

# FACTORS AFFECTING THE AWARENESS OF PROFESSIONAL ETHICS OF STUDENTS MAJORING IN ACCOUNTING - HAI PHONG UNIVERSITY

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**Abstract:** In the trend of globalization, the labor market especially the accounting labor market is increasingly globalized. The demand for accounting human resources is growing as well as the requirements for qualifications and professional ethics of accountants are higher in order to meet the needs of the domestic labor market. Therefore, the author has researched into the factors affecting the professional ethics of accounting students at Hai Phong University to be able to have a clearer orientation on the training and teaching of accounting human resources for the whole country in general as well as for Hai Phong city in particular. The study uses quantitative methods applied to a sample of 131 students majoring in accounting at Hai Phong University in all courses. Results from regression analysis using Stata 16 software have shown that there are six factors: Study Environment, Professional Capacity, Personal Ethics, Social Culture, Company Ethics and State Law. As a result, the author offers the implications to help Hai Phong University improve the quality of training students majoring in accounting and also raise students' awareness of professional ethics after graduation.

**Key words:** accountant, Hai Phong University, professional ethics.

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## CÁC NHÂN TỐ ẢNH HƯỞNG ĐẾN NHẬN THỨC VỀ ĐẠO ĐỨC NGHỀ NGHIỆP CỦA SINH VIÊN NGÀNH KẾ TOÁN TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC HẢI PHÒNG

**Tóm tắt:** Trong xu thế toàn cầu hóa, thị trường lao động đặc biệt thị trường lao động trong ngành kế toán càng có xu hướng toàn cầu hóa. Nhu cầu nguồn nhân lực kế toán ngày càng tăng cũng như đòi hỏi trình độ và đạo đức nghề nghiệp đối với người làm kế toán cũng cao hơn để đáp ứng nhu cầu của thị trường lao động trong nước. Vì vậy tác giả

đã nghiên cứu các nhân tố ảnh hưởng đến đạo đức nghề nghiệp của sinh viên ngành kế toán trường Đại học Hải Phòng để có thể định hướng rõ hơn về công tác đào tạo, giảng dạy nguồn nhân lực kế toán cho cả nước nói chung cũng như cho thành phố Hải Phòng nói riêng. Nghiên cứu sử dụng phương pháp định lượng áp dụng cho mẫu nghiên cứu 131 sinh viên chuyên ngành kế toán đang học tập tại trường Đại học Hải Phòng các khóa. Kết quả từ phân tích hồi quy sử dụng phần mềm Stata 16 đã chỉ ra rằng có 6 nhân tố: môi trường học tập, năng lực hành nghề, đạo đức cá nhân, văn hóa xã hội, đạo đức công ty và pháp luật nhà nước. Từ đó, tác giả đưa ra các hàm ý giúp trường Đại học Hải Phòng có thể nâng cao chất lượng đào tạo sinh viên ngành kế toán cũng như nâng cao nhận thức về đạo đức nghề nghiệp của sinh viên sau khi tốt nghiệp.

**Từ khóa:** kế toán, trường Đại học Hải Phòng, đạo đức nghề nghiệp.

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## 1. Introduction

The world is entering the 4.0 industrial revolution, with many profound impacts and influences on the entire world economy. Many businesses were established and the number of investors increased. Along with this is the need to check and control work quality, efficiency and predict future work results of the enterprise. Accordingly, accounting was born and developed more and more strongly to meet the increased demand for financial information.

Along with that, Vietnam is increasingly developing and integrating more and more deeply into the world economy, the business activities of Vietnamese enterprises cannot avoid risks. Accounting fraud has become an extremely sensitive issue. Many reasons have been given to explain the above problems. Among them, many researchers have the opinion that the professional ethics awareness of accounting students has a strong influence on professional ethics after

working. Currently, there have research articles on factors affecting the professional ethics awareness of students majoring in accounting. Furthermore, due to different research times, spaces, and subjects, the research results are also different. Realizing that accountants' awareness of professional ethics is a sensitive and important issue. However, there is currently no research conducted on this issue at Hai Phong University. With the desire to contribute partly to the development and assurance of output quality of students majoring in accounting at Hai Phong University, the author chose the topic: "Factors affecting the professional ethics awareness of students majoring in accounting at Hai Phong University".

## 2. Research content

### 2.1 Research overview, models and hypotheses

On the basis of research theories combined with research overview, with the

inheritance of variables from research models in practice, the author builds research hypotheses placed in the context of students' unique characteristics accounting at Hai Phong University.

*The first* is the study environment (MTHT)

Study environment related to courses, training programs, classroom curriculum, learning environment and teaching instructors. Study environment factors were chosen for research because these are the effects that activate and stimulate learning from within, where students' behavior is adjusted to conform to social ethical standards. According to Nguyen Hoang Chung, Nguyen Ngoc Giau (2020) The study environment is friends and teachers that have influence in learning ethics. According to Vo Thi Thuy (2023) environment is the impact that activates and stimulates learning both inside and outside. The study environment plays an important and decisive role in concentration and learning. For Tu Duc Van and Tran Quoc Thanh (2016), the study environment is the factors that affect the learning process of students including: physical environment and mental environment.

H1: The study environment has a positive influence on the professional ethics awareness of students majoring in accounting at Hai Phong University

*The second* is professional capacity (NLHN).

Professional capacity is professional knowledge, skills and abilities to apply technology. The process of forming professional capacity must be associated with studying, practicing and experiencing work in a mature way to ensure effective work performance. Being competent to do a job is considered a basic principle of professional ethics and people should not perform jobs that they are not competent to do. According to Mizgerd (2010), professional competence is basically a part of professional ethics. Having enough capacity (including understanding, knowledge, skills...) to do a job is considered a basic principle of professional ethics and people should not do things they are not qualified to do. Tran Phuoc et al (2023) practicing competency refers to the thinking awareness and skills necessary for practitioners to solve problems in their work. This is not a fixed quality but it can change over time as well as according to each person's training and striving process. Ai Nhi (2021) professional competence is the awareness, thinking and experience that a person accumulates to solve problems at work. Practicing capacity includes the knowledge and expertise of workers. It is a factor that changes over time because it is influenced by work attitude.

H2: Practicing capacity has a positive influence on professional ethical awareness of students majoring in accounting at Hai Phong University.

*The third* is personal ethics (ĐĐCN)

Personal ethics include straightforwardness, honesty, objectivity, the ability to self-regulate behavior and comply with legal regulations. Professional ethics are governed and influenced by personal ethics, realized from the smallest gestures and behaviors of the practitioners. Each of the above factors determines the accountant's abilities to survive in the future labor market. According to the Wikipedia Encyclopedia, morality is a Sino-Vietnamese word, used since ancient times to refer to an element of personality and value of each person. This is a system of rules and norms of the community and society. According to Maria's (2004) research results, 10 groups of personal virtues govern different professions such as: integrity, wisdom, honesty... For different professions, different virtues are needed different nature. According to Brinkman and Henriksen (2008), personal ethics have great influence on personal ethics. An individual lying about being sick and being late, while it is not only true, but it is also considered a violation of personal ethics core.

H3: Personal ethics has a positive influence on professional ethics awareness of students majoring in accounting at Hai Phong University.

*The Fourth* is Social Culture (VHXH)

Social culture includes school rules, media channels and employers. This is a

cognitive process, accumulated through observation, learning, experience and cultural research of practitioners, and is one of the factors that can encourage the development of professional ethics. According to Hofstede (1980) who divided national culture into two trends: collective cultural tendency and individual cultural tendency, some studies showed that national cultural characteristics have an impact on decisions about morality. According to Blodgett et al (2001), culture is a combination of traditional elements, heritage, rituals, customs and religion. Individuals from different cultures may have significant differences in ethical standards, beliefs, and behaviors. According to Christie et al (2003) culture plays an important role in forming values, beliefs and attitudes and guiding individuals in making decision.

H4: Social culture has a positive influence on the professional ethics awareness of students majoring in accounting at Hai Phong University.

*The fifth* is Company Ethics (DDCT)

Company ethics is a set of principles and standards that regulate, evaluate, guide and control the behavior of business entities. Corporate ethics is the ethical category applied to business activities. Hunt et al (1989) understood corporate ethics as the synthesis of managers' personal ethical values and the company's formal and informal ethical policies.

Trevino et al (1998) corporate ethics is a system of values shared by members of an organization and is part of corporate culture. Corporate ethical values impact personal ethical behavior by shaping individuals' ethical views and behavior. Douglas et al (2001) Corporate ethics represents leaders' views on ethical issues, formed through the attitudes and behaviors of managers. Company ethical values included reward and punishment policies for compliance or violation of the company's ethical regulations. Chau Thi Le Duyen (2012) believed that business ethics is a set of principles and standards that regulate, evaluate, guide and control the behavior of business entities.

H5: Company ethics has a positive influence on the professional ethics awareness of students majoring in accounting at Hai Phong University.

*The sixth* is state law (PLNN)

State laws and regulations on professions include documents issued by competent state management agencies or self-issued by professional associations. For many specific fields and professions, there are laws, circulars, regulations and other documents regulating professional ethics, conduct and communication in professional practice.

H6: State laws have a positive influence on the professional ethics awareness of students majoring in accounting at Hai Phong University.

Synthesizing the influencing factors analyzed above, the author proposes a research model:

$$DDNN = \beta_1 MTHT + \beta_2 NLHN + \beta_3 DDCN + \beta_4 VHXH + \beta_5 DDCT + \beta_6 PLNN$$

## 2.2 Method research

The research was carried out using statistical, comparative and analytical methods based on primary data collected based on a survey of 131 students majoring in accounting at Hai Phong University from October 2023 to December 2023. For correlation and regression analysis, the author used the sample  $n \geq 8m + 50$  (m is independent variables in the model). This research included six variables so  $n \geq 98$ . The author collected 131 survey questionnaires that were suitable for the study.

The research used quantitative research techniques to approach the model. The goal of the research is to identify and test factors affecting the perception of professional ethics of students majoring in accounting at Hai Phong University, using the software tool Stata 16 to synthesize and analyze data.

Quantitative research method is a method of quantifying data collection and analysis. Information and data were often collected through surveys using questionnaires.

## 2.3 Research results

(1) Analyze the reliability of Cronbach's Alpha scale

**Table 1 Processing Cronbach's Alpha coefficient**

<b>Observed variables</b>	<b>Item test correlation</b>	<b>Item rest correlation</b>	<b>Average interitem covariance</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>
The study environment (MTHT), Cronbach's Alpha = 0,9738				
MTHT1	0.9586	0.9255	1.404561	0.9678
MTHT2	0.9637	0.9360	1.427207	0.9649
MTHT3	0.9660	0.9393	1.408632	0.9639
MTHT4	0.9640	0.9348	1.391309	0.9652
The professional capacity (NLHN), Cronbach's Alpha = 0,9235; variable correlation coefficient = 1, 41468				
The personal ethics (DDCN), Cronbach's Alpha = 0,9617				
DDCN1	0.9585	0.9055	1.392719	0.9532
DDCN2	0.9642	0.9217	1.424839	0.9420
DDCN3	0.9695	0.9292	1.334292	0.9356
The Social Culture (VHXH), Cronbach's Alpha = 0,9738				
VHXH1	0.9555	0.9226	1.42568	0.9686
VHXH2	0.9707	0.9468	1.350891	0.9617
VHXH3	0.9694	0.9443	1.347837	0.9624
VHXH4	0.9565	0.9221	1.386142	0.9686
Company Ethics (DDCT), Cronbach's Alpha = 0,9819				
DDCT1	0.9684	0.9445	1.472911	0.9785
DDCT2	0.9776	0.9598	1.432981	0.9743

DDCT3	0.9833	0.9700	1.427031	0.9716
DDCT4	0.9668	0.9404	1.444177	0.9797
State law (PLNN), Cronbach's Alpha = 0,9687				
PLNN1	0.9752	0.9439	1.390018	0.9454
PLNN2	0.9652	0.9229	1.447798	0.9607
PLNN3	0.9700	0.9310	1.389372	0.9550

(Source: Author's summary from Stata 16)

The Study Environment factor has a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.9738 (>0.6). The Corrected Item-total Correlation coefficients of these component measurement variables are all greater than 0.3. Besides, the Alpha coefficient if the variable is removed (Alpha if item deleted) is smaller than Cronbach's Alpha.

The factor Professional Capacity has a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.9235 (>0.6). Corrected Item-total Correlation is 1.41468.

The Personal Ethics factor has a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.9617 (>0.6). The Corrected Item-total Correlation coefficients of these component measurement variables are all greater than 0.3. Besides, the Alpha coefficient if the variable is removed (Alpha if item deleted) is smaller than Cronbach's Alpha.

The Social culture factor has a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.9738

(>0.6). The Corrected Item-total Correlation coefficients of these component measurement variables are all greater than 0.3. Besides, the Alpha coefficient if the variable is removed (Alpha if item deleted) is smaller than Cronbach's Alpha.

The Company Ethics factor has a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.9819 (>0.6). The Corrected Item-total Correlation coefficients of these component measurement variables are all greater than 0.3. Besides, the Alpha coefficient if the variable is removed (Alpha if item deleted) is smaller than Cronbach's Alpha.

The State Law factor has a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.9687 (>0.6). The Corrected Item-total Correlation coefficients of these component measurement variables are all greater than 0.3. Besides, the Alpha coefficient if the variable is removed (Alpha if item deleted) is smaller than Cronbach's Alpha.

(2) EFA exploratory factor analysis

**Table 2: KMO and Bartlett's test of independent variables**

Bartlett test of sphericity

Chi-square = 5068.943
Degrees of freedom = 210
p-value = 0.000
H0: variables are not intercorrelated
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy
KMO = 0.952

(Source: Author's summary from Stata 16)

The KMO coefficient is equal to 0.952, with a value ranging from 0.5 to 1. The closer this value is to 1, the more appropriate the factor analysis is for the research data set. 0.000 < 0.1; For the Bartlett test to be meaningful, sig Bartlett's Test < 0.1 proves that the observed variables are correlated with each other.

The Bartlett coefficient has a sig of (3) Linear regression analysis

**Table 3: Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin - Watson
1	.9532	.9304	.9293	.32249	1.982

**Table 4: Regression analysis for perceptions of professional ethics**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	-.622	.100		.	.		
	MTHT	.166	.001	.169	.	.	.158	1.883
	NLHN	.120	.003	.141	.	.	.183	1.532
	DDCN	.189	.008	.192	.	.	.182	1.494

	VHXH	.132	.005	.146	.	.194	1.400
	DDCT	.256	.130	.286		.213	
	PLNN	.364	.015	.378		.320	1.110

(Source: Author's summary from Stata 16)

From the results of table 5, we have the following standardized regression model:

$$DDNN = 0.169MTHT + 0.141NLHN + 0.192DDCN + 0.146VHXH + 0.286DDCT + 0.378 PLNN$$

From the regression results, we can see that the independent variables have a Sig less than the 10% significance level, showing that the independent variables are all meaningful in explaining the dependent variable and no variable has been eliminated. VIF coefficients are all less than 2 so no multicollinearity occurs.

Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> value (Adjusted R-Squared) = 0.9293 means that of 100% of the variation in the dependent variable, 92.93% of the variation is due to the influence of independent variables, the rest is due to random error nature or factors other than the model fit.

### 3. CONCLUSIONS AND MANAGEMENT IMPLICATION

#### 3.1 Conclusions

Research results have shown six factors affecting the ethical awareness of students majoring in accounting at Hai Phong University, including: study

environment, professional capacity, personal ethics, social culture, company ethics, state law in which state law factor has the most important influence. After state law factor, company ethics, personal ethics, study environment, social culture and professional capacity have in turn influenced students' awareness of professional ethics students majoring in accounting. From finding the influencing factors, which help the Board of Directors Hai Phong University and the Board of Directors of the Faculty of Accounting and Finance to realize the influence and level of impact of each factor on perception about the professional ethics of students majoring in accounting to ensure output quality, provide society with human resources suitable to the development needs of the economy and society, and contributing to improve the economic development as well as enhancing professional reputation.

#### 3.2 Management implication For Hai Phong University

Designed in the training program professional content linked to the legal environment, learning environment and actual professional operating environment in Vietnam so that students can understand

and be conscious in law after graduation.

Connected with businesses and economic organizations in the area to create conditions for students to have more opportunities to improve their knowledge and hone practical career skills. Thereby helping students learn specialized knowledge and become more confident in handling tasks in a new environment.

Paid attention to training students to access application softwares and digital technologies to meet the requirements of the economy in the context of the current 4.0 industrial revolution.

#### **For Accounting - Finance Faculty**

Teaching materials: Integrate professional knowledge with professional ethical standards so that students can both practice professional skills and improve professional ethical awareness. Improving and enhancing knowledge, skills, and attitudes is what a training program must aim at in order to improve professional qualifications along with standard working attitudes.

About lecturers: Enhancing learning, professional exchange, scientific research, teaching, and link with other schools with the same training major to increase the friction and understanding of lecturers as well as students in the department.

Extracurricular activities: Developing healthy fun activities and exchange between old students and new

students, students still studying at school and graduates working, between students and experts so that students can have access to exchange and learn about their own problems. Helping students know how to behave flexibly and develop soft skills in the new period of economic development to be able to keep up with the rapid development of technology, thereby applying them to better jobs later graduation.

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