

Ethics and university teaching. Perceptions and new challenges

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Abstract

This article presents the perception that the professors of the School of Business Administration (EAN) of the University of Costa Rica have about ethics and university teaching. For this, through a mixed design of a dominant qualitative approach, based on a sociocritical paradigm, dynamic inquiries and scientific results were supported more solidly, to generate self-reflection and promote educational transformation. In this sense, a self-administered survey was applied to 147 academics, complemented with phone calls and face-to-face interviews. The results highlight the high degree of importance that teachers provide to ethics in vocational training, as well as the strategies and values that should characterize the professional in Business. The conclusions reaffirm the need to strengthen ethical performance in the professional performance of students. It is also highlighted that these professionals with ethical principles develop soft skills (teamwork, communication, leadership) and establish better human and organizational relationships.

Keywords: Ethics; teaching; values; Business Administration; Higher Education

Ética y docencia universitaria. Percepciones y nuevos desafíos

Resumen

En este artículo se presenta la percepción que tienen los docentes de la Escuela de Administración de Negocios (EAN) de la Universidad de Costa Rica, acerca de la ética y la docencia universitaria. Para ello, mediante un diseño mixto de enfoque dominante cualitativo, sustentado en un paradigma sociocrítico, se realizan indagaciones más dinámicas y se apoyan con mayor solidez los resultados científicos, para generar autorreflexión y propiciar la transformación educativa. En tal sentido, se aplicó una encuesta autoadministrada a 147 académicos, complementada con llamadas telefónicas y entrevistas cara a cara. Los resultados destacan el alto grado de importancia que le otorgan los docentes a la ética en la formación profesional, así como las estrategias y valores que deben caracterizar al profesional en Negocios. Las conclusiones reafirman la necesidad del fortalecimiento de la actuación ética en el desempeño profesional de los estudiantes. Asimismo, se destaca que estos profesionales con principios éticos desarrollan competencias blandas (trabajo en equipo, comunicación, liderazgo) y establecen mejores relaciones humanas y organizacionales.

Palabras claves: Ética; docencia; valores; Administración de Negocios; Educación Superior

Ética e ensino universitário. Percepções e novos desafios

Resumo

Este artigo apresenta a percepção que os professores da Escola de Administração de Empresas (EAN) da Universidade da Costa Rica têm sobre ética e ensino universitário. Para isso, através de um desenho misto de uma abordagem dominante qualitativa, com base em um paradigma sócio-crítico, são feitas pesquisas mais dinâmicas e os resultados científicos são apoiados de forma mais sólida, para gerar auto-reflexão e promover a transformação educacional. Nesse sentido, uma pesquisa autoadministrada foi aplicada a 147 acadêmicos, complementada com telefonemas e entrevistas pessoais. Os resultados destacam o alto grau de importância que os professores atribuem à ética na formação profissional, bem como as estratégias e valores que devem caracterizar o profissional em Administração. As conclusões reafirmam a necessidade de fortalecer o desempenho ético no desempenho profissional dos estudantes. Além disso, destaca-se que esses profissionais com princípios éticos desenvolvem habilidades sociais (trabalho em equipe, comunicação, liderança) e estabelecem melhores relações humanas e organizacionais.

Palavras-chave: Ética; ensino; valores; Administração de Negócios; Educação superior

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"Preparing the ground for the emergence of new professionals who will take up the challenge of the future is the task of the university and, in particular, of its faculty." (Román, 2001, p. 362)

Education is the key to a dignified life, it is a process of personal and social self- and co realization, of interaction and

development of all creative potentialities. The human nature, understood pluridimensionally in their Being, Living, and Acting in the world, as well as its opening towards transcendence, creates an interest in learning what is moral and what is ethical (Dewey, 1978; Nussbaum, 2005; Levinas, 2003; Torralba, 2003). Rusell (1998) had already argued that ethics has two origins: a political one and another related to personal, religious, and moral convictions.

The ethics of human development seeks to direct social life, provides an opportunity to evaluate one's and others' behavior, and makes it possible to make decisions that are in harmony with the environment in which one acts. As claimed by Vázquez (2007), human beings, as social beings, have morals that are expressed

through their actions both towards their peers and their environment. This means that ethics

seeks to guide people in a way of acting that contributes to the responsible construction of human coexistence and the full development of their potential.

Thus, when examining the constant and strong pressure of today's business environment that influence ethical decisions, it is important for universities and—especially— business schools to understand and educate their students within an educational context that encourages ethical decision-making (Amlie, 2010; Carroll & Buchholtz, 2012).

However, in order to enhance human development and meet the challenges, it is necessary to promote ethical training, related to a matter of choices between what is allowed and what is not, and between what is appropriate and what is not. In this way, it can be understood as a system of principles that determine whether a behavior is correct or not, within a set of moral rules by which conduct is governed (Griswold & Chowning, 2013; Lynn, 2010; Walther, 2016). Therefore, the way in which ethics is expressed

and lived may vary from one context to another, from one moment to another, but its ultimate goal is the full realization of human life, in its uniqueness and politicization (Zeledón, 2001).

Consequently, understanding the role of ethics in the field of higher education is relevant, since "the training processes in universities will be oriented towards the most comprehensive development of people, combining the cognitive, emotional, and social aspects required by students and society in a balanced way" (Martí, Gaete, Puerta-Lopera, & Martí-Vilar, 2014, p. 31). This appropriation from the university social responsibility reaffirms the professor's leading role, as a facilitator of reflective, dialogical, and experiential spaces that promote ethically acceptable behavior in the personal and academic dimensions, as well as in their future professional performance.

Therefore, this article analyzes the role of ethics from the perspective of university teaching in the field of business administration. It is assumed that, through education, professors motivate the emergence of a moral reasoning that promotes ethical action in their students.

The importance of the study of ethics in the various professions lies in the fact that, without an idea of the ethical standards linked to the context of each activity, it would be incomprehensible that any decision taken could be morally convincing (Rainey & Goujon, 2011), especially among the alternatives found in certain problematic situations (Frey, 2010). Therefore, students should be challenged to discover how these choices (decision-making) shape professional ethics and values (Walther, 2016). Hence, the professor must provide complex topics of social relevance that can be attractive to students and thus provide a real context for learning (Sarramona, 2008; Griswold & Chowning, 2013).

To this end, Børsen, Antia, & Glessmer (2013) proposed that the teaching-learning processes of ethics should address three important goals: a) awareness, i.e., to raise consciousness regarding ethical dilemmas; b) information, i.e., to provide students with relevant data and knowledge; and c) empowerment, i.e., to enable students to analyze ethical dilemmas and make appropriate decisions.

Consequently, besides focusing on professional preparation and development of soft skills, it

is essential that higher education institutions foster strong ethical-moral reflection and understanding that helps students analyze the consequences and implications of an ethics-based decision-making process (Lynn, 2010; Zamorano, 2010; Zeledón, 2010; Zeledón & Varela, 2015).

In this sense, in addition to providing professional skills, university education should contribute to the training of ethical citizens, committed to building peace and defending human rights. In other words, ethics should become a substantive axis of human, professional, and academic action, where the university reaffirms its leading role as one of the key institutions—besides family and school—that guide and encourage ethical learning (Briones & Lara, 2016; Buxarrais & Zeledón, 2004; Palomares & Chisvert, 2014; Zeledón, 2010). Undoubtedly, this reaffirms the importance of teaching in the field of ethics, as revealed below in the main conclusions of the research conducted at the School of Business Administration of Universidad de Costa Rica.

Therefore, the objective of this study is to identify the perceptions of professors at the School of Business Administration (EAN) of Universidad de Costa Rica regarding ethics and university teaching. Additionally, this research aims to identify the values and strategies that facilitate their pedagogical action to promote ethical learning in students of Business Administration and Public Accounting; therefore, this work gathers the main findings of the interviews with scholars, part of the research N.221-B5-316, endorsed by this institution, in which the subject of ethics in Business Administration was approached from other key actors, such as students, graduates, and employers.

Method

The research conducted is based on a mixed method (Hernández Sampieri & Mendoza, 2018) since, in addition to "promoting change and transformation of the participants" (Popkewitz, 1988, p.75), it involves the collection and analysis of the qualitative and quantitative data, as to integrate and complement the findings in a better understanding of the phenomenon being studied.

In this case, it is important that the research study enables the faculty of the School of Business Administration of the University of Costa Rica to recognize and understand the educational reality, based on their teaching knowledge and its dynamics in the processes of ethical training with students of Business Administration and Public Accounting. Its axiological practice facilitates learning from the involvement of the main actors of the educational act to generate attitudinal changes assumed by conviction and consolidated in ethical practices. The study is based on a hermeneutic-critical approach (Latorre, Del Rincón, & Arnal, 1996) that allows the use of techniques and instruments of communicative and interpretative nature, where self-reflection is encouraged in the participating individuals (in this case, the professors of the School of Business Administration), in order to guide the educational action towards the constructive transformation (Cebotarev, 2003) of the ethical education of the future professionals.

Design

This is a mixed study through a dominant approach design (Hernández, Fernández, & Baptista, 2014), since the emphasis is on the qualitative perspective, rather than the quantitative one. Consequently, it allowed us to identify the perceptions, strategies, and values the faculty displays in their pedagogical action to guide the ethical education of future professionals in the field of Business Administration.

Participants

A sample of the interviewed population was obtained from 147 professors of the School of Business Administration of Universidad de Costa Rica. The majority of the interviewees were men (83%), while women represented the 17%. All the interviewees (100%) had extensive experience in the area of business (more than 20 years) and display high professional quality, with at least three academic degrees (51%), among which the highest were master's degrees in a particular discipline related to business management, accounting, finance, computer science, law, economics, or some complementary areas. It should be noted that the interviewed scholars have between five and

fifteen years of experience as university professors (46.3%). In addition, 64% teach at the Rodrigo Facio campus, with an average of three courses per semester, and 32% work at one of the other three regional campuses included in the study (Guanacaste, Occidente, and Limón), teaching two subjects in the same academic semester.

Instrument

The questionnaire used to find out the professors' opinions about the learning and experiences that guide ethical training and its implications within the professional practice of Business Administration contained 26 questions (10 closed-ended and 16 open-ended). It was divided into three sections: Part I. General information about the participant (years of experience, academic training, importance given to the subject of ethics, among other questions); Part II. Ethics in Business Administration (e.g., the main role of ethics in Business Administration, whether they include ethics in the development of their courses, teaching strategies, and which five values should be included in the ethics educations of future Business Administration professionals); and Part III. Ethics in the School of Business Administration of the UCR (as an example, whether they know the EAN-UCR has a cross-cutting axis about ethics and values, whether they know the values of the EAN, strategies to promote the values of the EAN, and how they implement ethics in their teaching practice. To this end, the content was validated by five experts to evidence the representativeness of the statements and a pilot test was applied to ten scholars to check the clarity and understanding of the questions included in the instrument.

Procedures

The study data were obtained from the faculty, with the informed consent of each professor. The EAN Management notified the entire teaching community of the development of the research project, its importance and benefits for university work, especially its coherence with the cross-cutting axis of ethics and values. The questionnaire was sent through the Survey Monkey platform (so that it could be self-administered). In addition, it was complemented with telephone and face-to-face interviews. To this end, the research team

established prior contact with each professor to briefly explain the scope of the study and encourage their participation, which included different aspects of interest related to ethics, as indicated above. The application of the questionnaire lasted approximately 20 minutes per professor and was validated by experts in the field of ethics, as well as statisticians, in order to meet the criteria of validity and reliability.

Data Analysis

The program R Studio 3.4.3 was used for filtering and decoding the databases, along with the program IBM SPSS Statistics version 23 for creating frequencies and grouping variables, such as the implementation of ethics in their teaching practice, didactic strategies used, values that should be promoted in the education of the professional in Business, among others.

Results

It was evident that most of the interviewees (93.9%) implemented ethics into the courses, which is a very positive result of the research process carried out. In the same vein, 96.6% of them consider that ethics education should be an essential part of professional development within Business Management or Public Accounting, as evidenced in this testimony:

[...] the professional within business administration and any profession must be a guarantor of values and principles that are the backbone that organizations should have. That support is the credibility and confidence to start businesses (Informant 120).

In this way, we have confirmed the importance of including ethics and values in the study plans of the university programs and as a cross-cutting axis of the academic work of the EAN.

Based on the answers obtained, we can state that almost half of the interviewees (44.2%) emphasize that the main role of ethics within the Business Administration constitutes a pillar for human and organizational development,

Students should understand the importance

of ethics for organizations to fulfill their role in improving the life quality of human beings. (Informant 8)

Future professionals must be aware that in any position they hold within any institution, they must maintain their ethical and moral values, which allow them to exercise their functions in a productive manner and under the human rules of coexistence without hurting anyone. (Informant 28)

Within this criterion, 16.3% of the faculty consider that the main role of ethics in this area is

To define the limit between what is allowed and what is not within the professional performance. (Informant 6)

Distinguishing right from wrong. (Informant 35)

In that sense, when asked about the reasons why ethical training should be part of the professional development in Business Administration, 22.5% of the participants in the study said that it is fundamental to train capable professionals. In this regard, one professor emphasizes the following:

To train responsible professionals committed to always acting in the right way. (Informant 75).

Moreover, ethics allows for the framing of concepts, principles, and limits to apply them in the professional exercise (15.4%), as derived from the opinion of another professor:

Because it provides a reasoned criterion for selecting the best alternatives. (Informant 68)

And, as a third argument, they highlight that it helps to make good decisions based on ethics and moral criteria (11.9%), as stated by the following participants:

All decisions must be governed by moral and ethical principles in order to be correct. (Informant 134)

Future professionals must be aware that in any position they hold within any institution, they must maintain their ethical and moral values, which allow them to exercise their functions in a productive manner and under the human rules of coexistence without hurting anyone. (Informant 27)

Nevertheless, when asked about the way teachers incorporate values in the teaching of EAN, they stated that they use different strategies to do so, such as the following: a) Reflecting on the importance of ethical behavior in personal, professional, and working life; b) Having debates on controversial situations in national or international reality and; c) Experiencing values in the classroom. In this order, these three main strategies for ethical training are incorporated into the courses in percentages of 77.6%, 62.6%, and 58.5%, respectively. As an example, one of the professors interviewed highlights the following:

Analysis of company cases and how ethics are established in organizations (code of ethics, training, among others). (Informant 33)

In short, the professors most often indicated that they promote values through equality and respect, which are not the values that the EAN currently has in place. This situation opens a space for future reflection on whether the current values are really those that are necessary and relevant to work with, with which professors feel more identified and motivated to promote. Rather, based on this study, it may be convenient to update them from the different voices that were interviewed, such as the faculty (other study populations that were considered were students, graduates, and employers). However, this article presents the findings of the teaching community.

In view of the question on the five main values to be worked on in the ethical training of

future professionals in Business Administration, Figure 1 presents the results obtained. From the information displayed, it can be stated that none of the values mentioned are in accordance with the humanist values (ethics, tolerance, solidarity, perseverance, joy), nor with the business values (innovation, leadership, excellence, teamwork, entrepreneurship, social responsibility), which the School of Business Administration includes in its official documents (e.g., strategic plan, course program). However, if we consider the other values to work on ethical training according to the faculty, we can point out the following: commitment (25.2%), solidarity (22.4%), transparency (20.4%), honesty (17.7%), justice (15.0%), tolerance (10.9%), excellence (8.2%), teamwork (8.2%), discipline (7.5%), modesty (6.1%), empathy (5.4%), punctuality (4.8%), joy (4.1%), morals (4.1%), perseverance (4.1%), fellowship (3.4%), prudence (2.7%), ethics (2.0%), love (1.4%), fidelity (1.4%). In this sense, there are four humanist values that are consistent with those defined by the School of Business Administration (solidarity, tolerance, joy, and perseverance) and two with the business values (excellence and teamwork). However, among the ones of the latter group, Innovation, Leadership, nor Entrepreneurship were mentioned, while ethics—which is part of the first group and considered a humanist value by EAN—was not mentioned either. However, 49% of the faculty claimed that they were aware of the values of the School of Business Administration; however, when asked to mention them, they



Figure 1. Values to be worked on within ethics training, from the perspective of the EAN-UCR faculty.

indicated an average of 23% of the values that the School of Business Administration currently has as set out in the Strategic Development Plan (2015-2020), along with the mission and vision.

In terms of the teaching strategies used in their performance, the most mentioned ones included the following: a) debates on national or international news (67.9%); b) case studies (56.9%); and c) critical discussion and understanding of topics of interest (52.3%). Other strategies used were movies (21.1%), conversations (19.3%), project development (18.3%), and role playing (17.4%). Consequently, the three strategies that had the lowest percentage of use were conferences (7.3%), video forums (13.8%), and reflection forums (14.7%). In the case of real or imaginary moral dilemmas, 43.1% said they had used it, which is considered an intermediate value.

In relation to the main benefits derived from working on the ethical training of professionals in the field of Business Administration, out of the 147 responses, two of them reached the highest percentage (86.9%): a) the greater commitment for the work they do and b) professionals with better work performance. With regard to the other benefits mentioned, a high percentage of teachers agreed with the following: a) better human and organizational relations (86.4%), b) more valued professionals from the professional and human point of view (85.7%), c) abilities for team work (78.2%), d) better communication among company members (72.7%), and e) greater

motivation for work (72.1%). This shows that, for professors, working on ethical training generates a series of benefits for professionals and facilitates greater commitment, communication, and motivation at work. Finally, Table 1 shows the recommendations that professors offer to promote ethics within the professional training in Business Administration. Finally, the interviewees emphasize the importance of this type of research projects oriented to the topic of ethics and point out the following:

I hope that ethics will be a pillar in the education of our students and future professionals. (Informant 92)

It is an excellent initiative; today there is an obvious lack of interest from students in terms of values. (Informant 45)

In this sense, several professors agree that ethics training should be addressed from a more practical approach, such as case studies or community tours, so that students do not see the experience of values only as a requirement and appreciate their importance.

Discussion

In relation to the ideas developed, it is highlighted that "it is urgent to assess the need to include ethical training in universities" (Zamorano, 2010, p. 19). However, given that the ethical component

Table 1

Recommendations Offered by Faculty to Promote Ethics within Professional Training in Business Administration.

Recommendations	n	%
Provide training to teachers on how to implement ethics	103	70.1
Organize academic activities with experts in ethics	92	62.6
Have educational materials to implement ethics	72	49.0
Maintain good practices in the insertion of ethics	63	42.9
Have an outreach strategy on the importance of ethics	55	37.4
Others	5	3.4
Doesn't Know/Doesn't Respond	4	2.7

is a complex (Børsen, Antia, & Glessmer, 2013), controversial (Vargas, 2005), intangible (Gándara, 2017), and often misinterpreted (Peek, 1999) term, both in its theoretical-conceptual and pedagogical-educational approach, most professors are faced with the challenge of how to include it in the training processes (Bolívar, 2005; Hodelín & Fuentes, 2014). This study gathers the perceptions and challenges faced by the faculty when implementing ethics within university teaching.

This situation is in line with the approach of Doyle, Mullings, & Cunningham (2010), who emphasize that academic research raises challenging ethical issues and discuss how professors recognize and apply the most suitable teaching strategies to introduce the subject of ethics in class sessions (whether face-to-face or remote) (Lynn, 2010). Similarly, this perspective is shared by Hortal (2010), as well as Briones and Lara (2016), regarding the role of professors in this training dynamic.

The results obtained have been convincing in terms of the importance that the faculty give to the topic of ethics in Business Administration, as well as the relevance that it has as a foundation for human and organizational development (Bynum-Simpson, 2010; Rodríguez, 2016; Rojas, 2012).

The research reveals that most of the EAN faculty incorporates the subject of ethics in their courses, consistent with the guidelines of the Strategic Plan and the Curricular Reform carried out recently, through which the cross-cutting axis of ethics and values is included in the curricula of the Business Management and Public Accounting programs. In the same vein, the professors interviewed claim that ethical training should be part of professional development in the field of Business Administration, since it is substantial for human and organizational development. This result is consistent with the proposals of the need for ethical learning at the university (Esteban & Buxarrais, 2009) and the importance of social responsibility within higher education (Martí, Martí-Vilar, & Almerich, 2014; Vallaeys, 2008), since ethical training in professional practice implies reflection, judgment, and critical action, not only of disciplinary knowledge, but also of the professional horizon that such program

involves. In this way, professional behaviors must be nourished by current ethical thinking and articulated with the interdisciplinary dialogues and competencies that the exercise of each profession entails.

Therefore, this research confirms the perspective of the participants that it is essential to train capable professionals who apply ethical principles in their daily lives and in their work, which is evidenced in making good decisions with moral criteria (Buxarrais, 1997; Buxarrais & Zeledón, 2004; Gorosquieta, 1999).

Within the strategies that professors mostly use for the implementation of ethics, they point out the reflection on the importance of ethical behaviors in the different areas of human, professional, and work life, the debate on controversial situations both at local level and in other environments, as well as the experience of values in class (Buxarrais, 1997; García, 2006; Hirsch & López, 2014; Maura, 2004).

Another finding of the study is that the professors believe society recognizes that the values of equality and respect should be integrated into the matrix of meaningful values in the EAN. In that same sense, the participants also emphasized the five values to be worked on the field of Business Administration for the ethics education of future professionals: honesty, respect, responsibility, loyalty, and integrity. Therefore, it is shown that none of the values of greater presence in the professors' responses are part of the humanist or business values that the EAN has defined in its official documents, which is why the research contributes to reviewing and updating the pedagogical approach of the values of this School.

Likewise, the research showed that more than half of the professors interviewed are unaware of the values that the EAN has currently implemented in its management. This can be interpreted as a gap in the conceptual and methodological domain to promote the axis of ethics and values that support this School, since their role as instructors entails a communicative exercise and collaborative action so that, together with students, the experience of the values assumed by the EAN is promoted (Griswold & Chowning, 2013). Consequently, we can conclude that, although the faculty points out the importance of working on ethics in students'

training, it is necessary to have a communication and training plan that integrates, within its dynamic axes, acquiring and experiencing the values of EAN, with pedagogical practices aligned with these, so that the academic culture is permanently and systematically nourished by an ethical commitment, which is transferred to the different areas of personal and professional life.

Additionally, planning of academic events (conferences, talks, panels, forums, seminars, among other activities) is required so that EAN's faculty can update their knowledge and enrich their experience in this field, as well as have educational materials that serve as a guide or foundation for including ethics education into their academic dynamics.

This is of particular importance as the research process reflected that one of the main benefits of incorporating the subject of ethics in Business Administration is the commitment of professionals to carry out the work they undertake, which is related to better work performance. This finding is consistent with the approach that ethics is profitable (Cortina, 2003; Gosh, Gosh, & Abdel, 2011; Sánchez de León, 2011). Some studies, such as the one conducted by the Ethispher Institute, state that "there is a high correlation between ethics and higher average profitability... The best companies in the ethical field have a yield up to 35% higher than those of other benchmarks (Sánchez de León, 2011, para. 2). In this sense, ethics should not only prioritize nor generate profitability, because it is necessary that business behavior a) is based on the principle of responsibility for the decisions it takes on, b) incorporates rational reflection, and c) shows concern for the problems of individuals, rather than establishing rules, which involves being efficient with a human nature, among other considerations (Toña, 2003).

Finally, it is necessary to emphasize that this type of research shows that, from the perspective of professors, professionals trained within a class dynamic based not only on disciplinary learning, but especially on ethics, develop soft skills (e.g., teamwork, communication, work motivation, leadership), cultivate better human relationships, and have better professional performance. These valuable actions generate a healthy work environment, contribute to the strengthening of

ambidextrous organizations, and nurture ethical commitment (Bolívar, 2005) and university social responsibility (Martí-Vilar & Rodríguez-Osorio, 2016) in the search for the common good.

That is why, based on university teaching, a series of basic principles or aspirations should be considered which, according to Hortal (2002), structure and validate ethical training for professional practice, such as a) principle of beneficence, that is, doing an activity well and doing good to others through a well-done activity; b) principle of autonomy, which means that the user is a subject of rights, so he/she must be appropriately informed of any professional action that involves his or her consent in the situation that affects or involves him/her; c) principle of justice, which refers to the social sense of the profession, that is, what contribution to the common good it should make; and d) principle of non-maleficence, which means not doing one's job poorly, not harming the users, nor exerting violence on them because, as the same author claims, "to do things well to do good to people by means of the professional exercise involves being competent, efficient, diligent, and responsible in what the professional does" (Hortal 2002, p. 123).

In this sense, when examining the constant and strong pressure of today's business environment that influence ethical decisions, it is important for business schools (and other schools) to understand and educate their students within an educational context that promotes ethical decision-making (Carroll & Buchholtz, 2012). As noted by Cortina (2003),

[...] an organization that acquires good habits has generated the dispositions required to make good decisions, and not only does it take less effort to make them and therefore save energy, but also those who relate to it can reasonably expect that it will act in accordance with the aims and means the social, moral consciousness requires from the organization. They can rely on it (p. 20).

Therefore, it is expected that this work will enable and encourage the opening of new research processes that will deepen the relationship between university teaching and its ethical implications in the training of professionals, both in the field of

Business Administration and in other disciplines. At this time, when the pandemic generated by COVID-19 has generated new challenges for universities and scholars (as well as society in general), it is a priority to reinvent, innovate, and create new spaces, strategies, and mechanisms that contribute to the ethical training of our students from the cognitive, technical, identity, and political points of view (López, 2009). These times of uncertainty and dizzying changes force us to move in the assertive and prospective search for new answers to the problems and opportunities generated by the complex reality we experience.

Surely, ethics must not become a fashionable subject, yet it should become a current topic (Cortina, 2003; Moratalla, 2013). The scenarios through which humanity passes today reveal the transcendence of its approach, particularly in the field of university teaching, and its interrelationship with research (Junquera de Estéfani, 2019), given its vital role in the training of professionals that the new reality and future demands. Therefore, it is expected that these research processes nourish this task and encourage other actors to undertake new possibilities.

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