

Ethics

Does It Play a Role in the Finnish University Reform?

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ABSTRACT

The current university reform in Finland provides more autonomy in the management and finance for the universities. In the future, the management of the universities will be more based on freedom and entrepreneurial values. In our article we will concentrate on universities as ethical organizations and apply administrative ethics doctrine in to the context of higher education. Ethical organisations are those that follow ethical rules, including individuals who conduct with ethical standards and codes. University as an ethical organisation is composed of different elements, such as legal foundations and ethical principles, research ethics, professionals and management values, ethical codes and tools of ethics development. The “new” university has certain ethical challenges: How to maintain a public reputation of impartial and trustworthy institution, to clarify ethical regulations and to keep up good management practices and to carry on promoting ethical development work.

1. HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR AS AN ETHICAL TOPIC

1.1. Background

All twenty universities in Finland are government-run institutions and they are primarily financed from the state budget. University sector enjoys a high public trust among citizens in Finland and internationally. As scientific institutions, universities have a good reputation in the eyes of ordinary citizens.

As public institutions universities have a lot of duties and responsibilities in the domain of higher education and scientific research. Universities are responsible for basic research and graduate and post-graduate studies. They have responsibilities in adult education, research and development work and in internationalization of university studies. Their operations are built on two cornerstones; i.e. university autonomy and freedom of education and research. (Ministry of Education 2008a.)

Ethics is becoming a challenge in the universities as a consequence of managerial reforms. As part of the current university reform, the university management is facing deep-going changes in its organizational structure, administration and financing. In ethical sense, more discussion is needed about the nature of performance management between the ministry and universities, new ways of sharing responsibility and accountability inside the university organization, and the confidence relation

between the Rector and the board of the university. Besides, ethics is more or less ignored in the discussion of current university reform in Finland.

In the field of public administration study, increasing attention has been paid to issues of ethics and integrity in politics, administration, economy and society on a global scale. Research on public sector ethics is vital to the understanding and practice of good governance. The genuine need for ethical guidance in the conduct of government might arise from growing demands of productivity and accountability of public servants. (Bowman & Williams 1997, 525; Huberts, Maesschalck & Jurkiewicz 2008, 240, 259.)

However, issues of ethics are an understated question in the field of higher education study. Previous studies of management in higher education context in Finland have handled *university reform* (Aarveaara & Maruyama (Eds.) 2008; Salminen 2003; Välimaa (Ed.) 2001), *university evaluations* (Liuhanen 2007; Hölttä & Aarveaara 2004), *regulation and steering of universities* (Kivistö 2007; Rekilä 2006; Hölttä 1995), *strategic management in universities* (Lammi 2003; Malkki 1999; Mälkiä & Vakkuri (Eds.) 1998), and *academic leadership* (Kekäle 1997).

The importance of ethics in higher education context is internationally recognized. Several universities abroad have established ethics centers and institutes to carry out numerous programs and activities around ethics. For example Canadian universities are rather progressive in this field. The University of Ottawa has an office called Research Grants and Ethics Services, which helps researchers to manage grant funds and supports them in meeting the ethical standards of the research community by giving information and advice. The University of Lethbridge has put out a code of conduct and ethics for the Board of Governors. The code gives guidance for the board members on how to exercise power and discharge duties in an ethical way, and how to use the assets of the university and how to co-operate with interest groups. Canadian Centre for Ethics & Corporation Policy is an independent ethics centre, which promotes and maintains an ethical orientation and culture broadly in Canadian business or public organizations by organizing different events and training¹.

1.2. Research question

In Finland the most radical university reform is currently in process. The reform will further extend the autonomy of universities by giving them an independent legal status. Universities will still be funded mostly by the state, but the new legal personality improves their possibilities to seek comprehensive funding from external sources. This provides financial flexibility (Jääskinen & Rantanen 2006; Hölttä 2008; Ministry of Education 2008b.) But what are the ethical challenges of the reform? How does the reform change values and effect on management?

In this article, our main target is on the one hand, to apply administrative ethics doctrine in the context of higher education, and, on the other hand, to continue the discussion of the university reform in Finland from the ethical point of view. Thus, the specific research question is: how is university understood as an ethical organization, with the special attention to ethics management?

Closer definitions are needed for the concepts of ethics, ethical organization and ethics management.

The term *ethics* is a set of principles that acts as a guide to conduct providing a framework for acting. Ethics represents what is good and acceptable conduct. (Lawton 1998, 16–17.) Ethical issues can be located at different levels: the individual, the organizational and the societal levels. We concentrate rather on organizational level than on individual level.

Ethical organization can be perceived as an organization that follows ethical rules. In ethical organization also individuals conduct with high ethical standards and ethical codes to define relationships with the environment are established. The fundamental idea in ethical sensitivity is that ethical decision making implies ethical detection. Thus ethical sensitivity can be defined as the recognition of ethical dimensions in a decision situation. (Morton et al. 2006, 390.)

Ethics management is "the cumulative actions taken by managers to engender an ethical sensitivity and consciousness that permeates all aspects of getting things done in a public service agency" (Menzel 2001, 355). A public manager needs ethical standards and sensitivity in order to use his discretion in a responsible manner (Cooper 2006, 6). A strong ethical climate has a positive influence on organizational performance and productivity.

This ethics-performance linkage requires public managers to advocate and exemplify core values and to encourage dialogue on issues with ethical implications. (Menzel 2001, 2005, 2007; Jurkiewicz 2005.)

The research material of the article is based on administrative ethics literature and official documents and strategy reports of universities². It covers laws, ethical codes and different kind of university documents in all Finnish universities. As a complementary research material six interviews are executed with the representatives of ethics committees in the Finnish universities.

In our presentation, there are five subtopics, which we consider crucial in analyzing an ethical organization of university. They are foundations and ethical values; research ethics; professionals and values in management; ethical codes; and tools of developing ethics in universities.

2. UNIVERSITY AS AN ETHICAL ORGANIZATION

Compared to the rest of public organizations, universities as organizations have particular ethical questions of their own. The new universities act explains part of this. The formal university status will be changed from a public (state) agency to a public corporation. The planned and new independent legal personality also meets unforeseen challenges of ethics.

Ethical codes and rules are needed in higher and lower decision making levels of the university; in top management, with conducting of faculties, departments, laboratories, research teams etc. Because universities are labelled as research institutions, their functioning is faced with research ethics more than any other type of ethics.

2.1. Foundations and ethical values

Legal foundation

The relationship between law and ethics is important in management. Cooper (2006, 4) defines the relationship between law and ethics by stating that "law is the moral minimum". Laws, ethical rules and codes are necessary tools in building an ethical organization. (Menzel 2001, 355; Wittmer 2005, 63.) However, acting legally is not necessarily a

proof of ethical action (Honkonen & Korander 2004, 107).

Finnish parliament passes educational legislation and decides on the overall lines of education and research policy (Ministry of Education 2004). The Finnish constitution secures the freedom of the sciences and the universities act ensures the autonomy of the institutions. In accordance with the Constitution of Finland (11.6.1999/731 Section 16, Educational rights): "The freedom of science, the arts and higher education is guaranteed".

Ethical principles and codes of conduct can also be found in Administrative Procedure Act (434/2003) and Non-Discrimination Act (21/2004). The objective of the Administrative Procedure Act is to achieve and promote good administration and access to justice in administrative matters and to promote quality and productivity of administrative matters. The Non-Discrimination Act aims to foster and safeguard equality and enhance protection to those who have been discriminated.

The universities are governed by the Universities Act (645/1997). The Universities Act declares: "The universities shall have autonomy in research, arts and teaching." The Finnish Universities Act is under reform, and the political process is not yet finished³.

The functions of the universities are stated in the universities act: "The universities shall arrange their activities with a view to achieving a high international level of research, education and teaching in conformity with ethical principles and good scientific practices". The mention of autonomy in research, arts, and teaching will remain in the new universities act.

The responsibility of university managers will be increased. According to the proposed act, the management; the board (the senate) and the Rector, must act diligently in the best interests of the university. If a member of the board or the Rector deliberately or negligently causes injury or damage by breaking the universities act or other rules, he or she shall be liable for damages. As a university leader, the Rector must enjoy the confidence of the board. This result to two main consequences: first, the power of the Rector becomes much bigger than in previous system. Secondly, trust and distrust towards the Rector are in the hands of the board; not judged by the university community.

The university reform has effects on human resources by renewing personnel positions and causing a sort of ambivalence in the university

community. In the change situation, the crucial questions are how to build trust between different university actors and how to build an ethical culture in different levels of academic and administrative community.

University values

Values in the culture of working community are relatively steady beliefs about what kind of conduct is desirable and worth of efforts. They build a ground for ways of action and reflect conceptions of desirable or undesirable behavior. Discussion of values tells us what is important for the community. Added to value conversations, ethical values should be integrated into action and guide different choices made. (Myry & Helkama 2002, 37; Juujärvi, Myry & Pessa 2007, 49–51; Viinamäki 2008, 111.)

The model of higher education adopted in Finland is based on German humanism (known as Humboldtian ideas) that emphasizes the importance of academic freedom and student's moral growth during their studies. (Välilä 2001, 17.)

The justification of the academic freedom is not the right or good of the individual researcher, but the good of the society, which is the expected beneficiary of the development of the knowledge. Administrators of institutions of higher education have a duty to ensure the academic freedom is protected. (De George 2003, 13.)

Clark (1983) identified certain basic sets of values in higher education. They are justice, competence, liberty and loyalty. In higher education various groups press broad values upon the system.

There is no specific value theory for academic organizations. Salminen (2003, 64–65) proposes that value basis of higher education have four dimensions: 1) Academic: including values of freedom and criticism, 2) Bureaucratic: values of legalism, neutrality and formal rationality, 3) Managerial: values of efficiency, result-orientation and goal rationality, and 4) Entrepreneurial: values of profit making, fair play, private and individual initiative. In the future, managerial and entrepreneurial values will be highlighted in university management.

Rekilä (2006) describes the challenge of universities by noticing that the universities seek balance between the forces of the state, the market based steering and the academic tradition. That is why they have to perform at the same time like a

bureaucracy, a firm and an academic society.

As public corporations, reformed universities will be strengthened their community relations and increased their business activities. It can be expected, that external influence on decision making will be stronger in the future. Ethical debate on the relationships between public interest and private gain is required. Via business activities and growth of external funding, values and principles of business ethics should be adjusted to traditions of public ethics.

If a closer look is taken in to the current university strategy documents, a couple of conclusions are to be drawn. Firstly, the Finnish universities specify and manifest their values. The common value foundation is lying on the Government's shared value base, which is composed of values, such as effectiveness, quality and expertise, service principle, transparency, trust, impartiality and independence, equality and responsibility. (Ministry of Finance 2005.) This represents the hierarchy of values.

Secondly, universities have defined their own values in their strategies and they are manifested rather clearly in strategy documents. Ethics and morality as values are often mentioned in university strategy documents, but they are seldom decoded or specified. Thirdly, values of the universities are numerous. According to our judgment, the university values can be divided in three basic types:

- Basic values of science, such as civilization, criticism and truth,
- Universal values, such as democracy, solidarity and patriotism, and
- Managerial values, such as efficiency, quality and entrepreneurship.

As we stated earlier, managerial and entrepreneurial values will gain more ground in the "new university". The reformers seem to believe that these "new" values can be in harmony with the "old" values such as freedom and autonomy, truth and criticism.

2.2. Research ethics

Research ethics is considered one of the core ethical issues in the universities. As a concept, 'research ethics' refers to a complex set of values, standards

and institutional schemes that constitutes and regulates scientific activity. The ultimate responsibility of research is to seek the truth. Accordingly, scientific integrity is a key aspect of research ethics. Research ethics is a codification of ethics of science in practice. Research ethics principles concern different parties:

- Research must be regulated by ethical standards and values,
- Researchers should comply with research ethics standards, and
- Universities and other research institutions have to endeavor to establish an atmosphere that is conducive to good research, and to promote standards for scientific integrity. (Forskningsetiske Komiteer 2006.)

Research ethics within the scientific community can be promoted by organizing training in research ethics and advancing a leadership culture that takes ethical dilemmas into consideration. The responsibility for abiding by good scientific practice rests with the research community as a whole, and commitment in it is primarily up to each researcher and each member of a research team individually. Also each research team collectively, the head of research unit and the management of an organization carrying out the research, are responsible for committing to good scientific practice. (National Advisory Board on Research Ethics 2002.)

Universities and other research institutions⁴ have committed to guidelines called "Good scientific practice and procedures for handling misconduct and fraud in science" (2002) compiled by National Advisory Board on Research Ethics⁵. The responsibilities of the Board include promoting discussion and informing the public about research ethics in Finland as well as taking initiatives and responding to proposals made on matters concerning research ethics. The central idea of the recommendation is an encouragement to engage with ethically sustainable research methods and procedures which serve the interests of science and scholarship.

Good scientific practice includes that researchers and scientific experts:

- "follow modes of action endorsed by the research community in recording and presenting results, and in judging research and its results,
- apply ethically sustainable data-collection, research and evaluation methods conforming to scientific criteria, and practice openness intrinsic to scientific

knowledge in publishing their findings, and

- take due account of other researcher's work and achievements, respecting their work and giving due credit and weight to their achievements in carrying out their own research and publishing its results". (National Advisory Board on Research Ethics 2002.)

The guidelines of Good scientific practice provide also, that:

- "research is planned, conducted and reported in detail and according to the standards set for scientific knowledge,
- questions relating to the status, rights, co-authorship, liabilities and obligations of the members of a research team, right to research results and the preservation of material are determined and recorded in a manner acceptable to all parties before the research projects starts or a researcher is recruited to the team,
- the sources of financing and other associations relevant to the conduct of research are made known to those participating in the research and reported when the findings are published, and
- good administrative practice and good personnel and financial management practices are observed". (National Advisory Board on Research Ethics 2002.)

Institutions are also required to have routines that prevent dishonesty and promote honesty, and they should have procedures for handling suspicions and accusations of scientific dishonesty. Instruction on integrity standards shall be available also for students. (National Advisory Board on Research Ethics 2002; Forskningsetiske Komiteer 2006.)

Signing the guidelines of the National Advisory Board on Research Ethics, research organizations have committed themselves to applying certain procedures for handling alleged violations of good scientific practice (Lötjönen 2008).

Violations of good scientific practice are classified into two categories; misconduct in science and fraud in science. Examples of misconduct in science are understatement of other researchers' contribution to a publication, negligence in referring to earlier findings, and negligence in recording and retaining results, careless reporting of research findings and the methods used, and publication of the same results several times as new. (National Advisory Board on Research Ethics 2002; 2007.)

How are the ethical violations controlled by the ethical bodies? Is there any empirical evidence of developing research ethics? Finland has four

national committees concerning research ethics: the Board for Gene Technology, the Advisory Board for Biotechnology, and the Advisory Board on Health Care Ethics and the National Advisory Board on Research Ethics. We concentrated on the National Advisory Board on Research Ethics.

The National Advisory Board on Research Ethics has made two questionnaires (in 2003 and in 2006) to all research organizations committed to good scientific practice guidelines in order to chart prevalence of allegations and consequences and procedures for handling. Allegation of a violation of good scientific practice is handled firstly at the organization in which the suspected research has primarily been conducted. The number of allegations, inquiries, investigations and violations found concerning good scientific practice has grown in the last few years. Most allegations or violations found were related to plagiarism. (Lötjönen 2008.) The National Advisory Board on Research Ethics received information on three violation cases in 2007 and on nine cases in 2008. The Board gave statements on five cases in 2007 and on two cases in 2008. The challenge in practice is the limited availability of information on all relevant cases.

In addition, different scientific disciplines have their own sets of ethical norms with more detailed instructions concerning the relationship between the researcher and the object of the research, for example the Academy of Finland (2003). The Academy of Finland has committed to the ethical guidelines of the National Advisory Board. The Academy's own guidelines of research ethics are based upon those given by the Board. These sets of guidelines should be applied to all staff working on research projects funded by the Academy and to all holders of Academy research posts.

2.3. Professionals and management values

Professional ethics is connected to different university professions. The managerial ethic is a combination of knowledge, tradition, morality, faith, and good sense (Brown 1983, 340). We assume that professional ethics and management values are under change in the university reform. But how?

Ethics by professionals

Airaksinen (2004) defines professional ethics as a field of applied ethics whose purpose is to define,

clarify, and criticize professional work. Professional ethics has different aspects. It can be understood as a code of values and norms that actually guide practical decisions made by professionals. Also it can be regarded as an idealized set of values whose purpose is to explicate the best possible world in which the given profession could be working.

Professional codes of ethics are statements of principles, ethical policy statements and professional standards as well as codes (Brown 1983, 340). Code of ethics consists of principles and rules which are widely approved among the professionals. Codes manifest the attitude and responsibility towards professional work, and they enhance inner solidity of the profession and protect the member of the profession. Codes of ethics provide a sense of belonging to a group or a position (Menzel 2007, 62).

On individual level, professors, researchers and teachers are the main professions in universities. There are also many other group of experts. What are the typical characteristics of professionals? Being a professional requires more than mere technical skill and expertise, namely adherence to high moral standards. Professionals are expected to commit to values their profession serves and to behave according to the ethical code of their profession due to autonomous possession and expertise knowledge. Ethical codes provide a basis for professional responsibility. (Bowman 2000, 676–677; Myrsky 2003, 2; Cooper D. E. 2004: 63.)

According to the law of equality between men and women, universities should as ethical communities favor arguments for equally appointing male and female professionals in university offices and in leading positions. Equal treatment of both sexes is important in academic learning and knowledge processes.

Academics are expected to exhibit a higher degree of professionalism and adhere to a more strict code of ethics than other professions. It is difficult for a university to meet the expectations of graduates with high level ethical behavior unless its own affairs are conducted in the highest ethical manner. (Bruhn, Zajak, Al-Kazemi & Prescott 2002, 465.)

Codes of ethics can help maintain public trust in professionals that public affairs are being conducted in accordance with high ethical standards. Codes need to be supplemented by actions removing the opportunity or temptation for unethical conduct. (Zimmerman 1982; Juujärvi, Myrsky & Pessa 2007, 54–55.)

Ethics can be considered as one of the abilities to make decisions. Researcher as an academic expert will face challenging ethical choices concerning research, teaching, supervising, evaluating processes, nominating people in positions, and conducting projects with different interest groups. (More about research ethics challenges and recommendations from Clarkeburn & Mustajoki 2007 and Kuula 2006, and Lötjönen (Ed.) 1999).

For example, The Ethical Codes of Professors includes statements of values (such as scientific integrity, fairness, honesty, and responsibility). It also highlights the importance of research ethics and qualifies the guidelines of acceptable conduct in relationships with students, colleagues and other members of the scientific community and interest groups. (Professoriliitto 2001.)

The profile of an ethical manager

In their different roles academic managers play an essential part in promoting good ethical behavior and in initiating value discussions within their organizations. Ethical principles can be promoted and supported by leadership and example. (Salmiinen 2001, 100, 2008, 14–15.)

An ethical manager has such virtues as honesty, trustworthiness and integrity. Trust has to do with consistency, credibility and predictability in relationships. (f.e.g. Treviño, Hartman & Brown 2000, 130.)

According to Viinamäki (2008) value management is effected by how the manager experiences the values and how he or she enforces values in management appointments. Open communication culture enables discussion of values and is a prerequisite for value management. Openness confirms trust and credibility in managing by values. For a public manager, political accountability, limited customer-orientation, and wide transparency towards citizen are the mainstays of value management. Are these important for an academic leader as a public manager?

The idea of entrepreneurial university fascinates academics and academic leaders. The essence of entrepreneurial university includes above all more autonomy, diversified income to increase financial resources, providing discretionary money and reducing government dependency. (Clark 1998a, 14.) According to Clark (1998b) an entrepreneurial university actively seeks to innovate and develop a working culture that embraces change. It is im-

portant that academic values will guide transformation.

Values should be seen in cycles of interaction together with structures and procedures, not as a separate part. However, 'entrepreneurial' characteristics might concern traditional academics, because it appears to represent hard managerialism. There are fears of entrepreneurship as a raw individualistic striving that is socially divisive or doubts that traditional academic community would be fragmented. (Clark 1998a, 14.)

Ethical management can open up moral fiber and morale in workplaces. It helps to anchor ethically sustainable organizational culture in public organizations. We assume that higher education managers face as big challenges and demands concerning ethics as managers in expert organizations in general. According to our view ethics management in higher education context is composed of values, codes and rules. We also think that certain tools or practices are needed in encouraging ethical conduct among academics.

Ethical values are present in management operations in universities. The strategy documents in the Finnish universities define guidelines for development of ethics management in the universities⁶. The analysis of documents illustrated certain main trends of ethical management in higher education context:

- The university values create a solid base for academic leadership (ethical values should be based on the core functions of the institution).
- Values should be made visible and concrete by managing (leading by example).
- An academic leader has to create an inspiring research and teaching environment and support open discussion of values (value management).
- Management should be professional; it means genuine interest to act in managerial position and continuous development as a leader (professional management).

Discussion of values in higher education will be continued. One topic is how to find balance between traditional academic culture and market culture. As Rinne and Koivula (2005, 99–114) argued, universities cannot escape marketisation and entrepreneurial activities. With the new universities act, universities will have more autonomy in seeking external and competitive funding. It is a strong incentive for entrepreneurial

activity. The entrepreneurial university generally means entrepreneurial action, structures and attitude in a university. Academics regard different reforms usually very critically, but also very flexibly trying to shape those they do not like. That is why open discussion on both ethical values and what is right and wrong, should be encouraged in the academic community.

Transformation from “the old university” to the “new university” creates challenges for the conception of academic freedom (cf. Marga 2004). The university must maintain its autonomy from its supporters with the respect to its intellectual content, curriculum, courses and their content, and research. Institutions of higher education can be held accountable for the research they produce and for the quality of the instruction they provide to students. They can also be held accountable for the efficient use of the funds they receive. According to the new universities act (law proposal), responsibility (accountability) is planned to aim at such different directions as strategies, management and use of assets, finances, and activities of accounting and control. But their primary accountability should be in terms of their fulfilling their primary mission. (De George 2003, 13.)

2.4. Ethical codes

Organizations can establish their own codes of ethics. Codes of ethics are published rules and principles that regulate the behavior of officeholders within particular institutional settings (Cooper David E. 2004, 321). They contain standards and guidelines for situations falling in the ‘gray area’ between what is clearly ethical behavior and outright unethical behavior. (Zimmerman 1982, 221.) Properly-designed codes of ethics have a crucial role in fostering integrity in public agencies (Bowman & Williams 1997, 525).

Kelley and Chang (2007, 420–423) identified different types of ethical lapses that may occur in functioning of the universities. According to them individual ethical lapses will occur and will be ignored more often at universities with limited infrastructure support for ethical behavior. That is why it is important to develop ethical codes and create supporting infrastructure so that those codes are enacted.

Some of the Finnish universities and even departments of the university have formulated and specified recommendations or guidelines of ethical

conduct of their own. For example, the University of Vaasa has made Ethics Guide to support ethically sustainable study, research and administrative culture. It was good to notice that those recommendations speak out for community ethics, which is not very usual, compared to other universities.

An ethical leader acts as a role model setting a good example for employees and leading by the example they set. Also they should develop and implement a code or value statement, promote ethics training and even add an ethics element to annual performance reviews. (Denhardt 1988, Bowman 1990, Menzel 2007; Lamboo, Lasthuizen & Huberts 2008.) According to Ahonen (2005) ethical elements could be included into evaluations of and within universities. In addition ethical issues should be integrated in university leadership training.

In this research, certain examples of ethical codes formulated in the department and subject level were discovered. For example The French studies in the University of Turku and the Department of Biology of Physical Activity in the University of Jyväskylä have collected ethical codes and principles. Those ethical guides are based on the guidelines of the National Advisory Board on Research Ethics. They underline academic freedom, research ethics, teaching and student ethics. The ethical guides have also principles of ethically sustainable data-collection and publishing. University of Oulu has published ethical guides for teachers and students to enhance an atmosphere of trust and co-operation. Ethical guides and recommendations in universities announce the procedures in cases of allegation of violation or fraud of good scientific practice.

The ethical challenges of financial connections within research projects have been recognized (Raatikainen 2004, 67–68; Baier & Dupraz 2007, 38.) The funding source can hinder objectivity and independence. That is why it would be good to mark the boundaries of the sponsor and researchers in terms of transparency, independence and academic freedom. Clarifying everyone’s role helps to provide scientific guarantees and restrict the sponsor’s influence to funding only. Ministry of Education has compiled recommendations of ethics principles in guiding research projects carrying out with comprehensive funding. (Ministry of Education 2001.) The work group suggested that universities should pay more attention on ethical principles when they frame their strategies.

Lappeenranta University of Technology is one of the few higher education organizations that have defined ethical principles for research projects. Principles include rights and duties of researchers and enterprises, for example request to commit good scientific practices, to follow impartiality and objectivity, and to adhere to an agreement. This is a challenge for managing a research team or project also in the future.

2.5. Tools for developing ethics

The last issue is tools of developing ethics. A variety of tools exists in the Finnish university organizations. There are fundamental ways of developing ethics: either unethical actions are prevented or ethically good practices are promoted. As described previously, ethical regulation is meant for preventing ethical violations. Such a role is considered "watch-dogging" (Salminen, Viinamäki & Ikola-Norrbacka 2007). Less regulated instruments, such as codes and guides, are for ethical development work. We ask here, how to develop ethics by the contribution of special committees or training activities?

Ethical committees

Evaluations of the meaning and functioning of ethical committees are mainly based on interviews⁷ with persons working in ethics committees. Because these conversations were mostly confidential, and one of the interviewed persons wanted to stay anonymous, the names were left out from the reference list.

The limitations of ethical committees seemed to be that each university has different practices how to tackle ethical issues. Only few ethical committees have been established in the Finnish university sector.

The position of the ethical committee in the management hierarchy of the university is undefined. Ethical committee is not an official part of the university management system. Its function and role in the university depends on the position and activity of the committee's members. If the chairperson of the ethical committee has a high position in the university administration (Vice Rector), the importance of the committee will be enhanced and ethical agenda will be permeated through the university management.

Members of the committees are usually enthu-

siastic exponents of ethical action. If those active members leave the organization, it causes harms to the committee's function. It is possible that keeping up ethical issues in the university community depends on few individuals. The interviewed members of ethical committees emphasized committee's role as an adaptable, flexible and proactive actor.

However, it is insufficient that very few people are interested in ethical viewpoints in research and teaching. One purpose of an ethical committee is to gain consciousness of ethical values and guidelines. Instead of offering some separate courses, ethical viewpoints should be integrated widely in curriculum, starting at the bachelor level.

The meaning of an ethical committee is to act as a spokesman or a proponent of ethics in a science community. Ethical committees' tasks include informing about issues related to research and teaching ethics and maintaining discussion related to ethical issues in the academic community. They organize seminar series, conferences, workshops, public lectures and education dealing with topical ethical questions. Raising questions of research ethics seems to be the most important function of ethical committees. Also the committee can play a role in composition of ethical codes.

The application of the guidelines set by the National Advisory Board on Research Ethics for dealing with violations to good research practice is part of the university Rector's duties. The ethical committees do not usually handle those cases at all, but they can make statements on certain cases.

One important function of the ethical committee is to make statements on research projects in which people are studied in ways that may jeopardize their health.

In the future the ethical committee would deserve more official and established position in the university hierarchy. It is important that every university could nominate an ethical committee and its position and role would be taken seriously. This became evident from the interviewees' point.

Ethical training

Ethics training can facilitate decisions that reflect organizational values and purposes. It can support employees to become aware of ethical choices and to have the knowledge to choose and carry out the right choices. (Menzel 1997, 2001, 2007.)

Universities and other organizations carrying out

research have responsibility to familiarize students with good scientific practice and research ethics, for example by organizing training of ethics. (National Advisory Board on Research Ethics 2002; Kuula 2006.)

There are some doubts if ethics can be taught. Menzel (2007, 178–184) is convinced that teaching about ethics is possible and useful. Sensitivity and awareness teaching, moral reasoning and exemplar modeling can be included in the ethics training. When we teach students about ethics we should encourage them to think about complex moral issues and give them equipments to reason about ethical issues instead of seeking to convey a set of moral truths (cf. Kelley & Chang 2007, 424–425). Menzel (2007, 185) calls it the “new” ethics and he continues that the “new” ethics should also include a focus on teaching future public administrators how to be effective ethics managers. However there is no “one best way” to teach or acquire ethics, nor is there one best way to educate ethics managers.

University students study to become future professionals. Myyry (2003) has studied university students’ perceptions of morality. She found out that sensitivity to moral issues can be promoted by professional ethics training. Students face a social value system at the university, and the values that are transmitted to students may foster or inhibit their development toward becoming ethically conscious professionals. She states that “maintaining professional ethics is essential for a professional, and organizing ethics education is a challenge for universities”. She suggests that professional ethics programs should cover sensitivity to moral aspects of decision-making situations, the ability to make just judgments by applying ethical principles, and the willingness to act according to moral values.

Teaching ethics is par excellence being a good example. As Marga (2004, 480) reminds: “Professors can preach ethics, but unless they practice them, ethical formation is purely formal”.

3. CONCLUDING NOTES

In this article we tried to find out how the university is understood as an ethical organization. A few essential elements of the topic were described in previous chapters. We raised a question “does ethics play a role in universities?” and we are convinced that it does, and in this change situation

ethical values and ethical conduct are even more relevant.

For the final remarks we have concluded a few illustrations of the university as an ethical organization. Table 1. is on the other hand past-oriented and on the other hand it focuses on the future seeking the ethical challenges of the “new” university. It is a sort of an ideal model about the current and future university organization in ethical sense. It does not propose that the “old model” should be rejected or the “new model” would be fairly transcendent.

First, as shown in the table, being a formal organization university is an ethical entity. Ethics is declared in laws, rules and instructions. Universities confront significant challenges when the contemporary Universities Act is in the renewal process. The status of the university will be changed from a public agency to a public corporation. It provides more autonomy in financing and managing universities and hiring its personnel. An ethical challenge is how to maintain a good public reputation of universities. In this sense, the consequences of the university reform should be carefully analyzed.

Secondly, universities will adopt more entrepreneurial values and gain more freedom to operate. Those values have risen during the past few years, but in the future “the new managers” will entail a breath of business values. Traditional academic values will be colored by commercial values. Academics should be more aware of the decisions, which deal with ethical choice and ethical judgments.

Thirdly, ethical rules are still important in both models of universities. The future challenge of research ethics is based on coordinating and controlling of the rules of the game in scientific environment including basic research, applied research and innovation work. Ethical considerations are of utmost importance in dealing with contracts, contacts and networks with different partners.

Fourthly, managers will be given more freedom and power to manage but at the same time their individual responsibility and accountability will be enhanced. In the future the more crucial question is, whether they are enjoying the confidence of the boards, or they are trusted by the academic communities. Academic managers have also certain responsibilities to foster an ethical environment in their organizations. The promotion of good

Table 1. From “old” to “new” model – University as an ethical organization.

	The “old model” Pre-reform	The “new model” Post-reform
Legal foundation (status)	Public agency	Public corporation
Ethical values	Traditional and academic	Entrepreneurial and managerial
Research ethics	Rules of the scientific research	Rules of the game in scientific environment
Professions and management	Collective responsibility / Accountability	Individual responsibility / Accountability
Codes of ethics	Focus on research and learning	Focus on research and innovation
Development	Preventing / promoting	Promoting / preventing

management practices and the prevention of mismanagement and poor personnel policy become an ethical challenge. Some of the responsibilities of the leadership are to be redefined. To be a leader of a research team is an ethical duty as well.

Fifthly, codes of ethics in academic discipline will be focused more on the research and innovation. It is possible that the most effective way to strengthen the ethical organization and ethical management in the university is to incorporate ethics development in to the quality system.

Sixthly, we predict that the development of ethics will be increasingly focused on promoting ethically good guides in research and innovation, teaching and learning, instead of merely preventing misconducts.

Our conceptions of ethics management in universities is mainly based on document analysis and complementary interviews with the represen-

tatives of ethical committees. This has certain limitations. The material does not enable us to draw conclusions of value management in practice or academic managers' views of ethical management challenges. However, in university strategy documents the importance of the professional management and the academic leaders' capacity to create open discussion of the values is underlined. In this reform situation, it is even more important.

NOTES

¹ Source: Documents collected from websites of Canadian universities and Ethics Centre.

² Documents have been collected from twenty Finnish universities. Documents are different kind of formal strategies, policies, programs of human resource policies, instructions, and codes of conduct, in 2000–2008.

³ Timetable of the reform is: circulation of the draft

act for opinions 15.8.2008, deadline for opinions 15.10.2008, parliamentary proceedings in spring 2009. The aim is for the law to come into force on 1.8.2009. Organization in line with the new act in autumn 2009. Universities are supposed to start their work as independent legal personalities at 1.1.2010. (Ministry of Education 2009.)

⁴ Altogether 96 institutions (by 31.12.2008)

⁵ The National Advisory Board on Research Ethics is an expert body nominated by the Ministry of Education.

⁶ We could not yet find out references to the university reform from the documents of different universities analyzed. Renewal of strategies is in progress. However, there is one exception. The University of Helsinki has published a memo which handles the renewal of strategies. Among other development issues it highlights the meaning of the academic leadership and clarification of management responsibilities and strengthening of professional management.

⁷ Altogether six telephone interviews were made during August and September 2008.

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