

BUILDING GLOBAL AWARENESS AND ETHICAL DECISION-MAKING SKILLS IN U.S. BUSINESS STUDENTS: A CALL FOR TECHNOLOGY BASED EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

One aspect of business ethics education that has been a major roadblock for U.S. educators is how to effectively teach business ethics in a global economy. The problem stems from three major hurdles. First is the reliance of U.S. institutions on grounding the subject of business ethics in Western ethos, which does not accommodate other ethical standards (Peppas, 2002). In Western institutions, the ethics curriculum begins with the Western philosophy of ethics, which includes Aristotle, Plato, and Kant (White and Taft, 2004). Educators must work harder to teach competencies in non-Western ethical standards (Stein, 2019). The challenge is to build understanding without compromising personal ethical ideals. Learning platforms that foster dialogue, observation, and consideration of a wide range of ethical standards are critical. The second challenge is educator awareness of global issues and the need for instructors to adopt a global perspective in the classroom. Educators must be globally aware if we are to prepare our business graduates to be able to function ethically in international markets and situations. Ethics in international business is complex and requires curriculum that is current as well as instructors who are informed on current global issues (Leclair, 2000). Business educators must be well informed on diverse cultural perspectives (Miglietti, C., 2015). Much of the angst of instructor teaching and student learning in a global arena begins with how business ethics is taught. Finally, the third challenge is students' lack of enthusiasm for understanding the nuances of cultural differences in ethical decision-making (El Baradei, 2020). Building an understanding of a diverse range of cultural norms that impact business decision-making global stage that intrigues and inspires student interest is not easy (Ortiz, J. (2004). Current research indicates the answer to these three hurdles may be in experiential instruction. Creating opportunities for students to experience and interact with students, instructors, and businessmen and women from around the world is the first step in addressing three major hurdles in global business ethics instruction. Technology that facilitates dialogue and interactions between students and international representatives promotes cultural and society awareness in global business ethics and is critical in preparing global business participants (Sanyal, 2000; Pallab & Kausiki, 2005; Saat, 2014). In addition, education that combines conversations on diverse cultural perspectives and practical case scenarios can effectively support instructor skills. The Western business ethics curriculum has historically relied on case studies for teaching global issues. Case studies provide initial but only partial answers. Understanding our role in building ethical organizations in a global society is difficult when the student audience's goal is to live and work in an insular Western business environment. However, as educators, we have an obligation to develop student understanding, and the first step to begin may be case studies that incorporate non-Western perspectives in the form of genuine dialogue. How to achieve true dialogue on a global scale is the key

consideration. Teaching global business ethics requires an appreciation of different perspectives (Witte, 2010). Instructor and curriculum must be competent in understanding and explaining multiple perspectives to teach students to consider ethical issues in relation to the host culture. Meeting the need for a multinational student perspective and preparing Western students to be global business leaders require good teachers and a valid curriculum (Keida and Englis, 2011). Global interconnectivity in business education calls for instructors and curricula that deliver global understanding while preserving nationalism (Rizvi, 2019). Technology has the potential to unite different worlds. The use of virtual experiences and dialogue in global ethics instruction plays a vital role in preparing students to be ethical global leaders. Real-time conversations between business students from different worlds have the potential to build enthusiasm and understanding. Make no mistake; there are challenges in generating conversations between regions with geographic, language and time differences. However, a curriculum that builds real conversations may be the first step to help students appreciate the nuances of global business (Glass & Bonnici, 1997). This paper addresses the need for Western business schools prepare business graduates to operate effectively in a global business environment. Moving beyond Western business ethics taught in the classroom is fresh territory and raises the question of who will be responsible for designing the rules and guidelines for technology-driven global education. The message is simple: we Western educators need to expand our instructional horizons if we are to prepare business students to be leaders in a sustainable global economy.

KEYWORDS: Business ethics, globalization, ethics instruction, ethics competencies, experiential learning, global competencies.

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