

Chapter 74

Business Within Ethical Marketing Education: The Upcoming Challenges

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this chapter is to offer a new perspective on how business ethics, and more specifically ethical marketing, can be integrated into ethical education and the teaching of good practices, providing answers for different organizational ethical questions. The authors argue that ethical marketing currently plays a pivotal role in organizations, making it necessary to properly address issues from a moral point of view. Referring to elements related to the marketing area, such as the market itself, costumers, products, promotion, price, place, etc., the authors demonstrate that ethics and its purpose can add value to any organization. The sphere of ethical marketing has had extraordinary visibility, especially throughout the last decades, probably because of how they relate to the four marketing-mix P's. The authors argue that it is crucial to have a solid understanding of the significance of these principles.

INTRODUCTION

Ethical issues are on the international agenda, not only in the business world but also in all spheres of society. Today's professionals are expected to be more and more complete individuals who are capable of respecting the ethical codes that are imposed on society as a whole. Marketing is no exception and

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has been one of the most scrutinized areas, as marketing activities are commonly associated with deceptive practices. So, it is our purpose in this chapter not only to present some of the most frequent ethical dilemmas in this area, but also demonstrate that it is possible to adopt an ethical stance that honours marketing activity but also contributes to corporate growth, safeguarding companies' image and promoting their activity.

On the other hand, the authors intend to demonstrate the importance of incorporating ethics into marketing education, arguing that if students become used to dealing with the different issues and case studies in an ethical way, this will shape their personality and how they will work in the future and reduce the gap between what they study in university and what they experience in the market.

Hence, this chapter aims to provide innovative contributions, including listing the challenges to ethical marketing in a business environment; evaluating the importance of ethical training in companies, especially in the marketing area, and providing a structure for a guidebook with best practices that can help marketing leaders in managing responsible organization.

The structure of the present book chapter is as follows: first, the authors discuss some of the key theoretical issues concerning business ethics described in the specialized literature; then, focusing on the marketing ethics, they analyze the different elements of the marketing-mix, illustrating them with practical examples.

Based on these examples, the authors have developed a structure for a future guidebook, proposed within this work and containing an initial version of best practices for practitioners, which can help marketing leaders in managing responsible organizations. As a future research direction, the authors intend to improve the guidebook with more content and present a possible strategy that can increase the sense of responsibility in the marketing environment.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Business Ethics

The domain of business ethics has had an astonishing perceptibility, probably because of the misinterpretation of the connotation of terms as “morality”, “values”, and “principles”. We argue that a solid understanding of the significance of business ethics and its elements, such as ethical compass, ethical codes, ethical dilemmas, ethical teaching, ethical training, etc., can help organizations improve their relationship with stakeholders, as well as avoid prejudicial practices.

Business ethics has been seen and understood as a connection between the mission of a business and ethics, i.e. the way business goals align themselves with a code or mission of ethics and how that translates into business practices. The fundamental questions to be answered are how you can make the practice of business more ethical and how different stakeholders should interact with business from an ethical point of view (Robin, 2009). Another equally important aspect is that a business must remain ethical throughout the time; otherwise, ethics itself is in danger (Kaptein, 2017).

Regarding the different definitions of business ethics, we can go back to that is supported by different activities and situations where there is an uncertainty regarding what is right and what is wrong for a business (Crane & Matten, 2004). Also, ethics in business is perceived as a set of values and opinions that should govern an organization and its business behavior. Business ethics has to be taught, as it addresses not only traditional subjects, such as ethical dilemmas and Social Responsibility (SR), but

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