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Accounting Educators' Opinion towards Ethics in Accounting Curriculum of Higher Education Institutes in Peshawar

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Abstract: *In this study, findings of a comprehensive survey of accounting educators' opinions and practices concerning to ethics in accounting curriculum are presented. A questionnaire was used to gather the opinions of accounting faculty regarding the inclusion of ethics education in the accounting curriculum. Descriptive analysis techniques were used to analyze the survey results as the same method was used by researchers while conducting similar studies. As state boards across the globe require continued professional education in accounting curriculum, this study also finds that accounting faculty considers ethics education necessary for the profession's needs. Accounting faculty themselves are most suitable for teaching ethics education and prefer real-world application over conventional academic content. As far as the methodology used to teach ethics is concerned, educators support integration in different subjects as opposed to a stand-alone course and support the view that study is the most useful technique for ethics education.*

Keywords: Accounting, Faculty, Education, Survey, Religious, Ethics

Introduction

Background of the Study

The Concise Oxford Dictionary (1978) defines ethics as moral principles that control or influence a person's behavior. Ethics also points out a philosophical consideration of moral beliefs and practices (Abdul Rahman, 2003). Ethics is key to all sections of society, including governments, businesses, and Professions. It is because of constructive individual, institutional, and social concerns that ethics has regularly motivated researchers, trainers, and business managers to to preserve and develop it (Samadi & Mahdavikhou, 2009).

"Economic activities regulate through ethical values known as business ethics" (Ahmed M. Met al., 2003). Hence, business ethics is the people's involvement in economic activity to achieve business objectives as well as to serve the society and general public. Ethics can be viewed as a formal way of communicating to all that the profession can be relied upon and trusted (Carroll, 2005). Ethics is a key to accountants and the stakeholders who have faith in data provided by accountants because ethical behavior requires taking a moral point of view. Accountants are answerable to the public at large including investors, lenders, employees, customers, governments, and the accounting occupation.

If we study past three decades, it has become evident that the accounting profession must prioritize ethics, especially in the background of multiple scandals in multinational companies such as Enron, Sunbeam, Waste Management, and Worldcom, Transmille Group, Southern Bank Bhd and Pakistani companies such as Mehran Bank, Mohib Textiles and Taj Company (Siddiqui & Fahim, 2013). These scandals have severely damaged the image of accounting profession. Such recent accounting frauds forced us to re-examine accounting ethics and the need to review ethics in accounting curriculum (Khotanlou et al., 2012). The professional bodies have the agenda to re-establish their integrity, accountability and legitimacy (Beekun and Badawi, 2005; Ismaeel and Blaim, 2012). The accounting and auditing standards

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do not give surety of true and fair financial reporting, and absence of professional ethics make the situation worse for financial reporting. Ethics education gives students a perspective of the linkage between ethics theory and real-life situations. There are many published papers on accounting ethics education in the developed world. This research is the replication of a study by Blanthorne et al. (2007) in new settings (Peshawar, Pakistan). Blanthorne et al. (2007) conducted a survey in US to gather the opinions of faculty regarding Ethical education in accounting curriculum. Their findings revealed that 95% of the accounting faculty was of the view that accounting students should get ethical education. Faculty believed that ethical progress was essential for the profession to rebuild the stakeholder's confidence and to ensure the professions regulate itself in the right direction. Respondents favoring ethics education rated lack of resources such as time and space, willingness to teach, as a problem in teaching ethics while the ones opposing questioned the effectiveness of ethics training.

Problem Statement

It is noted that accountants in field show less ethical behavior than in other fields. (Armstrong 1987; Ponemon 1992; Eynon et al. 1997), and they are considered average ethically (Fleming 1996). However, a well-constructed accounting ethics course can improve moral reasoning and ethical skills of university students (Armstrong 1993; Beverungen et al. 2013: 102). The aim of this research is to offer basic understanding of what accounting faculty perceive regarding ethics and provide guidance for future standard setters. In addition to that, it updates previous research by giving up to date and detailed view regarding ethical education in accounting as described by the faculty. Linking our research to an extensive literature review, we surveyed faculty members views as why ethics should (or should not) be included in the curriculum, what should be taught, who should teach ethics, and how and where in the curriculum ethics should be taught. We also asked about influence of religious teachings in ethics education and the extent to which accounting faculty believe it should be integrated into ethics course or not.

Research Objectives

The objectives of the research are to:

1) To explore the opinions of accounting educators regarding inclusion of ethics content in the accounting curriculum.
2) To explore the delivery method of ethics content in teaching institutes
3) To Find out the influence of religious teachings in ethics education

Research Questions

1) Should Ethics Be Taught and why (not) teach ethics?
2) What, Where, How and by whom should ethics be taught?
3) Do religious teachings help in teaching ethics to accounting students?

Significance of Research

Financial disasters, big business failures, and the increased stakeholders concern for fair playland ethics based practices, indicates that ethics is the least of the concerns in the practices of the corporate businesses. The outcome Softhis study is well-timed because the recent surge in accounting scandals has again highlighted the contentious debate about improvement in ethics accounting curriculum. The findings of this study will provide perceptions of accounting faculty and input for future standard setters, teachers and business institutions regarding inclusion of ethics content in the accounting curriculum. Accounting degree holders will make better ethical decisions in corporate environment. As a result, less financial frauds will happen in the business world.

Literature Review

Ethics can be generally regarded with reference to "the actions of people, in situations where these actions have effects on the welfare of both one and others" (Gaaet al. 2004). Ethical considerations are involved in every business decision; therefore, ethics is an essential part of every business decision. (Felton et al. 1990: 390). This is partly because of the range of adverse and narrow cultural stereotypes due to cultural malign (Friedman et al 2001; Dimniket al 2006) which gives the image of an unreachable jargonized, numbercrunching, a-social domain. It makes it difficult for a practical engagement with issues of ethics and corporate governance (see Boyce et al. 2012; Boyce & Greer 2013).

Ethical education can be "… an important lever for changing business" (Gentile et al. 2003: 2). Ethical education gives students a perspective of the linkage between ethics theory and real-life situations (Helps, 1994). There are many published papers on accounting ethics education in the developed. They came to the conclusion that ethics should be included in the accounting curriculum for the progress of future accountants. It is certainly understandable that students form a base for ethics till they reach intermediate education, but there is enough evidence that it can be further improved at university level by incorporating ethics in their education. After all, teaching certain values and encouraging behavior remained a basic tool of education throughout the history, and because of this educationist given its social significance (see Boyce 2002). Incorporating and improving ethics education in accounting will take us to quality financial reporting.. Blanthorne et al. (2007) study was conducted as different US accounting organizations, after major corporate collapses such as Enron, proposed that ethics education needed more attention in academic institutions. Pakistan also had recent corporate scams such as Mehran Bank, Mohib Textiles and Taj Company (Siddiqui & Fahim, 2013). Business schools, to some extents are to blame for ethical woes in the business fraternity, because they neglect ethics in accounting curriculum. Encouraging students to follow profit making and shareholders interest by instilling amoral theories, accounting institutes led students to forgo any ethical moral (Ghoshal, 2005: 76) and the longstanding "history of sidestepping ethics" has resulted in a crisis of legitimacy and confidence (Swanson, 2005: 247). Ethics education has the ability to positively affect students and communities but, as organizations, universities normally favors popular political and social values and tend to enshrine these values in a way that supports and ensures the status quo (Boyce 2002).The same somehow applies to accounting education as well (see Merino 2006; Boyce 2008; Merino et al. 2010).The focus of students in accounting education incline towards the maximization of shareholder wealth as compared to other values (Gentile & Samuelson 2003).

Moreover, low investor protection, weak legal enforcement, ineffective judicial system and ineffective corporate governance system are more likely to result in higher number of frauds and corporate collapses (Attiya Y. Javid & Robina Iqbal, 2010). Due to the above discussed institutional differences between US and Pakistan, the need for ethics education may differ between the two countries. Therefore, the accounting educators' opinions are likely to differ regarding ethics education in curriculum from the opinions of US accounting educators. Thus, for replicating Blanthorne et al. (2007), Pakistan seems to be an appropriate choice.

Ashraf and Ghani (2005) describe the British colonial influence on Pakistani accounting. They explain how first the colonial influence and then global financial organizations such as Asian Development Bank and the International Monetary Fund played a significant part in formulating current financial reporting practices of Pakistan. The country adopted International Accounting Standards in 1985, however, that had no significant effect in improving the financial reporting. The authors argue that for emerging economies like Pakistan, the enforcement mechanisms such as interaction between legal system, accounting system and sub-system within accounting system plays a vital role in improving the quality of financial reporting. The authors conclude that lack of investor protection (minority rights protection, insider-trading protection), judicial inefficiencies, and weak enforcements are critical factors in describing the state of accounting in Pakistan. The findings of the study are important in the sense that they help in understanding the overall institutional and accounting structure of Pakistan, which in turn becomes the major motivation of the current study regarding ethics.

La Porta *et al* (1997) proved with a survey of forty-nine countries that countries will have reduced and thinner capital markets if the shareholder' protection, calculated by both the quality of legal rules and the character of law enforcement is poor. The findings were applicable to financial markets. They observed that the French civil law nations had the lowest investor protections and underdeveloped capital markets in comparison to common law nations. La Porta (1998) studied the source and quality of enforcement of legal rules, covering protection of corporate shareholders and creditors in 49 countries. Their results revealed that common-law countries generally had the strongest legal protection whereas the French civil-law countries had the weakest. Further they observed that ownership concentration in thelargest public companies was negatively related to investor protections, which was in consistence with the hypothesis that small, diversified shareholders are unlikely to be important in countries that fail to protect their rights. The findings of these studies are relevant to Pakistan as investor protection is low due to ineffective judicial system and poor legal enforcements resulting in poor equity markets. On the other hand, even though being a common law country yet there is no strong legal protection, but concentration of ownership can be negatively correlated with investor protection. In the presence of such institutional factors ethics education probably needs to be addressed more carefully.

Another aspect that makes the study worth doing and interesting are the cultural differences, which exists between the US and Pakistani society. Hofstede (1986) focused on the cultural differences in teaching and learning and presented his 4-Dimension model of cultural differences among societies. He presented the differences with reference to:

1. Large versus Small Power Distance
2. Individualism versus Collectivism
3. Strong versus Weak Uncertainty Avoidance
4. Masculinity versus Femininity

According to Hofstede (1986), teacher student came from diverse cultures thus much confusion could arise. These perplexities were attributed to many differences such as differences in their respective social positions in their societies, dissimilarities in the relevance of the curriculum for the two cultures, variances in the profiles of intellectual capabilities amongst the populations of the two cultures and dissimilarities in expected teacher/student and student/student communication. Based on work related values in over 50 countries the author presented a 4-Dimensional model of social differences among cultures. The four dimensions were individualism versus collectivism, large versus small power distance, strong versus weak uncertainty avoidance and masculinity and femininity. According to the model, US and Pakistani society differ a lot on individualism, power distance and uncertainty avoidance.

Pakistan is an Islamic country, and it may be perceived that people are strict followers of the religion and they observe the teachings of Islam in everyday life. However, literature suggests that Pakistani reporting system is in the current shape due to its British colonial earlier era and the role of international financial organizations. Factors like lack of stakeholder protection, judicial ineffectiveness and weak legal enforcements in the country make the current study worth doing. Inequalities in the societies of the two countries due to power distances suggest more attention be given to teaching ethics in Pakistan. But at the same time the low individualism in Pakistan imply that teaching ethics might not be as significant as considered in a high individualistic society like US. Collecting the views of accounting educators regarding ethics would provide evidence whether the views differ from US accounting educators in the presence of institutional and cultural differences. For this purpose, business schools and universities have started new policy to enhance ethical reasoning and individual reflection of education (Hejase et al, 2012).

Should Ethics Be Taught?

Considering the fact that Pakistan is an Islamic country, it may be implied that there is a general perception that ethics is best taught in families or religious institutions as prior literature provides evidence for such views (as cited in Blanthorne et al. 2007, pp. 364). However, literature also provides evidence for resource and reward limitations being the prominent reasons of failure in addressing ethical issues in courses (Cohen & Pant 1989; McNair & Milam 1993) and to some extent the opinion that ethics is not possible to be taught (Cohen & Pant 1989; Evan & Marcal 2005).Pakistan being a third world country and with scare resources sets the stage for the second question:

Why (Not) Teach Ethics?

The ability of accounting faculty to teach ethics is questioned in previous research (cited in Blanthorn et al., 2007, pp. 364) however, faculty believes that they are confident to teach ethics (Cohen et al. 1989; McNair et al. 1993; Blanthorne et al., 2007). The "Philosophical–Practical Dilemma" advocates that since some accounting faculty are not trained enough to teach ethics, so ethics should be taught by faculty of philosophy department. Langenderfer & Rockness disagreed with above statement and argued that "if ethical education is to have a significant place in the accounting curriculum, it must be integrated into the accounting courses and taught by accounting faculty" (p.61) (see section 3.1). In Pakistan, teachers holding various degrees such as Master of Public Administration, Master of philosophy and other business and accounting degrees teach ethics to accounting students. Thus, it was most appropriate to ask accounting educators who do they think should teach ethics. This forms the third research question:

Who Should Teach Ethics?

Another important issue is that of the content of ethics curriculum. Should it be based more on practical issues or theory? Prior literature provides mix views for the support of both practical and theory approach. Blanthorne et al. (2007) observed that accounting faculty preferred practical issues to be discussed in the classrooms rather than theory. Pakistani educational system is of a sort that mostly relies on textbooks and theory and does not include practical issues, which is one of the reasons that Pakistani graduates have firm theoretical knowledge of different subjects but have little know how of how to apply the theory in practice. Thus, it would be interesting to ask the fourth research question:

What Should be Taught?

Another important area that needs to be looked at is the way ethics is taught or should be taught. McNair & Milam (1993) observed that majority of accounting educators used lecture as a medium of instruction. However, many studies provide support for the case study method (as cited in Blanthorne et al., 2007, pp. 366; Wilhelm 2008; Langenderfer and Rockness, 1989). They found that accounting educators believed case study was a better option for teaching ethics. Case studies may be implemented in several ways to help different educational goals (Boyce et al. 2001). Mostly, dynamic rather than old-style moral approaches are likely to succeed (Pettifor et al 2002; Rockness et al. 2010). In Pakistan, general preferred method of teaching is classroom lectures, and this culture has prevailed for almost seventy-five years now. But there are progressive and vibrant institutions like Lahore University of Management Sciences and Institute of Business Administration and others that encourage case study approach. Many other institutions are now looking at these institutes as their role models. Therefore, it would be apt to ask the fifth question:

How should (is) Ethics be (being) Taught (i.e., Methods)?

All matters of life in Islam are led by ethics. Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) said: "I have not been sent except to perfect the ethical system (mukaram al-akhlaq)". (Samadiet al. 2009). The Holy Quran and Sunnah are the guiding principles for ethics in Islam. In a way comparable to Weberian Protestantism, Islam offers the conceptual foundation for a range of personal attributes that stimulate economic growth (Rokhman, 2010). The financial and economic systems under the Sharia Law; more disclosures, more fairness and detail are required to warrant distributive justice. The baseline is that Muslim accountants will be encouraged to adhere to such due to code religious beliefs and a way of obeying Allah's commands and not doing the things forbidden in Islam. (Abdul Rahman, 2003). As Pakistan was made on the basis of religion, it was interesting to ask accounting faculty whether religious teachings help in teaching ethics to accounting students.

Do Religious Teachings Influence Ethics education?

Prior studies such as Madison & Schmidth (2006) reported that the actual time spent on ethics instruction was less than what could have been ideal time for it. Blanthorne et al. (2007) observed that respondents believed ethics education was valued at their institutes, but sufficient coverage was not given in the institutes and in their own courses. In spite the popular view that ethics should be included in accounting education, it is still a debatable topic whether it should be integrated among the different courses or be a separate specialized course or courses. For example, Fisher et al. (2005) debate that a stand-alone course give a strong message to the accounting students that ethics education is necessary. However many previous studies favour the case of integration into different subjects but it does not completely remove the possibility of adoption of one or more specialist ethics courses in accounting curriculum. The main purpose of this approach if executed well, is to make realize students that ethics education is not a small stand-alone issue, rather it is enshrined in all business and organizational matters – a view point that is essential and key to ethics in accounting (Loeb 1988; Geary & Sims 1994; Adler 1999).The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) has recommended integration of ethical content in accounting courses as opposed to a stand-alone course, but this decision attracted a lot of criticism. Critics felt that it was a good opportunity to bring a decisive meaningful change in ethics education, which was unfortunately lost at this point of time. (see Hartman & Hartman 2004). Ethics should be integrated into other subjects, but a thorough analysis should also be carried out regarding the content covered and how it will be integrated across the subjects to give an accurate interdisciplinary perspective. (Swanson 2005; Bean et al. 2007; Williams et al. 2010). Preferably, stand- alone ethics courses would be taught by accounting faculty with appropriate expertise, thus conveying ethical knowledge in the context of the subject matter. Apart from that, a combination of accounting and philosophy faculty may also teach ethics. (Hartman et al. 2004; Abdol Mohammadi 2008).

One way out may be to have integrated in different subjects but at the same time offer at least one specialist stand-alone course. Such an arrangement will simultaneously satisfy the criteria of relevance and in depth understanding of the subject (Armstrong 1993). It is unfortunate to say that the practice of business schools to teach at least one specialist ethics subject will continue, as past practice indicates that voluntary compliance in this domain is unlikely to bring any significant change (Hartman et al. 2004). In the circumstances prevailing in Pakistan at the moment, e.g., currently ethics is in the list of general requirement subjects in Higher Education Commission's Curriculum of Commerce, an interesting question to conclude the survey would be:

Methodology

Quantitative research method is used to collect and analyze the data collected from the faculty related to the study. Data was collected through questionnaire from around 250 accounting faculty teaching accounting at 12 public and private institutes of Peshawar. Respondents were selected through convenience sampling method. The data collected was analyzed through Descriptive Statistics using frequency counts, percentages, means and standard deviation. Same method is used in similar previous research papers such as Blanthorne et al., (2007), adkins Madison et al. (2006).

Findings & Analysis

Figure 1

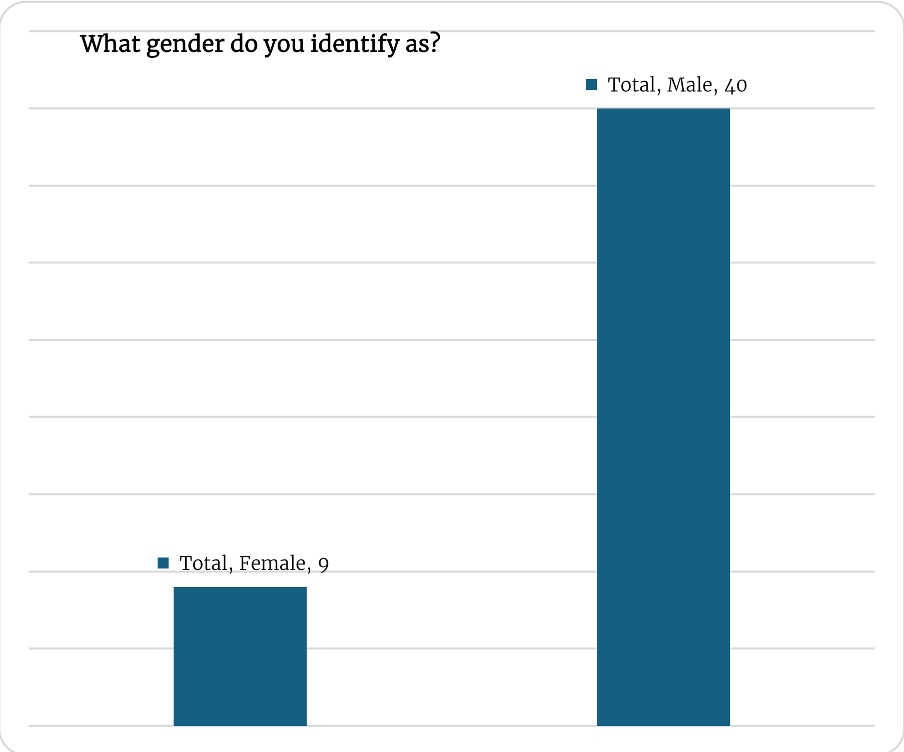


Figure 2

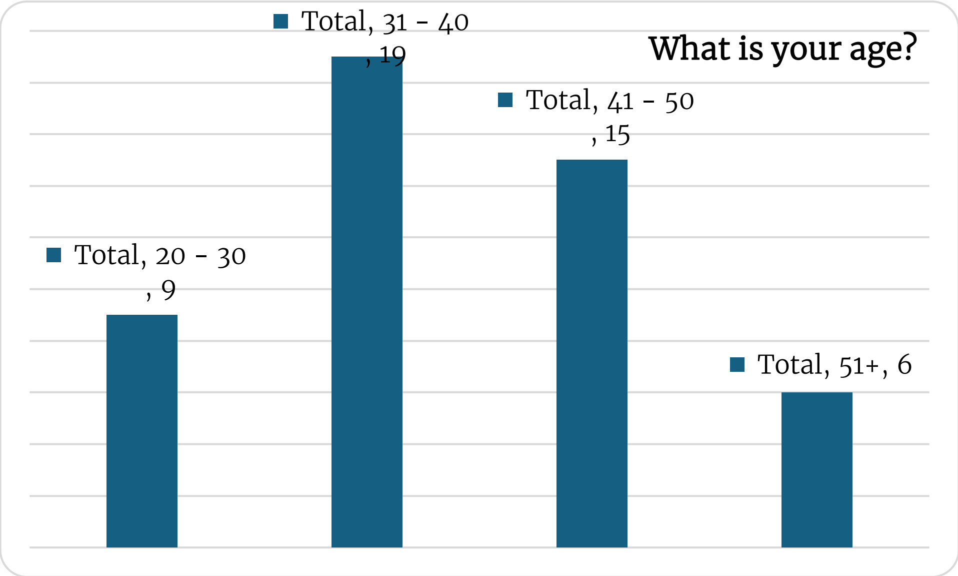
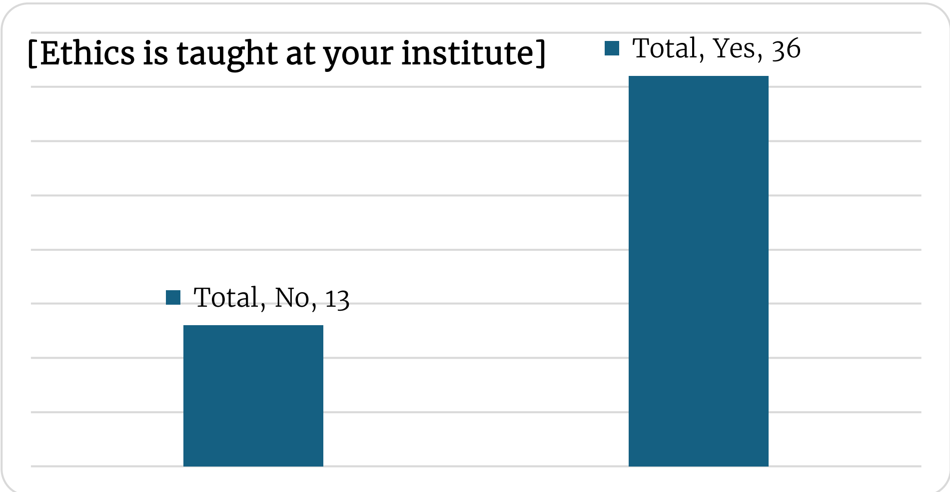


Figure 3

Figure 4



Interpretation

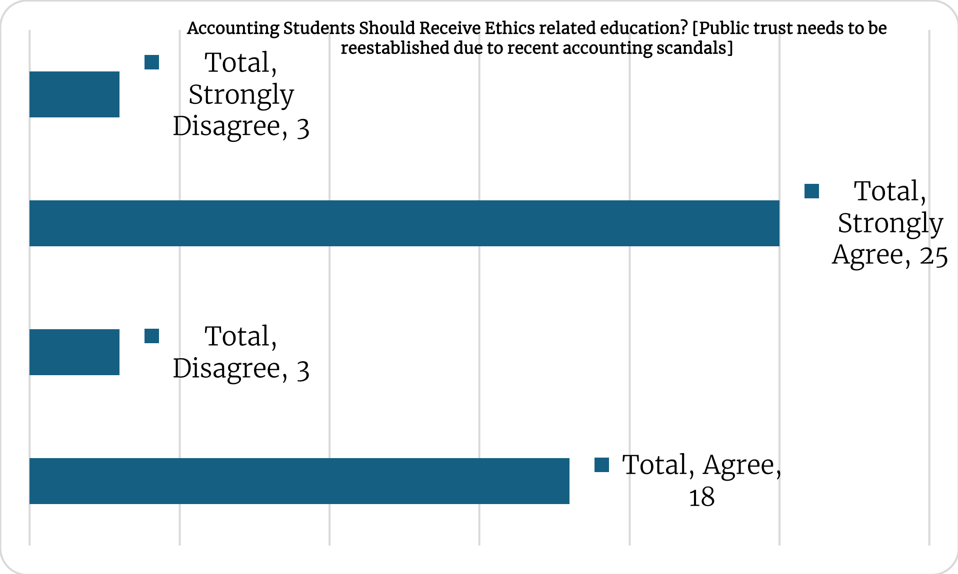
27% respondents said that ethics is not taught at their institute while 73% answered in affirmative.

Table 1 – Why Accounting Students Should Receive Ethics Related Education?

Interpretation

78% respondents strongly agreed that ethical development is key to the accounting profession.

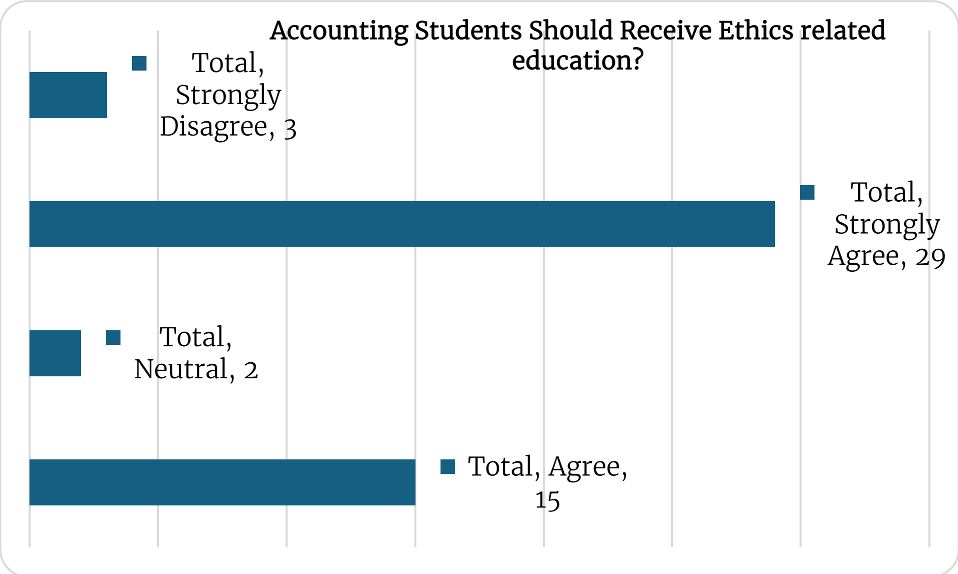
Figure 5



Interpretation

88% respondents replied in favor of the question asked. 51% of which strongly agreed and 37% agreed with the opinion.

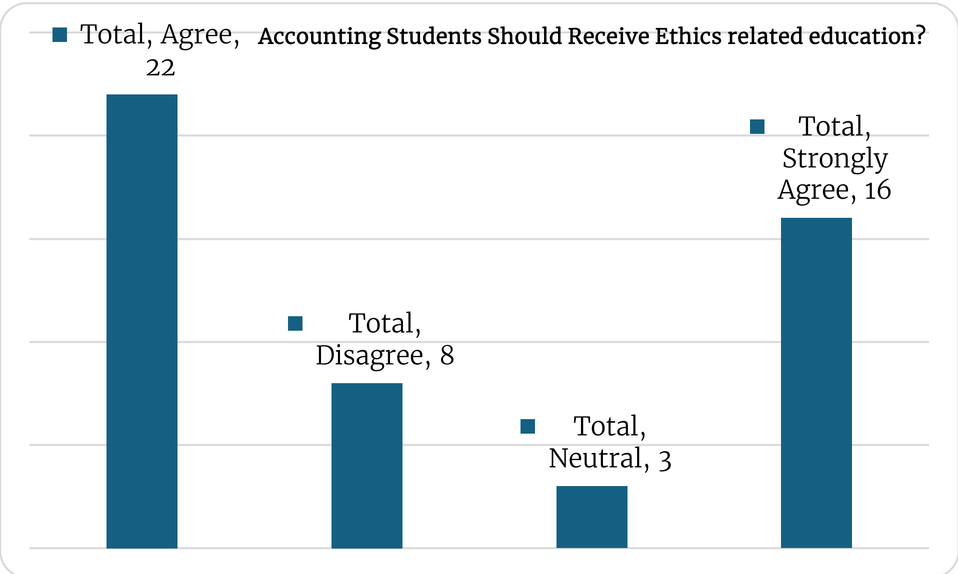
Figure 6



Interpretation

90% respondents (SA 59% A31%) agreed with the opinion that the profession may lose the right to regulate itself if ethical lapses continue.

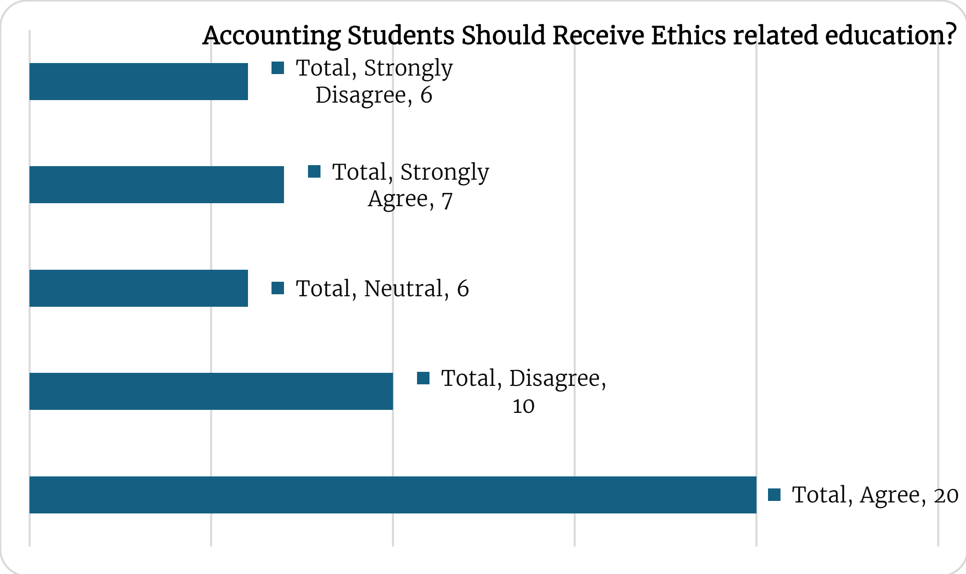
Figure 7



Interpretation

Majority of the respondents (SA 14% A41%) agreed and 32% disagreed (SD 14% D41%) that students do not seem to be getting adequate ethical education.

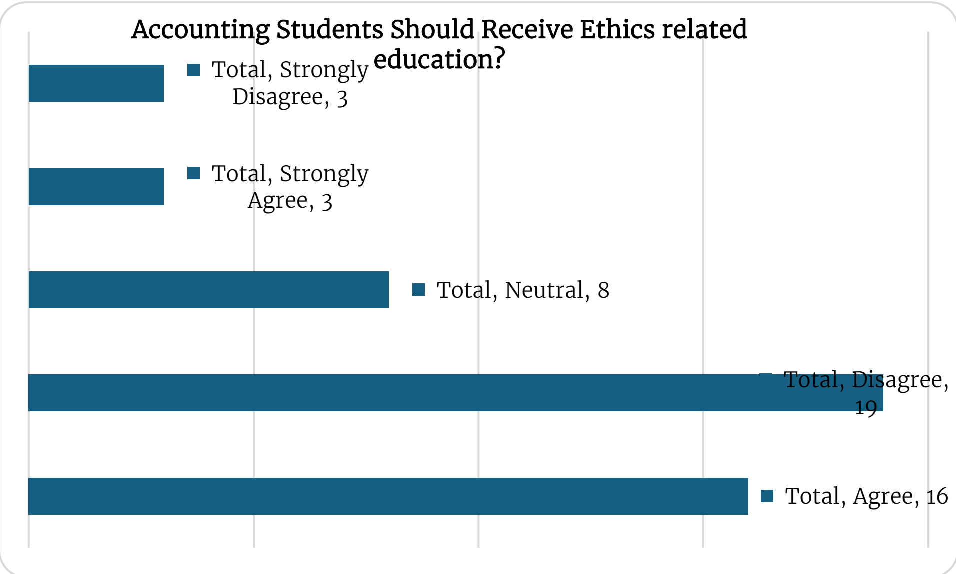
Figure 8



Interpretation

55% respondents agreed and 33% disagreed with the notion that Students ethical awareness has declined over the years.

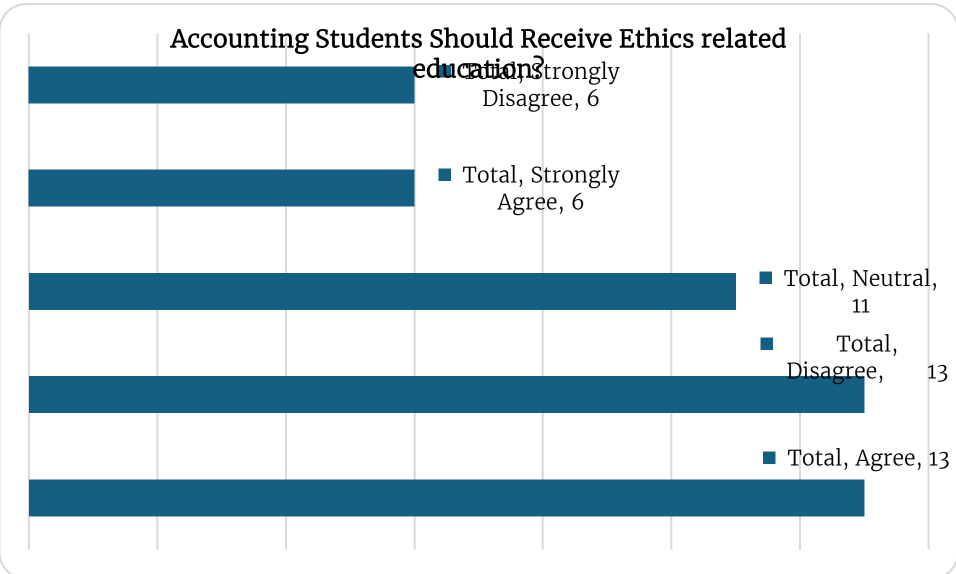
Figure 9



Interpretation

A mix of responses was received. 39% of the respondents agreed and 45 % disagreed that accounting education is focused on the right answer and does not prepare students to make ethically sensitive decisions.

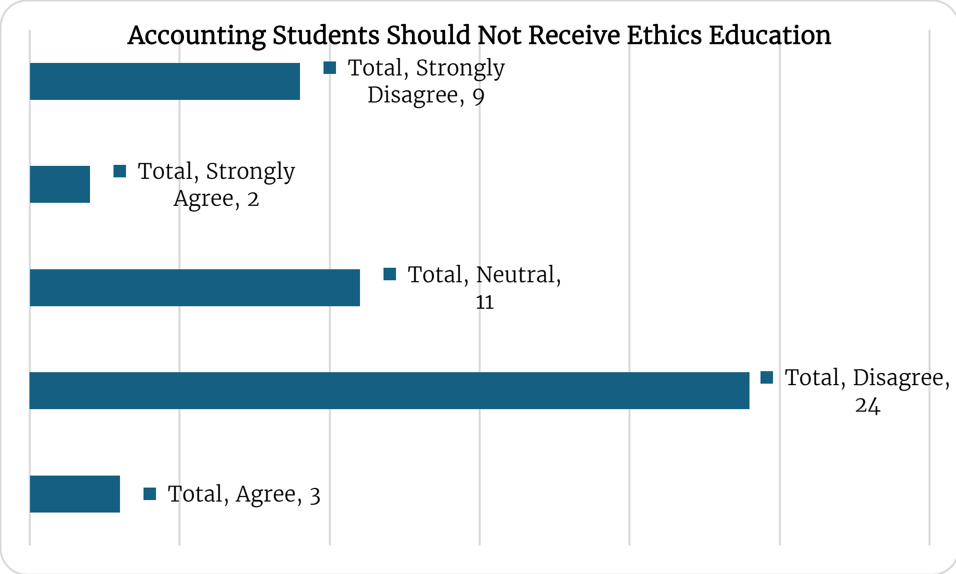
Figure 10



Interpretation

We got a divided opinion on this question. 39% respondents answered in favor while 39% were against the view that failure to teach ethics in the accounting curriculum contributed to recent business scandals.

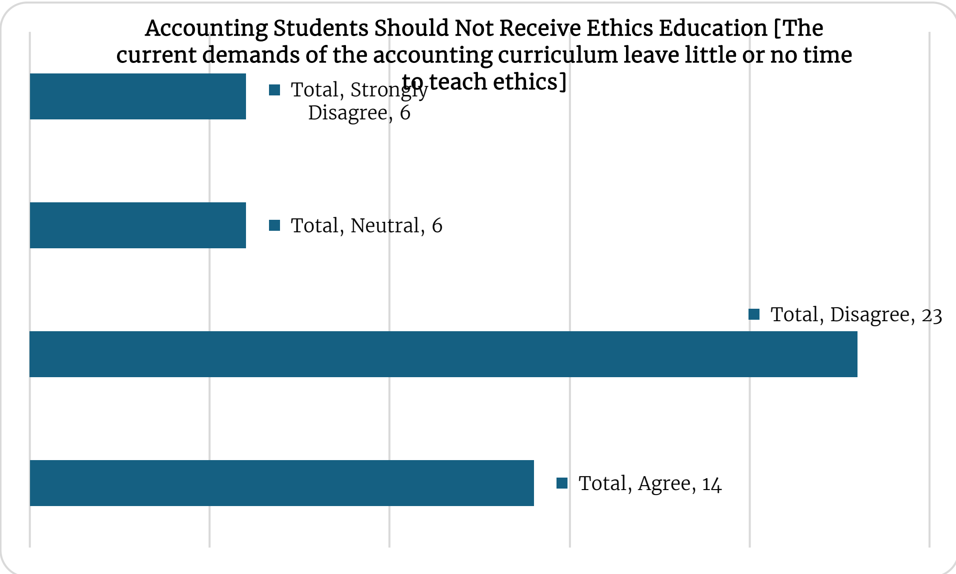
Figure 11



Interpretation

53% of the respondents disagreed with the opinion that faculty members are not willing to teach ethics. While 22% remained neutral and 24% agreed with the view shared above.

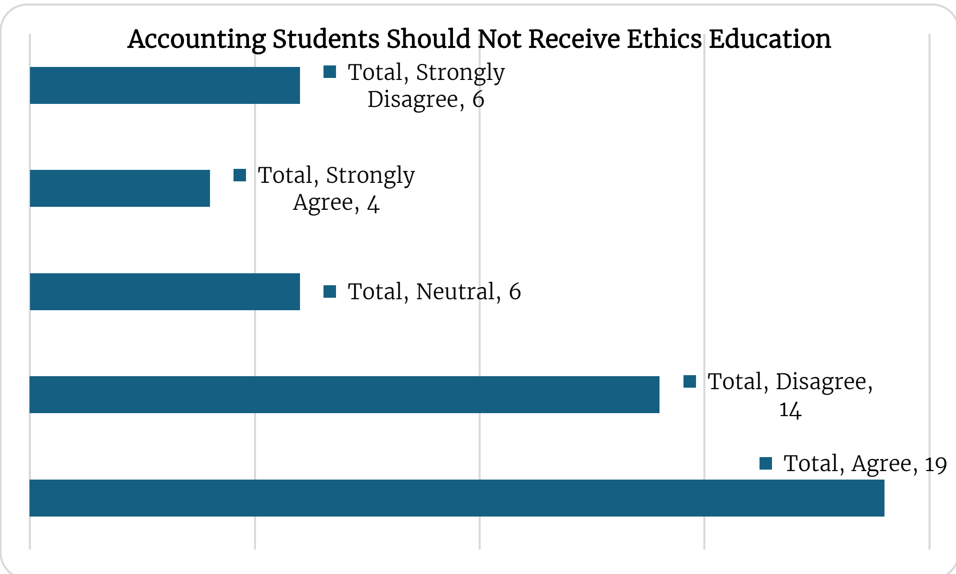
Figure 12



Interpretation

59% of the respondents disagreed with the view that time is a constraint to fulfil the current demands of accounting curriculum. Only 14% agreed with the above view.

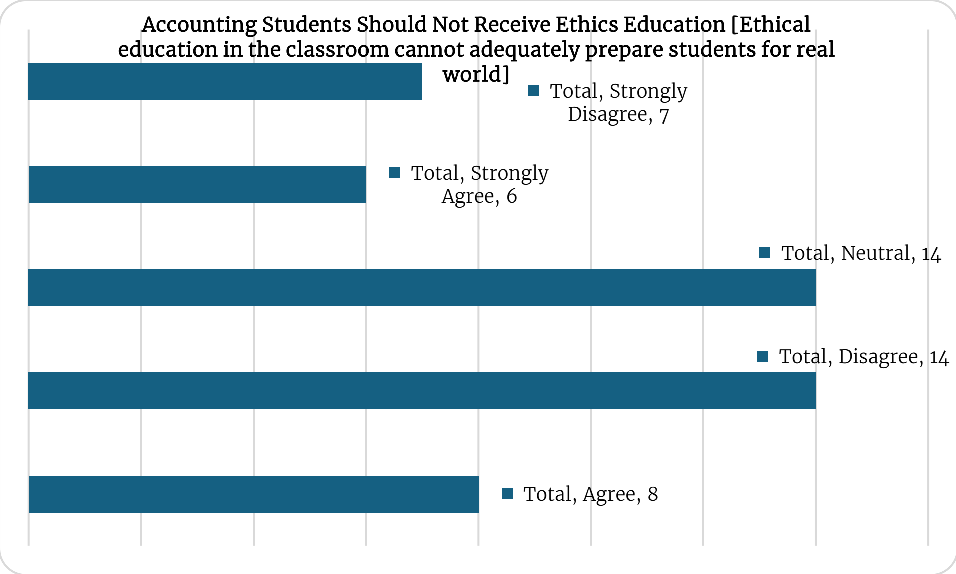
Figure 13



Interpretation

Surprisingly 47% respondents said that very few accounting faculty are qualified to teach ethics. Only 41% disagreed to the above statement.

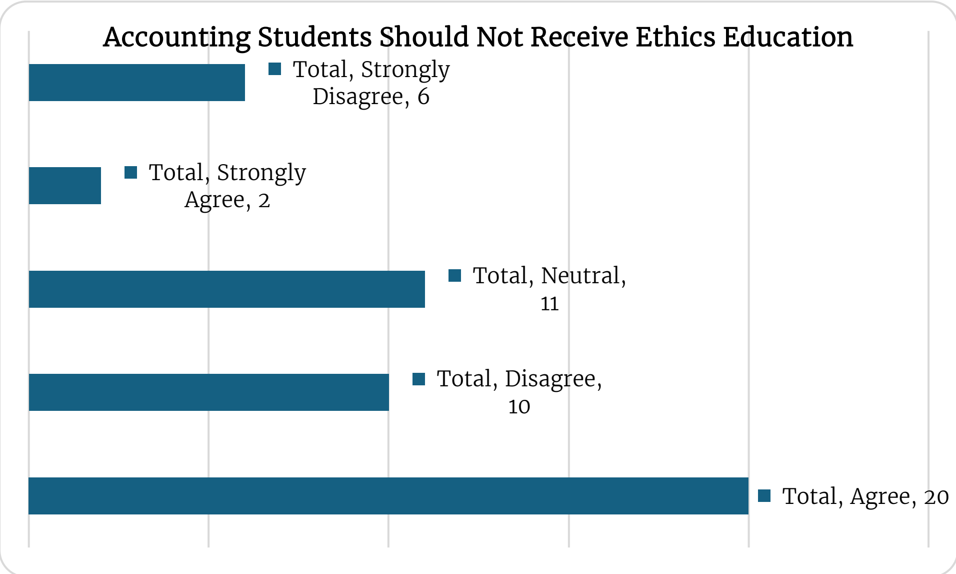
Figure 14



Interpretation

43% of the respondents disagreed with the notion that ethical education in the classroom cannot adequately prepare students for real world, while only 29% agreed with it.

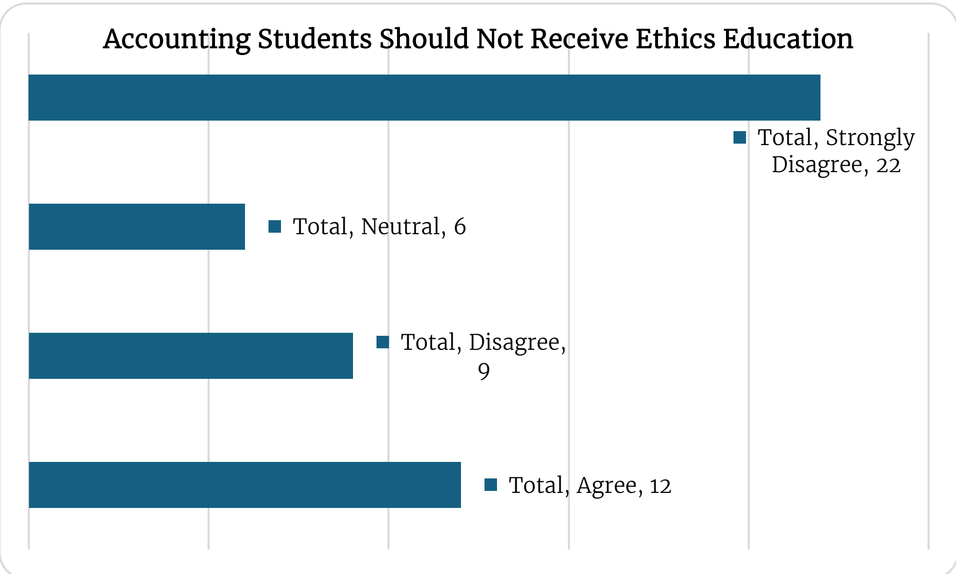
Figure 15



Interpretation

Alarmingly, 45% respondents were of the view that demands for teaching ethics in the curriculum are merely a public relations response to recent accounting scandals. 33% answered otherwise.

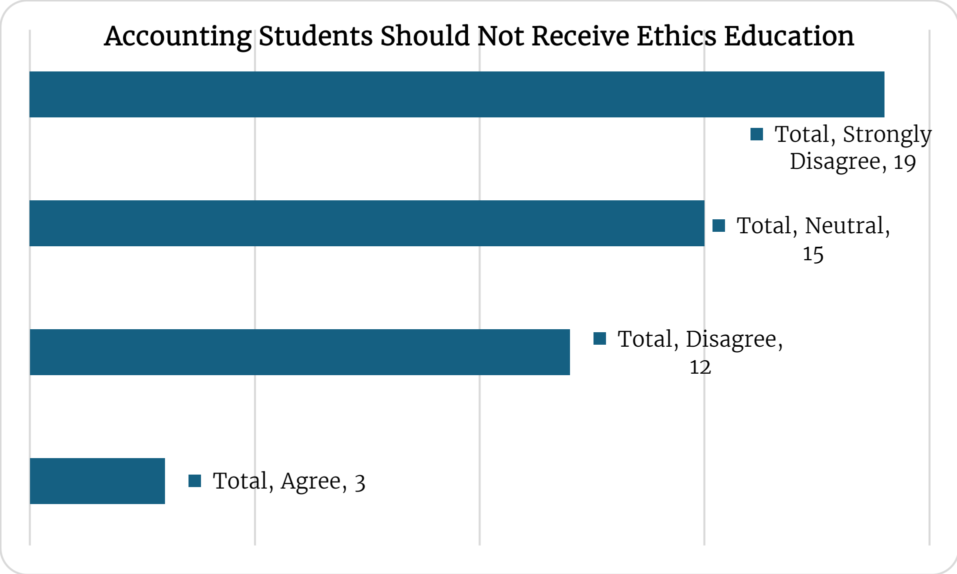
Figure 16



Interpretation

69% respondents disagreed with the statement that ethics cannot be taught, while only 24% agreed with it.

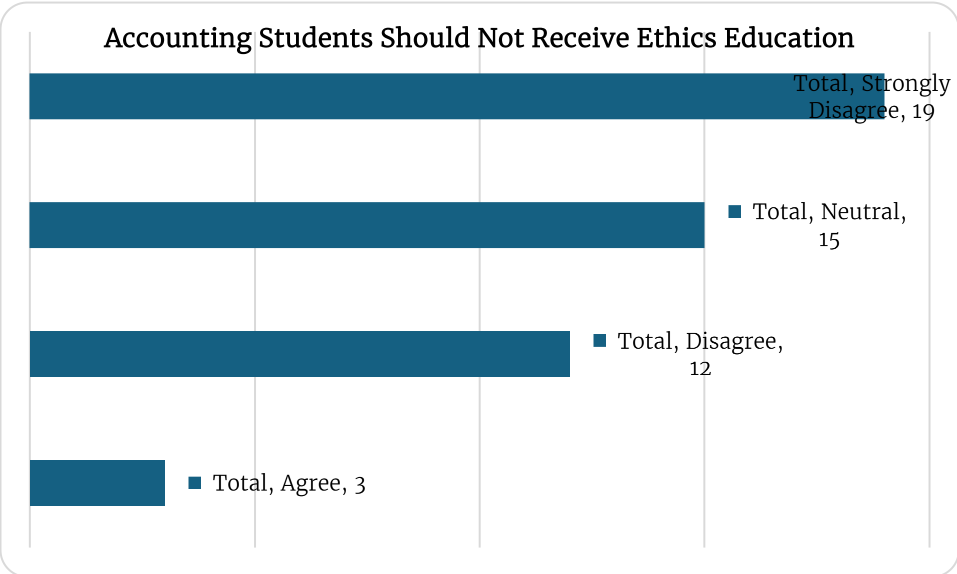
Figure 17



Interpretation

63% respondents disagreed with the statement that learning ethical values should be left to family, mosque, church etc, while only 6% agreed with it.

Figure 18

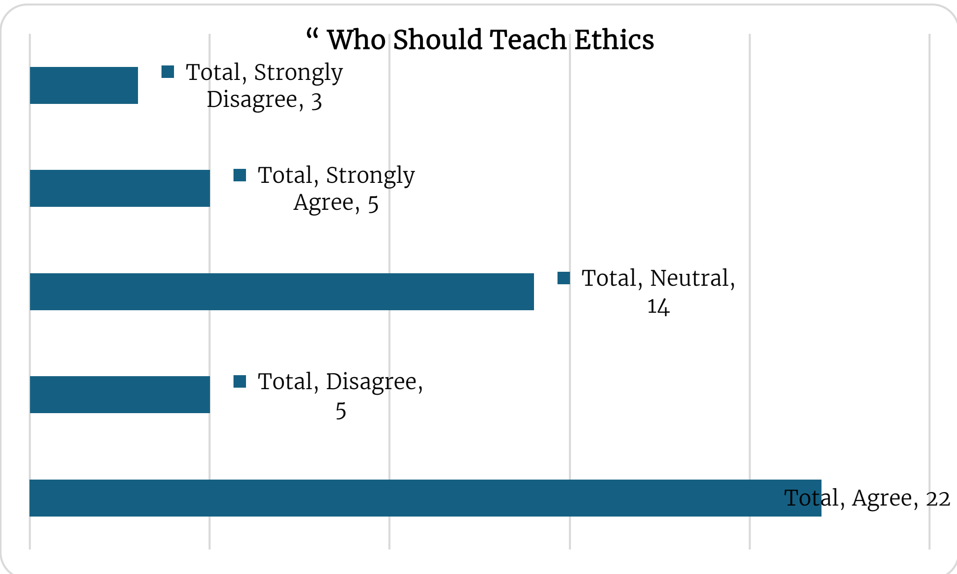


Interpretation

63% respondents disagreed with the statement that accounting curriculum is the wrong venue for ethical education, while only 6% agreed with it.

Table 3 – Who Should Teach Ethics

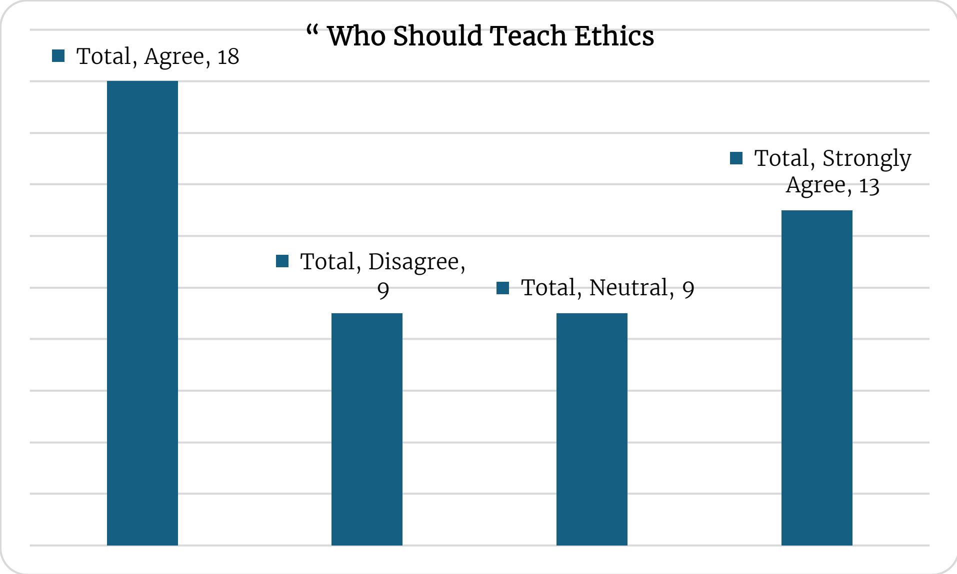
Figure 19



Interpretation

55% respondents agreed with the statement that accounting faculty should teach ethics.

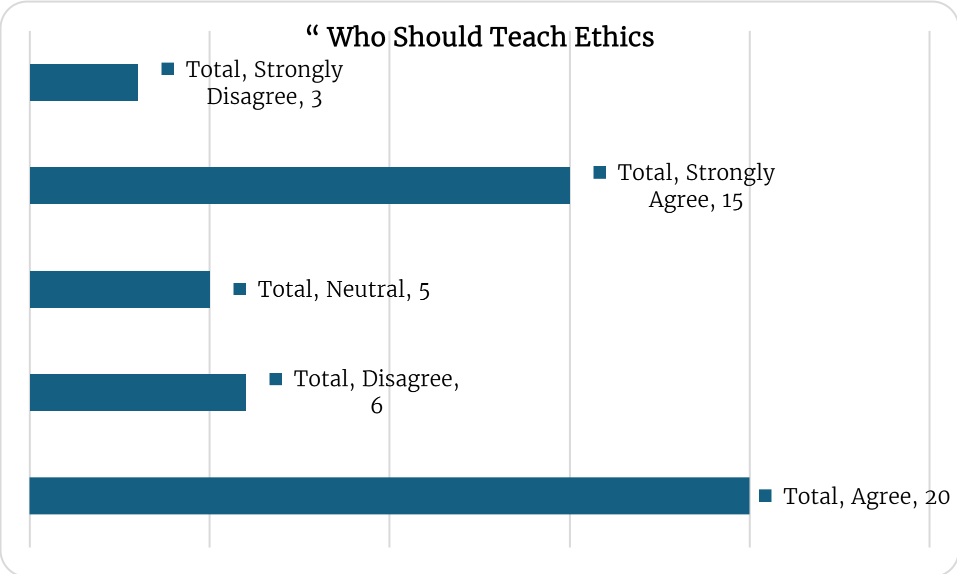
Figure 20



Interpretation

Only 37% respondents agreed with the statement that teams of accounting and philosophy and / or management facultyshould teach ethics.

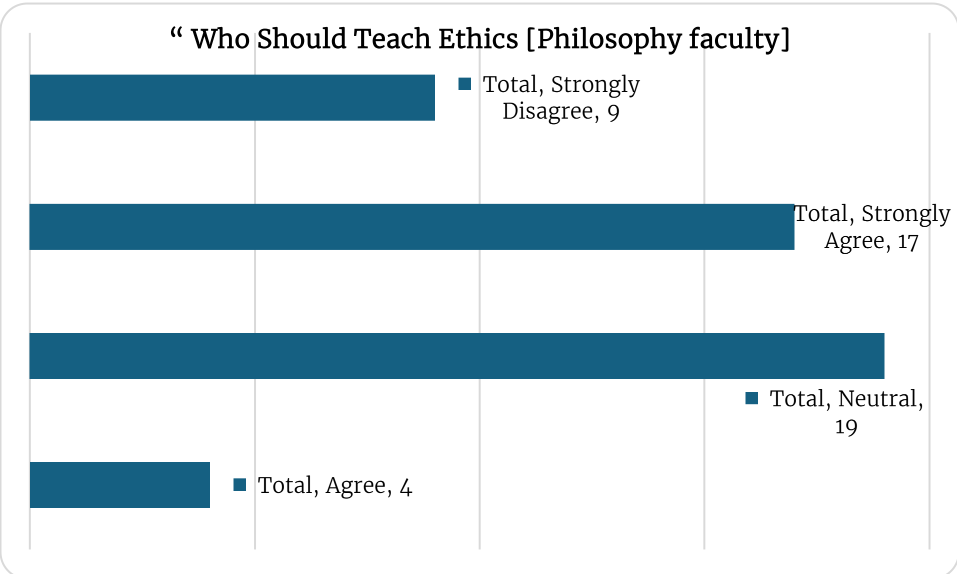
Figure 21



Interpretation

71% respondents agreed with the statement that management faculty specializing in ethics or corporate social responsibility.

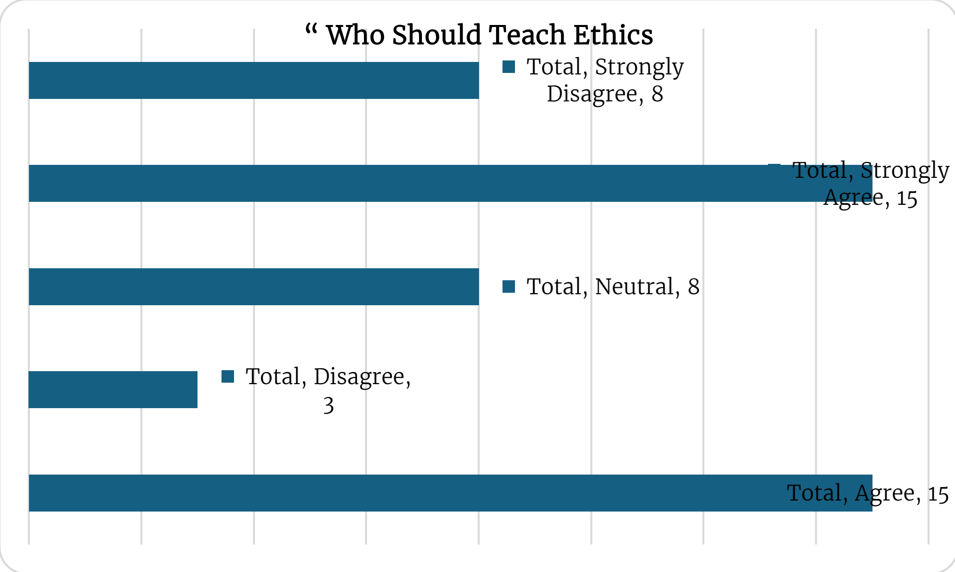
Figure 22



Interpretation

43% respondents agreed with the statement thatphilosophy facultyshould teach ethics.

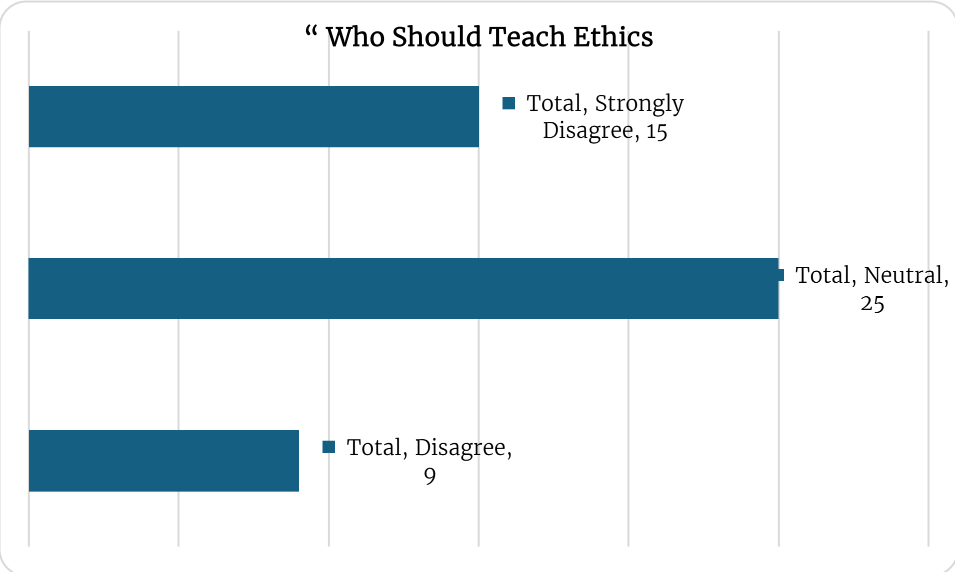
Figure 23



Interpretation

61% respondents agreed with the statement that only faculty with sufficient training in ethical reasoningshould teach ethics.

Figure 24

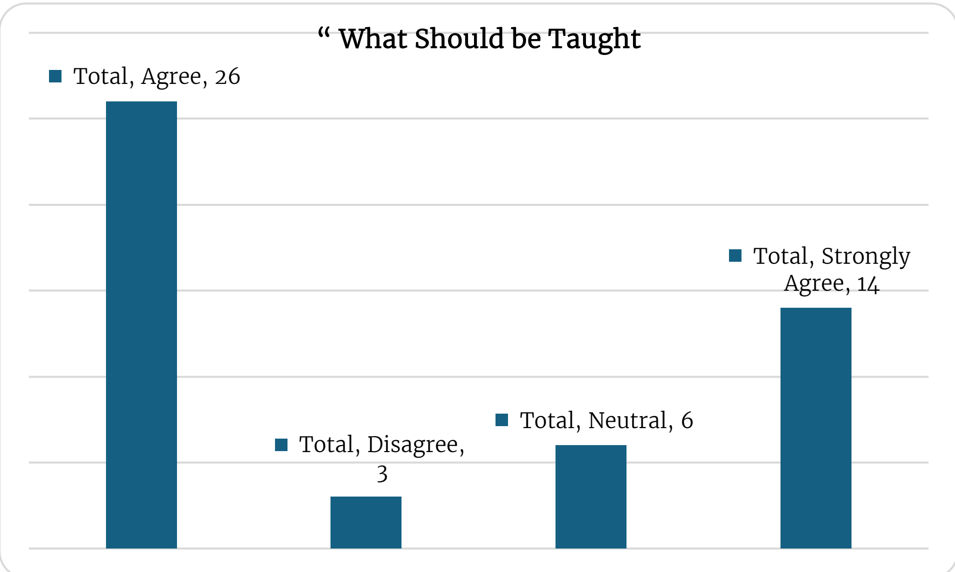


Interpretation

0% respondents agreed with the statement thataccounting faculty should teach ethics, but as long as I don't have to teach it.

Table 4 – What should be taught?

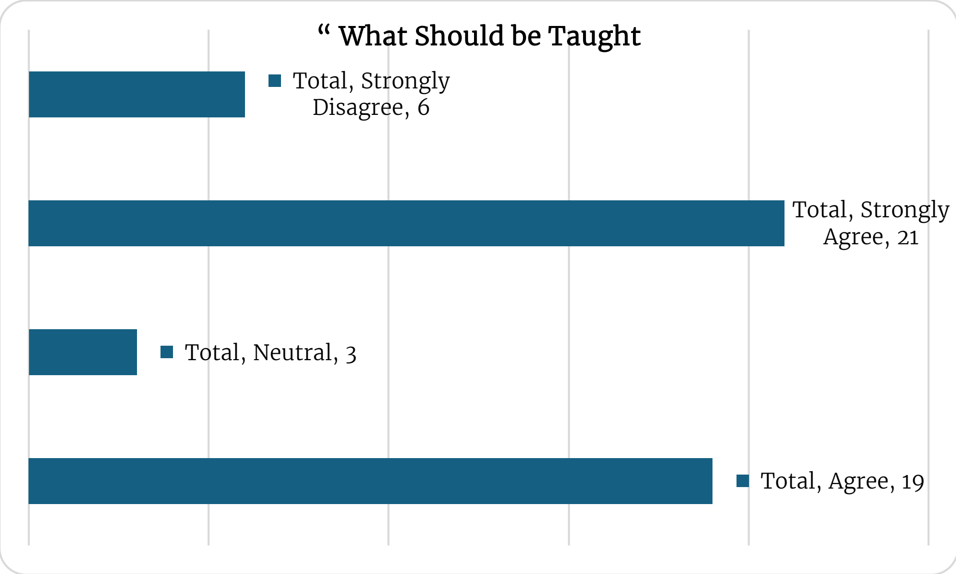
Figure 25



Interpretation

82% respondents agreed with the statement that ethical issues faced by the profession should be taught in ethics course taught in accounting institutes.

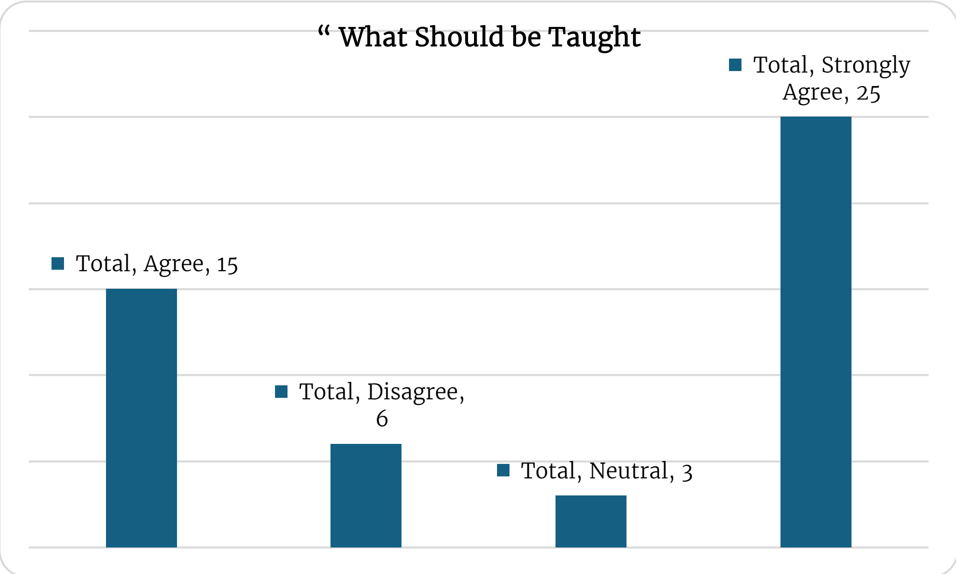
Figure 28



Interpretation

82% respondents agreed with the statement understanding professional moral obligations should be taught in ethics course taught in accounting institutes.

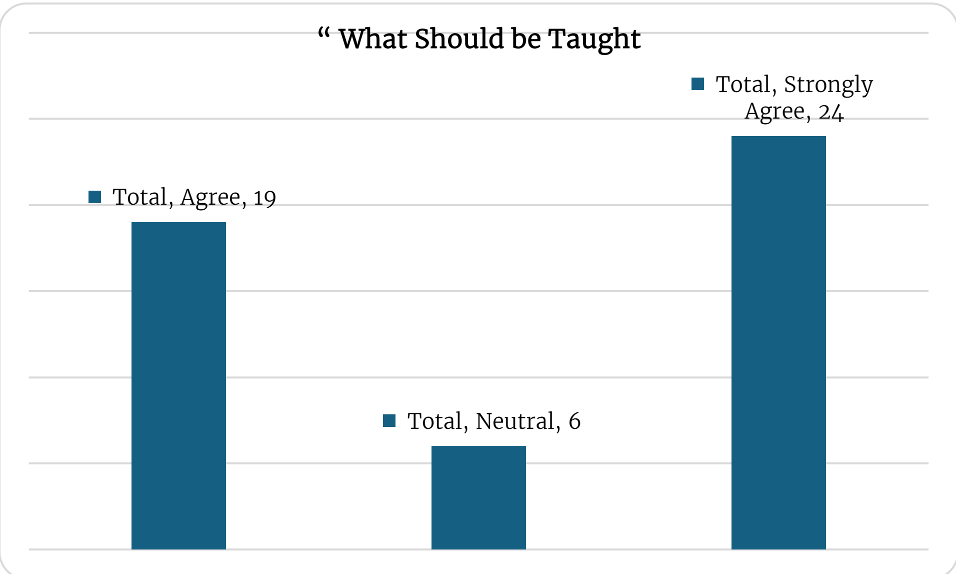
Figure 29



Interpretation

Only 31% respondents agreed with the statement Professional guidance (code of conduct, standards) should be taught in ethics course taught in accounting institutes.

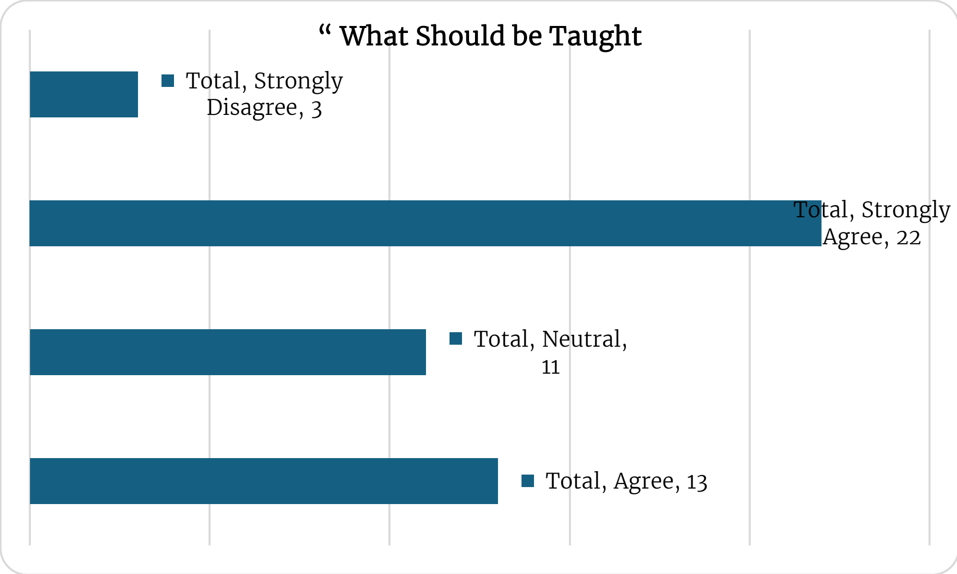
Figure 30



Interpretation

88% respondents agreed with the statement that ethical decision-making process / models should be taught in ethics course taught in accounting institutes.

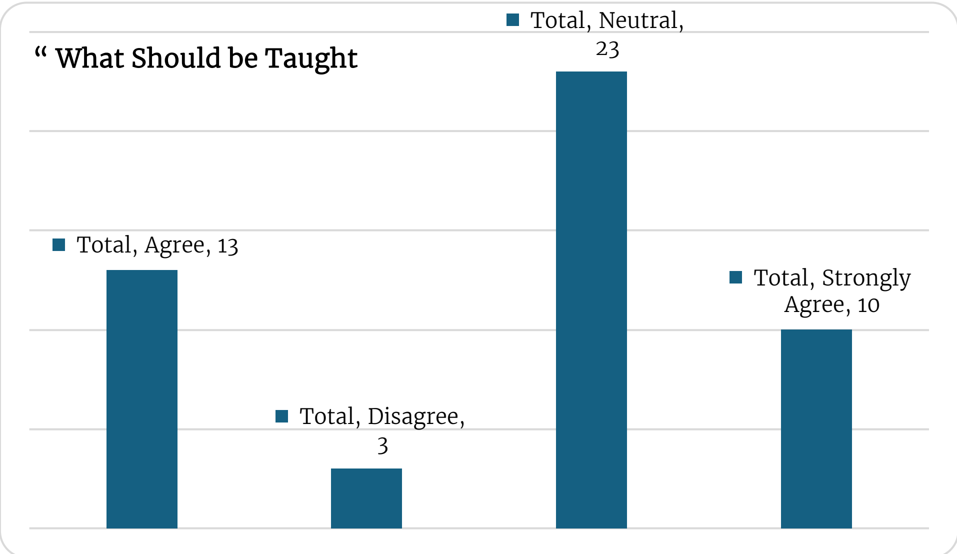
Figure 31



Interpretation

71% respondents agreed with the statement that the pursuit of personal excellence should be taught in ethics course taught in accounting institutes.

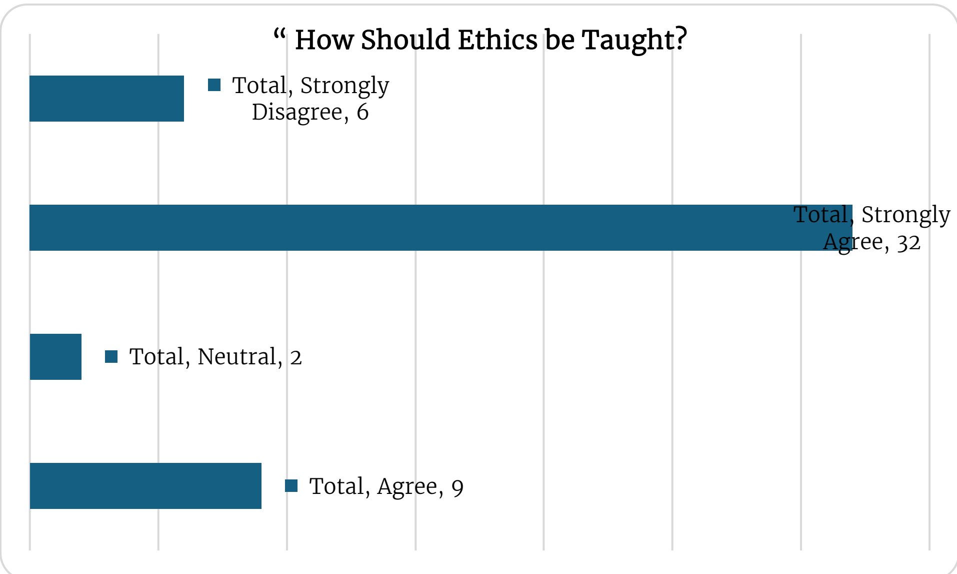
Figure 32



Interpretation

Only 47% respondents agreed with the statement that classical ethical theories (ex. Egotism, utilitarianism, deontology or writings of Plato, Aquinas, Hume, Kant, Mill, etc.) should be taught in ethics course taught in accounting institutes.

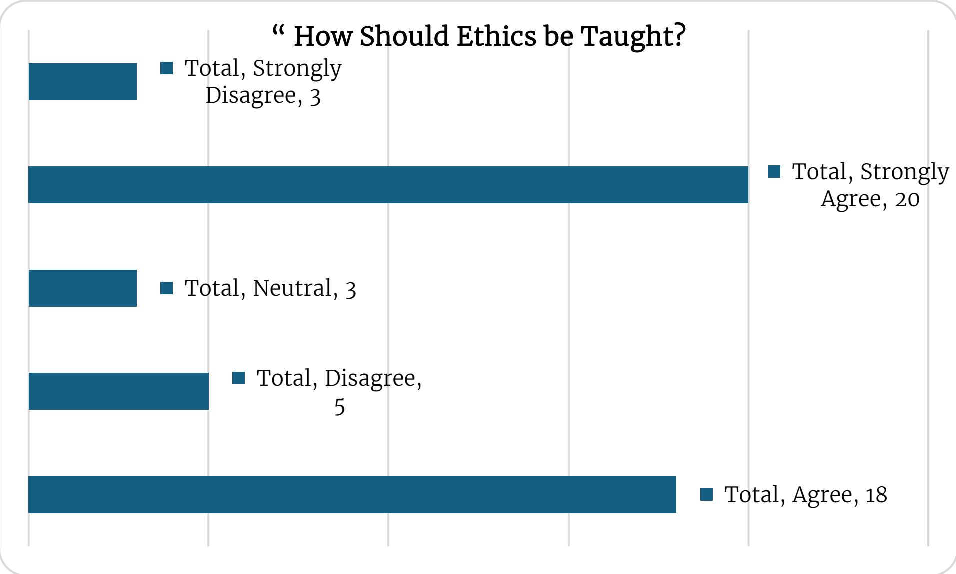
Figure 33



Interpretation

84% respondents responded that ethics should be taught through case study analysis.

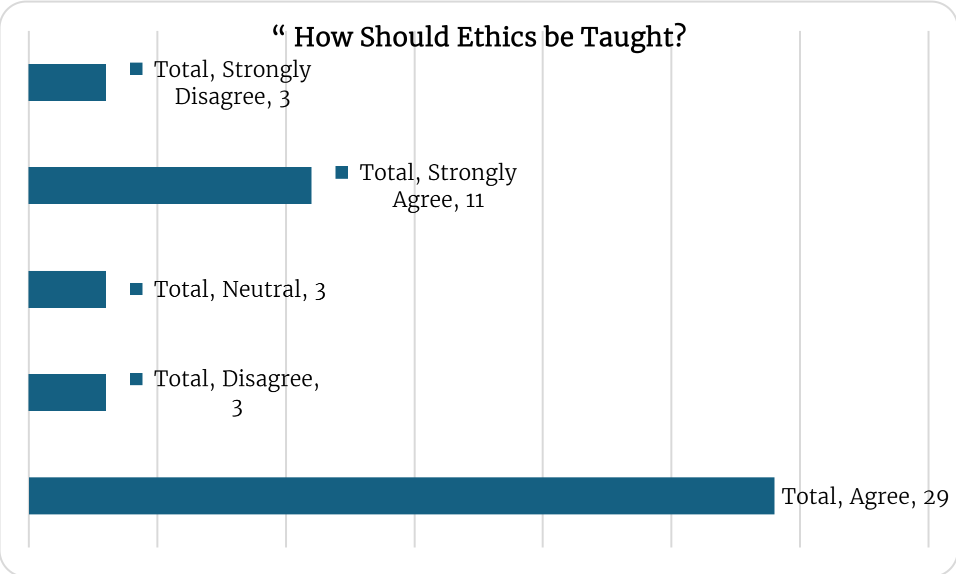
Figure 34



Interpretation

78% respondents responded that ethics should be taught through Vignettes (short written or video illustration).

Figure 35



Interpretation

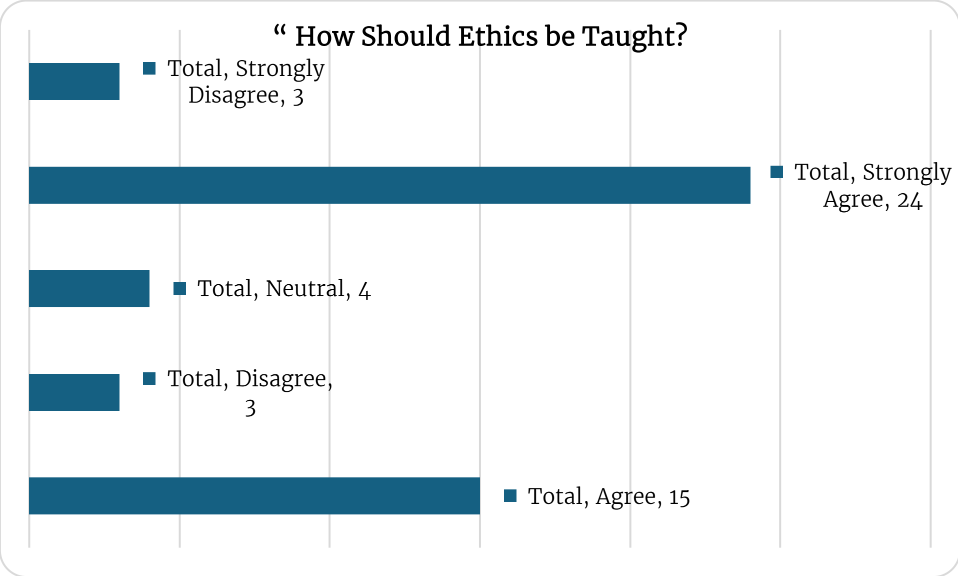
82% respondents responded that ethics should be taught through articles and other readings.

Figure 36

Interpretation

Only 39% respondents responded in affirmation that ethics should be taught through articles and other readings.

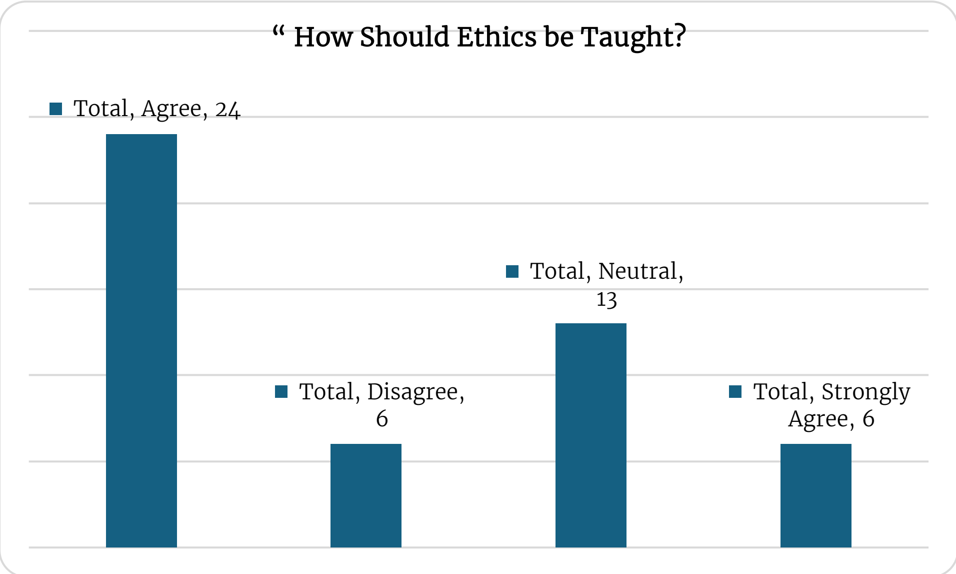
Figure 37



Interpretation

80% respondents responded that ethics should be taught through Role playing.

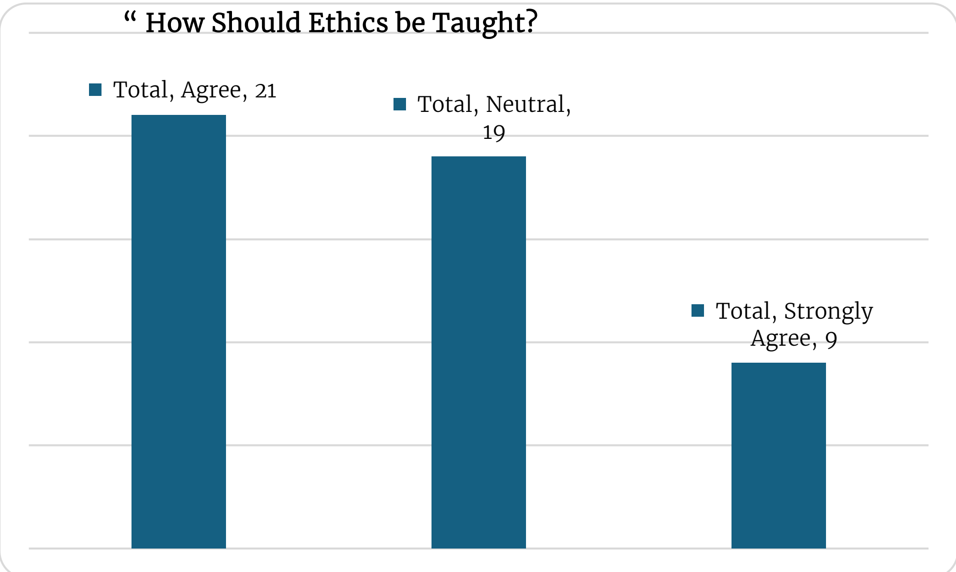
Figure 38



Interpretation

Relatively low percentage 80% respondents responded that ethics should be taught through Conventional classroom lectures.

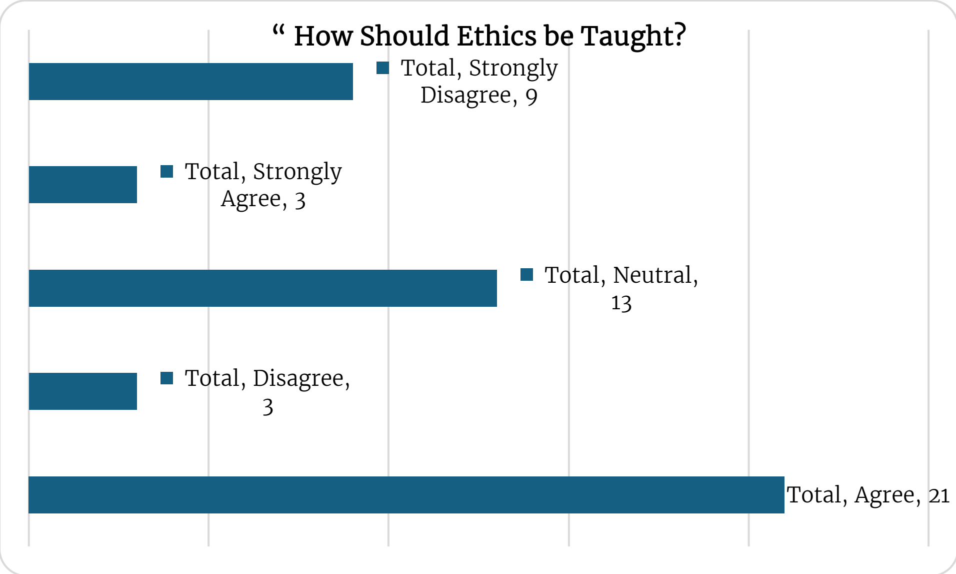
Figure 39



Interpretation

43% respondents responded that ethics should be taught through "Ethics Days" toexpose students to moral exemplars.

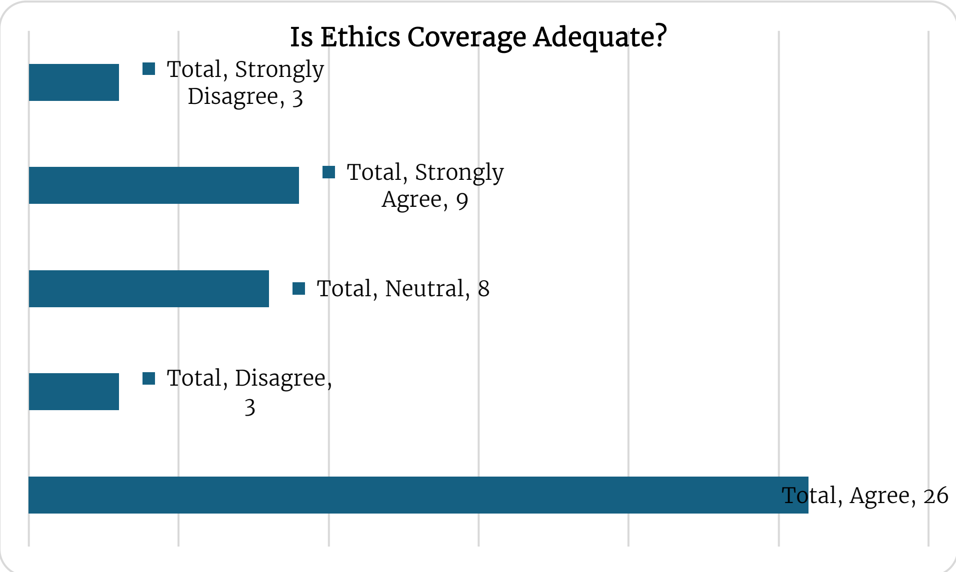
Figure 40



Interpretation

49% respondents responded that ethics should be taught through Ethicstextbooks.

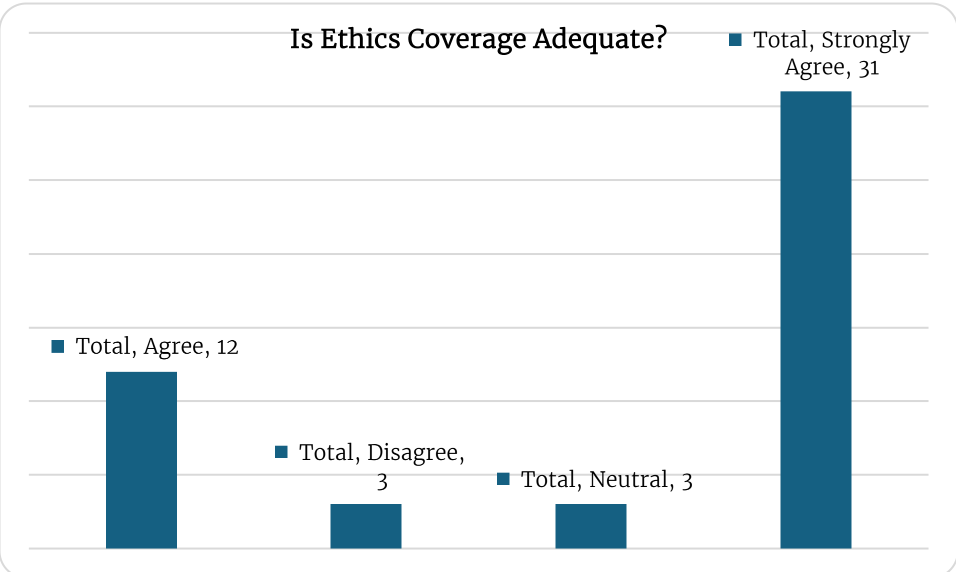
Figure 41



Interpretation

71% respondents responded that ethical coverage is encouraged by my department, while 12% disagreed about the same in their department.

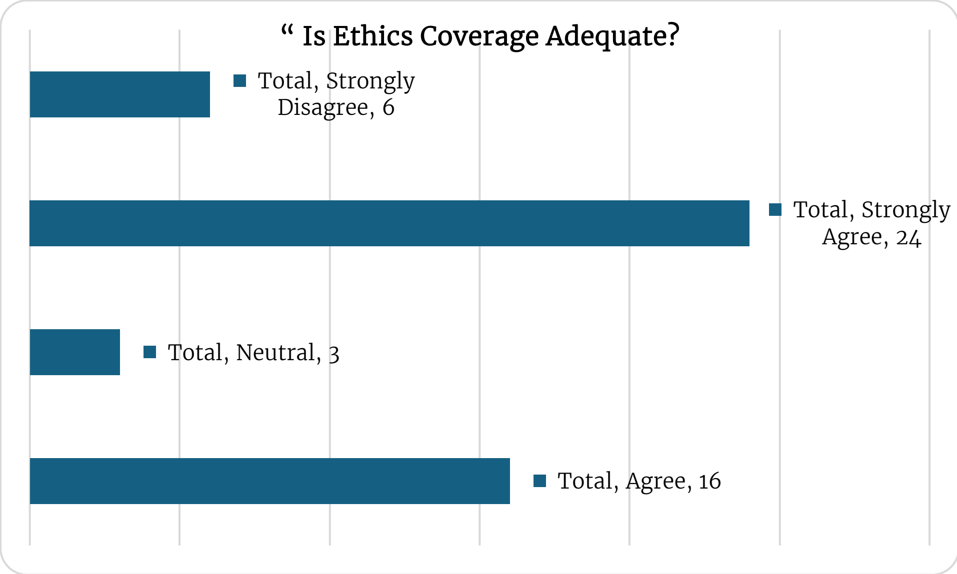
Figure 42



Interpretation

88% respondents responded that ethics should be included in thecompulsory requirement list of HEC curriculum of business administration, while only 6% disagreed with it.

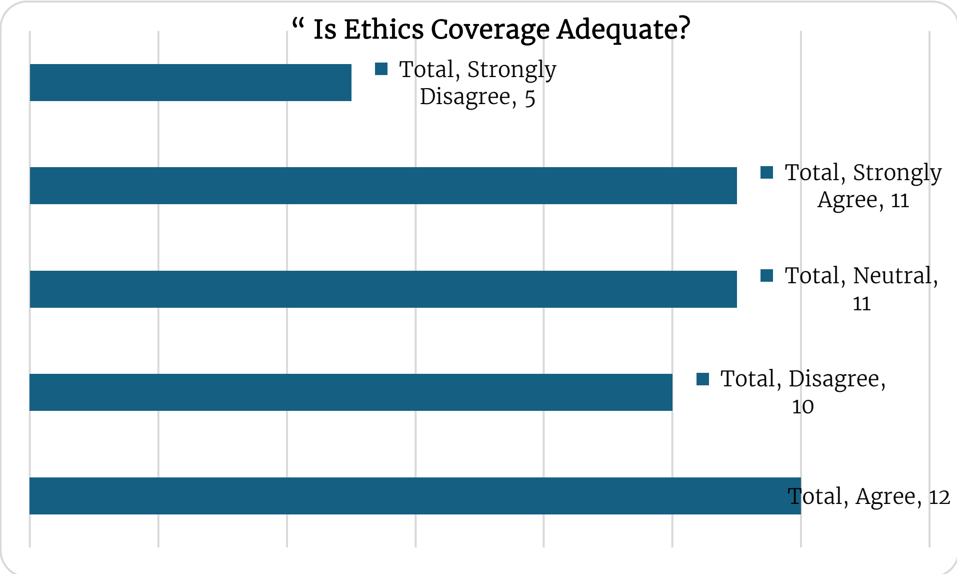
Figure 43



Interpretation

82% respondents responded that ethics training should be incorporated into doctoral programs (highest possible degrees available in a field, while only 12% disagreed with it.

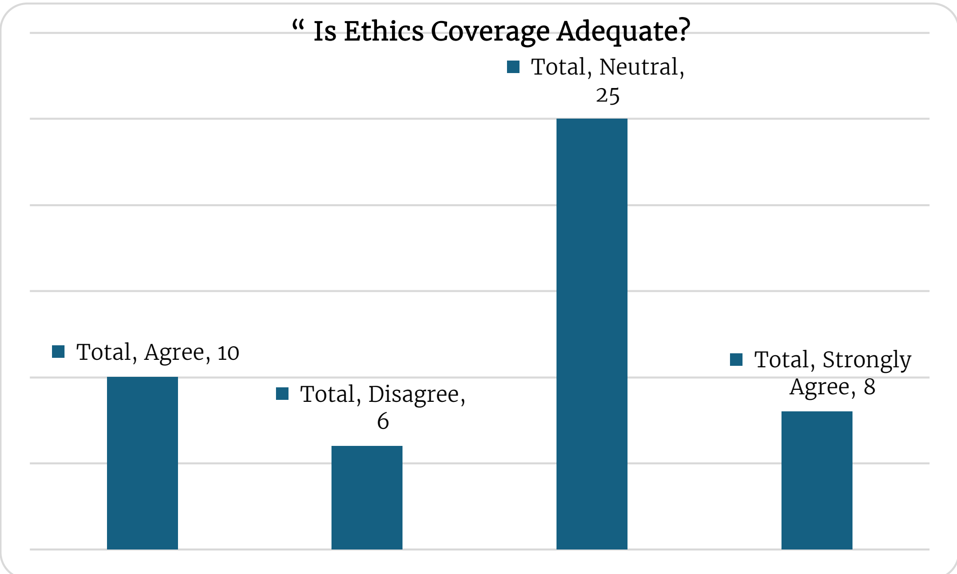
Figure 44



Interpretation

A divided opinion was received in response to this question. 47% respondents responded that ethical coverage is sufficient in the accounting department where I teach, while 31% disagreed with it and 22% remain neutral to it.

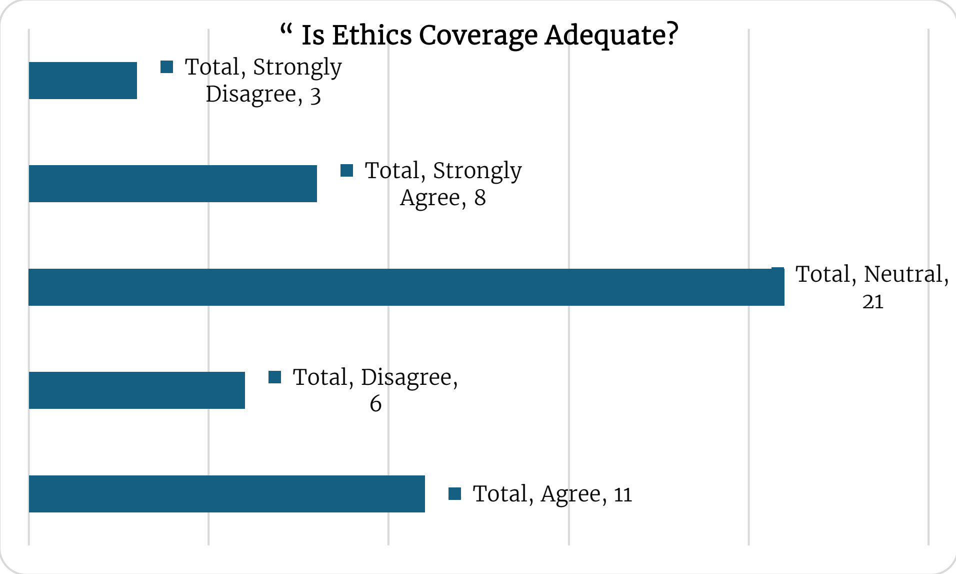
Figure 45



Interpretation

A divided opinion was received in response to this question. 37% respondents responded that ethical coverage is done primarily to meet HEC standards at my institution, while 12% disagreed with it and 51% remain neutral to it.

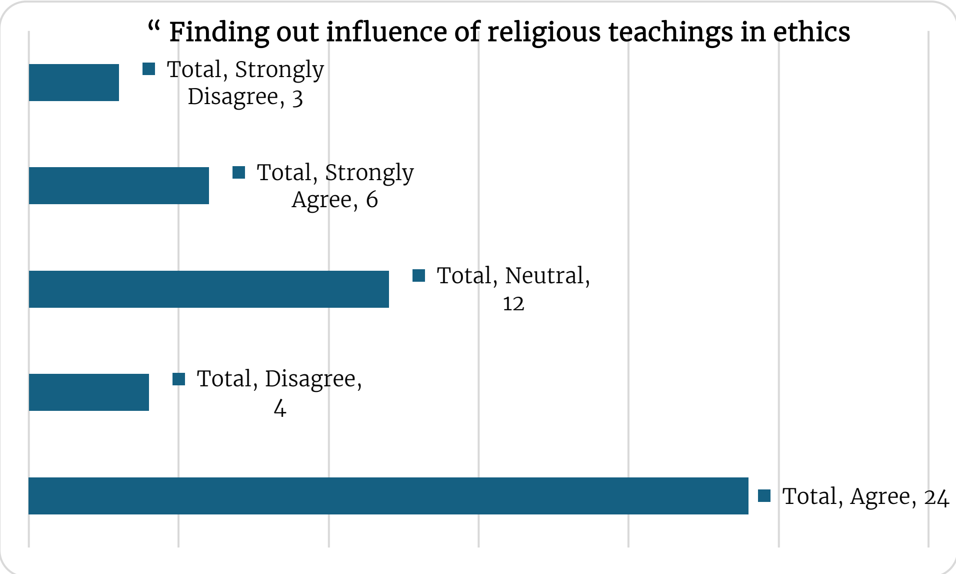
Figure 46



Interpretation

A similar divided opinion was received in response to this question. 39% respondents responded that ethical coverage is done to satisfy external pressures at my institution, while 18% disagreed with it and 43% remain neutral to it.

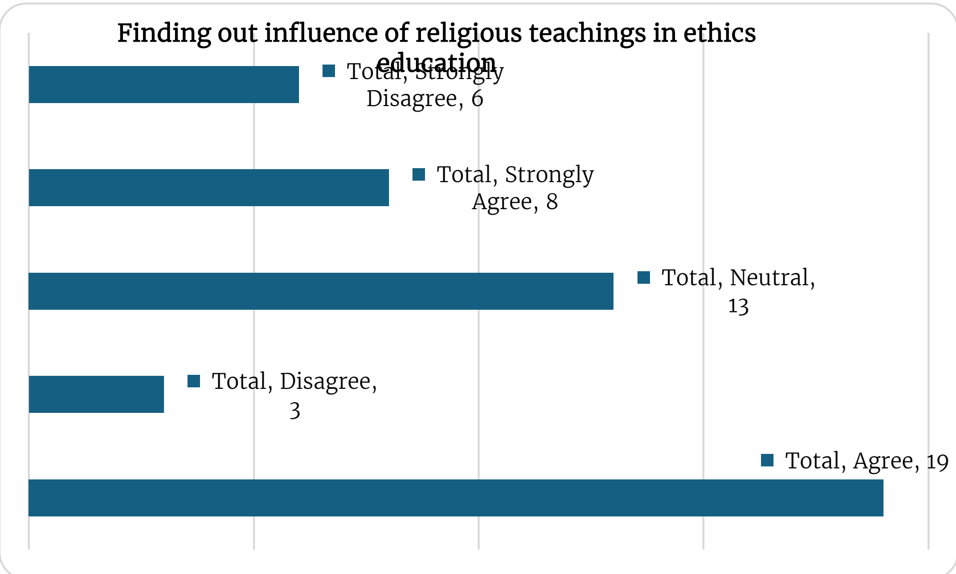
Figure 48



Interpretation

61% respondents agreed that students' religious ethical awareness has declined over the years, while only 20% disagreed with it.

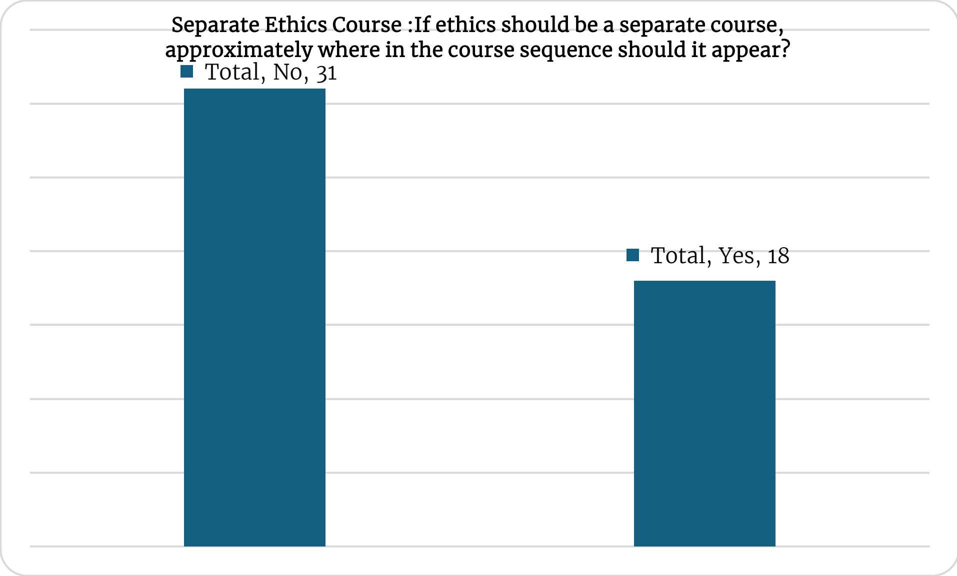
Figure 49



Interpretation

55% respondents agreed that people follow religious teachings more than ethics theories, hence more religious ethical content should be included in ethics course, while only 18% disagreed with it.

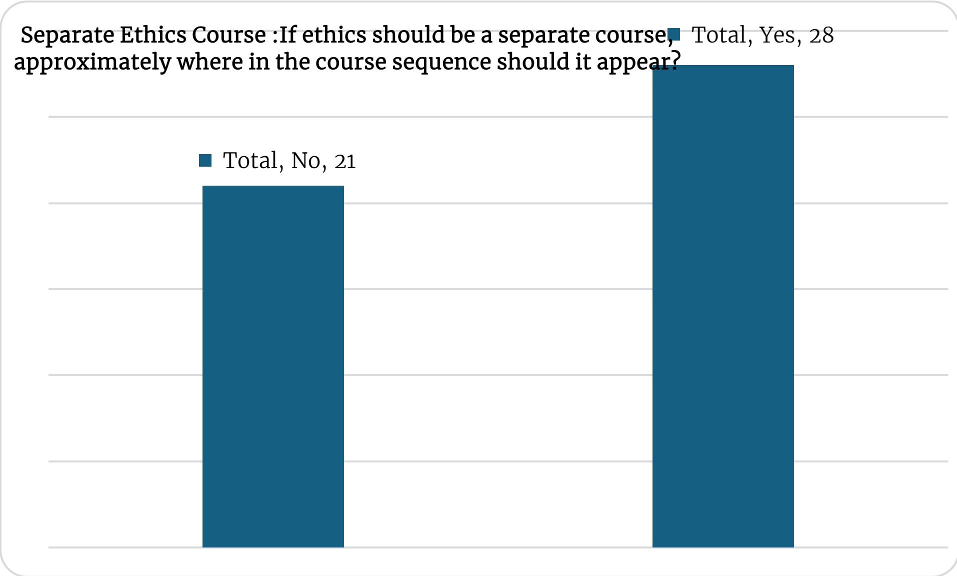
Figure 50



Interpretation

63% respondents agreed that ethics should be required in the business curriculum, but not necessarily in accounting, while 37% disagreed with it.

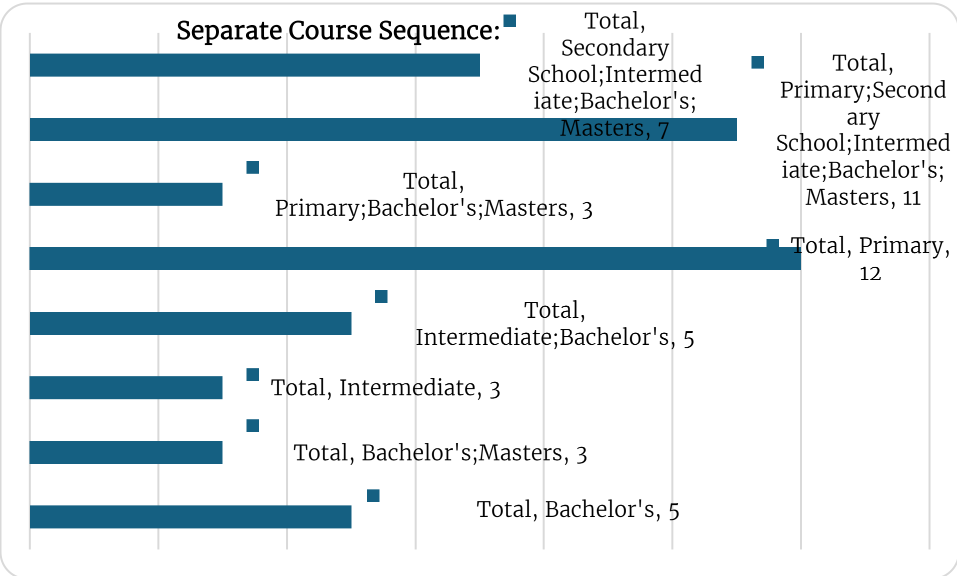
Figure 51



Interpretation

47% respondents agreed that a philosophy class that teaches normative ethical theory should be required, while 53% disagreed with this statement.

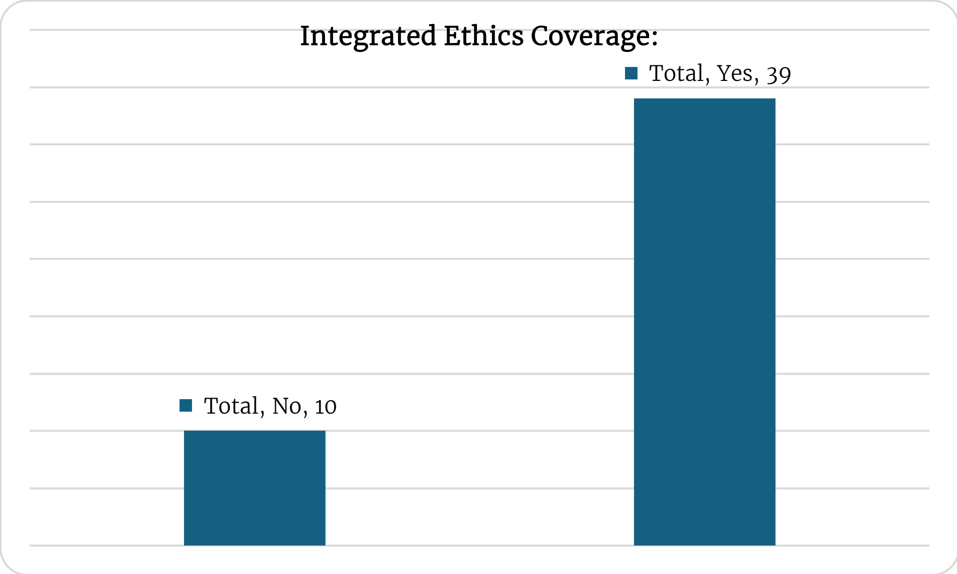
Figure 52



Interpretation

There was a choice to choose one or more options, so therespondents clicked several options as they felt right as follow with highest weightage (24%) given to primary stage where a separate ethics course should be introduced. Whereas 22% responded that ethics should be taught at all the levels. 14% respondents left the primary stage and chose all others starting from secondary school till masters.

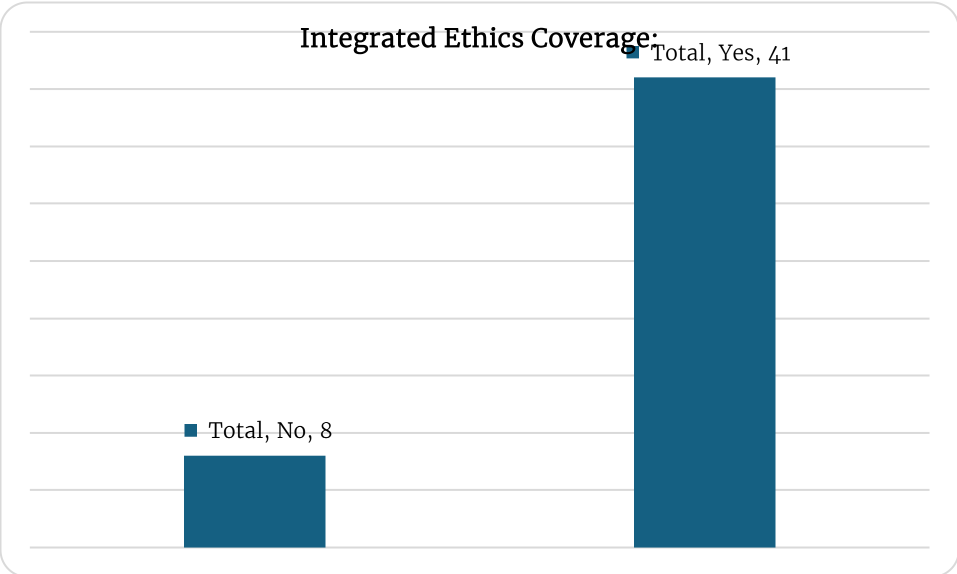
Figure 53



Interpretation

80% respondents agreed that ethics be present in every accounting course, while only 20% disagreed with it.

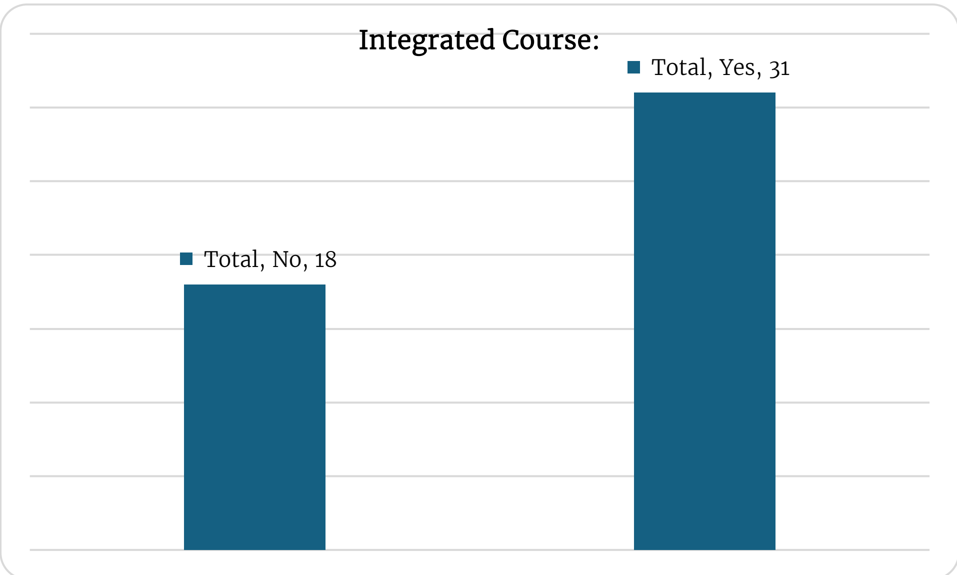
Figure 54



Interpretation

84% respondents agreed that ethics be incorporated in some standard accounting courses, while only 16% disagreed with it.

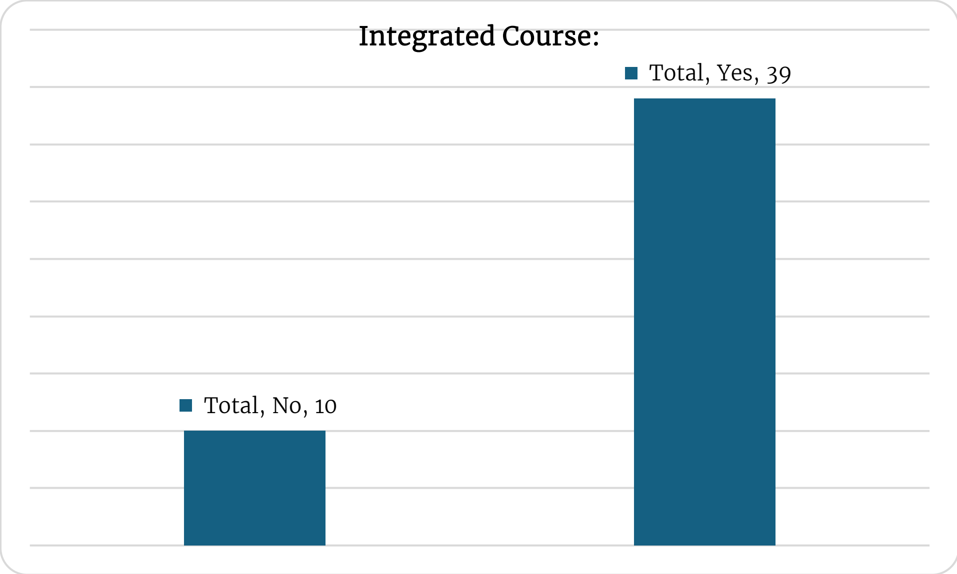
Figure 55



Interpretation

63% respondents responded that ethics should be integrated in financial management course, while 37% voted against this idea.

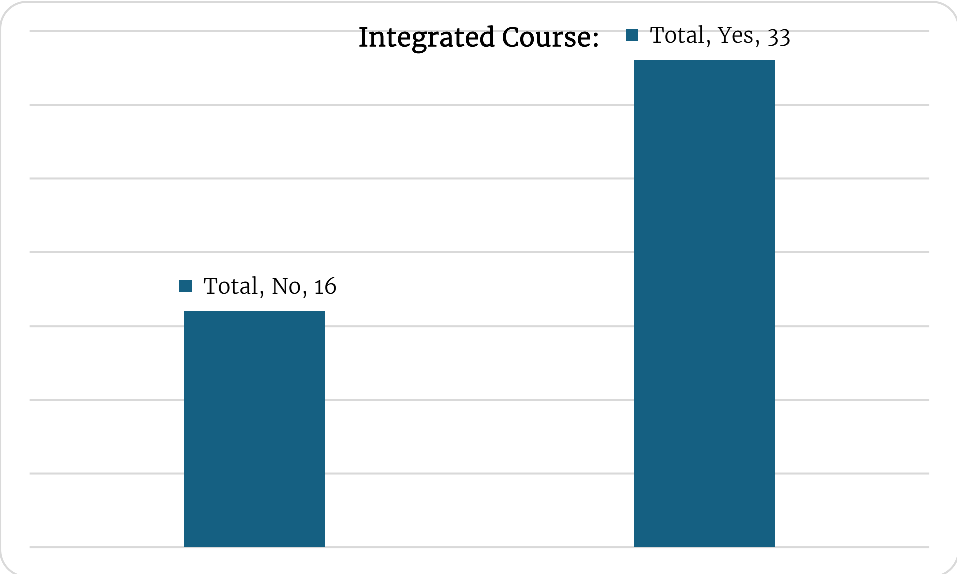
Figure 56



Interpretation

80% respondents responded that ethics should be integrated in financial accounting course, while 20% voted against this idea.

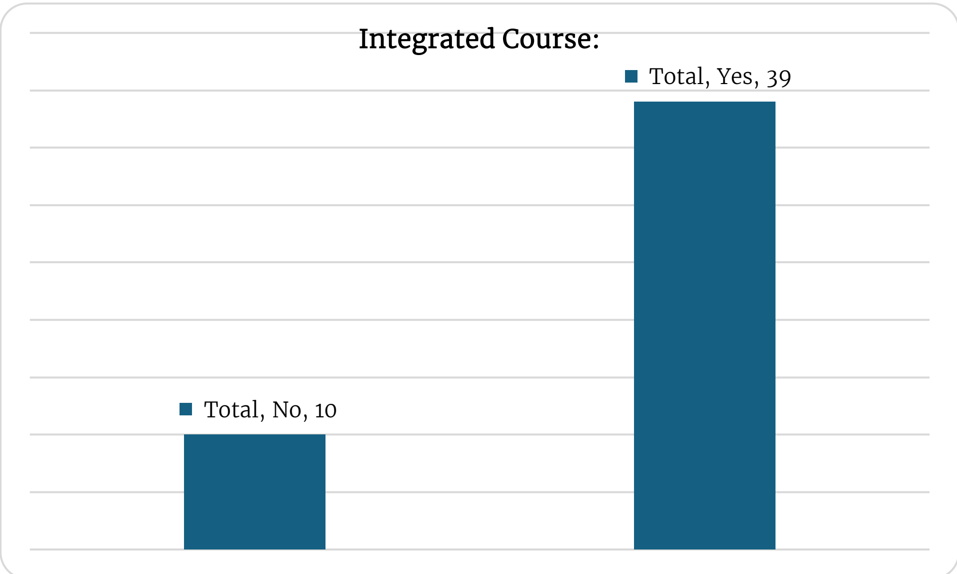
Figure 57



Interpretation

67% respondents responded that ethics should be integrated in cost/ managerial accounting course, while 33% responded with a No to above statement.

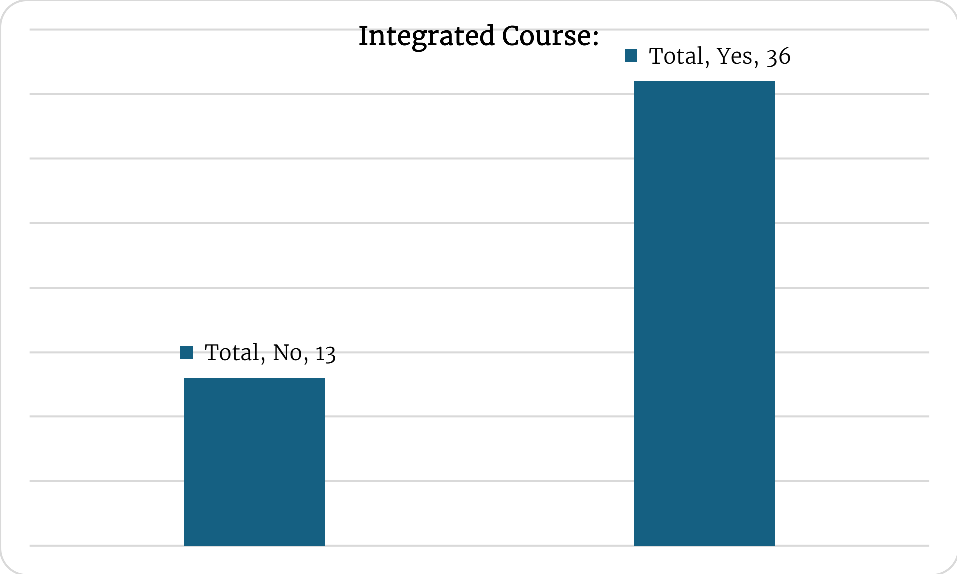
Figure 58



Interpretation

80% respondents responded that ethics should be integratedin Taxation course, while 20% responded with a No to above statement.

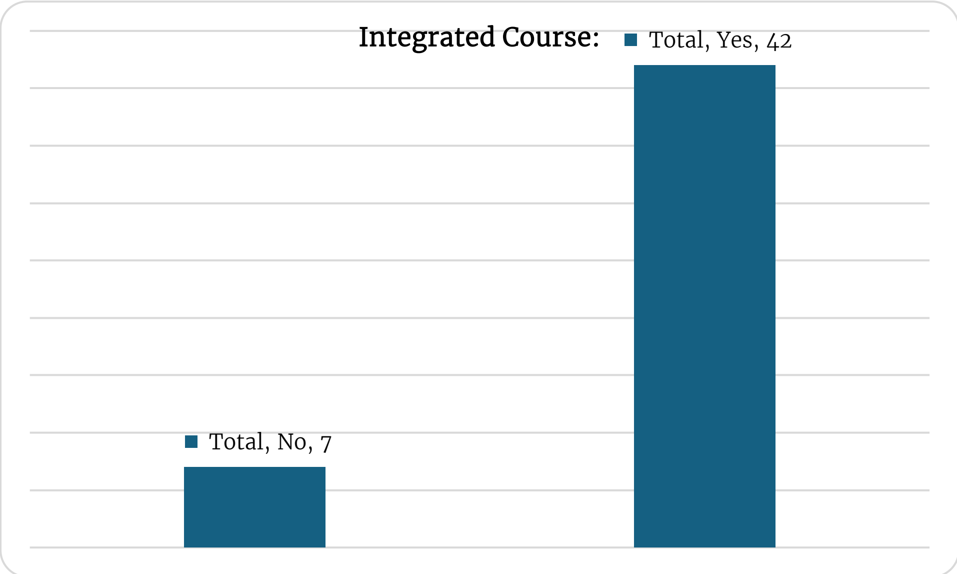
Figure 59



Interpretation

73% respondents responded that ethics should be integrated in corporate and business law course, while 27% responded with a No to above statement.

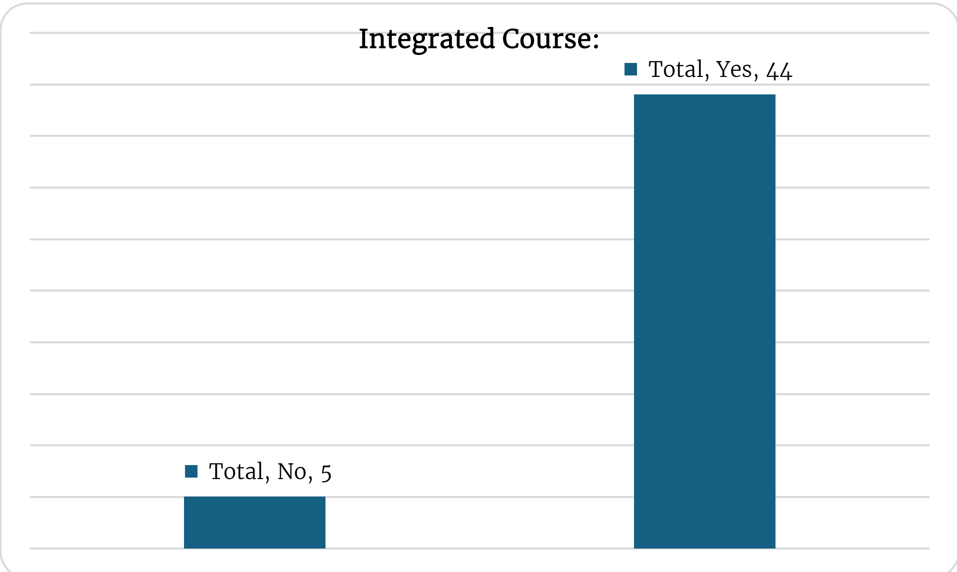
Figure 60



Interpretation

86% respondents responded that ethics should be integrated in audit and assurance course, while 14% responded with a No to above statement.

Figure 61



Interpretation

90% respondents responded that ethics should be integrated in audit and assurance course, while 10% responded with a No to above statement.

The statistics of the mean and standard deviation of the data is given below.

Table 1
Why Accounting Students Should Receive Ethics related education?

	Mean	Std Dev	N
Q1	0.822990421	1.174415	49
Q2	0.812161599	1.136141	49
Q3	0.748854644	1.034688	49
Q4	0.748021658	1.028919	49
Q5	1.117867555	1.283397	49
Q6	0.96543107	1.106951	49
Q7	1.020408163	1.241639	49
Total	0.890819	1.143736	49

The above table shows the value of mean, standard deviation and number of observations for individual question as well as overall for the variable. The overall mean value is 0.89 which showing that the average response and standard deviation is 1.14 which showing that each value is deviating by 1.14 units from its mean. The overall spread of mean is not very high.

Table 2
Why Accounting Students Should Not Receive Ethics Education

	Mean	Std Dev	N
Q1	0.752187	0.978945	49
Q2	0.921283	1.040833	49
Q3	1.082882	1.233048	49
Q4	1.002915	1.230632	49
Q5	0.94294	1.135767	49
Q6	1.10454	1.247446	49
Q7	0.827155	0.978076	49
Q8	0.827155	0.978076	49
Total	0.932632	1.102853	49

Table 3
Who Should Teach Ethics

	Mean	Std Dev	N
Q1	0.833819	1.020621	49
Q2	0.892128	1.06066	49
Q3	0.932945	1.194873	49
Q4	1.201166	1.442197	49
Q5	1.187005	1.415716	49
Q6	0.812162	0.889279	49
Total	0.976538	1.170558	49

Table 4
What Should be Taught

	Mean	Std Dev	N
Q1	0.548105	0.815454	49
Q2	0.857143	1.274755	49
Q3	0.812162	1.020204	49
Q4	0.619742	0.698029	49
Q5	0.861308	1.117273	49
Q6	0.772178	0.885445	49
Total	0.745106	0.968527	49

Table 5
How Should Ethics be Taught?

	Mean	Std Dev	N
Q1	0.986256	1.331206	49
Q2	0.879633	1.20691	49
Q3	0.682216	1.040833	49
Q4	0.859642	1.268737	49
Q5	0.879633	1.176947	49
Q6	0.7197	0.861596	49
Q7	0.617243	0.735402	49
Q8	0.982091	1.21848	49
Total	0.825802	1.105014	49

Table 6
Is Ethics Coverage Adequate?

	Mean	Std Dev	N
Q1	0.77551	1.040833	49
Q2	0.697209	0.867497	49
Q3	0.919617	1.297564	49
Q4	1.119534	1.307032	49
Q5	0.761349	0.911006	49
Q6	0.86464	1.084053	49
Total	0.85631	1.084664	49

Table 7
Finding out influence of religious teachings in ethics education

	Mean	Std Dev	N
Q1	0.819658	1.022702	49
Q2	1.000416	1.214286	49
Q3	0.978759	1.206206	49
Q4	1.235319	1.444848	49
Total	1.008538	1.222011	49

1) Should Ethics Be Taught and why (not) teach ethics?
2) What, Where, How and by whom should ethics be taught?
3) Do religious teachings help in teaching ethics to accounting students?

Conclusion and Recommendations

Below are the results of my detailed survey of accounting faculties' opinions concerning ethics education in accounting curriculum. I began my study by asking the most basic question from accounting faculty: should ethics be taught and why (not) teach ethics? I then further asked more detailed questions, by enquiring what, where, how and by whom should ethics be taught and exploring influence of religious teachings in ethics education. My objective was to update prior studies in this area by giving an up-to-date and complete view of ethics in accounting curriculum as reported by accounting faculty of Peshawar institutes. The survey data was evaluated via descriptive statistics using frequency counts, percentages, means and standard deviation. In doing so, we gave valuable understanding of faculty perceptions regarding ethics education in the accounting curriculum to support statutory organizations like the HEC and ICAP in shaping forth coming requirements.

The survey suggests that eighty six percent of accounting faculty are of the view that ethics should be included in accounting curriculum. Overall, faculty finds reason to include ethics more significant than not including ethics. The most highly rated reasons for not including ethics relate to the fact that very less number of accounting faculty are eligible to teach ethics, as opposed to the belief of resource limitations such as time. It specifies the faculty members themselves need training regarding ethics which itself indicates lack of focus on ethics in past years. At the same time faculty are of the view that If proper training is provided, they are the best source of ethics education for students as opposed to philosophy or management faculty, and give preference to content from practice, instead of classical ethics philosophies. Above conclusions suggest that accounting faculty is aware of the public perception, and subsequently consider addition in the accounting curriculum is need of the day.

About the question how ethics should be taught, faculty consider that the most appropriate method of delivery is case study method, and they should commitment to integrate case studies more frequently as compared to the past. Indeed the rapid increase of ethics case studies (e.g., May 1990; Brooks 2004) and conferences to support faculty with how to teach ethics (e.g., Loeb and Rockness 1992; Karr 2004) has influence dhow ethics is taught. As far as where in the course ethics should be taught is concerned, both survey findings and current practice give preference to integration as compared to a stand-alone ethics subject. In fact, 80% of the faculty support integration of ethics in some accounting courses, and 22% are of the view that ethics should be part of all accounting subjects. Interestingly as of today, 84% of our respondents want integration ethics into their subjects, as compared to the 82%reported in Blanthorne et al., (2007). It shows that little has changed practically in the way faculty members incorporate ethics in their courses, especially in background of the heightened interest in ethical education.

Awareness of religious ethics has declined as reported by 61% of the respondents. It is a worrying situation in a country which got its independence on religious grounds. Majority of the faculty stressed on the inclusion of religious ethical content in ethics course as majority follow religious ethics more than conventional ethical theories. Corporate governance was the most voted subject for the integration of the ethics course, signifying an individual will take ethically right decisions resulting in better governance in the corporate world.

i. Ethics education is to be included in the accounting curriculum, as supported by our faculty surveyed and as required by the AACSB (AACSB 2006a; AACSB 2006b, Business Standard No. 15; AACSB 2005b)
ii. More of religious ethical content be included in the curriculum.
iii. Integration is the way forward as voted by our respondents instead of a stand-alone subject.

Therefore, more integration is need of the day than ever before. Other than the amount of ethics coverage, the quality of instruction is also a concern.

It is to admit that a number of useful integration initiatives are there. However, for that to be effective, faculty must be willing and capable of methodically intertwine ethics with technical knowledge. Logically, majority of the faculty tend to teach their own area of expertise and technical knowledge, so if ethics is not an area of expertise of a teacher which our survey also validated then he will not be able and willing to integrate ethics into technical courses. These factors might lead flawed coverage of ethics content. Integration in such way will only be a box ticking exercise and may succeed in complying with statutory requirements, but critics say that (Swanson et al. 2005; Swanson 2004) it will not meet the spirit of accrediting goals. Therefore, it is suggested that a formal training on ethics provided to the faculty and guidelines how it should preferably be integrated in different courses. Currently ethics is in the list of general requirement subjects in higher education commission's Curriculum of Commerce. It needs to be added to the compulsory requirement list to make sure every university must include it in their courses.

Majority of the respondents are of the opinion that teaching ethics in their universities is encouraged by the management. But they still perceive that ethics coverage at their institutes is inadequate and that faculty should include more ethical content into their subjects. Above discussion suggests that factors such as scarcity of time, resources and compensation might be undermining the efforts of integration of ethics in accounting curriculum from being fully operative. Thus, accounting faculty will need to carry out a comprehensive assessment of the curriculum if they are committed to teach ethics effectively, through integration. Majority of the respondents favored the inclusion of religious content in the ethics course. Standard setting bodies consider this recommendation and relevant religious content which relates to functioning of the accountants and is acceptable to all.

Limitations of the Study and Future Research Recommendations

Due to time and resources limitations, only Peshawar city universities were chosen for the research. As revealed above, level of integration is below the required level so next thing to be asked is the appropriate level of coverage of ethics? integration of ethics content in different subjects is the way forward; the future studies should ask questions related to incorporation of ethics in accounting courses and enquire factors such as the quality of subject matter taught, the extent of course coverage, the measurement of both quality and quantity, and the techniques how integration will take place across the curriculum.

Secondly, faculty favors application as compared to classical theory. It instigates further questions: Directly teaching application will be effective without first teaching theory? As in other branches of social sciences, action and application is dependent on theoretical frameworks. Faculty have preferred a different teaching model towards ethics. Why? Is there any widely accepted common body of knowledge that should be provided to ethics students? Or we can assume that accounting students already understand theory and they are ready for application? Thirdly, I have conducted this study focusing on ethics in accounting curriculum. This study should be carried out in other specialties like medical, engineering and information technology curriculums.

Fourthly, the respondents favored the inclusion of religious content in the ethics course. Further research is needed to figure out the exact religious content related to ethics which will help accountants better perform their duties in corporate world.; both in terms of stand-alone course or integration into different courses like financial reporting, taxation, audit and performance management etc. Lastly, Quantitative method of descriptive statistics was used in this study. Other qualitative methods like interviews etc. can also be used for similar study.

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