Business Ethics Education and Faculty Teaching Expertise: Are Business School Educators equipped, trained and capable to teach Normative Ethical Theory?

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Statement of Originality

This dissertation contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. I give consent to the final version of my dissertation being made available worldwide when deposited in the University’s Digital Repository, subject to the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968.

(Signed)

Sven Erlic 9th August, 2015
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Abstract

Business schools are increasingly introducing the teaching of ethics into their academic programs and in particular to MBA’s, partially in response to recent business scandals. Nevertheless, the overwhelming trend is to teach ethics within another subject rather than as a compulsory and stand-alone subject. The reason is partially because empirical researches into the effectiveness of business ethics education do not reach uniform conclusions. A portion of studies have found that ethics education is ineffective and therefore concluded that ethics cannot be taught.

However, there is a growing call to investigate variables that were never explored in these studies, and in particular: the subject knowledge of the educators and their teaching methods. Therefore, in response to that call, this study sought to find out if currently employed business school educators have an appropriate level of knowledge in the subject of normative ethical theory, and if any particular variable increases an educator’s level of teaching expertise for teaching ethics.

This quantitative study surveyed 128 academics that teach ethics to business students in 29 Australian universities in order to test their ability to teach ethics effectively. It found that academics, highly educated in business and management but who have themselves not studied ethics as a stand-alone subject, do not have a reasonable understanding of normative ethical theory.
and concluded that they are therefore unlikely to be able to teach ethics successfully. It found that an overwhelming majority of business school educators are not equipped, trained or capable to teach ethics to business students. However, it also found that educators who had themselves been taught ethics as a stand-alone subject did have a reasonable understanding of ethics theory and therefore concluded that there is a higher likelihood that ethics can be taught effectively if it is taught by educators who themselves have studied ethics, critical thinking or philosophy as a stand-alone subject.
Chapter 1  Introduction

1.1 Background

An ethics course cannot turn a crook into a saint

Zeger Degraeve, 22 September 2014

The Dean of Melbourne Business School, Professor Zeger Degraeve, in response to the current parliamentary inquiry which seeks to determine if professional ethics training should be set as a mandatory component for anyone providing financial advice, is not convinced that business ethics education makes much difference. "If someone wants to behave unethically, a course won’t change that intention”, he was quoted saying in the Financial Review (see appendix A).

The effectiveness of ethics education has long been a notorious and divisive topic. It was first proposed by Socrates who insisted that it is possible to teach people ‘how to do the right thing’ (Plato, Republic, VI, 492; Plato, Apology, 22d). He claimed that ‘knowledge’ is both the necessary and sufficient condition for people to behave ethically. An educated person will think about their actions, and the more time a person spends in thought, the greater the chances are that he or she will come to the right conclusion. Therefore, education that encourages thought also ensures ethical conduct because people who ‘know’ but more importantly who understand why something is ethical, themselves become

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ethical by extension. Hence Socrates claimed that if you know what the right thing to do is, you will always do the right thing.

Not surprisingly, Socrates theory regarding ethics education has had its critics ever since. Notably, first by Aristotle (Nicomcean Ethics, 1145b30) who supported Socrates theory that education in critical thinking imparts wisdom but he argued that that is only the first step. Furthermore, he argued, ethical conduct develops with introspection, habit and experience along with education. As such persons acquire a ‘Good Character’ which is the ultimate requirement to behave ethically.

Socrates goal to teach Wisdom inspired Plato to found the very first university, the Akademia, and that aims remains as the preferred ultimate role of a modern university. A good university enhances the human condition and promotes active inquiry, it passes on its knowledge and knowledge processes through quality teaching (McKenna, 2001). Although the modern university is derived from the medieval Christian institution, it is arguably the Socratic ideal which was nurtured in Plato’s institution that provides the inspiration of how a ‘Good’ modern society should function.

Today, amid frequent corporate scandals, there is plenty of criticism in our society about business practices and ethical conduct of the business community. And as a result, there are frequent calls for improvement or inclusion of effective business ethics education for business students. Initially, Stead and Miller (1988, p. 559) led the call by arguing that “ethics education in
business could reduce the number of fraudulent financial manipulations, environmental tragedies, deadly working environments, and other corporate wrongdoings”. That call is still frequently found in modern media and is also a passionate source of discussion in academic journals (Frederick, 2008).

The Ethics Education Task Force, established by AACSB (The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business, an international membership organisation of educational institutions) was formed because business schools do recognise that they have a responsibility to provide practitioners with training in the basics of ethics (Pfeffer & Fong, 2004). This organisation emphasizes the importance of ethics education in business schools and its presence within the MBA curriculum has been an accreditation requirement of the AACSB (Phillips, 2004). To date, 10 out of the 32 Business Schools in Australia have been accredited by AACSB, agreeing to follow practices, including a minimum standard of ethics education, advocated by the AACSB. However, AACSB only advocates self-regulated integration of ethics education across the curriculum and has persisted in resisting numerous academic calls to set a standard for ethics education and in particular to mandate stand-alone ethics courses (Swanson & Fisher, 2011).

But empirical research into the effectiveness of ethics education has had confusing and completely contradictory results. Many studies conclude that it is not possible to teach ethics (Wynd & Mager, 1989; Weber & Green, 1991; Park, 1998; Jewe, 2008) while several other studies have concluded that it is possible
to teach ethics (Weber & Glyptis, 2000; Lau, 2009; Cloninger & Selvarajan, 2010).
This standoff could, at least partially, be responsible for the lack of a universal
standard of ethics education, and possibly also for creating a dilemma for
business schools that are developing or refining their MBA curriculum.

Therefore many business schools, while naturally advocating ethical
business practices, do not teach business ethics as a stand-alone subject but
rather gloss over ethical requirements as a component within other course
subjects (Cornelius et al, 2007; Brinkmann et al, 2011). And many of those
business schools that have ethics on the agenda simply present various theories,
rather than teach application or each theory in its own right, thereby promoting
ethical relativism (William, 2004). This in turn often leads to confusion rather
and Excellence* sums up this problem in general:

*The problem with business ethics is not vulgar ignorance but a far more
sophisticated confusion concerning exactly what the subject is supposed
to be and how the theory applies to business.*

Solomon argues for a preventative approach to ethics by building up a
personal character, cultivated through virtuous behaviour on a daily basis.
Business ethics education, he argues, is most efficiently served by the
understanding and application of virtue ethics, a sub-branch in normative ethical
theory.
But the study of virtue ethics belongs to the field of philosophy and since business schools are not trained how to teach people ‘good citizenry’, it is argued, that philosophy should be an integral part in business studies (De George, 2006), especially since virtue ethics cannot be taught using the same tools as regular or practical subjects (Morrell, 2004; Hartman, 2007; Evangeliou, 2012).

However, before one can decide on the best way to teach ethics, the turbulent issue whether ethics can or cannot be taught has to be conclusively solved. The real and imperative issue, of how to implement effective business ethics education, can only move forward and progress once supporters of Professor Zeger Degraeve’s notion that business ethics education does not work are thoroughly convinced through empirical evidence that there is a clear, obvious and recognisable reason why some business ethics courses fail. It has been suggested that business ethics courses fail because business school educators are not equipped trained or capable to teach normative ethical theory (Beggs & Dean, 2007; Swanson & Fisher, 2008; Evans & Weiss, 2008; Cloninger & Selvarajan, 2010). And in search of an empirical answer to this suggestion, this study employs a quantitative research approach to determine if it is true.

Finally, it is necessary to acknowledge the existence of the field of medical ethics education and that it has a long and interesting history. However, even though there are similarities, business ethics is different to medical ethics by virtue of its nature. Business ethics is ultimately about doing the right thing by
the global community in a modern economy via the exchange and manufacture of goods and services while medical ethics strives to provide a medical practitioner with reasoning to make a decision which is in the best interest of the patient and protects and preserves the good of the patient (Sugarman & Sulmasy, 2010). Therefore it is beyond the scope of this thesis to explore if medical ethics education is effective.

1.2 Research Aims and Objectives

The aim of this research is to provide a stable foundation from which a framework for the delivery of effective business ethics education can be created. Only once the groundwork firmly and convincingly establishes the primary and necessary conditions that effective business ethics education needs in order to work, can the debate progress in a practical and pragmatic manner. As such the main aim of this research is to settle a stale-mate, in which the only issue that has been conclusively and empirically established is that business ethics education only works sometimes. Frankly, the debate needs to move forward and look into the cause for this anomaly rather than keep conducting research into the same issue.

Further, this research aims to provide an understanding of the current debate as well as an insight into the origin of it. Why for example is Plato’s Republic not an essential educational tool seeing that it is the first and arguably the best comprehensive and extensive tool to answer the central question of ethics: Why should I, an individual person, be ethical?
Recent studies (Cornelius et al, 2007; Brinkmann et al, 2011) found that many business schools, while naturally advocating ethical business practices, do not teach business ethics as a stand-alone subject but rather gloss over ethical requirements as a component of other course subjects. These schools give ethics less priority and that diminishes the overall impact of ethics education.

And finally the aim of this research is to stimulate more research into this aspect of the business ethics education debate and to re-focus efforts on issues that can bring about substantive change, and perhaps also to have another look at classical answers to what is a classical issue. Although the tangible problem, for business school administrators, is primarily being able to conclusively determine whether or not the curriculum should include the subject of ethics as a stand-alone subject in business courses and in particular in that of an MBA, the secondary problem of determining the manner in which it should be taught is more of an academic concern rather than an administrative issue. As such, the ultimate aim of this research is to be part of a catalyst effort to get business ethics education into the curriculum into the business faculty as a stand-alone subject.

The objective of this research is first to review and identify the debate and finally to evaluate the extent of some of the arguments to determine the validity of the arguments and the strength of their research and conclusions. And secondly to develop a method by which educators can be empirically tested to see if they have been equipped, are fully trained and are capable to teach
normative ethical theory. It is important to note that it is beyond the scope of this thesis to determine the best teaching methods or how ethics should best be taught in business schools. For a comprehensive discussion on ways to teach and assess ethics in business schools see a comprehensive discussion by Swanson and Fisher (2011).

1.3 Research Questions and Hypothesis

The aim of this research is to examine the level of subject expertise that educators who currently teach ethics in business schools in Australia have in the area of normative ethical theory, and to examine which, if any, particular variable increases educators level of subject expertise. The research will investigate if any of the following variables increase educators’ subject expertise: duration of educators’ teaching experience, their age-group, the complexity or level of ethics education that they already deliver to students and finally the research will examine if the level of ethics education that the educators themselves received increases their level of subject expertise of normative ethical theory. It is assumed that if an educator has a high level of subject expertise, that educators will have a higher the level of successful teaching (Race, 2010).

Normative ethical theory is concerned with determining how we should live and act as members in a society. It aims to determine a system of principles that sets the standards by which people ought to behave. Normative ethical theory is distinct from *metaethics*, which is concerned with the nature of ethics,
and from *applied ethics*, which is concerned with the examination of issues of moral judgment (De George, 2006).

Further, normative ethical theory is divided into three categories: teleological ethics, deontological ethics and virtue ethics. The central position of deontological ethics is to follow rules, regulations and duty while teleological ethics focuses on producing a good end result or consequence (therefore also termed consequentialism). Virtue ethics, on the other hand, does not focus on rules or final results but on the character of the individual. It does not provide guidance of what to do in a tricky situation and does not attempt to predict the ultimate consequence of an act but seeks to teach *arête* or good character (Grace & Cohen, 2010).

Normally, the in-depth inquiry and study of normative ethical theory belongs to the subject of philosophy, however business schools employ educators that are trained in business subject and not specifically trained in philosophy (De George, 2006). So, are educators really able to teach a subject that they are not trained in? This situation has been researched before. In a study by Paul, Elder and Bartell (1997) university educators that have as their primary objective to teach critical thinking were investigated as to their content knowledge of the subject. Again, critical thinking is a primary and core topic in the subject of philosophy and the educators that were investigated did not have a philosophical education.
The study found 19% of the educators were able to reconcile content coverage. The other 81% of educators provided either limited or no real concept of the subject. As a consequence, their real ability to teach something which they themselves had limited understanding of was inadequate. If they would have had some education in philosophy they might have had a more adequate understanding of critical thinking and consequently been able to teach it (De George, 2006).

Further, the literature review has also identified a previously overlooked variable in the current empirical researches into the effectiveness of ethics education. It has been suggested that this variable is the cause for the contradicting results and the reason why some studies conclude that it is not possible to teach ethics while other studies conclude that it is possible to teach ethics (Swanson & Fisher, 2008). None of the previous research has focused or placed significant attention to the ability, equipment and training of ethics educators, trainers and teachers. Therefore this study proposes to seek to determine if it is the ability of the educator that is the variable that ultimately determines the success of ethics education. As such the main aim of this research is to answer the question:

*Research Question:* Are business school educators equipped, trained and capable to teach normative ethical theory?

This research is similar in nature to the qualitative study by Paul, Elder and Bartell (1997) but it is quantitative and aims to build on existing knowledge
established by Paul et al (1997). It seeks to determine the actual level of subject knowledge that business educators have of ethics, a subject that they teach as part of a business course and a subject that receives a lot of scrutiny.

On one hand this overall scrutiny of ethics education is seen as inappropriate and excessive. The education of ethics is the only subject in the business curriculum that is enduring such a high level of examination and analysis into its effectiveness. No other course is held to such a burden of proof. It would be hard to argue that, for example, all students who enrol and complete financial, auditing and accounting courses have learnt the subject successfully. Swanson and Fisher (2008) asks question like: “Do business faculty demand evidence that all business students who take leadership courses become good leaders?”

Regardless however, if the answer to this research question is in the negative, that educators that are employed by higher educational institutions business faculties are not equipped, trained or capable to teach normative ethical theory, then that would provide the answer to why their business ethics courses fail. And the first step to get the answer to the research question is simply to ask the educators themselves if they are equipped, trained and capable.

Therefore employing a questionnaire survey, educators that are employed to teach ethics in business courses in Australia were asked to assess their own knowledge. They were asked to self-assess their knowledge of the big
three normative ethical theories. And in order to gauge if their self-assessment was accurate, they were also asked to answer a relatively simple 24 question quiz in one of the theories: Virtue Ethics. If their self-assessment score would be similar to their actual assessment score then it would assumed that this research could rely on the data provided by the educators themselves. Therefore the following hypothesis was tested first:

**Hypothesis 1: Academics accurately self-assess their ethics theory knowledge**

Next, it was assumed that educators that are employed by Australian educational institutions to teach ethics have at the very least a reasonable understanding of normative ethical theory. Each respondent was graded on the quiz and was assessed on their subject knowledge on the traditional scale ranging from a fail to a high distinction to see if their overall average score was greater than a pass grade. It was assumed that educators employed to teach ethics would on average be able to score more than a pass in any ethics theory quiz and in this case, a quiz in virtue ethics. Therefore the following hypothesis was tested:

**Hypothesis 2: Academics that teach ethics as part of a business course in Australia have a reasonable understanding of virtue ethics.**

Further, it was also assumed that those educators who teach ethics as a stand-alone subject to business students have a better understanding of virtue ethics than educators who teach ethics as a component of another subject,
because they would by nature of their delivery be more exposed to the topic. Therefore the following hypothesis was tested:

**Hypothesis 3:** Academics that teach ethics as a stand-alone subject in a business degree in Australia have a better understanding of virtue ethics than academics that teach ethics as component of another subject.

And finally it was assumed that educators that themselves have studied ethics in detail have a greater knowledge and a better understanding of ethics theory than educators that only studied ethics as part of another subject. Therefore the following hypothesis was tested:

**Hypothesis 4:** Academics that studied ethics in detail have a greater understanding of virtue ethics than academics that studied ethics as component of another subject

1.4 Research Methodology

The first stage of this research was the identification of the research objectives through a comprehensive literature review in which a literature analysis of peer-reviewed academic articles was conducted. The next stage was to determine the research design and methodology. This research used a quantitative method and a survey questionnaire as the research instrument. It used a cross-sectional research design and employed stratified random sampling to collect respondents in the target population. The next stage was to collect the data necessary for analysis and to interpret it and the final stage was to derive at a conclusion, review any limitations and recommendations for future research.
1.5 Justification for this Research

There is no doubt that the inclusion, in some form, of the subject of ethics in a business course and in particular as a requirement of an MBA is a set standard around the world today. There is a general recognition of its importance, and it seems that educational institutions see it as a general obligation to include ethics in their courses. And even, every educational institution openly prides itself on their own standard of ethics and claim to pass it on to their students. There is no doubt of the prestige, social value or necessity of ethics, as there is also no doubt that credit is given to the person or organisation which instilled any recognised or celebrated ethical behaviour in any model citizen in a society. All individuals admired for their ethics had either: good parenting, good schooling or good teachers. There is always a reason for ethical conduct (Cragg, 1997).

Regardless however, there is no set standard in the manner ethics is taught in business schools. Every business school teaches accounting and finance as a separate subject but not every business school teaches ethics as a separate subject. It is either taught as a component in other topics like accounting, management or organisational studies or it is taught as a stand-alone subject sometimes under the umbrella of social responsibility. Rasche, Gilbert and Schedel (2013) suggest that business schools are creating a gap between their upbeat rhetoric around ethics education and their actual MBA curriculum. The effectiveness of the ethics education that they are currently providing does not
reflect their claim. They argue however, after they conducted an extensive cross-disciplinary examination of ethics education in MBA programs, that this impasse can be repaired. They conclude that business schools need to make structural changes to the curriculum and they need to, in particular, make more mandatory ethics courses. They also argue that business schools need to make a stronger integration of ethics-related debates into disciplines such as finance and accounting in order to create effective ethics education.

In addition to this call for more inclusion of ethics in MBA’s, Crane (2004), in a cross-cultural study found that there is a wide perception from existing business students that current ethical standards in business do not meet society’s needs adequately and that ethical behaviour is easy to identify. The study also found that there was widespread agreement that business ethics should be taught as a required course in business schools.

Why then, are business schools so slow to respond and why is there a general resistance to the introduction of ethics education into business schools as a mandatory and stand-alone subject? Notwithstanding that administrators and academics in higher education business faculties are among the best educated, informed and perceptive individuals in society. And as there must be a reason for this situation, this research assumes that decisions are actually made through a balanced and integrated usage of knowledge. Wise decisions are those that coordinate, integrate, weigh and balance knowledge and judgments (Rooney & McKenna, 2007).
But at this point in time, there is too much empirical evidence that conclude that business ethics courses do not work ethics (Wynd & Mager, 1989; Weber & Green, 1991; Park, 1998; Jewe, 2008). And no matter how many other and more substantial studies show the reverse, this fact cannot be dismissed until a cause of their finding is found. Until such time, a standard policy regarding ethics education in business schools cannot be developed.

First however, it is necessary to recognise that there is a gap in the literature that would provide a comparison with other subjects that also fail to teach their students effectively (Swanson & Fisher, 2008). It would be naive to assume that only business ethics courses can be ineffective. And secondly, there is a suggestion by Beggs and Dean (2007) that there should be an extensive debate about how ethics should be taught and in particular who should be teaching it. Swanson and Fisher (2008) suggest that perhaps ethics is currently being taught by educators who are not trained in ethics. Cloninger and Selvarajan (2010) call for future research to examine how seriously ethics and corporate social responsibility are taught in an MBA.

Further, Evan and Weiss (2008) in a study found that 22% of influential business school staff recognise that there is a lack of faculty expertise in the subject of ethics. The study concludes that there might be an inadequate supply of faculty academics that are suitable qualified to teach ethics. Weber, Gerde and Wasieleski (2008) also argue that academics hired by business faculties are not qualified to actually teach ethics.
This thesis is a direct response to these questions and their calls to investigate and research if current business school educators are suitably equipped, trained and as such capable to teach ethics? The justification of this research is based on the suggestions, thoughts and recommendations in the conclusions of these studies, their analyses and critical discussions.

1.6 Potential Value and Significance of the Research

If this research provides evidence that current educators in Australia do not have a significant and comprehensive understanding of ethics theory, it will conclude that ethics can only be taught effectively by people educated in philosophy and ethics. Philosophy is the natural domain of the subject of ethics. And that then would provide an addition and extension to the theory of normative ethics by introducing a previously unaccounted variable: ‘the philosophical education of the educator’. The theory will be strengthened as it takes into account that: to effectively apply the principles of ethics by nature of an education, the educator should be specifically educated in philosophy or ethics. Or in other words, teaching ethics is primarily effective if it is taught through philosophy or by an educated philosopher and not by an educated business and management scholar.

Further, if the research question is answered in the negative, this research would strengthen the argument that business schools need to teach philosophy (Cragg, 1997; Morrell 2004) and that they should employ philosophers in order to teach ethics effectively. And it could also have practical
consequences. Institutions that are under pressure to provide society with leaders of ‘Good Character’ like business schools might have to reconsider the way in which they currently teach ethics. In order to teach ethics effectively, they would have to provide it as an independent and compulsory subject and have it taught by educators who themselves have studied philosophy, logic and ethics in depth.

1.7 Conclusion

This chapter has provided an introductory review of the subject of business ethics education and the manner in which it is currently taught in educational institutions. It found that there is an increasing call to teach it effectively. It also found that there are no generally agreed standards to follow with regards to the teaching method and in particular there are no specific or particular standards or requirements to become an ethics educator in business schools. It suggests that the reason for this lack of standard is embedded in those empirical studies that have concluded that ethics education does not work. They are used as proof that ethics education does not need to be taught as a stand-alone subject by an ethics educated educator because it cannot be taught anyway. And this chapter provides its justification of the research that it has conducted as being in response to those studies and critical discussions that suggest the reason those ethics courses failed might have been the lack of suitably qualified educators. This chapter also outlines the research aim and objectives, the research methodology and the significance of the research.
Chapter 2  Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to review relevant and existing literature in order to understand the origin and background of the development of the topic of ethics, and in particular business ethics and its application in business programs. This chapter critically discusses definitions and issues that are intimately related to the research question as well as arguments surrounding the issue of teaching ethics in business schools.

First it describes the establishment of the study of ethics and ethics education (section 2.2). Next, it provides an overview of the meaning of business ethics (section 2.3); the meaning of social responsibility (section 2.4); the current nature of ethics education in business schools and the arguments for and against teaching ethics in business schools at work or at home (section 2.5). The chapter then reviews and compares studies that have conducted research into the effectiveness of business ethics education in Universities (section 2.6); critically discusses possible reasons as to why these studies have recorded contradictory results (section 2.7); defines and describes relevant theories regarding ethics, learning and teaching of ethics, and the arguments for introducing critical thinking and philosophy into business schools (section 2.8) and presents a conclusion (section 2.9).
2.2 The Foundation of Ethics Education

On what ground, then, can we say that it is profitable for a man to be unjust or self-indulgent or to do any disgraceful act which will make him a worse man, though he may gain money and power?

Plato, Republic, II, 366b

Being unethical is not only natural but also advantageous, says Adeimantus in Plato’s Republic, when he summarises Thrasymachus’ argument to Socrates: People do not do right by free will; justice is what is good for someone else; it is profitable to be unethical if you are not found out. Why, asks Adeimantus, is justice superior to injustice when everybody knows that injustice is the more profitable and being ethical is valued for its social prestige alone? This question is as topical today as it was then. Is it worth being ethical?

The word ethics comes from the Greek word ethikos which is sometimes translated as custom and which is derived from the word ethos which in turn relates to the word ‘character’ (Vardy & Grosch, 1994). As such the meaning of ethics can be said to refer to the customary way to behave in society and as such ethical behaviour can be defined as: Conduct which is in accordance with that of a character whose actions are beneficial for society. Ethics then, is behaviour that is done by persons of good character for the benefit of all.

Even though it is beyond the scope of this paper to explore the substance of Plato’s dialogues, it would be fair to say that Socrates was the first person who
advocated education as a tool to make good citizens. Cicero in (Tuscan Disputations V.10) wrote: "Socrates however was the first who called philosophy down from heaven, and placed it in cities, and introduced it even in homes, and drove it to inquire about life and customs and things good and evil.”

According to Socrates: an educated person will think about their actions and the more time a person spends in thought, the greater the chances are that they will come to the right conclusion. Therefore, education that encourages thought also ensures ethical conduct because people who know and more importantly who understand why something is ethical, themselves become ethical by extension (Irwin, 1989). If you really know what the right thing to do is, you will always do it. Knowledge is both the necessary and sufficient condition.

Morality and ethics are often treated as having an identical meaning, but they have different derivations and different meanings. Morality comes from the Latin word *moralis* meaning manner or custom, and was first used by Cicero in his commentaries and translations of Aristotle. Morality is concerned with which actions are right and wrong while ethics is concerned with the character of the person who performs these actions. Morality is doing the right thing according to culture and tradition but ethics is about doing the right thing by the community. For example, it is immoral to have an extramarital affair but it is unethical to take a bribe. Unfortunately these two terms are often interchangeably used and as such they are often treated as being identical in meaning and that is often the cause of misunderstanding where ethics education is concerned (Singer, 1993).
2.3 What is Business Ethics?

The philosophical branch of ethics is not the study of the definition of goodness but the study of how to become good men and perform good actions

Aristotle, *Nicomacean Ethics*, 1103b26

In 399 BCE Socrates was sentenced to death on the charge of corrupting the young. The prosecution argued that he taught young adults; how to undermine their elders; how to argue convincingly to make a weaker argument stronger and that as a result his teachings undermined established social values. But before he was executed, his escape was arranged and he was urged to leave the city and to make his getaway.

But he refused to go: “to do wrong is dishonourable...under no circumstances must one do wrong...not even when one is wronged” (Crito, 50b). He was not about to break the laws of the city which had provided him with security; his way of life; maintained his ancestral traditions and which had given him the opportunities that had made him into the man that he was...even if the city had passed a ‘faulty’ judgment.

Socrates did the right thing even though it was bad for him. Why would anybody do that? Why would you obey the law if it is harmful to your own immediate welfare? But Socrates was standing firm by the claims he had been making for years: Committing injustice is worse than suffering injustice (Gorgias,
475 c1-4), to do wrong is worse than to have wrong done to you. He would rather suffer than commit an unethical act.

The ‘moral’ of the story is that an ethical person has the character to do the right thing regardless of the circumstances and the cost. Many of Plato’s dialogues use Socrates’ plight to teach ethics by provoking a reaction and stimulating discussion and thought. This way Socrates, through Plato, still teaches ethics and is engaged in ethics education.

But what is the specific nature of business ethics education? Wesley Cragg, Professor of Business Ethics at York University in Canada, describes business ethics as a social activity of co-operation and respect in a modern market economy and emphasises that ethics is really about social co-operation and the realisation that human beings are, on their own, unable to meet even their most basic needs. He writes:

Taken as isolated individuals we are virtually defenceless in the face of serious attack. In absence of substantial social supports, none of us would survive infancy or childhood. Even as adults our survival, to say nothing of the quality of our lives, is directly dependent on the assistance and the co-operation of others (Cragg, 1997, p 232).

The rules, he argues, that sets the parameters and creates the necessary conditions for this co-operation to flourish are embodied in ethics. These rules govern and determine the path of our lives from start to end. The application of ethics not only directs the manner of our existence but also determines the level of our happiness, both materialistic and introspective.
Venezia et al (2011) argue that ethical conduct is an essential component in a capitalistic market-economy because a constantly changing and evolving market is unable to implement proactive business regulations fast enough. They argue that there isn’t enough precise and exact law to encompass all facets to govern business and therefore the business community needs to have an innate ethical demeanour as business persons often are at the forefront of progress.

Another definition is provided by Crane and Matten (2007) who argue that business ethics is the study of addressing what is right and wrong in a business situation. Similarly, Carroll and Buchholtz (2008) argue that: “Business ethics is concerned with good and bad or right and wrong behaviour and practices that take place within a business context”. But in view of the definition of ethics and the origin of ethics education, a more functional or exemplary definition is provided by Grace and Cohen (2010) who argue that, as ethics is about human excellence, so business ethics is about excellence in the management of supply of goods and services to society.

As such it could be said that the study of business ethics, rather than simply teaching business students which actions are preferable in a dilemma, should be about teaching people why they should do the preferable action despite its consequences. But even ethically aware persons revert their actions if, or once, they evaluate the costs on a personal level. A study found that since business students, expect their management to inherently behave unethically even if there is an ethical solution, and argued that therefore even ethically
minded students eventually adopt an unethical conduct in a fundamentally unethical environment (Lau 2010, p. 579).

### 2.4 What is Social Responsibility?

*Money! Nothing worse

*in our lives, so current, rampant, so corrupting.*

*Money – you demolish cities, root men from their homes, you train and twist good minds and set them on to the most atrocious schemes. No limit, you make them adept at every kind of outrage, every godless crime – money!*

Sophocles 496-406 BCE, *Antigone* (335)\(^1\)

In Sophocles play Antigone, the daughter of King Oedipus, faces the impossible choice. Should she follow the rules of nature or follow the rules of society, rules that are determined by the wealthy. It is a common theme in classical texts, expressing trade and moneymaking as an economic convenience but whose social impact goes against the common good. And in light of a multitude of modern corporate scandals, it is easy to argue that little has changed today. However, the last few decades has seen many businesses incorporate the idea of Corporate Social Responsibility (Moura-Leite & Padgett, 2011).

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\(^1\) Translation by Robert Fagles.
The idea of Corporate Social Responsibility or CSR suggests that the main responsibility of a business is not to make money for its owners but to benefit greater society. The argument is that a business cannot exist or prosper in isolation and that it needs the support of its consumer base and the infrastructure provided by society. In short, it is profitable for a business to have an inherent obligation to society as it will in turn support the business (Collins, 2009). A bit more than a decade earlier, Carroll (1999) had argued that CSR was here to stay because “it addresses and captures the most important concerns of the public regarding business and society relationships”. He argued that since this symbiotic relationship had been discovered, explored and promoted it was highly likely that it would permeate even deeper in the future. So far, he has been right.

While there is a range of definitions of CSR, not surprisingly however, there is a general distrust and scepticism about the sincerity of corporations and businesses that have incorporated the idea. Saeed and Arshad, (2012) argue that it is simply a marketing strategy and a way to differentiate a product and/or the organisation trying to enhance a corporate image. This view is frequently argued especially since the positive link between profitability and CSR is supported by research (Marconi, 2002) which shows that given a choice, consumers prefer to transact with a socially responsible company. The research also confirms that employees of a company that practices CSR have a higher level of motivation and job satisfaction.
Clearly, it can be profitable to practice social responsibility and a significant amount of companies have in recent times joined the practice but are they using the added potential profit as the real driver for incorporating CSR in their business and does that then effectively nullify or lessen its purpose? Mitchell (2009) argues that the reason the majority of companies support charities or social causes is mostly driven by company accountants looking for a tax deduction or that companies have found a new marketing tool and are merely reallocating advertising dollars. He argues that these companies still do not practice CSR in the manner of which it is intended. Companies simply donate money to organisations or get involved in social issues that create the greatest relative exposure and are found to be the most cost-effective form of advertising and marketing.

Raymond and Martin (2007) go even further. They argue that the CSR practiced by some companies actually misleads consumers and is a sham because a socially responsible company should not expect something in return but bestows its contributions with no strings attached. This view is not supported by Kotler and Lee (2005) who suggest that marketing campaigns can be created and specifically targeted for the benefit of consumers, recipients of charity and the company. A company is able to show passion to a social cause and make a profit at the same time, they argue.

This type of scrutiny is frequently applied to companies practising CSR, often labelling their effort as in-genuine or hypocritical. However, incorporating
CSR in a large business has today become both widespread and in effect conventional to the level that it has largely become expected to exist. And that is the reason, Lee and Carter (2005) argues, that a large number of companies have taken serious steps to practice CSR as a philosophy and look beyond profits by respecting the community in which they operate not only to support a social or community issue or action but to incorporate CSR in their strategic decisions, their product and their employees because CSR, if well run and with honest intent, is both profitable and able to create a profitable advantage.

But in a recent study, which surveyed 473 executives, Graafland and Schouten (2012) found that businesses are still primarily financially motivated. Company executives, it seems, certainly prefer to adhere to CSR and are proud and delighted when their company is regarded as socially responsible but will still run their company chiefly independent of the community rather than as part of the community. Self-interest is still the primary motivator. The reason for this might be that a good image does not necessarily translate into financial success. Studies have found (Clifton et al, 2003) that the great majority of consumers although conscious, are unwilling to specifically direct their shopping habits to companies practicing CSR, price is still the greatest decision factor. In an analysis of studies, Benabou and Tirole (2010) found that the broader consumer base, while fully supporting CSR practices in general do not themselves comply in practice with the ideology although they expect others to do so.
There are in essence two competing views about Corporate Social Responsibility. It is either regarded as a marketing tool and a business strategy (Evans, 2010) or as a fundamental characteristic in a modern company that exists for the purpose of the community (Collins, 2009). Adkins (1999) however, argues that the nature of the inspiration to practice CSR is not important because even if a company only engages in its practice to gain profit, it still is advantageous to the community and as such the definition of the purpose of CSR is irrelevant, that only the results matter.

2.5 Business Ethics Education

All business schools attempt to teach ethics in some form. Pizzolatto and Bevill (1996) found in their study that ethics education is fairly well integrated throughout business curricula, with the exception of finance and economics. Rasche, Gilbert, and Schedel (2013) did a cross-disciplinary examination of ethics education in MBA programs and found that business schools are increasingly offering ethics-related courses.

However, Rasche et al (2013) found that business schools ethics courses are only offered as electives and they also found that the integration of ethics in other subjects is un-proportional, that management-related courses exposes students more often to ethical questions. And therefore, they argue, business schools are creating a gap between their upbeat rhetoric around ethics education and their actual MBA curriculum. They suggest that more effective ethics education requires structural changes to the curriculum, in particular
mandatory ethics courses as well as a stronger integration of ethics-related debates into disciplines such as finance and accounting. There are a number of prominent advocates who argue that currently ethics education is not sufficiently integrated in an MBA curriculum. Business ethics education cannot be taught effectively unless it is taught as a stand-alone subject by educators that themselves have been educated in ethics (Grace & Cohen, 2010; Swanson & Fisher, 2008; Weber, Gerde & Wasielski, 2008).

Interestingly, not only is contemporary ethics education broadly criticized for its inadequacy, it is even suggested that business ethics education in its current state potentially causes harm. Park (1998) argues that since business schools are not accountable, ethics education is fragmented and without a direction. This in turn produces restrictive cognitive reasoning, which potentially causes more harm than good. He argues that business ethics education should focus on practical application with goals and measurable outcomes.

Many business schools have reverted to a general response, in defence to these types of critiques. They often argue that ethics is all encompassing and therefore the education of ethics is actually integrated in most other subjects. The argument is that ethics is taught and discussed from a specific and appropriate angle for each subject and that ethics education is therefore tailored on an individual and suitable fitting basis for each subject. And to test this particular hypothesis, Tesfayohannes and Driscoll (2010) carried out a content analysis of business school textbooks to see how ethics is integrated into them.
and if it is incorporated comprehensively. Their findings showed that there was significantly limited integration and coverage of ethics, in particular of ethical concepts and applications. They found that most prescribed business textbooks used by educational institutions gloss over ethics and topics regarding social responsibility. They found that overall integration of ethical concepts in business school text-books through devoted space was “extremely limited”.

In a further empirical study, Weber and Green (1991) found that few students grasped the concept embodied in ethical reasoning. They concluded that teaching the principles of ethical reasoning to business students is not viable and courses cannot have a significant impact on a sufficient level to increase a student’s ability to comprehend moral reasoning or to alter ethical behaviour. In another evaluation of business ethics education, Park (1998) not only argues that ethics education is ineffective but in its current state is even potentially harmful as it could result in promoting defensive reasoning.

Regardless however, some institutions like for example Harvard Business School have chosen to introduce ethics education in their MBA program and they do not consider adult graduate students to be too old to learn ethics (Piper & Parks, 1993). But even so, the content of their ethics program has been criticised for focusing on evaluating dilemmas in case studies rather than looking into the key principle embodied in the study of Virtue Ethics (Alsop, 2006). And overall, there is a growing amount of literature criticising the current manner of ethics education in business schools (Ghoshal, 2005; Mintzberg, 2004; Pfeffer & Fong,
and some specifically argue to introduce virtue ethics (Mintz, 1995; Floyd et al, 2013).

### 2.5.1 Should Ethics be taught at Home?

Hartman (2007) argue that ethics is taught at home and is determined way before people turn up for university studies. Ethics is not something that can be taught in a classroom within a few hours late in a person’s character development, he asserts. Ethics makes up an essential component of a person’s character and an ethics class cannot change a person’s character.

That was also the conclusion of an early empirical study by Wynd and Mager, (1989), who in their study found that studying ethics did not make a difference. They concluded that basic values are set early in life and do not change and that therefore ethics education, whose purpose essentially is to change people’s nature or character, does not work. However, Hartman (2007) admits that ethical stance can and does change but that occurs with life experience and usually at the workplace, if at all.

### 2.5.2 Should Ethics be taught in the Workplace?

But how do business students get their ethical values if not in business school? Who teaches them how to become an ‘ethical’ business person? A 2003 survey of corporate social responsibility education found that more than 80% of respondents said that their single most important manner in which they receive their ethics training was the business industry itself (Matten & Moon, 2004).
An empirical study by Weber and Green (1991) also agrees with the conclusion that ethics education does not belong in business schools but rather in the workplace. They concluded from their study which found that the mostly 19-year olds that they had used as subjects were unable to grasp a higher level of ethical reasoning. They hypothesised that ethics is best learned by mature adults or by persons with social responsibilities.

So, perhaps ethics is something that should be taught at the workplace then. That aspect was investigated by Weber and Wasieleski (2013) who found that a growing number of organisations had implemented in-house ethics compliance programs and training. Though the term most organisations use is ‘awareness’ rather than ethics and the main purpose of this training is to make their employees aware of commonly faced issues and compliance needs.

However, the study did find that this type of ethics training is rather a response to regulatory pressures than actually being educational in nature and they describe this type of ethics education in the workplace as being more like ‘compliance training’. Employees spent limited time in training and a clear majority of that training was through computer aided programs.

Essentially, Weber and Wasieleski (2013) argue that despite all the positive data that their study showed, it did not find that in-house ethics training produces a more ethical business community. While ethics education at the workplace is encouraging, they concluded, it is not where it belongs. Education should be performed by the educational system which is by far best equipped to
educate. While work experience is a form of education, it is not capable of providing the crucial theoretical component needed to inherently understand complex ideas.

2.5.3 Should Ethics be taught in Business School?

Can you tell me, Socrates, whether virtue is something that can be taught? Or is it not taught, but acquired by practice? Or is it neither acquired by practice nor learnt, but does it arise in people by natural aptitude or in some other way?

Plato, *Meno* (70a 1-4)

When the young, ambitious and unscrupulous aristocrat Meno engages Socrates in a discussion about virtue and the nature of its acquisition they come to the conclusion that virtue is not something that comes naturally but is something that has to be learnt. They also come to the conclusion that if virtue is a set of information or knowledge of a kind, something that can be memorised and learnt, then and only then can it be teachable. But as usual, the dialogue ends inconclusively and we aren’t told the final answer to Meno’s question. So, is virtue knowledge? And if it isn’t, how is it learnt? But more importantly, is it possible to teach virtue?

In recent decades these questions have been re-examined in order to provide a practical solution to a critical and increasingly alarming problem in modern society, the relationship between business and the community. There is growing concern about the ever rising list of important companies and their
management which have been engaged; in corruption and bribery; in accounting fraud and blatantly unethical behaviour. For example: Enron, WorldCom, Arthur Anderson, Tyco, Adelphia, Dynegy, HealthSouth, Boeing, Martha Stewart, Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, Bear Sterns, Lehman Brothers, AIG, and Merill Lynch. And since the stability of modern society is entirely dependent on an equitable system of distribution of goods and services through the concept of business, it is crucial that businesses are run responsibly and ethically.

However, simply pointing at examples of unethical conduct in the business world is not a convincing argument to implement business ethics education (Cornelius et al, 2007; Brinkmann et al, 2011). And since doing something unethical is not necessarily doing something illegal there is much weight placed on introducing laws and regulations. But it is clear that laws are simply not able to keep up. A constantly evolving innovation driven market-economy naturally places business at the forefront of progress and therefore there isn’t enough precise and exact law to encompass all facets of business conduct (Venezia et al, 2011).

Therefore, there is a growing argument that the most effective way to prevent future enterprising, resourceful and unscrupulous business leaders from circumventing the law is to introduce business ethics education as a stand-alone subject in business schools and teach it as application rather than theory (Stead & Miller, 1988). This, they argue, will combat future corporate unethical conduct. It is also argued that simply presenting various ethics theories rather than
teaching each theory in its own right promote ethical relativism which in turn leads to confusion rather than understanding (William, 2004).

There is of course the issue about semantics. Virtue (as distinct from virtues) can be a confusing term, the Ancient Greeks actually discussed *arête* and today it is frequently termed social responsibility. And while there might be subtle differences they all incorporate the same foundational principles which are embodied in the theory of virtue ethics. In essence, the theory states that ethical conduct and the will, if any, to be a good citizen is embodied in a person’s character. Solomon (1992) argues that business ethics education is best served by the understanding and application virtue ethics, a sub-branch in normative ethical theory.

However, is it really the job of a business school to teach people how to be good citizens? Should the study of corporate social responsibility actually teach students how to be socially responsible? Not according to a growing academic argument which effectively says that the application of business ethics and virtue simply cannot be taught because it is personal and something that someone already has in themselves (Piper et al, 1993) and besides, Carroll and Bucholtz (2008, p. 228) state that “virtue ethics is not very useful in business applications”. That sentiment is also reflected in some educational materials. Shaw (1991) wrote a 400 page text-book titled *Business Ethics* without even mentioning virtue ethics.
Further, empirical studies that sought to investigate if ethics can be taught frequently conclude that ethics cannot be taught. A study, which showed no significant ethical improvement in business students, concluded that it was unreasonable to expect a business ethics course to have an effect on ethical attitude in a short period of time (Jewe, 2008). The study speculates that ethics education would be more efficient in high schools or at an earlier stage of a student’s life. This conclusion agrees with an earlier study, whose results also found that ethics education does not work. They argued that: “basic values are set early in life and do not change unless there is a significant emotional event” (Wynd & Mager, 1989).

On the other hand, several empirical studies have found that ethics education in business can be effective. A study by Weber and Glyptis (2000) found that ethics education positively affects student’s values and opinions. Another comprehensive study by Lau (2009) found that ethics education significantly improved students overall ethical orientation and seemed to give its students a higher ethical awareness. Students who had completed the course also scored higher on ethical stance on a range of ethics issues, then those who had not completed the course.

A further study by Cloninger and Selvarajan (2010), also found that business ethics courses were successful and students demonstrated better ethical judgments after the course. And the same finding was arrived at by Nguyen et al (2008) who stressed in their conclusion that a business ethics
course must both be designed and delivered properly in order for it to have the desired effect.

Synthesising from these studies, which produced contradictory results, it is clear that business ethics education can be successfully taught sometimes. Unfortunately, the results cannot be quantified more precisely even though there have been several attempts to create a standard by which to measure ethical reasoning and ethical conduct (Loviscky, Trevino & Jacobs, 2007).

2.6 Research into the Effectives of Business Ethics Education

In 1982, Business & Society, a peer-reviewed journal that focuses on original research relating to ethics, corporate governance and management issues, published in the same volume two independently written and researched articles on the same topic. The articles both sought to find out if ethics courses improve ethical judgements of undergraduate students and they both conducted professional empirical research. But the studies had directly opposite results, Martin (1981-1982) found that business ethics courses fail to teach ethics while Boyd (1981-1982) found that they do.

Initially, a number of successive follow up studies confirmed that ethics education was beneficial (Arlow & Ulrich, 1985; Surlin, 1987; Stead & Miller, 1988; Cohen & Cornwell, 1989; Glen, 1992). These studies also generated similar general conclusive arguments, that: “ethics education in business could reduce the number of fraudulent financial manipulations, environmental tragedies,
deadly working environments, and other corporate wrongdoings” (Stead & Miller, 1988, p. 559).

But since then, a significant number of studies have reached the opposite conclusion. Their general conclusion, derived from empirical research, was that it is not possible to teach ethics to business students (Wynd & Mager, 1989; Weber & Green, 1991; Smith & Oakley, 1996; Park, 1998). These studies showed completely opposite results and came to directly opposite conclusions than those previous studies. Ethics education does not work, they concluded, taking a business ethics course made no difference to students’ attitudes towards ethical business behaviour.

The topic was again re-examined by Jones and Gauschi (1998), who resoundingly concluded from their empirical study that ethics can be taught. Another study by Carlson and Burke (1998) also supported this finding. That study clearly showed that a significant portion of their subjects increased their analytical ability and changed their reasoning after an ethics course and it concluded that ethics educated persons went: “Beyond a quick-easy reaction to examining ethical concern more careful and fully” (Carlson & Burke, 1998, p. 1186). But, that same year, a study published by Jewe (1998) again found that the opposite was also true. It found that students who had completed an ethics course manifested no difference in their attitudes toward ethical business behaviour.
Since then, even further successive empirical studies have continued to try and determine whether ethics can be taught to business students. Weber and Glyptis (2000), in their study, concluded that a business ethics course positively affects student’s values and opinions. Lau (2009), in his study, concluded that ethics education not only significantly improves student’s overall ethical orientation it also gives students higher ethical awareness as well as a higher ethical stance on a range of ethics issues. Cloninger and Selvarajan (2010), in their study, also concluded that students that had completed an ethics course demonstrated better ethical judgments than students who had not. Lawrence, Reed and Locander (2011) also found that students with exposure to a business ethics course were more adept at ethical reflecting and ethical reasoning.

However, regardless of the number of studies that end up concluding that ethics education is effective, there are still studies that have conclusively shown that the opposite can also be true. It is imperative to find the cause of the contradictory results in order for the topic to move further.

2.7 Why is the Research Contradictive?

By now, there has been successive and numerous studies on ethics education and its effectiveness. Studies that have been published in peer-review journals were conducted by educated and competent persons. But due to the contradictory conclusions of the studies, their only real contribution to knowledge is that sometimes ethics education is effective and that sometimes
ethics education is not effective. It is clear that the focus of these studies needs to be re-directed, perhaps the wrong questions are being asked?

But before the ability of business schools to teach ethics effectively in its current state is dismissed entirely, maybe their occasional failure can be explained by other factors. In a content analysis of online material provided by business schools seeking either standing or clientele, Cornelius, Wallace and Tassabehji (2007) found that promoting ethics education is not emphasised. It is not a drawcard that brings in students and it is not a feature of their institution that brings fame. And because ethics education is not valued by business schools overall, the current system has ensured a limited availability of suitably qualified staff for those schools that do choose to teach it.

Cornelius, Wallace and Tassabehji (2007) also argue these might be the reasons why ethics education in business schools is ineffective. The relationship between teaching and valuing ethics has a circular relationship. Therefore providing an undervalued service is self-defeating. If an educational institution does not see the value in ethics education, it is incapable of teaching it competently or with quality. Maybe if business schools saw the value in ethics education they would provide it effectively.

Business schools put ethics at the bottom of their list of priorities and that diminishes the impact of ethics education. Cornelius et al (2007) argue that the main obstacle to overcome this culture of business education is to resolve
the manner in how ethics should be taught by determining the value of ethics education itself.

Glenn (1992), whose study found that ethics education does work, also included in his article a methodological comparison of studies thus far. He found that hitherto empirical research was neither comparable nor conclusive. Studies were not soundly based on previous ones; were not rigorous enough; used a lack of instruments like not using control groups; used samples that were too small; used samples that were not diverse enough and most significantly he found that previous studies neglected to follow their subject over a greater period of time.

Some years later Lau (2010) did a follow up on Glenn’s investigation and points out that, even though previous studies into ethics education and its impact have concluded completely contradictory results, most of the studies found a positive relationship. Only four out of eleven studies that he investigated concluded that ethics education did not make an impact on students.

In his methodological comparison of the studies to investigate the impact ethics education has on students, he included studies that had been conducted since the methodological study by Glenn (1992). Lau (2010) then also found that even recent research did not use a set standard to ensure practical comparison between studies or even employ improved methodology as deducted necessary in conclusions of previous studies.

Another strong criticism was that many studies still did not use control groups. He further found that research methodology and design varied markedly
from study to study. The widely different and varying methods used to measure outcomes, Lau (2010) argues, is probably the single largest reason for the contradictory results. Many of these studies used either ambiguous or ill-defined constructs or had samples that were too small. And this diversity made it difficult, if not impossible to interpret differences in the results. Another point of contention that he pointed out was the subjectivity of instruments used to measure the outcome of ethics education. For example, a study that had concluded that ethics education does not have an impact (Jewe, 2008), simply conducted an online survey in four religious universities.

Another interesting point is that all of these studies were conducted in America on undergraduate students and from a single cultural perspective. A study by Tsui and Windsor (2001) tested ethics perception using samples from different cultures. They found that diverse cultures perceive ethical behaviour differently and concluded that ethical conduct and judgment is dependent on cultural differences. What one culture regards as unethical can to another culture be acceptable behaviour.

But culture is not the only variable that dilutes an understanding of ethical behaviour. A study by Ritter (2006) using a relatively small sample, also investigating whether ethics education has an impact on its students, found that women were more likely to benefit from ethics behaviour education. Curiously, while the study concluded that ethical education does not have an impact it still
found that gender made a difference in perception and adoption of ethical

principles.

However, there is no agreed conclusive answer to the question if ethics
can be taught effectively in business schools, since the studies regarding the
effectiveness of its education have brought about completely conflicting and
contradictory results. And the lack of conclusive results in this area has
unfortunately not raised eyebrows in the business academic community in a
manner one would expect from scholars and researchers. Rather they have each
been used as supporting evidence by consecutive debate since. This has allowed
each side of the camp, so to speak, to cherry-pick the research that supports
their assertion. As such general and overall progress in the development of ethics
education, in its own right, in business schools has not only been undermined
but in some cases completely disregarded (Swanson & Fisher, 2008).

Further, Weber et al (2008) argue that ethics education is prone to failure
because of the lack of ethics educated academics in business schools. So, rather
than continuing to do similar studies which are by now seem to be doomed to
bring about more inconclusive results of the bigger picture, why not answer the
nagging question: Why do some studies fail to find a positive correlation
between ethics and education?
2.8 Theories and Teaching Methods

Knowledge will not come from teaching but from questioning

Socrates in Plato’s *Meno*, 85d

When Socrates was charged and eventually sentenced to death for teaching young adults how to make a weaker argument stronger and thereby undermining established social values, he maintained that he was not actually a teacher but somebody who was deeply interested in knowledge and the extraction of universal truths through a process similar to midwifery.

Socrates differentiated between two types of learning. There is learning a *technê*, from which our modern word technical is derived, which can be translated as a skill or a craft and which can be learnt by instruction or by practice. Then there is learning *epistêmê* which can be translated as ‘Justified True Belief’ or using modern terminology as ‘Theoretical Knowledge’ or universal knowledge that is invariable in time and space (McKenna & Biloslavo, 2011). But perhaps a more suitable translation is simply ‘Knowledge’ as in the direct opposite of belief and opinion. However, *epistêmê* is not something that can be taught in the same way as a *technê*, Socrates argues, it is taught by the student through questioning and reasoning or what we today term ‘critical thinking’.
Since ethics is not a technical skill and cannot be learnt the traditional way, how should a business school approach the teaching of ethics then? Giacalone and Thompson (2006) argue that finding business role models is the key to implant inspiration and that inspiring role models promotes imitation and idealistic realisation. Especially since the fundamental understanding of ethics does not cross cultural barriers (Lin, Ho & Lin, 2013). Though that approach seems fraught with difficulty as even, Mahatma Gandhi, arguably the most ethical person that ever lived has his critics.

While a range of other ‘simple’ solutions like for example class discussion are concluded and advocated (Pizzolatto & Bevill, 1996), there is an overall emphasis on including direct student involvement. Lawrence, Reed and Locander (2011) argue that guest speakers together with a combination of classroom activities should be employed. And that students should be made to think and be encouraged to engage in personal reflection about hard ethical decisions. This, they argue, will ensure effective classroom discussions where they can sort out their own personal biases and hubris.

On the other hand, collaborative learning and co-operative learning, is advocated by Mintz (1996), who argues that experiencing group dynamics in an informal social organisation imprints ethical principles in students. He argues that for example a role playing scenario, where all members in a group are accountable and only team effort is rewarded, is a memorable and imprinting experience. The essence of a person’s character, Mintz (1996) argues, is
determined by that person’s peers. A good character is highly valued in a social setting and since ethics determines character value, people seeking social standing strive to become ethical. There are also suggestions to adopt a holistic approach and incorporate a wide variety of techniques (Sarwar, 2013).

2.8.1 Normative Ethical Theory

Normative ethical theory is the determination of a systematic, coherent and unified set of rules that ought to govern human conduct, the values worth pursuing and the character traits deserving development in human life. It attempts to find the basic principles from which norms can be derived and to “justify the basic principles of right and wrong conduct and behaviour” (De, George, 2006, p. 21). It is distinct from applied ethics, which is concerned with the examination of issues of moral judgment, and distinct from metaethics, which is concerned with describing the meaning of right and wrong, moral obligation as well as the logic of those descriptions.

Normative ethical theory is divided into three categories: teleological ethics, deontological ethics and virtue ethics. The central position of deontological ethics is to follow rules, regulations and duty while teleological ethics focuses on producing a good end result or consequence (therefore also termed consequentialism). Virtue ethics focuses on the character of the person performing the action rather than on the situation itself. It therefore provides guidance on how to produce a good person rather than on evaluating possible actions in a tricky situation (Grace & Cohen, 2010).
2.8.2 Constructivist Learning Theory

Constructivism is a modern term by which, in the realm of education, refers to knowledge that is learnt through means of individual ‘construction’. The theory claims that some knowledge and understanding that is learnt, is dependent on the environment and previous experience and as such learners construct their own form of knowledge which is relative to their needs and method of understanding (Wilson, 1996). This type of knowledge can be ‘True Knowledge’ but it does not have to be. Biech (2008) argues that when students learn through constructivism they make their own form of sense or use past experiences in order to learn and an effective teacher uses learner’s existing understanding of the world in order to pass on knowledge.

Wilson (2005) argues that learners do not need to know what reality is actually like, in order to experience life. True knowledge is not important when it comes to daily conduct and it is possible to gain knowledge and perceived understanding without epistêmê. He does however acknowledge that in order for people to learn something that requires their outlook in life to change or to learn something that requires their attitudes to change, constructivism fails as a method of learning.

Hence, constructivism is a method of learning of new knowledge, new understanding and new skills which ultimately do not necessitate knowledge of reality and the real world or the need to change attitudes and realisation (Schunk, 2008). A student does not need to know that their existing knowledge
contains fallacies and does not need to become bewildered with strange new conclusions.

_Aporia_ is the ancient Greek term that Socrates would have used. He argued that people can only be taught _epistêmê_ once they have reached _aporia_, a word which is sometimes translated as bafflement but really means; to be without resources; to have a blank mind; to have exhausted your own thought process and not be able to come up with any solutions or explanations that are rational; to not have a prior construct of the knowledge that is being taught; to not be able to use your own experiences and understanding to explain and construct new knowledge and understanding.

It is only once you have reached _aporia_, when you know that you don’t know something, that you can truly learn. Sloan (2006) agrees with that conclusion saying that real learning occurs can only occur during a process of ‘critical reflection’. Thus, learning using constructivist learning theory is only useful for teaching skills or a trade or a process but not for the type of learning that is needed within the context of learning philosophy, ethics, critical thinking or such learning that builds character.

**2.8.3 Transformative Learning Theory**

Transformative learning is a term that is difficult to understand and it is an idea that is just as difficult to explain. It includes a number of abstract ideas and assumptions that are assembled in a combination of wonderful sounding
words which then become confusing, irrational and difficult to make sense of. For example, O’Brien and Collins (2011) define transformative learning as: “learning characterised by self-reflection and self-examination” while Howie and Bagnall (2013) explain it as a “substantively explosive conceptual metaphor” which is full of “inconsequential inconsistencies” but that it is irrationally popular.

Jack Mezirow (2003), who developed the transformative learning theory a few decades ago, writes that transformative learning is: “Metacognitive reasoning emphasising insight of the source of the knowledge, its structure, and history as well as judging its relevance, appropriateness, and consequences”. Further, in the dictionary Learning Theories A to Z, Leonard (2002) is unable to provide a definition at all, and instead provides confusing examples and only describes what it is not.

This inconsistency and confusing terminology and in particular its lack of pragmatism is great fuel for critics of the transformative learning theory (Taylor, 2007). How does one apply transformative learning and what are the criteria and conditions necessary for it to exist and what does it really mean?

Other criticism focus on internal aspects of the theory like the manner of defining the reality that it is using as a horizon or in a simpler term, asking why spirituality is not chosen as a form or true reality. Taylor (2008) argues that the theory is not complete until it takes into account holistic ways of knowledge, using more than just logical and rational methods to derive at conclusions and he
argues that the theory needs to take into account social change, individual spiritualism and constantly reflect on its knowledge base in order to develop critical consciousness. He further argues that there are three alternatives to “Mezirow’s psycho-critical perspective of transformative learning” and they are psychoanalytic, psycho-developmental and social emancipatory. These alternatives, he explains, include reflection of personal and lifelong journeys and understanding of one’s inner self and a sense of self-responsibility. The critics of the transformative learning theory seem to fall in the same trap of not being able to rationalise their criticism in a comprehensibly pragmatic manner.

However, despite the difficulty the theory poses in the form it is frequently presented as, it does on occasion make sense. Mezirow (2003), in another attempt to explain the theory, stresses the need for the learner to engage in critical reflection that challenges the learners existing knowledge. While that argument makes it clearer, it still implies a one-way self-inspired process. It seems to omit two crucial and important facets. The critical reflection that Mezirow refers to, can only be achieved through dialect discourse with an instructor who is accomplished and knowledgeable in the area of instruction. And secondly, the learning can only be reached to that level if it uses tools like logic and universal justification. This type of learning is a process by which taken-for-granted frames of reference are transformed into knowledge, beliefs or opinions that are rationally justified and closer to the actual truth (Fisher-Yoshida & Geller, 2009). Transformative learning theory is conspicuously close to the Socratic method of teaching.
2.8.4 The Socratic Method

*I cannot teach anybody anything, I can only make them think*

Socrates (paraphrased: Plato, *Apology* 22d)

Ethics is the very topic that was fundamentally responsible for the creation of the first school of higher education. Plato’s *Academia* investigated the Socratic idea that knowing what the right thing to do is, is not only a necessary condition but also a sufficient condition for doing the right thing. Socrates claimed that in order to behave ethically, you first have to understand what ethical behaviour is. And that nobody in their right mind who knows what ethical behaviour is, who really understands it and understands it properly, can ever knowingly behave unethically. Take for example the quote: “No man who had once learnt the nature of virtue would be stupid enough to act contrary to it, for he would be acting against his own interests” (Plato, *Apology*, 21b), or “He who knows the beautiful and good, will never choose anything else” (Xenophon, *Memorabilia* iii, 9, 5).

Hartman (2007), Professor of Business Ethics, in his article *Socratic Questions and Aristotelian Answers: A Virtue-Based Approach to Business Ethics* contrasts the Socratic approach to ethics with Aristotle’s response to it and evaluates its value and relevance to modern business teachers of ethics. In his article Hartman defines the central question in ethical education as asking: What
is ethical behaviour? And he concludes that the answer to this question is relative; that ethics is not a science; that defining ethical behaviour is notoriously controversial; that there are no obvious or definite answers because, he argues, there are no foundational ethical principles, like Socrates claims.

Hartman (2007), in his analysis of the Socratic Method concludes that the teaching method is notoriously controversial because essentially it does not aim to teach science or pragmatic subjects but aims at changing attitudes and behaviour. And as such, in the area of teaching philosophy, there are no obvious or definite answers and no foundational principles. Socrates “raises the bar too high” he argues.

However neither Socrates nor Aristotle has problems defining what ethical behaviour is. Aristotle specifically, to make that point, quotes an unknown author: “Men are bad in countless ways but good in only one” (Nicomacean Ethics, 1106b35). They also both argued that being ethical is good for you. Rather it is on the issue regarding the conscious conduct of ethical behaviour that Socrates and Aristotle differed. Socrates theory is “glaringly inconsistent with observed facts”, writes Aristotle (Nicomacean Ethics, 1145b30). And in contrast, claimed that even ethically educated people can behave unethically but that a person of a good character is more likely to behave ethically.

Hartman (2007) states that the difference between ‘right and wrong behaviour’ is something that pretty much everybody has an opinion about and
because of that, contemporary education in business ethics frequently fails in its general goal. He argues that students stubbornly hold on to their own opinions and consequently the education of ethics undermines ethics itself. Hartman blames the Socratic Method of teaching for this state of affairs and as such he advocates an Aristotelian approach to ethics education.

However, the great illusion which has caused countless confusion about the Socratic Method of teaching is the constant claim by Socrates that he is ignorant and therefore also is learning and in search for answers. Hartman, like some people, takes Socrates claim of ignorance literally and says that Socrates, admittingly ignorant, is only able to “destroy definitions that others propose” and that he himself is unable to tell his students the correct answer or even the definition, which he keeps pестering his students to come up with (Hartman, 2007, p. 315).

The confusion about Socrates ignorance occurs because his objective is not easy to identify. Neither Plato nor Socrates tells you the answer to a question but that is the purpose of the dialogues. They are primarily written so that people will think about issues, the answer they initially reach is irrelevant but if people keep thinking about it they will eventually reach the correct answer. The main purpose of a Socratic Dialogue is to teach people how to think, not what to think. And to accomplish that, Plato’s Socrates always engages his students in a three-step learning process. The stages are Honesty, Eironeia and Aporia (Irwin, 1989, p. 86-88; Hutchinson, 1995; Shields, 2007).
First Socrates requires his students to be honest. In order to learn you must participate completely and honestly and give answers that you personally believe, not answers that are acceptable or easy. Secondly, Socrates portrays *Eironeia* (the word from which we derive our modern word irony) which in ancient Greek means something like ‘mock modesty’: to pretend that you are less than you actually are. Every time Socrates says he does not know anything, an ardent reader can tell that Socrates is actually developing an argument that is completely going to baffle his student.

And once Socrates has achieved that, once he has baffled his student to such an extent that the student is speechless and unable to justify his own knowledge and understanding, the student admits *aporia* and realises that he doesn’t actually know what he thought he knew. Aporia is usually translated as bafflement but it really means running out of resources or ideas. And only once people reach and accept aporia is their mind clear, fresh and open to learning. Socrates reduces his students to aporia because he sees that as a necessary step in the learning process (Popper, 1966, pp. 135-141). A person who thinks that they already have knowledge cannot be taught it. Socrates first exposes faulty opinions and only then does the teaching start.
2.8.5 Teaching Critical Thinking

*A person's ethics will develop into excellence if properly taught but if is sown and grows in unsuitable soil, the very opposite will happen*

Socrates in Plato's *Republic*, VI, 492

The Socratic Method of teaching is an efficient teaching technique to engage in to overcome the learning resistance that is prevalent in ethics education. But there are three main hurdles. First it is difficult to understand how it works. Secondly, it is difficult to distinguish between different types of knowledge and lastly: it is excruciatingly difficult to master (Gurung & Schwartz, 2009, p.93).

In order to engage in the Socratic Method of teaching one must first know the subject matter really well and secondly one must know how to get the student to crave the knowledge. The theory is that a person who thinks that they already have knowledge cannot be taught properly and it is first necessary to expose any faulty opinions and only then can the teaching start. And once that is accomplished, the teaching is more in the form of a need from the student to fill the now vacuum of ignorance that is left. It is the student that now engages in questioning and searching for answers.

The learning of ‘critical thinking’ in order to be able to accurately interpret reality is Socrates aim. And his method not only encourages but also
actually teaches *critical thinking* which also seems to be the main aim of the transformative learning theory which does contain aspects of the Socratic Method but needs to be refined and comprehensively articulated to be of practical use. ‘Critical thinking’ is not easy to understand and even harder to teach.

In a study, Paul et al (1997) found that only a tiny minority of university faculty teachers in California who promoted and taught critical thinking were able to identify important criteria and standards by which to evaluate such. Being in charge with teaching of a skill that is somewhat abstract is a challenge not everyone can master. To teach a, as Socrates would call it, *technē* requires a different type of teaching than the type of teaching needed to teach philosophy, critical thinking and ethics.

Hence, to learn ethics, students need to engage in critical thinking. Ethics cannot be taught using the same methods that are used to teach marketing, accounting, or finance (Evangeliou, 2012). It would be imprudent to approach the education of ethics in the same manner regular business disciplines are approached. And since *critical thinking* is an essential component of philosophy it is taught as the primary objective in the subject of philosophy and in particular in the sub-topic of logic. Perhaps, therefore, persons specifically educated in philosophy and logic are also the most suitable to teach ethics effectively.
2.8.6 Teaching Philosophy in Business Schools

It is argued that a person that passes a course in ethics does not become an expert in ethics but rather becomes an ethical citizen (De George, 2006). And if that is true then a pass in a business ethics course would require that person’s characters to change, at least partially.

However De George (2006) argues that business schools are neither equipped nor trained to teach people how to become good citizens as that domain belongs to the field of philosophy and that therefore philosophy should be an integral part in business studies because ethics can only be taught using the tools of philosophy. Of course, there is no shortage of suggestions regarding which is the best teaching theory or best teaching techniques for ethics education (Pizzolatto & Bevill, 1996; Mintz, 1996; Lawrence, Reed & Locander, 2011). However, introducing classical philosophy in the curriculum is an often overlooked and underestimated method when it comes to developing effective ethics education in business schools.

And there is a growing call to introduce philosophy in business schools or at least methods of teaching used by philosophy and to stop underestimating the effectiveness of Platonic Dialogue, the Socratic Method or an Aristotelian methodical approach (Morrell, 2004; Hartman, 2007; Evangeliou, 2012). These scholars each individually argue that it is imprudent to approach the education of ethics in the same manner that regular business disciplines are approached. You
cannot teach ethics like you teach marketing, accounting, human resource management or business strategy.

They argue that teaching ethics is beyond the capability of a business teacher, that ethics cannot be taught by people who have not been taught themselves or who specialise in pragmatic subjects. Ethics belongs to the domain of philosophy and can only be taught by philosophers. However, Business Schools do not tend to employ academics educated in philosophy nor do they teach philosophy. Rather they expect that academics and educators that currently are employed to teach ethics are capable to teach it regardless of their philosophical training. This research aims to find out if that reliance is well founded?

2.9 Conclusion

In conclusion, this literature review reveals that; the community places a high value on ethics; ethics is teachable; ethics education makes a big impact most of the time; ethics is hard to teach; the implementation of business ethics is self-regulated and that there are strong arguments suggesting that business schools are not equipped to teach it.

In the last few decades there have been a significant number of studies dedicated to determine the effectiveness of business ethics education but their conclusions are inconclusive since results are frequently contradictory. And rather than continuing to ask the same question: “Does business ethics
education work?” it is suggested that, since ethics is teachable, future studies concentrate on finding out why some of the studies found negative results.

The literature review also revealed that there is a growing call to investigate variables that were not explored in any of the studies and in particular: the subject knowledge of the educators and their teaching methods. Therefore, in response to that call, this research study has chosen to undertake an investigation to find out if currently employed business school educators have an appropriate level of knowledge in the subject of ethics theory.
3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes and explains the research methodology that was used to obtain the data to empirically assess the hypotheses posed in this study. First, it outlines the research questions and the hypotheses that were investigated (section 3.2). Next, it provides an overview of the research method and the research paradigm that was used (section 3.3); the research design and the rationale for its choice (section 3.4); the sampling technique, data collection method and the nature of the sample population (section 3.5); the procedures for the data collection (section 3.6); a discussion of the validity and reliability of the research design (section 3.7); a description of the questionnaire design (section 3.8). The chapter then discusses limitations (section 3.9), ethical considerations (section 3.10) and presents a conclusion (section 3.11).

3.2 Research Questions

The key objective of this research is to (i) examine the level of subject expertise that educators who teach ethics in business schools have in the subject of normative ethical theory, and (ii) to examine; if respondents with particular characteristics have a higher level of knowledge and if a particular variable increases educators level of subject expertise of normative ethical theory.
The level of success by which knowledge is transmitted from a teacher to a learner, in an educational environment, is primarily dependent on two factors: subject knowledge and teaching skill. While teaching skill makes a significant difference to learning, subject matter expertise or subject knowledge is the more crucial of the two factors since it drives and guides the learning itself. The higher the level of subject matter expertise that a teacher has, results in a higher level of probability that students will accomplish successful learning (Race, 2010).

This concept, that subject knowledge is more important in order to teach, is reflected by contemporary practice, in particular in higher education. University teaching staff are primarily hired in accordance with their subject knowledge. Formal qualifications in teaching, while obviously valued, are not a requirement for recruitment at tertiary level teaching. University tutors, instructors or professors do not have to complete any form of formal assessment to determine their ability to teach in order to teach. Only their subject knowledge is scrutinised. Therefore this study does not seek to determine the level of teaching skill that businesses school educators have, only their level of subject knowledge.

In order to answer the research question, several hypotheses were formulated. Each was set and justified as follows:

**Hypothesis 1: Academics accurately self-assess their ethics theory knowledge**

In the research survey, business faculty academics in teaching roles were asked to self-assess their expertise of the ‘big three’ theories of normative ethics:
deontology, utilitarianism and virtue ethics. In order to answer the research question, the respondents were first provided with a bar to self-assess on a scale from 0 to 100 (where 0 is no expertise and 100 being full expertise) of their understanding of each of the three theories. As such respondents were able to indicate their own opinion regarding their subject knowledge of each of the three theories.

In order to test if they accurately self-assess their own knowledge of the three theories, at a later stage in the survey, the respondents were provided with an option to test their knowledge of the theory of virtue ethics. Respondents who declined to take that test were asked why they preferred not to take it. The reasons they were able to indicate through the multi-choice format were that; either their knowledge is not actually up to scratch; their knowledge is a bit rusty or that their knowledge is good but that they did not have the time to take the test.

Those who did elect to take the virtue ethics quiz were assessed separately and each respondent was given a grade as well as a score out of 100 (where 100 represent the top score) so that it can be compared on the same scale as the self-assessed claim. It contained 24 relatively simple questions. Three (3) were in a multi-choice question format and twenty-one (21) were on a True or False format. Each of the true/false questions also gave the respondent the opportunity to choose the answer ‘I don’t know’ so that they did not have to guess the answer but rather let the survey know that they actually do not know.
All ‘I don’t know’ answers were marked as being an incorrect answer. Once the virtue ethics test in the survey was marked and graded, it was labelled as the respondents ‘actual knowledge’ and was compared with the respondents’ self-assessment to see if they accurately self-assessed their subject knowledge of virtue ethics. This provided the ability to check how accurately the respondents self-assessed their subject knowledge of the virtue ethics theory.

The reason the respondents self-assessment were tested in virtue ethics was because it would be unlikely that the respondents would be willing to take an extensive quiz of all normative ethics theories however if their self-assessment of virtue ethics knowledge was correct or reasonably similar to their assessed knowledge of virtue ethics, then it would be assumed that the respondents self-assessment of their knowledge in the other theories would also be reasonably accurate, and vice versa. The correlation and relationship between the respondents’ actual knowledge of virtue ethics versus their self-assessed knowledge was taken as a guide of the respondents’ total actual knowledge of all normative ethics theories.

As such, the next hypothesis seeks to examine if business faculty academics in Australia have a reasonable understanding of virtue ethics. Because it will be possible to compare and relate the answer to respondents knowledge of virtue ethics to their knowledge of the other theories if the assumption is true that: respondents relationship of their actual knowledge versus their self-
assessed of virtue ethics would be the same or similar to the other normative ethical theories.

Hypothesis 2: Academics that teach ethics as part of a business course in Australia have a reasonable understanding of virtue ethics.

This research assumes that academics, who by nature of their occupation and are well-educated, have a substantial or at the very least a reasonable level of content knowledge in the subject that they teach. It also assumes that in order to teach ethics, educators need to have a reasonable understanding of the underlying theories. It will be possible to examine if the respondents have a reasonable understanding of virtue ethics since the survey included a 24 question quiz. Therefore this hypothesis seeks to determine the respondents’ subject knowledge in order to determine the level of knowledge that the respondents have and, since they all teach ethics to business students, it is hypothesised that the respondents as a minimum have a reasonable understanding of the theory of virtue ethics.

However, since the respondents teach ethics at various levels and to various degrees, this research hypothesizes that those academics that teach ethics specifically and in particular as a stand-alone subject have on overall better knowledge of normative ethical theories. Also, theoretical knowledge in a subject is both retained and enhanced if continually practiced in particular if practiced in the form of teaching (Race, 2010). Again, since we only tested their knowledge of Virtue Ethics, the hypothesis limits itself to the claim that academics that teach
ethics as a stand-alone subject have a better understanding of virtue ethics than academics that teach ethics as a component of another subject. Therefore, the hypothesis to be tested is:

**Hypothesis 3:** Academics that teach ethics as a stand-alone subject in a business degree in Australia have a better understanding of virtue ethics than academics who teach ethics as component of another subject.

As it is common for business faculties to teach ethics as component of another subject rather than as a stand-alone subject, many academics that later end up teaching in the business faculty themselves might therefore only have been taught ethics as a component of another subject. This research assumes that if ethics is taught as a stand-alone subject, more emphasis is given to it and students on average end up with a higher level of knowledge and understanding of the topic. This assumption is tested with the following hypothesis:

**Hypothesis 4:** Academics that studied ethics in detail have a greater understanding of virtue ethics than academics that studied ethics as component of another subject.

### 3.3 Research Method

A majority of business research emulate methods from the social sciences, some of which are centred on quantitative methods. Bryman and Bell (2011, p. xxxiii) define business research as: “academic research on topics relating to questions that are relevant to the field of business and management
and have a social science orientation”. Quantitative methods in turn provide a crucial step in the scientific method which provides a form of knowledge, based on induction. Positivism is the idea that only sensory data, and as a consequence the scientific method, can provide authentic knowledge (Burns, 2000).

Since positivism excludes ‘pure rational thought’ as a source of knowledge because it is not empirically testable, it has as its disadvantage the inability to prove abstract ideas, laws, and principles that are beyond particular observable facts. As such positivism can never supply absolute, certain and irrevocably true statements and is always conjectural and limited to within its own environment. Only rational philosophy can provide time-less and universal truths by using logical and rational reasoning (Popper, 1945).

However, Burns (2000) argues that positivism has been uncritically accepted not only because it is an alternative to superstition but also because using rational thought is a difficult process and is extraordinarily complex to understand. He further argues that positivism and the scientific method is reliable if qualitative measurements are appropriately taken.

The main disadvantage with the scientific method is that it relies on induction, deriving conclusions from the specific to the general. Popper, (1959) argues that since scientific theory consists of theories that are deduced from statements of a lesser level of universality, these statements in turn must be testable in like manner – ad infinitum. Popper (1959, p. 26), when he criticises induction, points out that this may lead to an infinite regress and that that is
untenable: “Every scientific statement must be testable but while it must not have been tested before it is accepted it however must be capable of being tested.” This argument rationally demonstrates that the ultimate basis of the scientific method ends up either as an infinite regress or is itself untestable, thereby breaking its own rules.

On the other hand Rosenberg (2000, p. 111) argues that the advantage of the scientific method is that it provides knowledge, albeit conjectural, that is true in our reality and can provide both practical and pragmatic conclusions which improve our interaction and understanding of reality.

However, the advantage of quantitative research methods is that it provides data in a numerical format that can be measured mathematically, and numbers are impermeable to subjective interpretation...mostly. The disadvantage is that numbers do not provide detailed narratives or elaborate accounts of human perception, which is a major feature of business research. Another implicit disadvantage of quantitative methods is that statistical data can be presented in such a form that it becomes misleading, it needs strict scrutiny.

Interpretivism, in contrast to positivism, is often linked to participant observation or field research and associated with quantitative methods. However, it is also based on induction. Neuman (2000) describes it as a systematic analysis of detailed observations of people in their natural settings in order to arrive at understanding of how people create and maintain their social worlds.
This research is based on the quantitative method in which numerical data is collected through a survey questionnaire from a sample population in order to test a number of hypothesises.

3.4 Research Design

A research design is the method or plan that is put in place in order to answer the above defined research question. It determines the manner in which data is collected and the manner in which it is analysed. It sets out the sequential steps for the study; the method to test the hypothesis and the context of the research question. The research design determines the instruments, measurements and scales for collecting data and method to address the research questions. It also establishes the logical requirement needed to determine what evidence is necessary and sufficient to answer the research question (Lee & Ling, 2008).

Bryman and Bell (2011) classifies research designs into five major categories: experimental, cross-sectional, longitudinal, case study design and comparative design. According to Bryman and bell (2011) experimental Design is used in quantitative analysis to study causal relationship between an independent variable and a dependent variable. Cross-sectional design refers to the collection of data of more than one subject at a single point in time on two or more variables to identify patterns of association. It examines one or more variable in different groups that are similar in all other characteristics. A longitudinal design studies subjects at more than one point in time. Case study
design is an intensive analysis of a single/multiple case(s), often employing a qualitative approach. Depending on the purpose, it may include a comparative design, where a comparison of two or more cases is undertaken to identify patterns of similarity or difference for the phenomenon being investigated.

This research study follows cross-sectional design and divides the respondent population into groups. These groups share the characteristics of being highly qualified academics teaching ethics at Australian universities and the key variable of interest here is content knowledge of the subject of normative ethical theory and how they acquired that knowledge. The respondents are then grouped into the various level of ethics education that they deliver. For example, a group that teaches ethics as a stand-alone subject and another group that teaches ethics as an integral component of another subject and the final group that teaches ethics superficially within the subject. By comparing each group’s subject knowledge of normative ethical theory, any differences between the groups can be attributed their particular characteristics.

Further, as cross-sectional research is based on calculated observations that take place in different groups at one time, there is no experimental procedure needed as no variables are manipulated. Observed information is simply recorded from the various groups that are being examined. As such, cross-sectional research best describes the characteristics that exist in the groups but does not generally determine the reason for any relationship that might exist.
This method is mostly used to gather information in order to develop further research to investigate the relationship that is observed (Saunders et al, 2009).

3.5 Sampling and Population

Sampling is the method by which a subset of representative samples/individuals from within a population is selected to estimate certain characteristics of the whole population. While the nature of the research to some extent determines the sampling method, there are sometimes constraints within the ability, boundaries or logistics of the research or the researcher that limits the choice or magnitude of the sampling method (Bryman & Bell, 2011). There are two broad categories of sampling: probability sampling and non-probability sampling. In probability sampling every respondent in the population has a probability of being included in the sample, consequently that feature cannot be claimed by non-probability sampling. Probability sampling is often associated with survey and experimental research strategies while research based on focus groups or case study analysis is usually associated with non-probability sampling (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2009). Probability sampling was adopted for this study because it fits in with the intended aim of the study.

In cases where the research is bound by limitations, various sampling methods have to be measured against each other and each has its own advantages and disadvantages. Watson and Noble (2005) argue that the main concern, when gathering a sample is ensuring that it is large enough and broad enough to be representative of the group as a whole and while a small sample
can provide useful information, the size of the sample is correlational to accuracy. Further, Watson and Noble (2005) divide sampling methods into two broad categories, Random Sampling and Quota Sampling. But, they argue, the disadvantage with gathering a random sample is that a truly random sample is exceptionally difficulty to determine and therefore they prefer quota sampling where samples ratios are collected in a predetermined fashion or expected distribution. However, the disadvantage of quota sampling is of course that predetermining the distribution of a population can be counter-productive.

In a more detailed analysis of sampling methods Swanson and Holton (2005) identify six sampling strategies: convenience sampling, purposive sampling, simple random sampling, cluster sampling, stratified sampling and a 100% census of all members of a population. They stress that choosing the right sampling method is crucial for the integrity of the research but recognise that researchers with limited resources are prone to make concessions in order to balance their cost to be able to conduct the research at all. They also found that convenience sampling, the most problematic sampling strategy, is the most commonly used especially in organisational and human resource management research.

However, the view that affordable or cheaper sampling methods provide the least reliable data is challenged by Michalski (2003) who argues that cost-saving measures and time-saving measures do not necessarily compromise research, in particular the type of research that is most prevalent in our society.
He argues that reliability of research based on these methods has been adequately proven by the already large number of completed studies which used affordable sampling methods and have showed accuracy, consistency and reliability. And as these sampling methods have a proven track record, their disadvantages are mostly in the perception of research critics.

Another approach is taken by Poynter (2010) who argues that while the growth of non-random probability sampling methods are a direct consequence of the need to provide more affordable and less time-consuming research, the growth has also been a driver to enhance sampling methods within its own constraints. He argues that the substantial growth in online quantitative survey research, both in terms of volume and value has created, as a check and balance, the new practice of ‘in-house panels’. This is where survey participants regularly participate in market research. Their variables are intimately known and their participation provides them with a regular, small but cumulative income.

While new practices are constantly being developed to reduce disadvantages of sampling methods, like random digit dialling in telephone interviewing (Balakrishnan, 2010), it is the nature of the research questions that should determine the chosen sampling method. Operational cost can be alleviated by either combing sampling methods, appropriately assessing the purpose of the research and then adjusting or introducing a suitable sampling method. Harkness, Vijver and Mohler (2003) describe this process as a "scientific
and argue that choosing a sampling method needs be well thought through to minimise possible inherent disadvantages.

As this study was narrowly focused, the target group was quite specific. The explicitly required sample demographic was that the respondent had to be employed as a teaching academic (a lecturer, teacher, educator, instructor or a tutor) by the business faculty in an educational institution in Australia which awards business degrees and in particular the Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree. And as part of that employment the respondent had to be delivering, in any form, ethics education to business students in an Australian educational institution of higher education. Only respondents that deliver ethics education to business students at a university level were eligible to participate.

Given the specific nature of the sample requirement, it is difficult to estimate the total target population without extensive research. However, it is known that the target group exists as a cluster within an easily identified larger group: academics that are employed by the business faculty of a university that awards MBA’s. But the population number of the target group is expected to vary widely from institution to institution because different institutions place different values on ethics education and subsequently differ in delivery of business ethics education in their MBA programs.

As such this survey employed a stratified random sampling approach because it ensures the presence of the key sub-group within the total sample. A simple random sampling technique would not have been sufficient to ensure
that the sample would proportionally or equally contain the key target sub-group in the overall sample. Another advantage of stratified random sampling is that even the smallest and most inaccessible subgroups in a population can be representatively sampled. This technique gives a higher statistical precision than random sampling because the variability within the subgroups is lower compared to the variations when dealing with the entire population (Saunders et al. 2009).

A list of teaching academics was compiled with the help of the Australian Education Network which runs a website that is called MBA Guide (http://www.mbaguide.com.au/). It lists all the educational institutions in Australia which award MBA degrees. From this information 40 educational institutions were identified but only 37 had publicly available and easily accessible e-mails of all teaching academics that were employed by the institutions' business faculty. Two of 40 educational institutions, Macquarie University and Australian Catholic University, did not provide publicly available e-mails of their teaching academics. They did provide a form of intermediary communication but that was not suitable for this method. Further, one institution, Canberra University, while providing publicly available e-mails of their teaching academics, had an exceptionally cumbersome web system to retrieve them. These three institutions were not included in the sample.

Next, e-mails were sent out to all the business faculty academic staff who had publicly available e-mail addresses, even though most of them would not be part of the target group because it would be next to impossible to identify the
specific groups sought. As a result many of the responses had to be filtered out in the final data so that only the key group would be present. And at a confidence level of 95% and a confidence interval of 8%, a sample size calculation calculates that a minimum of 119 samples are required. The survey collected 128 valid responses.

3.6 Data Collection Method

The term data collection method refers to the process of obtaining data once a research project has been defined. There are several methods to collect data. Russ-Eft and Preskill (2009) list the possible collection methods as: survey, test, questionnaire, interview, focus group and observation or performance records. But they stress that any data collected has to be appropriate for the research in order for it to provide information from which accurate conclusions can be drawn.

In order to study a population, data can be collected either from the entire population, a census, or from part of the total population, a sample. The advantage of conducting a census is that it is accurate, comprehensive and detailed. While the disadvantage of a census is that it is costly and time-consuming. Respectively, conducting a sample survey has as its advantage in that it is quicker and cheaper than a census but as its disadvantage it loses accuracy and detail.
However, the notion that there is a direct correlation between cost and quality, when collecting data, is frequently being challenged. Crouch and Housden (2003) argue that; a well-chosen sample size reduces the need for a large sample size; that the more time, effort or cost is spent per sample the less samples are needed. They also suggest using personal contact methods because that produces an overall higher response rate, and thus a smaller margin of error. Overall, there are a number of suggestions for minimising the disadvantage of a high cost, like for example to process data in-house (Ward, 1997).

While questionnaires in particular, being popular, convenient and low-cost, are often identified as the weakest method of data collection, Phillips and Phillips (2011) argues that its disadvantage can be minimised by including processes in the data collection that will increase their credibility. They state for example that, if accuracy is of primary concern then measures, like ensuring completeness and a high return-rate, should be taken. Thus to minimise distorted, inaccurate and missing data the questionnaires itself needs to be complete, clear and returned.

Phillips and Stawarski (2008) argue that collecting data through performance records or using existing data that has been collected as administrative by-product has the advantage of being inherently accurate, non-intrusive and time-efficient. But that, as its disadvantage, the researcher has little flexibility on the content since the nature of the information collected is
guided by organisational needs. Other disadvantages include overcoming issues like confidentiality or even contending with more practical issues like sorting the data as it might not be in a numeric or an easily accessible format.

A questionnaire survey that was e-mailed out to the sample population was used to collect data in this research. The advantage was that a large population sample, almost the entire population of academics who are employed by an educational institution to teach business students in Australia, could be contacted easily and effectively. And as the survey was electronic and internet based a response by the respondents would not be as time consuming as another form of survey.

3.7 Validity and reliability

The next key issues to consider when designing the research are reliability and validity. By addressing researchers can ensure that there is widespread confidence that the interpretation of data is accurate and that the integrity of the research is accepted by others (Whittemore et al, 2001).

A reliable research design allows the research to be repeated. As such well-designed and documented research with easy-to-follow instructions can be replicated by other researchers. If the research results can constantly be replicated then that ensures stability and as such establishes and entrenches findings. Further, if other researchers achieve the same results then the validity character often termed equivalence has also been achieved (Golafshani, 2003).
Validity refers to the integrity of the conclusions and there are different kinds of statistical validity. The main types of validity, some of which can also be sub-divided further, are external validity, internal validity, test validity and face validity (Cooper & Schindler, 2006).

External validity is crucial to achieve and it refers to the process of the research being able to achieve generalisation. Or in other words if the research can justify that results obtained from the small researched population can be generalised to the entire population in order to make predictions or statements about the entire population. It seeks to determine how well the sample population represents the entire population and if the sampling method is acceptable. Ecological validity is different kind of external validity and it refers to the manner in which the research mirrors or resembles real life situations and can be applied to settings outside of the research (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

Internal validity is usually the key issue to consider in quantitative research as it tests the ability of the research to measure what it is supposed to measure, and that causal relationships of the variables are accurate. It ensures confidence in the findings that observations and results are caused by or in the manner the research suggests and not by some alternative cause or causes (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

Test validity is an assessment of how much meaning can be placed on the test results and can be sub-divided into criterion validity, content validity and construct validity. Criterion validity establishes whether the test matches a
certain set of abilities and can be further sub-divided into concurrent validity and predictive validity. Content validity estimates how well the test or questionnaire covers all elements of the variable and constructs that is being studied. Concurrent validity measures the test against an established benchmark test and predictive validity measures if the research can predict future relationship (Cooper & Schindler, 2006).

Face validity measures how representative a research project is 'at face value', whether the research appears to have achieved its answers by asking the right questions but is generally the least relied upon form of validity (Yang and Miller, 2008).

This research relies on the results of the Virtue Ethics Quiz that was integrated into the survey questionnaire. In regards to reliability, this research is unique in the sense that is does not have a predecessor or forerunner to which it can compare its results, and as such establish its reliability through consistency. It did not repeat any previous quizzes, nor did it repeat previous clinical experiments or statistical trials in order to test if it could return the same or compatible results. Therefore, the reliability of this research cannot be judged in this manner since that would require that test result produce the same outcome time after time.

However, reliability alone is not a sufficient measure, but is closely related to validity. For a test to be truly reliable, it also needs to be valid. A test can be reliable but invalid, consistently returning the same yet incorrect results.
that do not reflect the situation in reality (for example, constantly give a person an IQ score of 100 while in reality the IQ of that person is 120). A ‘valid’ test, on the other hand, always produces reliability. If research can show that it has validity then by virtue of its nature it also has reliability. A test cannot be valid yet unreliable. Validity defines the strength of the results and whether it can be regarded as accurately describing the real world and as such is the more important and crucial (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

The validity of the virtue ethics quiz that forms the central part of this research is established through face validity, content validity, and predictive validity.

Face validity determines if the test seems to measure what it is intended to measure. The mainly true/false virtue ethics quiz asks questions regarding the subject of virtue ethics and therefore on face value it makes sense that respondents who answer correctly also have subject knowledge of the content. It makes sense that respondents who do not have subject knowledge would answer incorrectly.

Content validity refers to how accurately a tool measures the variable. In other words, does a virtue ethics quiz accurately assess a respondent’s subject knowledge of virtue ethics or are the respondent’s responses influenced by other factors? Content validity is most often measured by relying on the knowledge of people who are familiar with the construct being measured and since the questions were exerted from existing introductory courses on virtue ethics they
have been put together by subject-matter experts who already use them as a measurement tool in their courses to assess subject knowledge.

Predictive validity refers to the degree a test score can be predicted on some criterion of measure. The research expected and predicted that respondents that did not studied normative ethics or only studied it superficially would not score well in the quiz. There was a direct correlation between lack of study of virtue ethics and a lack of subject knowledge.

The virtue ethics quiz, that this research relies on, assumes to measure respondents subject knowledge of virtue ethics by asking them relatively simple and randomly selected questions that are specific to the subject and have an obvious and unequivocal answer (through 3 multiple-choice questions and 21 True/False questions). However, the answers to two of the quiz questions are contentious and therefore only respondents who answered ‘I don’t know’ were marked as wrong for those two questions. Naturally, the quiz questions would only be simple to respondents that have either studied virtue ethics in detail or to respondents that have relatively recently engaged in a brief yet engaging overview or introductory study of basic or fundamental concepts of virtue ethics. The question were randomly selected from a variety of existing and pre-tested introductory virtue ethics tests available on-line which have been especially designed to reliably measure virtue ethics knowledge.

2 There are a large number of online tests available through the public domain. They can be accesses by typing in ‘virtue ethics quiz’ in a search engine. For example: http://www.sparknotes.com/philosophy/ethics/quiz.html or
3.8 Questionnaire design

This research employed a self-administered electronic questionnaire survey in order to collect the information that was needed to find out the answers to the above established research questions. The internet-based survey was created with Qualtrics Research Suite software. This software package also hosted (stored the webpage) the survey and collected the data from the survey.

All participants were initially contacted via e-mail which contained a short message inviting them to participate in the study (See appendix B). The message contained a hyperlink that opened up a new browser window and took them to the webpage where the survey was located. The link to the online survey was distributed to all educators in the 37 Australian institutions that award MBA degrees which had publically and easily available e-mails.

The introductory webpage contained the information statement FAQ (frequently asked Questions) and an electronic tick box representing the respondent’s signature affirming that they have provided informed consent. The actual survey did not start unless the informed consent box was ticked and submitted. The questionnaire and the measurements within it were expressed in the form of statements which were easy to understand and complete (see appendix C for the content of the webpage).

The survey was set out in three parts. The first part was used to gather essential information about the demographic characteristics of the respondents, to find if the respondents were currently teaching business students and if they taught the subject of ethics in any form to their students.

This part of the survey provided information about the background of respondents which included gender, age, educational level, employment place and duration, multicultural status, religious status and religious observance.

Further, this part of the survey also sorted the respondents into categories to find out which of them would be suitable subjects for the research. They were first sorted into the category of whether they were current teaching academics to business students and then into the subcategory of whether they taught ethics in any form. Only respondents that currently taught business students and taught the subject of ethics in some form were included as subjects of this research. As these criteria were essential components of the research, respondents that completed the survey but were not part of this final subcategory were not taken as valid respondents and therefore not included in the research.

The second part of the survey sought to find out (a) to what extent the respondents taught ethics to their students, (b) the level of ethics education that the respondents themselves had received, (c) a self-assessment and an (d) a formal assessment of their understanding of virtue ethics. This information
generated the essential data that was necessary to answer the hypotheses formulated from the research questions.

The final part of the survey sought to gather the respondents’ opinions and attitudes regarding current business ethics education and if and how it could be optimized. It also gathered their opinions about the current level of ethics of the business community and the nature of ethics in general. This part of the survey was not used for the purpose of this particular research but was deemed necessary to include to further entice respondents to participate in the survey. This part of the data also has potential for the conduct of other and separate research in the field of business ethics education.

The information collected through the survey has observable and tangible properties and as such are particularly usable for the purpose of statistical and interpretive analysis. A self-administered survey also has the added benefit that it can be distributed to a large number of potential respondents in a timely and cost effective manner.

3.9 Limitations

A limitation is a factor, circumstance or condition that affects or might affect the research. Some limitations are beyond the control of the researcher but some are under the researcher’s control. It is important to identify these factors in order to prevent them subsequently causing problems by being overlooked (Mauch & Birch, 1998).
For this research project the primary limitation was the anticipated reluctance that some respondents would have in part-taking in the quiz in order to determine their actual knowledge of normative ethical theory, and in those cases the subsequent reliance of their honest assessment of their actual content knowledge of the subject of virtue ethics as given in the form of a reason as to why they preferred not to part-take in the quiz offered them in the survey.

Because the survey, to a certain extent, relies on the participants accurately reporting and stating their personal experience and knowledge, there is a risk of ‘common method bias’ and in particular with ‘social desirability bias’. Participants might choose to respond according to their own perceptions and desirability, independent of the true correlation being measured.

It is also possible to view as another limitation of the proposed research that it does not take into account teaching theory or teaching competency to evaluate teaching capability. Rather than the ability and knowledge of ‘teaching’ as a variable in itself, this research relies on the suggestion that significant knowledge and understanding of the topic is both necessary and sufficient in order to be capable of teaching it. This study proposes to argue that an educator that knows and understands a topic cannot by virtue of possession of that knowledge teach it incorrectly.
3.10 Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues exist in any kind of research that involves human subjects and they play an important part in the planning, design and conduct of research projects (Saunders et al. 2009). The primary concerns are: first to ensure that harm of any kind does not befall the respondents, and second that all respondents participate in the research freely, based on informed consent.

Orb et al (2001) suggests that there are three main ethical considerations. The first main consideration is to comply with all relevant laws, legal requirements or boundaries and with specific rules and regulations required by the university.

As this research involved human participants, approval was required from the University of Newcastle’s Human Ethics Review Committee (HERC). Approval was obtained after the Committee was satisfied that the research project compiled with the ethics requirements outlined by the University of Newcastle.

Ethical considerations sought especially to ensure that respondent’s dignity was respected and that they were not caused anxiety, discomfort, stress, or loss of self-esteem or any form of harm such as legal, career or income harm. The final approved HERC wording for the participant advice statement was part of every survey. Participants were also advised that their participation would indicate their informed consent.
The second main consideration is that every participant’s rights, privacy and freedom are fully protected. Participants in this research project were provided with an information statement which clearly explained the purpose of the research, the participants’ rights, and the research procedure. The information statement was in the form of a FAQ (frequently asked questions) and an information declaration. There was particular emphasis informing the respondents that they could voluntarily exit the survey at any time until the questionnaire was completed and submitted. They were also specifically informed that all data would be treated in a way that would protect the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants. Ensuring confidentiality also has the added benefit of significantly improving response rate (Neuman, 2003).

Further, each respondent was required to signify their informed consent to ensure their willingness to participate in the survey by affirming an electronic tick box. The electronic survey, which was produced and executed using Qualtrics Software, was programmed not to start unless the consent box was ticked and submitted. As such respondents were effectively asked to sign electronic participant consent form before proceeding to attempt the survey (see appendix C).

The third main consideration is to ensure that the participants do not run the risk of any physical, mental or legal harm. This situation is generally ensured by not disclosing respondents’ personal information or survey responses. In this research project, the fact that respondents were anonymous prevents the
possibility that they would be identified. However, as with any internet based interaction, there might potentially be some information in the data that could identify the participants. Therefore, the raw research data will not be disclosed to any persons other than those identified as partaking in the research and it will be password protected and stored on the researcher’s personal computer or on a compact disc as a backup, and will be stored for a maximum period of five years. Upon expiry of this period, all data collected will be destroyed either by a shredder or by permanent deletion.

Finally, only the researcher will have access to the data and only for the purpose of research and none of the participants received or will receive any form of reward or reimbursement of any kind in relation to this research. Thus, ethical codes and principles were used to guide the research and address ongoing issues related to the research quality, integrity and efficiency (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

3.11 Conclusion

This chapter has described the methodology, framework and process that this research study used. It explains and justifies the hypotheses sought and establishes the research paradigm and the approach for the data gathering.

This research study adopted a positivist paradigm approach using quantitative research methodology in the form of a questionnaire in order to examine; the level of subject expertise that educators who teach ethics in
business schools have in the subject of virtue ethics, and which variables increases educators’ level of subject expertise, in order to determine if business school educators are equipped, trained and capable to teach normative ethical theory.

It used a self-completion electronic and internet based questionnaire that was e-mailed out to all educators in 37 Australian educational institutions business faculties that award MBA degrees who had publically and easily available e-mails. It was specifically designed for the purpose of collecting the necessary data and to ensure that it could identify target respondents.

Further, this research study used a cross-sectional research design and employed stratified random sampling in order to ensure the presence of the specific and narrow key target group: respondents that deliver ethics education in some form to university level business students. Choosing the right sampling method is crucial for the integrity of the research.

Finally, limitations of the study and the ethical issues involved in it were addressed. As the research involves people, the research only started after approval was obtained from the University of Newcastle Human Research Ethics committee. The data were then input to SPSS software to test the stated hypothesis and was used for the analysis. The next chapter analyses the data obtained from this research.
Chapter 4  Data Analysis

4.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the way in which the survey data was analysed and reports the hypotheses test results. First it explains how the number of valid responses was reached (section 4.2). Next, it provides an overview of the demographic profile of the respondents (section 4.3); then it provides an overview of both how the respondents received their own ethics education and the manner in which they deliver ethics education. It also shows and discusses the results regarding the respondents claimed understanding of the three major ethics theories and the results from the quiz establishing their actual understanding of virtue ethics (section 4.4), then it reports the hypothesis test results (section 4.5) and presents a conclusion (section 4.6).

4.2 Response Rate

It is difficult to discover the target population that this research requires because the study is narrowly focused and the target group is quite specific. The explicitly required sample demographic was that the respondent had to be delivering ethics education, in any form, to business students in an educational institution in Australia which awards Business Degrees. But, as only respondents that deliver ethics education to business students at a university level were targeted, it is assumed that the sought target group exists as a sub-group within the business faculty of an educational institution and therefore exists as a cluster within this
easily identified and easily contactable larger group. Therefore an invitation to participate in the research was sent out to all teaching academics that work in the business faculty in an Australian educational institution of higher education who have a publicly available and easily accessible e-mail, in order to ensure that the specific target group would be reached. The questionnaire was then setup in such a fashion that only the target group would be filtered through as valid respondents.

A total of 4,678 e-mails, containing an invitation to participate in the study and a hyperlink to the survey, were sent out. A total of 151 of these e-mails were returned as being invalid, expired or out of office on an extended basis. A total of 278 participants responded to the invitation and viewed the webpage that contained the information statement and consent notification which needed to be electronically ticked before the survey would activate. Out of this total, 3 participants did not agree to the terms as set out in the information statement and exited the webpage without having accessed the survey. A further 30 participants did tick the consent box and accessed the survey but did not answer any questions and did not progress in the survey past the first demographics page. Another 31 participants completed the demographics page but did not answer any of the survey questions and did not progress beyond part one of the survey. A further 12 participants only partially completed the survey and as such their incomplete contribution could not be used for the study.
There were a total of 202 fully completed surveys, but out of them 33 respondents did not engage in the teaching of business to business students. They did not deliver business education in the form that was required of the sought target group. A further 41 respondents, while teaching business students, did not engage in the teaching of ethics to their students. They did not deliver ethics education in any form that was required of the sought target group. As both of these groups of respondents did not comply with the sought requirements, they were excluded from the study as invalid responses. As such the total number of valid responses received were: 128.

4.3 Demographic Profile of Respondents

4.3.1 Gender of Respondents

The gender profile of this study shows that the study has a balanced mix of male and female respondents. There were 56% male respondents or 71 out of 128, and 44% female respondents or 56 out 128. One respondent (0.8%) assigned their gender as ‘other’.

4.3.2 Age of Respondents

The age profile of this study is shown in table 4.3.2. It shows that the majority of respondents surveyed were from the 50-59 age-group (47%, or 60 out of 128). The 40-49 age group came second (22%, or 28 out of 128), and was closely followed by the 60 or older age group (16%, or 21 out of 128). There were 12%, or 15 out of 128 of respondents from the 30-39 age group and only 3%, or 4 out of 128 from the 18-29 age group.
Figure 4.3.2 show the distribution of gender in each age group. It shows that there were more females in the 50-59 age group but there were more males all of the other age groups.

4.3.3 Education Level of Respondents

The frequency distribution about the current highest level of education completed by the respondents, at the time of the survey, shows that a large majority of the respondents (79%, or 100 out of 128) held a doctoral degree, followed by those with a master’s degree (16%, or 21 out of 128). Only 4%, or 5 out of 128 held a bachelor’s degree and 1%, or 1 out of 128 held a Graduate diploma.

4.3.4 Length of Teaching of Respondents

The frequency distribution about how long respondents have been teaching shows that, a large majority, 73%, or 93 out of 128 of the respondents have been
for more than 10 years and out that portion 35%, or 45 out of 128 of respondents have been teaching for more than 20 years. A further 17% or 22 out of 128 of the respondents have been teaching for 5-10 years and 10%, or 12 out of 128 have been teaching for 1-5 years. Only 0.8 %, or 1 out of 128 of respondents have only been teaching for less than a year.

4.3.5 Workplace of Respondents

There is a relatively equal distribution of institutions providing ethical education to MBA’s students in Australia in this sample. In this survey 37 out of the 40 educational institutions that had been identified as providing MBA’s had been contacted and out of those respondents were from a mix of 29 different educational institutions. Table 4.3.5 shows the largest group of 15.6% were from Newcastle University, followed by 8.6% of respondents from Monash University. Next largest group of 7.0 % was from La Trobe University and 6.3% from University of Western Sydney.

Once the introductory emails were sent out academics from 6 institutions did not participate in the survey. These were the: University of the Sunshine Coast; Southern Cross University; James Cook University; Edith Cowan University; RMIT University and Flinders University.

A list of teaching academics was compiled with the help of The Australian Education Network which runs a website that is called MBA Guide (http://www.mbaguide.com.au/). It lists all the educational institutions in Australia which award MBA degrees. From this information, 37 educational
institutions were identified. Two of these educational institutions, Macquarie University and Australian Catholic University, did not provide publicly available e-mails of their teaching academics. They did provide a form of intermediary communication which was not suitable for this method. Further, one institution, Canberra University, while providing publicly available e-mails of their teaching academics, had an exceptionally cumbersome web system to retrieve them en masse. These three institutions were not included in the sample.

Table 4.3.5: Workplace of Respondents

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<tr>
<th>Workplace</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australian National University</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bond University</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Darwin University</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Queensland University</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Sturt University</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curtin University</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deakin University</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Griffith University</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Trobe University</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monash University</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murdoch University</td>
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<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUT Business School</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
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<td>Swinburne University of Technology</td>
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<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
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<td>University of Adelaide</td>
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<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Ballarat</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Melbourne (MBS)</td>
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<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of New England</td>
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<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
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<td>University of Tasmania</td>
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<td>University of Technology Sydney</td>
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<td>Victoria University</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Workplace</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>128</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.4. Manner of Ethics Education of Respondents

4.4.1 How Ethics Theory is taught by the Respondents

Figure 4.4.1 shows what importance ethics theory is given in the course that the respondents teach. It visually shows that there is an unequal distribution. Only 5%, or 6 out of 128 of the respondents teach ethics theory as a stand-alone subject. A further 31%, or 40 out of 128 of the respondents have ethics theory as an integral part of the course that they teach even though it is not the actual focus of the course. The majority, 64%, or 82 out of 128 of respondents simply refer to ethics theory in their course.

Figure 4.4.1: the level of importance ethics theory is given in the respondents’ course
4.4.2 How Respondents themselves were taught Ethics Theory

Figure 4.4.2 visually shows the distribution of the manner in which the respondents themselves had studied ethics. It shows that 24%, or 31 out of 128 of the respondents have studied ethics theory in detail. A further 33%, or 43 out of 128 of the respondents only studied ethics theory as a component of another subject. 10%, or 12 out of 128 of the respondents have themselves never studied ethics theory and 33%, or 43 out of 128 of the respondents said that they had only studied ethics theory superficially.

![Figure 4.4.2: How Respondents themselves were taught Ethics Theory](chart)

**Question to Respondents: Have you yourself, studied Ethics?**
4.4.3 Claimed Understanding of the three Major Ethics Theories

Out of the three major ethics theories (utilitarianism, deontology and virtue ethics) the respondents asserted that they were most familiar with utilitarianism. Figure 4.4.3 shows that the mean of asserted understanding of utilitarianism was 67%. The mean of asserted understanding of virtue ethics (58%) was similar to asserted understanding of deontology (57%). The respondents claimed understandings about all of the big three ethics theories have outliers to either extreme of both 0% and 100% asserted knowledge.

Figure 4.4.3: Respondents claimed understanding of Ethics Theory

Question to Respondents: How would you rate your understanding of the following ethics theory?
The distribution of knowledge in deontology and virtue ethics is bi-modal with a large portion of respondents, the first peak in the histograms, asserting that they have very little to no understanding of the theory and then there is a second peak at the midrange (See appendix D for the distribution of asserted understanding of the three main ethics theories in histograms). The histogram showing the curve representing the respondents asserted understanding of Utilitarianism is slightly skewed to the left indicating that an ever increasing number of respondents assert a higher level of understanding.

Figure 4.4.3.2 shows in comparative box-plots the relationship between the respondents asserted understanding of virtue ethics and the manner in which they received their ethics education. It shows that a much higher portion of those respondents that studied ethics in detail asserted that they have a higher understanding of virtue ethics. The mean is substantially higher as is the number of respondents that lie in the interquartile range. Similarly, most of the respondents who asserted that they have not studied ethics claimed that they had a lesser understanding of virtue ethics with the mean of respondents being the lowest and the interquartile range is much more spread out for this group. All of the groups have outliers both at the minimum and maximum end. The box-plots clearly indicate that the more education in virtue ethics respondents had received, the higher they themselves rated their understating of virtue ethics.
4.4.4 Actual Understanding of Virtue Ethics

The survey also asked the respondents to answer 24 questions that specifically tested their knowledge of virtue ethics. In order to assess what the actual knowledge of the respondents was, the number of answer that the respondents got correct was added up and graded. Each respondent was given a grade code representing their actual understanding of virtue ethics. Table 4.4.4 shows how the scores and grades were allocated in relation to how many of the questions out of 24 that were answered correctly.
Table 4.4.4.1: The relationship between grades given and number of questions answered correctly

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of questions correctly answered</th>
<th>Percentile Range</th>
<th>Grade Given</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-9</td>
<td>0 – 40%</td>
<td>FAIL</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-14</td>
<td>41 – 60%</td>
<td>PASS</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-17</td>
<td>61 – 74%</td>
<td>CREDIT</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-19</td>
<td>75 – 84%</td>
<td>DISTINCTION</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-24</td>
<td>85 – 100%</td>
<td>HIGH DISTINCTION</td>
<td>HD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As well as being able to put their knowledge of virtue ethics to a test in a 24 question quiz, the respondents were given the opportunity to self-assess their knowledge. The quiz was only given to respondents willing to have their knowledge tested. Those respondents that chose not to participate in the quiz were given three different types of reasons to explain why they would not participate. Figure 4.4.4.1 shows that almost half, a clear majority of respondents, chose not to partake in the quiz because their knowledge of virtue ethics “isn’t really up to scratch”. Almost 12% said that they would have needed to read up because their knowledge of virtue ethics was “a bit rusty”. And 5% of respondents claimed that their knowledge of virtue ethics was very good but that they did not want to spend the time completing a quiz.
All of the respondents were given a grade. Those respondents that did not partake in the quiz were graded according to the reason they gave for not taking the quiz. If they said that their knowledge of virtue ethics was “not really up to scratch” they were given an F for fail, if they said their knowledge of virtue ethics was “a bit rusty” they were given a P for pass and if they said their knowledge was good but that they did not have the time to complete the quiz, they were given a C for credit.

The grades that the respondents received after their knowledge of virtue ethics had been assessed were as follows: a majority of respondents, 60% or 76 out of 128, were given a Fail grade. A further 26% or 33 out of 128 of respondents were
given a Pass grade, 11% or 14 out of 128 were given a Credit grade, 2.3% or 3 out of 128 a Distinction grade and 1.6% or 2 out of 128 a grade of High Distinction.

Figure 4.4.4.2 shows the distribution of the assessed knowledge of the participants of virtue ethics according to the grade that they were given as a result of either the quiz or the reason for why they chose not to take the quiz.

The grades were then transformed in SPSS in order to produce comparison numerical calculations. Table 4.4.4.3 show what number each grade level was given.
Table 4.4.4.3: Numerical Conversion of Grades

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Grade of:</th>
<th>was converted to the numerical value of:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fail (F)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pass (P)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit (C)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distinction (D)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Distinction (HD)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The distribution of assessed knowledge of Virtue Ethics was then compared by the groups in regards to the level of study that the responded had engaged in.

Table 4.4.4.4 shows that the group that had studied Ethics in detail had a mean of 2.03 of their assessed knowledge of Virtue Ethics. Respondents that had not studied ethics had the smallest mean of 1.08 while the mean from the groups that had studied ethics as part of another subject and those that had studied ethics superficially were similar with 1.55 and 1.51 respectively.

Table 4.4.4.4: Respondents graded assessed knowledge of virtue ethics in relation to the level of study of ethics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Have you yourself, studied Ethics?</th>
<th>Mean of assessed knowledge of Virtue Ethics</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, in detail</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1.016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, as part of another subject</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>.832</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, but only superficially</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>.856</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>.289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1.61</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>.889</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The distribution of assessed knowledge of Virtue Ethics was then compared by the groups in regards to the level of education that they themselves deliver to business students. Table 4.4.4.5 shows that the group that deliver Ethics education as a stand-alone subject had the largest mean of 2.00 of their assessed knowledge of Virtue Ethics. Followed by a mean of 1.80 were the respondents that teach Ethics Theory without it being the focus of the course and those respondents that gloss over Ethics theory in their courses had a mean of 1.49.
Table 4.4.4.5: Respondents graded assessed knowledge of Virtue Ethics in relation to the level of Ethics education that they deliver

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In the education that you deliver, is Ethics Theory a part of it?</th>
<th>Mean of assessed knowledge of Virtue Ethics</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, there is some mention of Ethics Theory</td>
<td>1.49</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>.864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, Ethics Theory is an integral part but not the focus of the course</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>.939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, I teach Ethics Theory as a stand-alone subject</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>.632</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1.61</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>.889</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The distribution of assessed knowledge of Virtue Ethics was then compared by the age group of the respondents. Table 4.4.4.6 shows that respondents aged 60 and older had the highest mean of 1.95, next came the 30-39 age group with a mean of 1.73. Followed by the 50-59 age group with a mean of 1.57 and the 40-49 age group with a mean of 1.46. The smallest mean of 1.00 came from the 18-29 age group.

Table 4.4.4.6: Respondents graded assessed knowledge of virtue ethics in relation to their age-group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What age group are you in?</th>
<th>Mean of assessed knowledge of Virtue Ethics</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-29</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>1.73</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1.280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>1.46</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>.793</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>1.57</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>.789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 or older</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>.973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1.61</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>.889</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The distribution of assessed knowledge of Virtue Ethics was then compared with the amount of time the respondents had been teaching. Table 4.4.4.7 shows that respondents that had been teaching for between 5-10 years had the highest mean of 1.77, followed closely with a mean of 1.64 was the group that had been teaching for more than 20 years. The group that had been teaching for 10-20 years had a mean of 1.63 and the smallest mean 1.00 came from the group that had been teaching for less than one year with the group that had been teaching for 1-5 slightly higher with 1.17.
Table 4.4.4.7: Respondents graded assessed knowledge of Virtue Ethics in relation to their age-group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How long have you been teaching?</th>
<th>Mean of assessed knowledge of Virtue Ethics</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 1 year</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - 5 years</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>.577</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 - 10 years</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1.152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 10 years</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>.815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 20 years</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>.883</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1.61</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>.889</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.5 Hypotheses Testing

The hypotheses developed and justified in chapter 2 were tested as follows:

4.5.1 Do Educators accurately self-assess their subject knowledge of Ethics?

*Hypothesis 1: Academics accurately self-assess their ethics theory knowledge*

The null and alternative hypotheses were formulated as follows:

\[ H_0: \text{The } \mu \text{ of academics of self-assessed knowledge of Virtue Ethics} = \text{the } \mu \text{ of the academics independently assessed knowledge of Virtue Ethics} \]

\[ H_A: \text{The } \mu \text{ of academics of self-assessed knowledge of Virtue Ethics} \neq \text{the } \mu \text{ of the academics independently assessed knowledge of Virtue Ethics} \]

Since it was estimated that respondents would not have the patience to take three test-quizzes, one on each major ethics theory (Virtue Ethics, Deontology and Utilitarianism) the survey only attempted to test the respondents on one of the theories, virtue ethics. It is however assumed that if respondents accurately self-assessed their knowledge of virtue ethics then their self-assessment of their own knowledge of the other two major ethics theories would also be an accurate estimation. Consequently the reverse would also be true, that if the respondents inaccurately self-assessed or estimated their own knowledge of virtue ethics
then they would also have inaccurately estimated their own knowledge of the other major ethics theories.

A paired-samples t-test was undertaken to compare claimed knowledge of virtue ethics to actual knowledge of virtue ethics. First, the assumption of normality was tested using Q-Q plots and boxplots for the two variables of self-assessed and independently assessed knowledge of virtue ethics and can be assumed (see appendix E). Table 4.5.1.2 show that there is a strong correlation but Table 4.5.1.1 show that the mean of self-assessed knowledge of virtue ethics (51.27) was larger than the mean of their independently assessed knowledge of virtue ethics (43.24). Table 4.5.4.3 show that the findings reveal that there was a statistical significance between the average assessed knowledge of virtue ethics between the two groups of academics (t = 5.61, p = 0.000). Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted, which states that the respondent did not accurately assess their own knowledge of virtue ethics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.5.1.1: Paired Samples Statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents Self-Assessed Knowledge of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virtue Ethics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents Independently Assessed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of Virtue Ethics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51.2656</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43.2422</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.5.1.2: Paired Samples Correlations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents Self-Assessed Knowledge of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virtue Ethics &amp; Respondents Independently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessed Knowledge of Virtue Ethics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Table 4.5.3: Paired Samples Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paired Differences</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents Self-Assessed Knowledge of Virtue Ethics - Respondents Independently Assessed Knowledge of Virtue Ethics</td>
<td>8.02344</td>
<td>16.17837</td>
<td>1.42998</td>
<td>5.19377 - 10.85311</td>
<td>5.611</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.5.2 Do Educators have a Reasonable understanding of Virtue Ethics?

_Hypothesis 2: Academics that teach ethics as part of a business course in Australia have a reasonable understanding of virtue ethics._

All of the respondents in this study teach ethics theory as part on a business course at an educational institution in Australia and all of the respondents have been assessed in regards to their knowledge of virtue ethics. Virtue ethics is both the oldest and the most extensive of the three main ethics theories. It is therefore assumed, for the purpose of this hypothesis test, that in order for a person to be classified as having a reasonable understanding of ethics theory that that person would have been assessed with a minimum grade of Pass (P or in this case the numerical value of 2.0 out of a maximum of 5.0) in their knowledge of virtue ethics. As such the null and alternative hypotheses were formulated as follows:

H₀: The μ of the respondents assessed knowledge of Virtue Ethics = 2.0
Hₐ: The μ of the respondents assessed knowledge of Virtue Ethics ≠ 2.0
Then a one sample t-test was undertaken to determine whether the respondents assessed knowledge of virtue ethics was significantly greater than the grade of Pass (2.00). Table 4.5.2.1 show that the mean of respondents assessed knowledge of virtue ethics is 1.61 and the one-sample t-test in as seen in table 4.5.2.2 show that there was a statistical difference between the sample data and the hypothesised reasonable minimum grade of Pass (sig. of the t-statistic = 0.000 which is < 0.05). Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected, and the results support the alternative hypothesis that academics that teach ethics theory as part of a business course in Australia do not have a reasonable understanding of virtue ethics.

| Table 4.5.2.1: One-Sample Statistics |
|-----------------|--------|--------|----------------|
| Respondents Assessed Knowledge of Virtue Ethics | N | Mean | Std. Deviation |
| 128 | 1.61 | .889 |

| Table 4.5.2.2: One-Sample Test |
|-----------------|--------|--------|----------------|
| Test Value = 2 |
| t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference |
| -4.969 | 127 | .000 | -.391 | -.55 | -.24 |

4.5.3 Does Current Teaching Level of Ethics Increase Educator’s Subject Knowledge?

_Hypothesis 3: Academics that teach ethics as a stand-alone subject in a business degree in Australia have a better understanding of virtue ethics than academics that teach ethics as component of another subject._

The null and alternative hypotheses were formulated as follows:
H₀: The μ of the assessed knowledge of virtue ethics of academics that teach ethics as a stand-alone subject = the μ of the assessed knowledge of virtue ethics of academics that teach ethics as a component of another subject

Hₐ: The μ of the assessed knowledge of virtue ethics of academics that teach ethics as a stand-alone subject ≠ the μ of the assessed knowledge of virtue ethics of academics that teach ethics as a component of another subject

An independent-samples t-test was undertaken to determine whether there was a significant mean difference in the assessed knowledge of virtue ethics between academics that teach ethics as a stand-alone subject and academics that teach ethics as a component of another subject. Table 4.5.3.1 show that the mean of the respondents assessed knowledge in virtue ethics is 2.00 for academics that teach ethics as a stand-alone subject and 1.80 for academics that teach ethics as a component of another subject.

Table 4.5.3.2 show that the assumption of homogeneity of variance was supported by Levene’s test (F = 2.29, p> 0.05) and therefore the values for equal variance estimates are used. The findings shown in Table 4.5.2.2 reveal that there was not a statistical significance between the average assessed knowledge of virtue ethics between the two groups of academics (t = -0.50, p = 0.618). Therefore the null hypothesis is was accepted which states that there is no statistical significant difference of knowledge of virtue ethics between academic that teach ethics as a stand-alone subject and academics that teach ethics as a component of another subject. The results show that the two groups of academics teaching ethics are on average at the same level of knowledge about virtue ethics.
4.5.4 Does Educators own Education of Ethics affects their Subject Knowledge?

**Hypothesis 4**: Academics that studied ethics in detail have a greater understanding of virtue ethics than academics that studied ethics as component of another subject

The null and alternative hypotheses were formulated as follows:

\[ H_0: \mu_{\text{assessed knowledge of virtue ethics}} \text{ of academics that studied ethics in detail} = \mu_{\text{assessed knowledge of virtue ethics}} \text{ of academics that studied ethics as a component of another subject} \]

\[ H_A: \mu_{\text{assessed knowledge of virtue ethics}} \text{ of academics that studied ethics in detail} \neq \mu_{\text{assessed knowledge of virtue ethics}} \text{ of academics that studied ethics as a component of another subject} \]

An independent-samples t-test was undertaken to determine whether there was a significant mean difference in the assessed knowledge of virtue ethics between academics that studied ethics in detail and academics that studied ethics as a component of another subject. Table 4.5.4.1 show that the mean of the
respondents assessed knowledge in virtue ethics is 2.03 for academics that studied ethics in detail and 1.55 for academics that studied ethics as a component of another subject. Table 4.5.4.2 show that the assumption of homogeneity of variance was supported by Levene’s test (F=0.25, p> 0.05) and therefore the values for equal variance estimates are used. The findings reveal that there was a statistical significance between the average assessed knowledge of virtue ethics between the two groups of academics (t = 2.24, p = 0.028). Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted, which states that there is a statistical significant difference of knowledge of virtue ethics between academic that studied ethics in detail and academics that studied ethics as a component of another subject. The results show that academics that have studied ethics in detail have a greater understanding of virtue ethics.

Table 4.5.4.1: Independent samples t-test statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents Assessed Knowledge of Virtue Ethics</th>
<th>Have you yourself, studied Ethics?</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, in detail</td>
<td></td>
<td>31</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>1.016</td>
<td>.182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, as part of another subject</td>
<td></td>
<td>42</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>.832</td>
<td>.128</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.5.4.2: Independent samples t-test results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents Assessed Knowledge of Virtue Ethics (Graded 5)</th>
<th>Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>.621</td>
<td>2.238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>2.172</td>
<td>56.872</td>
<td>0.34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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4.5 Conclusion

This chapter has analysed and presented the results of the study. First the response rate was discussed. Second, the demographic profiles were analysed. It found that the respondents were highly educated, 95% had a Master’s degree or higher and 73%, a clear majority, had significant teaching experience having been teaching for more than 10 years. More than 85% of the respondents were older than 39 and there was relatively equal distribution in gender. The demographics of the respondents noticeably show a population that is categorically desirable in higher education and academia.

Next, the respondent’s manner of ethics education was analysed. The study found that only 24% of the respondents had been specifically educated in ethics themselves and that only 5% currently teach it as a stand-alone subject. It also asked the respondents to self-assess their knowledge of the ‘big three’ normative ethics theories and then independently assessed their knowledge of one of the theories, virtue ethics. It found that 60% of the respondents failed a relatively simple 24 question quiz about virtue ethics and that the respondents had significantly over-estimated their own understanding of virtue ethics.

Next, this study outlines the testing of four hypotheses using independent t-test, paired t-test and one-sample t-test. And found that; the respondents were not able to accurately self-assess their knowledge of ethics theory; the respondents do not have a reasonable understanding of ethics theory; respondents who currently teach ethics as an independent subject have on average the same
amount of content knowledge as those that teach it as part of another subject and that respondents who have studied ethics in detail have a greater understanding of ethics theory than those respondents that studied it as part of another subject. The next chapter will present a detailed discussion focused on the findings of this study, its contribution to theory and its implications.
5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to link the analysis in the literature review (chapter 2) with the findings from the data and draw conclusions in relation to the research question. This chapter critically discusses the research results, analyses the data and justifies any conclusions that were reached. First, it summaries the results of the four hypotheses that were tested (section 5.2), next, it states the limitations of the study (section 5.3), and finally it critically discusses the results and draws its conclusions (section 5.4).

5.2 Summary of Results

The aim of this research was to investigate if a previously overlooked variable, the ethics education of an educator, could be the reason for the current impasse into the issue of whether business ethics education works. The literature review has reviewed empirical research studies and critical analyses that had been conducted in the past few decades to find out if business ethics education works. And even though a clear majority of studies confirm that ethics education does work and is beneficial, there have been a significant number of empirical research studies that have concluded that ethics cannot be taught.

The literature review also found a number of critical analyses into this issue, which suggest that the reason some studies found that ethics cannot be
taught is that academics hired by business faculties are not suitably qualified to teach ethics. And as this research study is conducted in direct response to these calls to investigate this variable, the research question that this thesis seeks to answer is:

**Are business school educators equipped, trained and capable to teach normative ethical theory?**

In order to get an answer to this question a cross-sectional survey questionnaire research design was administered using stratified random sampling to collect responses from the sample. The target population was: currently employed educators that teach ethics to business students. Then the survey gathered information about the respondent’s subject knowledge of normative ethical theory. The survey first simply asked the respondents to themselves evaluate their own subject knowledge. And then it gave the respondents the opportunity to participate in a quiz to test their claim. The survey only tested one of the big three ethics theories: virtue ethics, and made an assumption that if the respondents accurately self-assessed their knowledge of virtue ethics then they would also have accurately self-assessed their knowledge in deontology and utilitarianism.

Based on the responses on the quiz, the survey graded the respondent’s answers in order to be able to compare them with the respondent’s initial claim and in order to assert if the respondents have a reasonable understanding of virtue ethics. A pass grade or greater would have established them as having a
reasonable understanding of the subject. Through certain survey questions, the research was then able to place the respondents in various categories in order to investigate if, or which, conditions made a difference to their subject knowledge. Four hypotheses were then set and tested. These are discussed in the following sections.

5.2.1 Do Educators accurately self-assess their subject knowledge of Ethics?

The first hypothesis tested was: Academics accurately self-assess their ethics theory knowledge. In order to test this hypothesis a paired-samples t-test compared the respondent’s means of their claimed knowledge of virtue ethics versus their actual knowledge, as graded in the quiz. It found a statistical difference and therefore rejected the hypothesis. The results show that respondents do not accurately self-assess their subject knowledge. In order to accurately find out their actual knowledge of ethics theory, respondents need to be formally tested and are not able to self-assess.

5.2.2 Do Educators have a Reasonable understanding of Virtue Ethics?

The second hypothesis tested was: Academics that teach ethics as part of a business course in Australia have a reasonable understanding of virtue ethics. In order to test this hypothesis, it was first assumed that respondents that scored a pass grade or above do have a reasonable subject knowledge of virtue ethics, and then a one-sample t-test was undertaken to examine if, on average, the respondents scored a pass grade in the quiz. A pass grade had the value of 2, and a High Distinction the value of 5. The respondents mean of assessed knowledge
in virtue ethics was 1.61. Their average grade was F for fail in the test quiz. As such the results show a statistical difference between the respondents’ grades and the hypothesised reasonable minimum grade and therefore the hypothesis was rejected. The results show that academics that teach ethics theory as part of a business course in Australia do not have a reasonable understanding of virtue ethics.

5.2.3 Does Current Teaching Level of Ethics Increase Educator’s Subject Knowledge?

The third hypothesis tested was: *Academics that teach ethics as a stand-alone subject in a business degree in Australia have a better understanding of virtue ethics than academics that teach ethics as component of another subject.* Since not all academics teach ethics as a stand-alone subject, it was assumed that those educators that teach ethics specifically, by nature of their role therefore, have a better subject knowledge and understanding of virtue ethics. It was therefore also assumed that the category of educators who teach ethics as a stand-alone subject would score much better in the quiz and on average have a significantly better subject knowledge and understanding of virtue ethics.

An independent-samples t-test was undertaken to determine whether there was a significant mean difference in the assessed knowledge of virtue ethics between academics that teach ethics as a stand-alone subject and academics that teach ethics as a component of another subject. The results showed no statistical significance between the average assessed knowledge of virtue ethics between the two groups of academics and therefore the hypothesis
was rejected. The results show that academics that teach ethics as a stand-alone subject in a business degree in Australia do not have a better understanding of virtue ethics than academics that teach ethics as component of another subject.

5.2.4 Does Educators own Education of Ethics affects their Subject Knowledge?

The forth hypothesis tested was: *Academics that studied ethics in detail have a greater understanding of virtue ethics than academics that studied ethics theory as component of another subject.* It is assumed that academics that themselves have studied ethics in detail, compared with those academics that themselves only studied ethics as a component of another subject, have better subject knowledge and greater understanding of ethics theory. An independent-samples t-test was undertaken to determine whether there was a significant mean difference in the assessed knowledge of virtue ethics between academics that studied ethics in detail and academics that studied ethics as a component of another subject. The findings reveal that there was a statistical significance between the average assessed knowledge of virtue ethics between the two groups of academics and therefore the hypothesis was accepted. The results show that academics that themselves have studied ethics in detail have a greater understanding of virtue ethics than academics that studied ethics as component of another subject.
5.3 Limitations

This research study sought to find out if educators in Australian business schools are equipped, trained and capable to teach normative ethical theory by undertaking a quantitative survey based study. Such a study is timely as the literature review revealed that there is no set standard by which to deliver business ethics education and many business schools engage in teaching applied ethics through subjects like “corporate social responsibility” or “corporate citizenship” rather than delivering a course that teaches ethics in depth through critical thinking as a course grounded in normative philosophy would. It is therefore possible that some educators of ethics courses do not teach ethical theory but rather teach applied ethics and as such might have abandoned theoretical knowledge about ethics, concentrating instead on moral issues or practical ethics.

Therefore a limitation of this study is that it assumed that business schools teach normative ethical theory and as such equated subject knowledge with theoretical knowledge, however the thesis still expected that educators would accurately self-assess their theoretical knowledge of normative ethical theory and thereby bypass this limitation. If educators lacked comprehensive theoretical knowledge, they should have said so in the survey. Instead, even educators who teach applied ethics overestimated their own theoretical knowledge.
A meta-analysis of business ethics education by Waples, Antes, Murphy, Connelly, and Mumford (2009) found that different ethics programs aim for different outcomes. Meta-analysis also clearly finds that ethics can be taught (Cragg, 1997) but for ethics to be successfully taught, students must engage in critical thinking (Evangeliou, 2012). However, only a course in philosophy specifically teaches critical thinking and since learning critical thinking is a requirement for successfully learning ethics, should it come to any surprise that some business courses that involve teaching applied ethics, fail? Is learning ‘critical thinking’ even a requirement of a course on applied ethics? Speculatively, critical thinking is not as likely to be the focus of courses, where applied ethics is taught rather than philosophy-based courses. This aspect of applied ethics education has not been explored much. Perhaps future research could investigate the relationship between teaching applied ethics and learning ‘critical thinking’ employing experimental designs rather than through a meta-analysis.

This study sought to find out if educators were able to teach ethics effectively and in order to find out, investigated educator’s subject knowledge of ethics theory. It was beyond the resources of this study to use a mixed methodological approach incorporating a qualitative approach to further investigate this issue and provide richer understanding of the problem. As such, this thesis was unable to investigate teaching method or teaching skill. Thus, one of the limitations of this study was that it was unable to draw any conclusions in regards to teaching skill, especially since effective learning could be accomplished through teaching skill or fail due to the lack thereof. Or on the
other hand would it perhaps be possible to rote learn normative ethical theory without really understanding it? If so, could an educator who is only able to regurgitate normative ethical theory teach it successfully? Although, it seems irrational that an educator without real subject knowledge would be able to successfully teach that subject to a notable standard, in particular, teaching something as complicated as ethics which requires the skill of ‘critical thinking’.

Further, it was also beyond the resources and therefore scope of this thesis to determine the actual size of the target population. Perhaps future research can engage in an extensive search to retrieve informed advice from Business Program Convenors on the nature and extent of ethics education in business programs and/or do a search on university business school websites to assess how many run courses especially on ethics and to what extent and how they approach ethics education. Future researchers could undertake a qualitative approach in the above identified gaps.

5.4 Discussion and Conclusion

In the debate regarding the introduction of ethics as a stand-alone and compulsory subject of a business degree, there are a few issues that are principally and predominantly agreed upon. It is agreed that there is a frightening level of unethical business practices (Adler, 2002). It is also agreed that business schools, though not complicit in corporate crime, bear some responsibility and therefore should assume a more meaningful role in instilling an authentic pursuit of corporate social responsibility onto their students.
(Frederick, 2008). And further, research has shown that even students themselves want to learn ethics (Kerr & Smith, 1995). In response, there has been a significant increase in ethics education in business schools overall (Rasche et al, 2013), but there is significant and general doubt that currently delivered business ethics education is working. And therefore business schools in general, lack a standard approach to ethics education. Some business schools choose to teach it as a stand-alone subject while others place less interest in it and only teach it as part of another subject and then often only superficially.

However, while there is no dispute that critical thinking is an integral part of the academic subject of Philosophy which can include the effective teaching of ethical theory, there is however no agreement as to how the subject should be taught in business school. It seems that part of the reason has got to do with definitions. The frequently asked questions are: What is ethics and subsequently what is the goal of ethics education? And the various conclusions are; to teach students not to break the law; to teach students to abide by professional codes; to teach students to identify unethical conduct; to attempt to improve a student’s characters, and to teach students to successfully evaluate what an appropriate response would be to a tricky situation or a moral dilemma (Ho & Lin, 2006; Sims, 2002).

The proponents against implementing compulsory and stand-alone business ethics education argue that, it is absurd to teach people not to break the law or to teach students to identify ethical conduct or the merit of being
ethical. Because, for example, even though ethics is difficult to define, the general public, of whom the overwhelming majority have never had training in ethics, do not need experts to tell them which business practices are unethical. The argument is that identifying unethical conduct is not an acquired skill but an innate and natural ability instilled at an age before a person enters higher education. Therefore, they argue, courses whose aim it is to teach people the difference between ‘right and wrong’ are futile (Ho & Lin, 2006). But according to Aristotle, while the definition of a moral education is learning about right & wrong, the definition of an ethics education is learning how to become a person of a good character (Nicomacean Ethics, 1103b26).

Another general argument is that ethical behaviour is in itself not measurable because it is relative, and as such the concept of ethical behaviour is notoriously controversial. And that there are no foundational ethical principles or scientifically or even accessible variables that remain constant in different sample populations and that therefore ethical conduct is dependent on a variety of relative variables (Hartman, 2007). As such many have drawn conclusions that ethics education, that aims to improve a student’s character, simply does not work and that that type of ethics is unteachable at an educational institution (Geary & Sims, 1994).

What is clearly emerging from this analysis is that the manner in which ethics is taught makes all the difference (Cragg, 1997). What is also emerging is that ethics should be of primary concern. Ethical conduct in the business
community is critical and therefore ethical education in business schools is fundamental to the community, arguably significantly more so than any other subject in a business school because it is the only subject that attempts to shape students character. But it seems that the nature of ethics itself and the purpose of the education can be hard to identify and that makes the manner in how it should be taught neither simple nor obvious.

It would be hard to disagree that, if a single reason, goal or aim of a university education had to be given then that reason would not be: to teach a skill, a *technē*, because practical skills are mostly learnt on the job. Work and employment provides experience and practical skills while a university education provides theoretical knowledge and the ability to reason rationally. It is more probable that the single reason, goal or aim of a university is to teach an *epistêmē*, and in particular to teach wisdom. And according to McKenna, Rooney & Boal (2009, pp. 178-179) some essential traits of a wise person include the ability to:

- Use an active cognitive process rather than simply habitual patterns of thought
- Formulate and understand logical arguments based on sound propositions
- Make careful observations to establish facts and logically derive explanations
- Use reason, logic and rational thought
- Use a metaphysical quality to gain vision, insight and foresight
- Truly value humane and virtuous outcomes
If the nature of wisdom is set in the engagement of these principles, then it is not hard to see that these principles are conspicuously identical with those that Socrates aims to teach. Wise people are ethical. An ethical decision is a wise decision, and a wise decision is based on a rational and logically derived evaluation in order to foresee and implement a long-term solution or action for the purpose of a gaining a virtuous outcome. Being ethical is the same as being wise.

But which causes the other? Does wisdom generate ethical behaviour or does ethical knowledge and subsequent conduct generate wisdom, or is it the same thing? Perhaps business schools should introduce and teach the subject of wisdom instead of ethics. Although, a university course that teaches wisdom is sure to get a substantial number of cynics and critics. Regardless though, the aim of an ethics education is to teach aspects that are rooted in wisdom, and the central question that has so far been posed and been the aim of substantial number of research studies is whether or not ethics can or cannot be taught. But just as wisdom does not simply arrive with age and it is not something that persons are born with, neither is ethics. Wisdom is learnt, and so is ethics. Metaphysical arguments that use complex, logical, meticulous and exhaustive analysis convincing come to that conclusion (Benson, 2000; Annas, 1999).

Thus using rational thought rather than inductive conclusions that are highly dependent on a number of variables and thus prone to a variety of errors or misinterpretations, it becomes obvious that ethics is learnt. Behaviour, ethics
and values are unmistakably communicated from one generation to the next: “The central question is not whether, but how it happens” (Cragg, 1997, p. 238). And since the majority of the research does find that ethics is teachable, as far as the research that did not find the same results, perhaps a more prudent conclusion then arguing that ethics education does not work, would be to reconsider the research question (Ho & Lin, 2005). Perhaps the question should be re-formulated to ask why some of the research found that ethics education did not work. The contention regarding the research that did not find any positive correlation between ethics education and effectiveness (Martin 1981; Wynd & Mager, 1989; Weber & Green, 1991; Smith & Oakley, 1996; Park, 1998; Jewe 1998) is not about their results but about their conclusions.

There are several suggestions as to why sometimes ethics education would be ineffective. Tsalikis and Fritzscbe (1989) argue that the conflicting results, determining if business ethics education is teachable, are due to the large number of normative theories of ethics that pose conflicting rules and interpretations and lead to conflicting evaluations of what is ethical or unethical. A study by Tesfayohannes and Driscoll (2010) found that most prescribed texts used in business schools do not handle the issue of ethical business practice very well and in particular teaching and developing ethical and socially responsible attributes. The study concluded that texts used in business schools do not adequately deliver ethical concepts, practical examples and case analysis.
A study by Beggs and Dean (2007) surveyed the opinions of business school faculty members regarding the issue. They sought to find out the opinions of teaching personnel about ethics education in their own institution and classrooms? Not surprisingly the results were mixed, however there was a general acceptance that they felt that they were unable to teach ethics effectively as they themselves had not had proper training in the first place. The other main response was that they simply did not have the time to cover such a difficult topic in the time which they had been allocated. A similar survey by Evans and Weiss (2008) found that many faculty deans acknowledge that there is a shortage of faculty expertise. The critical analysis of these two studies form part of a growing call to examine if business school educators are equipped, trained and capable to teach ethics (Swanson & Fisher, 2008; Weber et al, 2008; Cloninger & Selvarajan 2010), and that question also forms the justification and purpose of this research study.

In a qualitative study by Paul et al (1997), faculty teachers in California that taught ‘Critical Thinking’ were assessed as to their subject knowledge of the topic. Critical thinking is also a crucial component of ethics education. The study found that only 19% of university faculty teachers in California who promoted and taught critical thinking were themselves able to identify important criteria and standards of it and able to explain what the nature of critical thinking involved. The study concluded that few teachers had any in-depth exposure to the research on the concept and that most had only a vague understanding of
what it is, and what is involved in bringing it successfully into instruction. That conclusion is concerning, and so are the results of this research study.

This research conducted a similar but quantitative study, essentially to find out if: persons who are highly educated in business but who have not studied ethics, philosophy or logic as a stand-alone subject, really are able to teach ethics successfully and comprehensively? This research found that business school educators are not equipped, trained or capable to teach ethics to business students. It found that, on the assumption that a suitably qualified person would have a reasonable understanding of any of the big three normative ethics theories, educators in business schools are not able to demonstrate that they are suitably trained to teach ethics to business students.

The research did however find that those educators that have themselves had been educated in ethics as a stand-alone subject did have a reasonable understanding of ethics and thus it concludes that only they would have the minimum requirement to be able to effectively and consistently teach ethics to business students. The research also found that, because many business schools only teach ethics as part of another subject, the next generation of educators have only been taught ethics as part of another subject and that situation is creating a circular development of ineffective ethics educators. The research shows that those respondents that only learnt ethics as part of another subject do not possess a reasonable understanding of it and are therefore unlikely to be able to teach it effectively. In order to be able to teach ethics effectively, an
educator must first have studied ethics as a stand-alone and comprehensive subject. And finally this analysis agrees with arguments that conclude that if ethics is to be taught in business schools, it would most effectively be taught through the subject of philosophy (Morrell, 2004; Hartman, 2007) because only the subject of philosophy includes the study of virtue ethics in depth by teaching critical thinking.

In conclusion, it is obvious that the results of this research are not flattering for business schools in regards to the delivery of ethics education in business programs. It further, seriously challenges the conclusions of previous research, and in particular of research which concluded that it is not possible to teach ethics to business students (Martin 1981; Wynd & Mager, 1989; Weber & Green, 1991; Smith & Oakley, 1996; Park, 1998; Jewe 1998). While the majority of studies that have investigated this issue concur that ethics education is possible, those studies that have been showing an apparent contradiction have provided ammunition that inadvertently have hindered the evolution of ethics education in business schools.

The importance of this research is that it clearly identifies that the problem with ethics education is not with students’ ability to learn ethics but with educators who are either not given full or appropriate resources or who are not fully trained to teach ethics. This variable is what makes ethics education fail. It is not possible to teach something as complicated as ethics without appropriate resources and a thorough understanding of the topic. The results
show, not only a serious weakness in existent contemporary business ethics education but also exposes the significant extent of it. It is frightful that only 15% of educators teaching business ethics education in universities have an advanced knowledge of the subject and that only 25% have a passable understanding of the subject, but what is most alarming is that 60% fail in their understanding of the subject.

The implications of the findings of this study are two-fold. First, any future study into this topic will have to include in their investigations the variable of ‘the capability of the educators to teach ethics’. Secondly, it could serve as a general wake-up call to business schools who insist that providing stand-alone ethics education is futile. And once future and successive studies can draw a positive correlation between effective ethics education and ethics educators capability to teach ethics, then research questions on this topic should stop asking: ‘is it possible to teach ethics?’ and should concentrate on answering: ‘who should teach ethics to business students?’
References


Marconi, J. (2002). *Cause marketing: Build your image and bottom line through socially responsible partnerships, programs, and events*, Kaplan Professional.


Experts divided on value of ethics for financial advisers

At the heart of recent financial scandals that have cost thousands of Australian investors their life savings is a question of ethical behaviour.

But academics charged with teaching students the basics of ethics are divided over whether additional education in the field will make much of a difference.

Carl Rhodes, professor of management and organisation studies at Macquarie University, says ethical training – particularly when forced on someone unwilling – has little traction in reducing misbehaviour.

"Scandals as they are reported are almost always cases of where laws are broken. I would have no expectation that ethics training might make someone more law abiding," he says.

"In a sense, it is trying to externalise both the problem and solution instead of looking elsewhere.

"I fully support that ethics should be included in programs for people who want to do it but I don’t think it is a solution to ethical issues for banks at all, as instead of looking at the culture and practice of the organisation it blames the behaviour of individuals."

Professor Rhodes says organisational culture can embed unethical behaviour and the taking of shortcuts and risks.

"If you look at the issue of finance, you have banks announcing huge increases in profit, so it is an organisation that values and rewards people making loads of money," Professor Rhodes says.

"It is not just the culture of individual organisations, but it is also cultures that are geared to rewarding greed. The fact people then do act greedily – well you can’t suggest training will solve this."

In a submission to a parliamentary inquiry into proposals to lift the professional, ethical and education standards in the financial services industry, University of NSW academics Justin O’Brien and George Gilligan, from the Centre for Law, Markets and Regulation, have argued ethics training should be a mandatory component for anyone providing financial advice.

Not only should it be a requirement of licensing, they said, "but ongoing ethical training with continuing ethical self-reporting should be a mandatory feature of a future licence retention system."

They argued this was necessary to counter the cases of "bad apples... camouflaged and at times sheltered within their organisational structures."

Melbourne Business School dean Zeger Degraeve says that while ethical education is not a silver bullet, it can assist in the long run in improving corporate behaviour.

"A course in ethics cannot make a saint from a crook," Professor Degraeve says.

"If someone wants to behave unethically, a course won’t change that intention. But a course can provide someone who wants to behave ethically with the supports, tools and aids to engage in ethical behaviour."

By changing internal culture and encouraging ethical behaviour, organisations could shift in the right direction at crucial moments.

"You create an expectation of ethical behaviour. It becomes part of the day to day discussion in an organisation," he says.

RUTH CALLAGHAN

Zeger Degraeve says an ethics course cannot turn a crook into a saint.
Appendix B: Invitation to participate e-mail sent to respondents

Hello,

My name is Sven Erlic. I am conducting research into Business Ethics Education in Australia as part of my post graduate studies at the University of Newcastle. My supervisor is Dr Ashish Malik.

I would like to invite you to take part in this research project because you, as a Business Faculty employee, have a special insight into the education of the modern business students and I would very much like to learn from your experience and find out your opinions and understanding of current Business Ethics Education in Australia.

While the primary aim of this research is to provide empirical data for my postgraduate dissertation, it will probably eventually be published in some form and as such could provide more fundamental understanding about the nature of Business Ethics Education in Australia.

In the study, you will be asked to complete an electronic survey. Your participation in this study is voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time. The survey should take around 12 minutes to complete and has been approved by University’s Human Research Ethics Committee, Approval No: H-2014-0250.

For more information and to participate in the survey, please click on the link below:

http://newcastlebusandlaw.co1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_9R0G3rdQ5QkA6y1

Thank You

Sven Erlic
Appendix C: Content of the Survey Webpage

Normative Ethical Theory and Business Ethics Education in Australia: Are educators in Business Schools equipped, trained and capable to teach Virtue Ethics?

At the lawn of ACU Canberra campus late in 2013

Information Statement for the Research Project:

You have been invited to participate in this research project which is being conducted by Sven Erlic at the University of Newcastle. The research is part of Sven’s studies at the University of Newcastle and supervised by Dr Ashish Malik from the Faculty of Business and Law, University of Newcastle.
Why is the research being done?

Amid frequent corporate scandals, there is plenty of criticism in our society about business practices and ethical conduct of the business community. As a result, there are regular calls for improvement or inclusion of effective Business Ethics Education. However, empirical research into the effectiveness of ethics education in business schools has confusing and contradictory results.

Upon closer investigation, it has been found that none of the previous research has focused or placed significant attention to the ability, equipment and training of ethics educators, trainers and teachers in business schools. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to investigate if educators in Australian Business Schools are equipped with the necessary tools to teach Normative Ethical Theory and in particular Virtue Ethics.

Who can participate in the research?

Academic staff that are responsible for direct contact with students as well as staff that are integral to the education of business students can participate in the research. This includes any staff whose nature of employment is conjoint, adjunct, casual, fractional or by fixed-term contract.

What choice do you have?

Participation in this research is entirely your choice. Only those people who give their informed consent electronically will be included in the project.

What would you be asked to do?

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to fill in the on-line survey which starts immediately after you have given your consent. You are also asked to answer the questions honestly and encouraged to give feedback.

How much time will it take?

Depending on your subject knowledge, the survey will take about 10 to 15 minutes to complete.

What are the risks and benefits of participating?

While the primary aim of this research is to provide empirical data for a postgraduate research dissertation, it will probably eventually be published in some form and as such could provide more fundamental understanding about the nature of business ethics education. As such, depending on the results, Business Schools and Universities who award MBA degrees might choose to alter the way in which they deliver ethics education.

Therefore, while you and your institution will not be under any risk by participating, there is a potential future benefit to participating educators and institutions wishing to
include this research as supporting evidence to implement educational improvements because the research data will directly reflect their own situation. Also, participants are able to skip certain survey questions, (e.g., demographics regarding religious views), that might be perceived to be of a sensitive nature.

How will your privacy be protected?

The data will be collected through the survey technology provider Qualtrics http://www.qualtrics.com and afterwards will be securely stored in a password protected database and a password protected computer at the Chief Investigator’s office. Only the researchers, Sven Erlic and Dr Ashish Malik, will have access to it. It will be stored for up to five years after which it will be deleted.

How will the information collected be used?

The data will contribute towards the student researcher’s postgraduate degree. The findings and analysis from this project may be disseminated in the form of:

1. Publishing papers in journals, books, reports or other academic outputs.
2. Presentations at seminars and conferences.

All survey participants will be given the opportunity to be provided with a summary of the results as well as the final analysis and conclusion. No individually identifiable information will be used in any of the above dissemination avenues. Confidentiality of the participants will be maintained at all times.

Further information

If you would like further information please contact Sven Erlic Sven.Erlic@uon.edu.au or the project supervisor Ashish.Malik@newcastle.edu.au. Thank you for considering this invitation.

Complaints about this research

This project has been approved by the University’s Human Research Ethics Committee, Approval No. (Still Pending) Should you have concerns about your rights as a participating case organisation in this research, or you have a complaint about the manner in which the research is conducted, it may be given to the researcher, or, if an independent person is preferred, to the Human Research Ethics Officer, Research Office, The Chancellery, The University of Newcastle, University Drive, Callaghan NSW 2308, Australia, telephone (02) 49216333, email Human-Ethics@newcastle.edu.au.

What do you need to do to participate?

First make sure that you understand the content of this Information Statement before you give your consent to participate. If there is anything you do not understand, or you have questions, contact the researcher.
If you agree to participate, please tick the box that you give your consent and the survey will start.

- I agree to participate in the above research project and give my consent freely.
  
  I understand that the project will be conducted as described in the Information Statement and I understand that I can withdraw from the project at any time prior to submitting my completed survey, and do not have to give any reason for withdrawing.

- I choose not to participate in this research project.

If NO is selected, display the following message: otherwise go to question block 1

Thank you for considering participating in the research. If you change your mind you are welcome to come back.
Which university do you work for?

- Australian Catholic University
- Australian Graduate School of Management
- Australian National University
- Bond University
- Charles Darwin University
- Central Queensland University
- Charles Sturt University
- Curtin University
- Deakin University
- Edith Cowan University
- Flinders University
- Griffith University
- James Cook University
- La Trobe University
- Macquarie University (MGSM)
- Monash University
- Murdoch University
- QUT Business School
- RMIT University
- Southern Cross University
- Swinburne University of Technology
- University of Adelaide
- University of Ballarat
- University of Canberra
- University of Melbourne (MBS)
- University of New England
- University of Newcastle
- University of NSW (AGSM)
- University of Queensland
- University of South Australia
- University of Sydney
- University of Tasmania
- University of Technology Sydney
- University of the Sunshine Coast
- University of Western Australia
- University of Western Sydney
- University of Wollongong
- Victoria University
- Other Workplace

What age group are you in?

- 18-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50 - 59
- 60 or older
What is your gender?
- Male
- Female
- Other

What is your country of birth?
- Australia
- Britain
- New Zealand
- China
- India
- Vietnam
- Italy
- Philippines
- Malaysia
- Germany
- South Africa
- Other ________________

How many languages can you speak fluently?
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4 or more

What is the highest level of education you have completed?
- High School or other
- Diploma
- Bachelors Degree
- Graduate Diploma
- Masters Degree
- Doctoral Degree
How would you describe the religious observance of your family when you were growing up? (Tick all relevant boxes if you grew up with a mixture of views)

- Committed Theist
- Lukewarm Theist
- Deist/Pantheist
- Agnostic
- Atheist
- Factualist

How would you describe your religious views?

- Committed Theist
- Lukewarm Theist
- Deist/Pantheist
- Agnostic
- Atheist
- Factualist

What is your family's religious background?

- Roman Catholic
- Other Christian
- Jewish
- Muslim
- Hindu
- Buddhist
- Traditional Chinese
- No Religion
- Mixed
- Other ____________________

Are you a vegetarian?

- No
- No, but I am a semi-vegetarian
- Yes
- Yes, I’m vegan

Do you, in any form, deliver business education to students in Australia?

- Yes
- No

If YES is selected, display the following questions: otherwise goto question block 3

QUESTION BLOCK 2

How long have you been teaching?

- Less than 1 year
- 1 - 5 years
- 5 - 10 years
- More than 10 years
- More than 20 years
Do you know what the Socratic Method of Teaching involves?

- Yes, I use it all the time
- Yes, I have a good idea
- Yes, but I don't really understand it properly
- No

Which of the following steps are parts of the Socratic Method of Teaching?

- Eironeia - Mock Modesty, pretending that you don't know
- Honesty - Students must pledge to answer honestly
- Dialectic - Engaging the student in a discussion
- Learning - Student engages in critical thinking
- Aporia - Achieve bafflement, student realise they are ignorant
- Inquiry - Focus on questioning without supplying answers
- Other ____________________

From your experience and contact with Business students, how would you rate the % ability of an average business student of 'critical thinking'?

% At start of the course
% On graduation

From your experience and contact with Business students, what is your opinion on the following statements?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Don't Know</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business Students must graduate with good intellectual standards</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is possible to teach ethical behaviour in an online course</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is not possible to teach ethics to Business students</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>It is a waste of time to teach ethics to Business students</td>
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<tr>
<td>It is not the job of a Business Degree to teach ethical conduct Students are more interested in the qualification (passing) then in learning My teaching input makes a difference in the ethical conduct of a graduate</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the education that you deliver, is ethics theory a part of it?
- ☐ No, my courses do not include any mention of Ethics Theory
- ☐ Yes, there is some mention of Ethics Theory
- ☐ Yes, Ethics Theory is an integral part but not the focus of the course
- ☐ Yes, I teach Ethics Theory as a stand-alone subject

Do you think that ethics educators are given enough resources to teach it effectively?
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ No
- ☐ No, they need: ____________________

A stand-alone Business Ethics course:
- ☐ Should teach all ethics theories including ethical relativism
- ☐ Should teach all ethics theories excluding ethical relativism
- ☐ It is not necessary to teach Ethics as a stand-alone subject
- ☐ Should only teach the theory of Virtue Ethics
- ☐ Should only teach the theory of Deontology
- ☐ Should only teach the theory of Utilitarianism
- ☐ It is sufficient to include Ethics as a component in other subjects in order to learn ethical principles and theories

**QUESTION BLOCK 3**
Which of these answers describes a meaning of 'Ethics' really well?

- Moral Philosophy
- Religious Decrees
- Rules of Conduct
- Moral Principles
- Social Conventions
- Conduct that benefits society
- Standards of right and wrong
- Social Norms
- Instructions on how to live a 'Good Life'
- Behaviour which brings one the greatest Good
- A sub-field of philosophy that aims at clarifying the nature of right and wrong, or good and bad
- Other ____________________

A person’s ethical conduct is:

- More or less predetermined at birth
- Mostly developed in early childhood
- Mostly developed in early adulthood
- Radically different after receiving an effective education that encourages introspection and critical self-examination
- Other ____________________

To study 'Ethics' means to learn:

- Which rules of conduct to follow
- That many ethical choices can be justified using different theories
- How to distinguish between good and bad
- The principles of human conduct
- What choice to make when faced with a moral dilemma
- Behaviour that promotes human welfare
- What type of conduct benefits society
- How to live a good life
- Religious decrees
- Which social norms and conduct are accepted where
- How people justify their conduct
- How to live an 'Examined Life'
- A variety of Ethical Theories
- Other ____________________

Ethical conduct is:

- Learnt from habit and experience
- Learnt from rational instruction
- Learnt by memorising rules of conduct
- A natural form of behaviour that does not need to be taught
- A skill that needs to be taught to adults
- A standard that needs to be taught to adults
- Other ____________________

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The best way to teach ethics is to:

- Have a compulsory stand-alone subject called 'Logic'
- Have a compulsory stand-alone subject called 'Philosophy'
- Have a compulsory stand-alone subject called 'Critical Thinking'
- Ethics cannot be taught to business students
- Get students to evaluate moral dilemmas throughout subjects
- Use the Socratic Method of teaching
- Other ____________________

In your opinion, are the following statements true or false?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>True</th>
<th>False</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is morally right is right in itself, not relative to individuals,</td>
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<tr>
<td>groups, culture, religion, history or class</td>
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<tr>
<td>Different people have different ethical beliefs, and there is no</td>
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<tr>
<td>procedure for determining who is correct</td>
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<tr>
<td>One culture is not morally better than any other</td>
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<tr>
<td>What is morally right is what makes us the best person we could be</td>
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<tr>
<td>What is morally right is what generates the best balance of pleasure</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>over pain when everyone is considered equally</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ethics is mostly relative to a large variety of factors</td>
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<tr>
<td>If ethical relativism is true than no valid cross culture criticism of</td>
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<tr>
<td>moral experience is possible, it leads to moral absurdity</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If ethical relativism is true no moral progress is possible</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>if ethical relativism is true than there is no valid critique on conduct</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Have you yourself, studied Ethics?

- Yes, in detail
- Yes, as part of another subject
- Yes, but only superficially
- No
Display this question only If *Have you yourself, studied Ethics? No Is Not Selected.*

Which of these theorists have you studied?

- □ Plato / Socrates
- □ Aristotle
- □ John Stuart Mills
- □ Immanuel Kant
- □ Karl Popper
- □ Jeremy Bentham
- □ Confucius
- □ William David Ross
- □ Frederick Nietzsche
- □ Thomas Aquinas
- □ Thomas Hobbes
- □ Jean-Jacques Rousseau
- □ Bertrand Russell
- □ Carol Gilligan
- □ Rene Descartes
- □ Arthur Schopenhauer
- □ Elizabeth Cady Stanton
- □ Other ____________________

Display this question only If *Socrates? Is Selected.*

Which of these texts have you studied / read?

- □ The Republic
- □ Euthyphro
- □ Meno
- □ Symposium
- □ Apology
- □ Phaedo
- □ Crito
- □ Laws
- □ Other ____________________

Display this question only If *Aristotle? Is Selected.*

Which of these texts have you studied / read?

- □ Nicomachean Ethics
- □ Politics
- □ Metaphysics
- □ De Anima
- □ The Art of Rhetoric
- □ Other ____________________
QUESTION BLOCK 5

Not far now. The survey is almost complete, your patience and co-operation is highly appreciated.

With which of these Moral Philosophies do you MOST identify?

- Accept / lean toward Utilitarianism
- Accept / lean toward Deontology
- Accept / lean toward Virtue Ethics
- Mixed / Not sure
- Other ____________________

To see if you are paying attention answer the obvious answer to this question.

What is the probability of a fair coin coming up heads?

- Half of the time
- Always heads
- Always tails
- Other

How did you develop your own personal ethics? How were you taught to become the person that you are? Rank the level of influence each of the following items had in determining your character and current ethical stand.

| Parents and family |  |  |  |  |
| Friends and colleges |  |  |  |  |
| Personal heroes in art and literature |  |  |  |  |
| Singers and musicians |  |  |  |  |
| Actors on TV and film |  |  |  |  |
| Personal heroes in Sport |  |  |  |  |
| Personal heroes in Politics |  |  |  |  |
| Education, introspection and critical thinking |  |  |  |  |
| Religion |  |  |  |  |
| Nature, It was more or less inbuilt in my character from birth |  |  |  |  |
| Something completely different |  |  |  |  |
### How do you agree with the following statements?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There is no correct standard of ethics</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The right thing to do in any situation is that which benefits the most</td>
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<tr>
<td>people</td>
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<tr>
<td>My religion, above all, shows me how to live</td>
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<tr>
<td>Philosophy is a fundamental subject at University</td>
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<tr>
<td>I don’t think much about why I do things, I just do them</td>
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<tr>
<td>Human reason is the source of all good</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moral principles should take precedence over other considerations,</td>
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<tr>
<td>including aesthetic, prudential, and legal considerations</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Would you prefer to receive $1000 dollars today or $1,500 in 60 days?

- $1,000 today
- $1,500 in 60 days

### How strongly do you agree with the following statements?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Companies listed on the ASX are inherently ethical</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Australian business community has an acceptable standard of ethical</td>
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<tr>
<td>conduct</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business School graduates are more likely to be ethical in business</td>
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<tr>
<td>than their counterparts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sound ethics is good business in the long run</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ethics really boils down to a cost-benefit analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intense competition forces businessmen to resort to unethical</td>
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<tr>
<td>behaviour</td>
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<td>A separate ethics course should be included in Business study</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business students are more interested in earning a degree</td>
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<tr>
<td>then learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>The role of an Business educator is also to teach ethical conduct</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ethics is really about making people do what is in the best interest of</td>
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<tr>
<td>others</td>
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<tr>
<td>Defining Ethical conduct is unnecessary, people always know when they</td>
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<tr>
<td>are doing the wrong thing - the trick is to convince them not to do it</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
How would you rate your understanding of the following concepts and theories?

(Drag the bar slider)

☐ % Ethical Relativism
☐ % Virtue Ethics
☐ % Utilitarianism
☐ % Deontology

Display this Question If the question “How would you rate your understanding of the following concepts and theories?” Is Not Equal to 0

Would you mind /like to test your knowledge of Virtue Ethics by answering a few additional questions?

☐ Yes, bring it on. I would like to answer a few additional questions to test my knowledge of Virtue Ethics
☐ No, I don’t have the time but trust me. I know everything about Virtue Ethics
☐ No, I am a bit rusty and need to read up, but essentially I understand Virtue Ethics quite well
☐ No, my knowledge of Virtue Ethics isn’t really up to scratch

**QUESTION BLOCK 6**

Display this Block of Questions ONLY if the answer to the question “Do you understand the concept of Virtue Ethics?” Is Not No

According to Aristotle, how is virtue acquired?

☐ Instinct and Action
☐ Instruction and Memory
☐ Thought and Reflection
☐ Practice and Habit
☐ All of the above
☐ I don't remember / I don't know

According to Aristotle, what is the highest pursuit in life?

☐ The pursuit of Pleasure
☐ The pursuit of Honours
☐ The pursuit of the Good
☐ The pursuit of Rational Contemplation
☐ I don't remember / I don't know

Which of the following best captures Aristotle's most fundamental question?

☐ What are the correct moral rules?
☐ How can we maximize overall happiness?
☐ What is the good life for man?
☐ Can Virtue be taught?
☐ All of the above
☐ I don't remember / I don't know
According to Virtue Ethics...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>True</th>
<th>False</th>
<th>Don’t Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Virtue is acquired by exercising habit which is based on teaching and experience.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>If the above statement is true, who is it credited to?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Virtue does not come from teaching but from questioning.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>If the above statement is true, who is it credited to?</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellence is a mean between two extremes of excess (e.g. Cowardliness / Rashness, Humility / Vanity, Frugal / Liberal).</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If the above statement is true, who is it credited to?</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People only make poor decisions because they do not have the knowledge to see the consequences of their decisions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>If the above statement is true, who is it credited to?</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge is both the necessary and sufficient condition to do the right thing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>If the above statement is true, who is it credited to?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who is this statement credited to: People only do 'the wrong thing' because they do not know what the right thing to do is?</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virtue is a type of knowledge and can therefore be taught.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>If the above statement is true, who is it credited to?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The most important thing in life is to do 'the right thing'.</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>If the above statement is true, who is it credited to?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doing 'the right thing' determines the value of your life and you as a person.</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>If the above statement is true, who is it credited to?</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doing 'the right thing' is doing what is good for someone else and therefore being unethical is both natural and advantageous. Being hardcore ethical is valued for social prestige alone.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>If the above statement is true, who is it credited to?</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics is the study of how to become a 'Good person' that performs good actions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>If the above statement is true, who is it credited to?</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who is this statement credited to: People who know what the 'right thing to do' is, will always do 'the right thing'?</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Almost done. This is the final block of questions.

Do you think that Plato's *Republic* is an essential tool to teach Ethics?
- ☐ Yes, absolutely and it should be studied in depth
- ☐ Yes, but equal attention should be given to Aristotle's 'Nicomachean Ethics'
- ☐ Yes, but equal attention should be given to modern texts
- ☐ No, it is too old and somewhat out of date, modern texts are superior
- ☐ Other ____________________

In your opinion, if you had to guess, what percentage of Australian companies listed on the ASX market promote or advertise products or services in a misleading or deceitful manner, extract, create, produce, manufacture, or market materials, products, goods or services which have a harmful effect on humans, non-human animals or the environment?
__%__ Percentage of unethical companies on the ASX

Would you agree that a vastly improved Business Ethics Education in Australian Business Schools would eventually decrease the amount of unethical conduct in Australian Business?
- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

Do you think that the current level of Ethical education in Business Schools is sufficient?
- ☐ Yes, it is fine
- ☐ Yes, but it needs to be reviewed regularly to keep it up to date
- ☐ No, it needs some improvement
- ☐ No, it is well below an acceptable standard

Do you have any comments you would like to make about the subject of Business Ethics Education in Australia?
- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes ____________________

Once the survey results has been analysed, would you like to receive a copy of the results and analysis?
- ☐ No thanks
- ☐ Yes, send me a copy of the results to this e-mail address:

*(Statement of Confidentiality: the identity of for those who elect to receive survey results and analysis via an email will always remain confidential to the researcher and the supervisor and once emails have been posted they will be deleted from the database) ____________________*
Appendix D: Respondents asserted level of understanding of the three major Ethics Theories

Respondents Asserted Knowledge of Virtue Ethics

Mean = 5.78
Std. Dev = 2.77
N = 128

Respondents Asserted Knowledge of Deontology

Mean = 6.5
Std. Dev = 2.76
N = 125

Respondents Asserted Knowledge of Utilitarianism

Mean = 6.72
Std. Dev = 2.74
N = 125
Appendix E: Testing assumption of normality of the variables: self-assessed and assessed knowledge of virtue ethics
Appendix F: Survey Quiz and Marking Key

**How would you rate your understanding of the following concepts and theories?** *(Drag the bar slider)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>%</th>
<th>Ethical Relativism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>Virtue Ethics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>Utilitarianism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>Deontology</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Display this Question If the question “How would you rate your understanding of the following concepts and theories?” Is Not Equal to 0*

Would you mind /like to test your knowledge of Virtue Ethics by answering a few additional questions?
- Yes, bring it on. I would like to answer a few additional questions to test my knowledge of Virtue Ethics
- No, I don’t have the time but trust me. I know everything about Virtue Ethics
- No, I am a bit rusty and need to read up, but essentially I understand Virtue Ethics quite well
- No, my knowledge of Virtue Ethics isn’t really up to scratch

**QUESTION BLOCK QUIZ**

*Display this Block of Questions ONLY if the answer to the question “Do you understand the concept of Virtue Ethics?” Is Not No*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q1. According to Aristotle, how is virtue acquired?</th>
<th>Q2. According to Aristotle, what is the highest pursuit in life?</th>
<th>Q3. Which of the following best captures Aristotle’s most fundamental question?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐ Instinct and Action</td>
<td>☐ The pursuit of Pleasure</td>
<td>☐ What are the correct moral rules?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Instruction and Memory</td>
<td>☐ The pursuit of Honours</td>
<td>☐ How can we maximize overall happiness?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Thought and Reflection</td>
<td>☒ The pursuit of the Good</td>
<td>☒ What is the good life for man?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☒ Practice and Habit</td>
<td></td>
<td>☐ Can Virtue be taught?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ All of the above</td>
<td>☒ The pursuit of Rational Contemplation</td>
<td>☐ All of the above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ I don’t remember / I don’t know</td>
<td>☐ I don’t remember / I don’t know</td>
<td>☐ I don’t remember / I don’t know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

164
According to Virtue Ethics...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>True</th>
<th>False</th>
<th>Don’t Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. Virtue is acquired by exercising habit which is based on teaching and experience.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. If the above statement is true, who is it credited to?</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Virtue does not come from teaching but from questioning.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. If the above statement is true, who is it credited to?</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Excellence is a mean between two extremes of excess (e.g. Cowardliness / Rashness, Humility / Vanity, Frugal / Liberal).</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. If the above statement is true, who is it credited to?</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. People only make poor decisions because they do not have the knowledge to see the consequences of their decisions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. If the above statement is true, who is it credited to?</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Knowledge is both the necessary and sufficient condition to do the right thing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. If the above statement is true, who is it credited to?</td>
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<tr>
<td>14. Who is this statement credited to: People only do 'the wrong thing' because they do not know what the right thing to do is?</td>
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<tr>
<td>15. Virtue is a type of knowledge and can therefore be taught.</td>
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<tr>
<td>16. If the above statement is true, who is it credited to?</td>
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<tr>
<td>17. The most important thing in life is to do 'the right thing'.</td>
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<tr>
<td>18. If the above statement is true, who is it credited to?</td>
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<tr>
<td>19. Doing 'the right thing' determines the value of your life and you as a person.</td>
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<tr>
<td>20. If the above statement is true, who is it credited to?</td>
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<td>21. Doing the right thing’ is doing what is good for someone else and therefore being unethical is both natural and advantageous. Being hardcore ethical is valued for social prestige alone.</td>
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<td>22. Ethics is the study of how to become a 'Good person' that performs good actions.</td>
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<td>23. If the above statement is true, who is it credited to?</td>
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<tr>
<td>24. Who is this statement credited to: People who know what the 'right thing to do' is, will always do 'the right thing'?</td>
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