Neither of the universities when asked said that they have strong and enforced requirements of ethics in the literature or in the examination of marketing courses. However points were made that if the course substance contained it to a larger extent, it should also be present in the literature and exams.

In order to make our finding in this area stronger we investigated the syllabus of each marketing course. Here we did not find any significant deviation from the responses we got from our interviewees.

On whether student gets enough education on ethics, the answers differed to a larger extent. Lund and Umeå thought that given the time they had the role of ethics was as big as can be expected. Växjö and Mid Sweden however said that more ethics was preferable for example due to the larger role it has got in society.

6.3 Overview

From the answers on the representation we can see an unclear picture of the actual implementation. With all so clear answers on the importance of ethics the picture we see on the subject of representation is more disorganized with arguments going back and forth. But just from the fact that two out of the four universities said they wanted more ethics and the other two rationalized their current amount with time constraints, we draw the conclusion that the ethics represented in the marketing courses does not completely reflect the importance given to it by the studied universities.

6.4 Implications

From our results we have arrived at some suggestions for the Universities regarding their approach to the subject of ethics. One of the problems identified with the amount of ethics taught is time constraint. With the way ethics in marketing courses is approached at a couple of the universities, where ethics is something they add on top of the other course material, there will be conflicts when one or the other is increased. A way we believe the universities can get around this is by weaving ethics into the other material. This will likely reduce the time consummation and at the same time strengthen the relation between the two parts and also build on the students’ ability for ethical reflection desired by for example Växjö University. Another thing universities should do is to set up clearer goals with the ethics in marketing courses. As we observed a lack of this as well as low formal requirements, we believe this to be a major cause to the actual implementations failure to represent the perceived importance.
7. Suggestions for future studies

In this chapter we will briefly discuss what future studies we see a need for after finishing our own research.

When conducting our research we came across two areas where we saw a need for further studies. The first one is a similar study as this one but with a focus on economy instead. Our interviewee from Mid Sweden University mentioned how he has seen that ethics is often neglected in this area. This especially in the way that people are represented in theoretical models. Our suggestion for research is thus to investigate to what extent, if any, ethical aspects are taken into consideration in this area.

The other suggestion we have is more related to our own study. This suggestion is to further investigate the how ethics in education is seen from the students point of view. When studying the literature for this research we realized that information on the views of students on the matter was very scarce.
References

Books


Journals


**Internet sites**


Authors comments

Due to the amount of time that has passed since this research commenced, we are aware that some of the empirical findings may have changed. We did receive some responses in our interviews that indicated changes where already being planned to some extent at a couple of the universities. On the other hand we also received responses indicating satisfaction with the current situation. In the end we can’t find any reasons to believe that the problems and discrepancies identified in the paper has completely been solved or disappeared in the relatively short time that has passed. Therefore we still assume that the results and implications of this paper are still relevant and useful.
Appendix A

Hej!

Vi är två studenter vid Umeå Universitet som just nu skriver vår C-uppsats. Uppsatsen berör ämnet; etik inom marknadsföringskurser. Det vi ska undersöka är bl.a. er syn på marknadsföringsetik, förekomsten utav etik i era marknadsföringskurser både formellt och informellt (dvs. huruvida all den etik som undervisas finns representerad på kursplanen eller inte), samt de trender ni sett under de senaste åren.

Tillvägagångssättet kommer att vara korta telefonintervjuer med personer som har samma eller en liknande position som er på ett antal utav Sveriges universitet. Vi undrar därför om ni skulle kunna tänka er att ställa upp på denna intervju.

Intervjun kommer att vara kort samt korrekt genomförd. Detta innebär att vi inte kommer att använda resultaten från intervjun utan att ni först har godkänt detta. Frågorna kommer ni att få tillgång till innan intervjuetillfället då vi värderar informerade svar högre än spontana.

Vi har planerat att utföra intervjuerna om ca 2 veckor.

Känns detta som något ni skulle kunna tänka er att ställa upp på så skulle vi vara mycket tacksamma. Meddela oss så snart som möjligt.

Med vänliga hälsningar
Albin Hortell och Daniel Hellgren
Appendix B

Hej!

Som överenskommnet sänder vi nu frågorna som ska användas som underlag för intervjun. Dessa frågor är ett underlag för att föra en kortare diskussion i ämnet marknadsföringsetik.

Syfte

Syftet med denna undersökning är att ta reda på hur handelshögskolor runt om i landet ser på vikten av marknadsförings etik och hur de integrerar den i utbildningen, både formellt och informellt. Med detta vill vi fastställa om den ansedda vikten utav god marknadsföringsetik är representerad inom marknadsföringskurserna. Vi har valt detta ämne då etik har blivit ett viktigt marknadsföringsverktyg på senare år t.ex. i och med klimatfrågor osv. Det vi vill uppnå med dessa intervjuer är att få synpunkten av representanter från några utav Sveriges universitet så att vi kan inkludera dem i en diskussion om ämnet.

Tillvägagångssätt


Intervju frågor

1. Hur gammal är du?
2. Vad har du för utbildningsbakgrund och varifrån?
3. Vad har du för position på ditt universitet?
4. Hur länge har du haft denna position?
5. Hur länge har du jobbat på universitetet?
6. Vad har du för roll i planerandet/utförandet utav kurser inom marknadsföring på ditt universitet?
8. Tycker du att god etik är en viktig egenskap hos praktiserande marknadsförare eller är lagen samt företagets etiska koder tillräckliga?

9. Upplever du att den etik som praktiseras idag utav marknadsförare generellt är tillräcklig eller borde den förbättras?

10. Hur viktigt tycker du att det är att beröra etik inom marknadsföringskurser på A, B och C nivå?

11. Har ni några krav på förekomst utav diskussioner om etik inom era marknadsföringskurser?

12. Förekommer mycket diskussion om etik utan krav på era marknadsföringskurser?

13. Har ni kurser inom marknadsförings etik, och i så fall, förekommer dessa obligatoriskt inom program eller är de endast valbara?

14. Är etik ett utav de kriterier ni använder för att välja kurs-litteratur?

15. I vilken utsträckning berörs etik inom de marknadsföringskurser ni ger?

16. Har ni några krav på att etik berörs under examineringen utav era marknadsföringskurser?

17. Tycker du att era elever får en tillräcklig kunskap om marknadsförings etik efter avklarad utbildning hos er, eller tycker du att ämnet borde få mer fokus än det har nu?

18. Har du upplevt någon ökning/minskning utav förekomsten av etik inom marknadsföringskurser (t.ex. sen du var student)?

19. Vilka mål har ni med etiken inom kurserna, vad är viktigt för eleverna att lära sig?

20. Har ni fått önskemål om mer etik inom era marknadsföringskurser utav studenter?

21. Är det något du vill tillägga eller har du några önskemål gällande etik inom kurserna?