Teachers, ethics and globalization
-an international comparative field study of the perspective of six teachers regarding ethics questions

Lärare, etik och globalisering
-en komparativ internationell fältstudie av sex lärares syn på etikfrågor

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Acknowledgements

This Bachelor thesis on religion, at Växjö University, is the result of a Minor Field study performed in northeast Brazil during the period January to March 2007. It was carried out in cooperation with three teachers from a Brazilian school, one teacher from a Swedish school, one senior lecturer in ethics and one Swedish missionary in Brazil.

First of all I would like to thank the headmaster of the Brazilian school, as without his cooperation and welcome my study would have been much harder to perform. Also, I extend all my gratitude to the six informants who participated in my study; without their observations and experiences I would not have known what I do today. All the staff of the Swedish Embassy and Church of Sweden Mission in Brazil, who assisted me with different kinds of information and contacts, should also be acknowledged. I am extremely grateful to Christian, who was my interpreter - my ears and voice on this journey; without his presence and support I would never have made it this far. Not to mention my tutor, who has been my guide and inspiration from a distance - thank you Lennart! Last but not least a big thank you to Växjö University, which gave me the opportunity to experience another culture, meet unforgettable people and see things from other people’s perspective. These memories will always remain within me and form part of my future profession as a teacher.
Abstract

The purpose of this thesis was to study the view of six teachers, working in three different field areas, on ethics questions and ethics teaching in schools, from a global perspective. My second aim was to analyze whether there was any cooperation between these different field areas or between them and others, in order to improve the ethics teaching in schools. My research questions were intended for one teacher in a Swedish school, three teachers in a Brazilian school, one Swedish missionary and one Swedish senior lecturer in ethics. The research questions basically centre on how these teachers would define concepts such as ethics and global ethics, what kind of ethics questions they feel are important for the school to convey and if there is any form of cooperation between teachers in Swedish/Brazilian schools and different organizations, designed to improve the ethics teaching in schools from a global perspective.

On the basis of the results of my questionnaires I find the definition of ethics more or less equal among the six teachers. They relate ethics to moral philosophy and other questions such as what is right, wrong, good and evil. The teachers also believe ethics contains a reflection on global matters, like the environment, poverty and peace. Five out of six teachers define global ethics with conceptions like global responsibility, respect for future generations, global consensus, comprehension and tolerance. One of the teachers does not believe in global ethics but in groups that could establish some common values to be achieved.

All six teachers feel it is important to bring questions related to Human Rights to the fore in schools. These ethics questions would touch on increased egoism, responsibility, respect for the environment, respect for differences, solidarity, tolerance, attitudes and sexual morals. According to the teachers these matters should be practiced and studied from a micro, macro and gender perspective.

My results show that cooperation does exist between the Swedish/Brazilian schools and different organizations and institutions. There is cooperation between The Church of Sweden Mission and Brazilian organizations, but there are no exchanges between Swedish schools and schools outside Europe. One way to improve ethics teaching and facilitate exchanges between schools from a global perspective could be to globalize the curriculum. With a globalized curriculum teachers could give the students the global context they need in global society.
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1. Introduction

The millennium report by the ex-general secretary of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, has contributed to a new politics for global development in Sweden.\(^1\) The Swedish Parliament shall ensure that all political areas contribute to fair and sustainable development and strive to halve poverty in twenty five years’ time.\(^2\) Some of the central themes of the new politics for global development are respect for human rights, democracy, gender equality, sustainable use of natural resources and protection of the environment. To achieve sustainable development with a focus on the common good we depend on our joint responsibility.\(^3\) Today several organizations, international networks and institutions work and cooperate to achieve sustainable development on a federal level, for instance *SIDA, Framtidsjorden and the Church of Sweden Mission.*\(^4\)

Another important institution which could contribute to making people aware of global issues and increasing responsibility amongst young people is school. The need for ethics teaching from a global perspective is increasing because of present-day globalized society, which involves immigration from other cultures, religions, traditions etc. to Sweden and emigration in different forms to other countries. Teaching containing global ethics questions and global cooperation could give students a better understanding of how conditions of life, traditions and community systems interact with different cultures, religions and theories of life.

Religion is the main subject in Swedish high schools for the teaching of different religions, theories of life and ethics, therefore the priorities within the subject should be questioned. However, if we are to put all these theories into practice we depend on teachers’ and students’ attitude towards ethics questions in school. Culture, the school environment and the general situation of the country can favour or obstruct teachers’ and student’s interest in specific ethics questions.

\(^2\) [http://www.regeringen.se/sb/d/2355/a/30775](http://www.regeringen.se/sb/d/2355/a/30775), 2007-10-12.
\(^3\) The common good mainly consists of having the social systems, institutions and environments on which we all depend work in a manner that benefits all people.
\(^4\) *SIDA* (Swedish International Development Agency: its main goal is to contribute to creating better conditions for poor people so they can improve their own conditions of life. It channels its resources through NGOs, multilateral cooperation and the EU and creates partnerships with companies, popular movements, organizations, universities and government agencies for its development projects. *Framtidsjorden* is an international network which supports development based on social justice and ecological sustainability. Since 1874 *The Church of Sweden* has had a mission task of cooperation with different churches and organisations.
The fact that Brazil is a country with an upper-middle income and a very strong, close presence of poverty in its society was the main reason for including it in my study. I applied for a Minor field study scholarship, sponsored by SIDA, which among other factors, gives one the opportunity to experience another culture and obtain different perspectives on several matters. The comparison between two societies as different as Sweden and Brazil could help us to understand how different ethics-related matters can really influence teachers’ and students’ attitudes. One assumption may be that teachers in Brazil have a different perspective on ethics teaching as compared to teachers from secularized Sweden.

As a future high school teacher in religion, I am interested in knowing what kind of ethics questions teachers in these two different environments consider it is important to convey in schools. I am also interested in verifying whether there is any kind of cooperation between Swedish/Brazilian schools and different scholars and organizations which could be useful in improving ethics teaching in schools from a global perspective.

For the purpose of building up some background information on ethics, teaching and global perspectives, I have had recourse to several scholars in my history of research, including Göran Bexell, Olof Franck, Elisabeth Gerle, Edgar Almén, Michael Grimmit, Thomas E. Skidmore, the Dalai Lama and Leonardo Boff. Further information of their background will be presented in 4. History of research. Different websites within the ethics sphere have also been complementary to my study.
2. Aim and Research Questions

My first aim is to make a comparative study between six teachers in different countries - Sweden and Brazil - and three different field areas.

Principally I will focus on how teachers from different countries and field areas define concepts such as ethics and global ethics, and which ethics questions they consider it is more important to convey in schools from a global perspective.

My second aim is to study whether there is any kind of cooperation between the teachers’ different field areas and the external organizations, which could maximize the positive task of ethics teaching in schools.

In this study three research questions will be discussed:

1. How would six teachers in Sweden and Brazil, define the concepts ‘ethics’ and ‘global ethics’?
2. What kind of ethics questions (national/global) do six teachers in Sweden and Brazil attach importance to and feel the school should convey?
3. Is there any form of cooperation between Swedish/Brazilian schools and different organizations, in order to improve ethics teaching from a global perspective?

2.1 Limitations

Since ethics tends to be an ambiguous conception I’ve limited my own definition of ethics to the one presented by Göran Bexell and Carl-Henric Grenholm in *Teologisk Etik*. According to their definition ethics is moral values and norms and contains three questions: “What is moral good and evil? What is moral right and wrong? What is a good person and what does a good society look like”?

Even though scholars use the conceptions global and universal ethics as if they were one and the same, I have limited my study to the first one mentioned, in order to avoid any misunderstandings relating to Universalism. My study is also limited to only six informants, two different countries and three different field areas over a short period of time.

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3. Methodology

In the methodology chapter I will present the two countries and the three field areas where my research took place. I will also present the six informants who participated in my study. The procedure of my study, hypotheses and study material will also be described and discussed.

3.1 Country characteristics

According to the Human Rights report on Brazil 2005, made by The Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Sweden, Brazil is a country with sharp contrasts and a great deal of complexity. It has the characteristics of a modern, developed, democratic, industrial country as well as the common characteristics of a developing country with sharp income differences. These contrasts have many sources. Some of them are caused by the past promises of a country with big opportunities for life, and the current reality of discrimination, violence and poverty.

In 1989 democracy was established in Brazil and since then a great deal of progress has been achieved in social and economic areas. Different questions related to Human Rights are openly discussed on the federal level through conferences, seminars and workshops. However, according to the Human Rights report on Brazil 2005, the good intentions from the federal level have not always reached the local level. Corruption, assault, murder, torture, sexual exploitation etc. are everyday matters. Traditions and habitual patterns, violence, organized criminality and drug dealing are aggravating factors. Assault and corruption have also been a problem inside the police forces. Considering Human Rights, the Constitution claims that everyone should be equal in the face of the law and have freedom of speech, but the right to a satisfactory standard of living is very far from being achieved in Brazil. In 2001 the Government indicated that 46 million people out of 180 million of the total population had less than one dollar per day to live on.

Sweden’s prosperity contrasts sharply with the privation suffered in a developing country like Brazil. Nevertheless global matters and joint responsibility reach beyond borders and affect us all.

8Skidmore, Thomas E., Brazil- Five centuries of change, 1999.
Sweden’s relations with Brazil are increasing through different types of aid and economical investments in Brazil. Today Brazil is Sweden’s largest trade partner in Latin America and around one thousand Swedish people are living in Brazil. The political relations between Sweden and Brazil are extensive, they share many common values and objectives in their foreign policies and there is a mutual interest of cooperation and brainstorming in many areas, such as multilateral cooperation, peace, sustainable development, resistance to poverty, human rights and democracy.

3.1.1 Religion and theories of life

Around 73.9% Brazilians belong to the Roman Catholic Church. But Catholicism in Brazil is often mixed with spiritualism and afro-rituals. There are a few Indian religions such as União da Vegetal and Santo Daime, that have become popularized among Brazilians without being incorporated into Afro-Brazilian cults. The traditional Indian religions are decreasing though, because of the decreasing number of Indians in the country. There is also an increasing Protestant communion, mostly represented by the Pentecostal movement.

During the period of military rule (1964-1985), the so-called liberation theology became important for Catholics. Local religious groups fought poverty and oppression and popular support helped radical priests to question the Catholic Church’s role as an authentic provider for the soul. With the establishment of democracy, the magnitude of liberation theology decreased, but the philosophy of helping the poor remained until now. Liberation theology has also been noticed by different theologians and organizations, like Leonardo Boff and Iser Assessoria, and is still of great importance.

The situation in Sweden is quite different; Sweden is considered a highly-secularized country, which has contributed to a separation between state and church in the year 2000. The Church of Sweden, an Evangelical Lutheran Church, is a democratic, independent religious body. Secularization contributed to the Law of religious freedom in the year 1951 and the

12 Ibid.
15 Ibid.
16 Iser Assessoria, is an ecumenical institute in Rio de Janeiro, which has its roots in the liberation theology and work with religion research and popular adult education. The purpose is to make a contribution in the creation of a fair and democratic society. Leonardo Boff is the founder of the organisation but there are co-workers from different churches and popular movements, especially within the Catholic groups. In the book Introducing liberation Theology (1987) by Leonardo and Clodovis Boff the liberation theology is presented
ambition arose to create objective teaching of religion in Swedish schools. Around 84% of the Swedish population belongs to the Church of Sweden. Like Brazil, Swedish society is also characterized by other religions and theories of life, such as The Roman Catholic Church, Orthodox Churches and Islam, among others.

3.1.2 School system

With regard to the education and school system in Brazil, school attendance is compulsory between the ages of seven and fourteen. There are no fees, the state covers all the costs for this compulsory school, but many schools in slum areas do not have enough financial resources and there are unauthorized teachers with low salaries. The situation is even more difficult for children living in rural areas, in the Amazon and in the poor area of northeast Brazil, where one fifth of Brazilians can neither read nor write. Distances to the schools are very long indeed and many children have to stay at home helping with the family maintenance. Today most Brazilian children start the eighth year of compulsory school but only fifty per cent finish it, and very few of them continue later with high school studies. There is a vast range of private high schools for those who can afford this alternative, most of them run by Catholic communities. Compared to Sweden, where most of the universities or colleges are run by the state, half of Brazilian universities are private. Unlike Brazil, Sweden has nine years of compulsory school, most of the students go voluntarily to high school afterwards and 43% continue to study at colleges or universities. There are also independent schools in Sweden, most of which have a special alignment, for instance a religion or different pedagogies.

3.2 Field areas and Informants

Six informants took part in my study. Four of the six informants work in compulsory school while the other two are related to the field area of ethics through The Church of Sweden. Below I give further information about the different field areas and the six informants’ background. For reasons of integrity, assumed names will be used in the presentation.

19 The field information about the Swedish and Brazilian school is collected from each school’s website on the Internet. Out of ethical consideration I choose to not mention the Internet addresses in the Bibliography because these could reveal the schools names and indirectly risk the teachers’ anonymity (www CODEX, Forskningsetiskaprinципer I humanistisk-samhällsvetenskaplig forskning).
3.2.1 The Swedish school

The Swedish school represented in my study is a public school located in a village in the south of Sweden. The school has around 270 pupils (both pre-school and intermediate level) and underlines four key words: health, knowledge, culture and security. It prioritizes understanding multitude and equality and has developed an environmental consciousness from a sustainable perspective. These perspectives are also practiced within the educational program. One of the local prioritized goals for the year 2006 was cooperation with the surrounding world.

The teacher who will represent the Swedish school is Kristin. She is a teacher for pupils of the intermediate level.

3.2.2 The Brazilian school

The Brazilian school where my research took place was founded in 1997 and represents four centres and three different levels: Infants: 5 years, from 1-2 to 7 years old, Basic: 7 years, from 7 to 14 years old and Intermediate: 3 years, from 15 -18 years old. The centre I visited has Basic and Intermediate classes and holds approximately 600 students. The school is located in a big city in northeast Brazil. It is private and independent from any religious perspective on education and teaching. The Pedagogical Proposal of the Brazilian school establishes several pacts: with natural living space, constant learning, formal and political quality of education, cultural and ethical formation, an opportunity of welcoming diversity and a valuation of the teaching professional.

The school’s educational action is based on the principles of equality, personal qualities, autonomy, truth and interdisciplinary aspects and stresses the following values:
- Respect for individualities, the first condition for democratic citizenship.
- Responsibility in Being, Doing and Coexisting - coherent construction of identity, development of abilities and feelings indispensable for social coexistence.
- Cooperation and solidarity with others, breaking egoistic barriers to achieve the collective aim.

Below is a presentation of the three Brazilian teachers who represent the Brazilian school.

Marco has a degree in Sociology and Business Administration. He is a teacher of ethics and citizenship for the Intermediate Education level (15-17 years old).
Joana has a degree in Psychology and a specialization in Psycho-Pedagogies. Her teaching subject is psychology for students between the ages of 10 and 17.

Ines has degree in History and teaches this subject in the Basic and Intermediate levels (11-19 years old).

### 3.2.3 The Church of Sweden

Since 1874 the Church of Sweden has had a mission task of cooperation with different churches and organizations in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East. The World Wide Christian Church constitutes the world’s widest global network and forty-five Swedish missionaries are sent to fifteen different countries to sustain it. One of the Church of Sweden Mission’s assignments is “to stand on the side of the vulnerable and defend the right of people to live in dignity regardless of nationality or belief”. I contacted the Church of Sweden Mission in Brazil to obtain more information on the task of missions in a developing country. They helped me with information and email contacts within the mission field area.

My next informant, Karin was sent to Brazil in 1998 by the Church of Sweden Mission as a Swedish missionary. She is working as a religion researcher and has been an adult educator at The Institution for Research and Adult Education as well as cooperating with Iser Assessoria in Rio de Janeiro.

At the Church of Sweden’s research department there are different researchers within the ethics field area. One of them is my informant, Ulla. She is a priest and senior lecturer in ethics and wrote her dissertation on Global Ethics. She has also lived and carried out research at Princeton University and taken part in a project called Global Civilization.

### 3.3 Hypotheses

On the basis of my history of research, I have elaborated three hypotheses related to my study.

1. Teachers in Brazil have a different definition and concept of ethics because of the living conditions in their country.
2. There are some ethics questions that teachers pay more importance to for conveyance in the school and which could represent global, sustainable ethics.

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3. There are not enough guidelines in the curriculum and cooperation between different field areas to develop and sustain ethics teaching from a global perspective.

3.4 Method and material

My research took place partly in the natural field areas, Sweden and Brazil, where people live and act, because I felt this would improve my study. The relevance of the context and respect for social coherence is the most important factor a study of this kind.\(^{21}\)

3.4.1 The questionnaire

The study consisted mainly of a questionnaire distributed to six teachers in two different countries, Sweden and Brazil, and three different field areas, a Swedish school and a Brazilian school and the Church of Sweden’s Mission and Research Department. The reason for choosing a questionnaire as a method for this study was based on the wish to make a comparison between these six teachers. With the informants’ different background and experience I hoped to give a wider perspective on ethics and ethics teaching in my study. The contents of the questionnaire were dependent on which area it was distributed in and included three main categories: ethics definitions, sustainable ethics questions and cooperation from a global perspective. The questionnaire consisted of open questions in order to give the six informants the opportunity to express individual opinions about different matters and not limit the answer possibilities.

The first questionnaire (enclosure 1) was developed in English because the report was supposed to be written in English. I divided it into three categories: ethics definitions, sustainable ethics questions and cooperation. In each category I developed questions related to ethics and adapted them to the informants in the different field areas. Then I had it translated into Portuguese (enclosure 2) and Swedish (enclosure 3) so the informants would be able to answer them in their first language. The Portuguese translation was carried out by an inhabitant of Portugal and I did the English and Swedish translation myself.

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3.4.2 Informant contact

The informants, three Brazilian teachers, one Swedish teacher, one senior lecturer in ethics and one Swedish missionary were contacted by email. The email addresses to the Brazilian teachers were given to me through the Swedish Embassy in Brazil. I sent an introductory mail to the headmaster. Communication with the Brazilian school was mainly via email and sometimes through phone calls. At first I had no direct contacts with the Brazilian teachers, only with the headmaster. On my first visit to the Brazilian school he introduced me to the three teachers who would participate in my study. He had specifically chosen these three because of their subject field. My first visit to the school consisted of a presentation of myself and my study, a meeting with the teachers and a guided tour around the school. Because of a construction delay, the school had opened on the day I was there for the first time, which was rather improper for the purposes of my study. The delay had caused a great deal of stress and the teachers had not been able to see the questionnaire I had sent to the headmaster before I left Sweden. To give the teachers some time to look over my questionnaire and to plan the next visits, we decided I should return in a week. During the next visits I collected the questionnaires and discussed the questions and other matters related to my study with the three teachers. I participated in ethics lessons and gave my own lesson, including an ethical dilemma. These lessons and my interview with a person working in a non-governmental organisation will not be described or discussed in this thesis, though. To limit my field subject this thesis will only focus on the results of the six teachers’ questionnaires.

I contacted the Swedish teacher by phone and handed her the questionnaire personally. The email address of the Swedish missionary was given to me in an email by the Church of Sweden. I found the email address of the senior lecturer in ethics on a website and contacted her by email. The last two informants sent me back the completed questionnaires by email and the remaining four I picked up personally from each school. All six informants were chosen because of their different relations to ethics and teaching.

3.5 Critique of methods

For greater standardization, which is desirable for almost all kinds of questionnaires, there should be equality between the questionnaires that are handed out.\textsuperscript{22} Since I adapted my questions to the different field areas of my informants, this may have affected the final level

\textsuperscript{22} Trost, J., Enkätboken, 2001, p 56.
of standardization. On the other hand, the fact that I visited four of my informants may also have been a disadvantage for my final result. The two informants I did not visit did not have the same opportunity to explain and discuss their answers with me in person afterwards, even though I specifically wrote in all the emails that if they had any questions about the questionnaire they could contact me.

Translation mistakes may also have affected the reliability of the answers. There was in fact a translation error in one of the questions - the translator used the concept universal instead of global, which had a different meaning for one of the Brazilian teachers and may have affected the results, even though we discussed it afterwards. The fact that popular concepts in Sweden - for instance global ethics - were used, may have constituted a disadvantage for the Brazilian teachers. Uncertainty about the meaning of global ethics may have had an impact on the results. Some of the teachers declared that they had not been working as teachers for a long time or using concepts like global ethics and this could explain the different amounts of text produced by the teachers. All Swedish quotations mentioned in 4. History of research has been translated into English by myself, but I have retained the original as a reference in case misunderstandings should arise. The fact that I failed to obtain the Brazilian school’s curriculum, as I had been promised, means details regarding goals and material that could have been interesting for the final results have been omitted.
4. History of research

4.1 Perspectives on ethics

The word ethics is an ambiguous concept, and represents multitude and variation. It can be studied from different perspectives, and therefore my next step is to present different scholars’ definitions of ethics.

*Teologisk etik* by Göran Bexell (professor in ethics, Lutheran priest and Vice-chancellor of Lunds University, Sweden) and Carl Henric Grenholm (Lutheran priest and professor in Christian ethics at Uppsala University, Sweden) give an insight into different perspectives of ethics but primarily the theological and philosophical perspective. They point out that a theological and a philosophical definition of ethics is a “reflection on moral”. A similar definition is given by Håkan Thorsén (senior lecturer at the Department of Health Sciences, Örebro University, Sweden) and Carl Eber Olivestam (senior lecturer at the Institution for Pedagogy and Didactics, Gothenburg University, Sweden), who define ethics as “an intellectual/sensible reflection on what is right or wrong and good and bad”. Ethics and morals are often mistaken as being synonymous but Olof Franck (author and senior lecturer in Philosophy of Religion at Uppsala University, Sweden) points out the difference between the concepts. According to him ethics is “a science of what is right or wrong” and morals are “people’s unsystematic beliefs of what is right and wrong and their actions and behaviour in relation to these opinions”.

To Bexell and Grenholm ethics represents three questions: “What is moral good and bad? What is moral right and wrong? What is a good person like, and what does a good society look like?” From their perspective ethics mainly contain moral values and norms, for instance good/bad, right/wrong. A norm is defined as a direction of human acts and shall apply to all people. Despite these definitions of ethics there is further discussion as to whether there are any values or norms which could be commonly comprised. According to Bexell and Grenholm the majority agrees that justice is desirable but there are different

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25 Ibid. p 20.
28 Ibid. p 14ff.
29 Ibid. p 17.
opinions about what social justice involves. Differences do not have to mean that there are no common morals though, and Bexell and Grenholm give humanistic ethics as an example. Humanistic ethics should function even in a pluralistic society, because it claims common rights, such as equality. The question is how much influence do humanistic beliefs have on schools and on teachers in Sweden and Brazil.

A certain moral idea of what is right, wrong, good, evil and responsible is often related to a certain world or life theory, and the Swedish school system and ethics teaching in Swedish schools is based on Christian tradition and Western Humanism. Secularization, however, has affected the importance of Christianity in society and Humanism has been questioned by different life theories, for instance Existentialism and Ecological movements which point out not only the human value but the inherent value in nature and in animals. The societies of Sweden and Brazil are influenced by several religions and cultures, but the Christian religion (Evangelic Lutheran and Roman Catholic) is the most extended and many private schools are catholic or protestant; therefore, below, I make a presentation of what constitutes Christian ethics.

4.2 Christian ethics

Christian ethics are based on God’s Ten Commandments in The Old Testament and Jesus’ New Love Commandment in The New Testament. The moral theology contained in the Ten Commandments points out, among others: life, human dignity, ownership, environment, social and economic justice and love for the poor. I shall now proceed to deepen the meaning of these concepts.

4.2.1 Ethics values

Some of the most discussed ethical questions in the general debate are related to human life and legitimate defense, such as murder, abortion, death penalty, euthanasia and suicide. The Fifth Commandment in the Catholic Church’s Catechism stresses the value of respect for

34 [Bibeln](http://www.bibeln.se), 2 Mos. 20:3-17, Luk. 10:27, 2000.
human life through the Holy Story’s Testimony.\textsuperscript{36} Since life is a creation by God, it has an inherent value and a murder of any kind is related to original sin. Respect for human life and human development demands peace. Peace is not only a world without war; peace is respect for human personal dignity and human rights.\textsuperscript{37}

The Seventh Commandment in the Catholic Church’s Catechism emphasizes everyone’s right to have access to the earth’s supplies and private property.\textsuperscript{38} However, this matter is inadequately unequal from an international perspective. Due to the dependent political relationship, there is a huge need for solidarity between countries. The rich nations have a responsibility towards the poorer countries, which cannot manage to obtain the resources they need for development or have been unable to do so as a result of tragic historical events. Aid is a great help and an answer to direct needs but it is also important to support poor countries and help them on their way to development and liberation. The common good shall always be in focus. The Seventh Commandment stresses love for the poor, in the sense of material, cultural or religious poverty; those who help the poor will be blessed by God.\textsuperscript{39}

The First Commandment points out the importance of loving God and Jesus places it above all the others. The Second Commandment emphasizes love for one’s neighbour. These two Commandments are called The Double Love Message. The ethics teaching by Jesus is concentrated in \textit{The Sermon of the Mount}, where we find the \textit{golden rule}, a compassion which is principle to different ethical standing points. The Golden rule “treat others as you want to be treated” has become influential among people of diverse cultures and useful in political matters.\textsuperscript{40} It represents a common value and therefore could be useful in a global society with cultural differences and not less in schools which may well be the best place for prevention of cultural conflicts. Next I will give a small historical insight, modern theories and goals for ethics teaching in Swedish schools.

\section*{4.3 Ethics in schools}
Formerly there was a normative ethical perspective on religion teaching in Swedish schools, which was based on Christian tradition. Teachers were supposed to influence the students with certain ideals in order to make exemplary citizens out of them. Because of the Law of

\textsuperscript{38} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{39} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{40} http://www.jcu.edu/philosophy/gensler/goldrule.htm, 2007-03-20.
Freedom of Religion in Sweden (1951) this kind of teaching changed in the year 1960, creating a pedagogy that should describe different religions and life theories in an impartial and comprehensive way.\textsuperscript{41}

For a long time all human behaviour was based on learning and from the Behaviourist perspective it was the only explanation for human moral behaviour.\textsuperscript{42} Today there is a discussion between scholars in biology and psychology whether morals are something we are born with or if they are something we learn. According to different scholars this is a central question, which may be of great significance for reaching new insights about ourselves. Another important question is the one which can tell us which institutional and social conditions will facilitate complete development for humans’ moral instincts.\textsuperscript{43}

Today Swedish schools represent an institution, where pupils should be given an ethical stability. The common basis of values is introduced in the curriculum of Swedish schools and expresses an ethical base, which is supposed to give shape to the school.\textsuperscript{44} The ethics perspective is emphasized not only in religion, but in every school subject, and permeates all the teaching.\textsuperscript{45} A descriptive ethical perspective dominates the teaching of religion; the pupils gain an insight into different ethical systems and applications in different societies and environments. The purpose is to supply knowledge on different interpretations in ethics questions which the students may experience in society.\textsuperscript{46} Which ethics questions and value assumptions teachers use in their ethics teaching to give pupils a global context demands further investigation.

Michael Grimmit, known as a lecturer and author on religious education at the University of Birmingham, stresses the importance of asking simple questions, such as: What shall I teach? How shall I teach it? When shall I teach it? But above all, why should I teach it?\textsuperscript{47} According to Grimmit, the last question is the one that makes teachers reflect carefully on their value assumptions and clarity about the value assumptions is important since they underline our view of how education and religion are related to each other. In a society characterized by cultural, religious and ideological pluralism it is difficult to know what value assumptions contain. Grimmit points out that values, like knowledge, are bound together with a culture and ideology which settle the sense of identity and cultural continuity in a

\textsuperscript{41}http://www.skolverket.se/sb/d/129?searchword=1951&page=search&website=&search=S%F6k, 2007-03-20.
\textsuperscript{44}Olivestam, Carl E., Religionsdidaktik- om teori, perspektiv och praktik i religionsundervisningen, 2006, p 43f.
\textsuperscript{46}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{47}Grimmitt, Michael, Religious Education and Human Development, 1987, p 15.
society. Therefore I believe the importance of giving students a global context within the school subject of religion is greater than ever.

Grimmott mentions two kinds of knowledge, one that acquires knowledge about religions and another that acquires knowledge from religions. To learn about religions is basically to study facts, but learning from religions demands reflection about our own and different theories of life. In a global complex society, which is characterized by multi-culture and multi-faith, it is important to clarify value assumptions and which knowledge should be conveyed to our students.

The last decade’s research in Sweden shows that interest for life questions, such as the meaning of life, relations to other human beings, conflicts, peace etc. is increasing among Swedish students. As teachers we could take advantage of this popularity to reach a more global perspective on ethics questions among students. The Christian Democrats in Sweden have expressed their wish to strengthen the common basis of values in Swedish schools, meaning a constant discussion about ethics questions and values which Swedish society is based on. The Church of Sweden has emphasized that ethics teaching material in Swedish schools could be improved. Their opinion is based on the concept of a tougher society environment in Sweden, for instant the violence that occurs in different mass media. Young people are easily influenced by these impressions and need to balance them against something. The Church of Sweden believes that they can help to improve ethics teaching in schools through more ethics discussions. To simplify contacts between the parish and the school, the suggestion is made of discussion material on ethics for different stages, adapted to modern times and presented in such a way that it could be useful all over the country. The Church and school curriculum in Sweden emphasize the importance of bringing ethics questions to the fore, but exactly which ethics questions are not specified. Bearing in mind the present globalization and multi-religious societies, new ethics matters and perspectives come into consideration. Below I will deepen the meaning of globalization and global ethics.

50 Almén, Edgar, Livstolkning och värdegrund, 2000, p117ff.
51 Almén, Edgar, Livstolkning och värdegrund, 2000, p117ff.
4.4 Global ethics

From some perspectives globalization is considered a new phenomenon and from others a very old process. Unlike internationalization, globalization represents a cassation of national borders and integration rather than international cooperation. According to Western tradition, ethics norms have been considered global and universal for over two thousand years. The term globalization can be used in a negative and in a positive light. From a positive perspective, globalization represents interaction and communication between people from different continents, ethnicity and cultural background. Some negative aspects of globalization are, among others, ecological changes like global warming and an increasing gap between rich and poor.

With increasing globalization, new conceptions are being developed, for instant the concept of world citizen. Martha C. Nussbaum, an American philosopher, points out that a global society desperately needs to educate world citizens. The meaning of world citizen, according to Nussbaum, is a citizen who could function in a local multi-cultural context as well as criticize the reasons for his ideas, wherever in the world they might be confronted. The conception of world citizen strains knowledge, such as the ability to criticize one’s own traditions and understanding how common needs and goals are realized in different ways depending on different circumstances. From a previous study I could see that teachers have a tendency to prioritize national heritage in their teaching even though there is increasing globalization in society. As Nussbaum points out, teaching has to be globally influenced, to ensure students obtain a wider frame of references.

Elisabeth Gerle, senior lecturer in ethics at Malmö University, points out that “for the first time in history a genuine global context exists”. Gerle bases the globally shared context on different issues, for instant ecological threats, a growing population, a globalizing economy and the widening gap between rich and poor. She emphasizes that global ethics should respond to these matters and to violations of human rights, such as race, class, gender, ethnicity and religion. On the other hand she questions whether achieving global ethics is possible or not. The uneven relationships in a society to power and influence affect humanity and sustainable development. The wellbeing of the whole is a central matter for global ethics.

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57 Ibid.
59 Härsing, Linn, Kultur på avstånd, 2006.
60 Gerle, Elisabeth, In search of a Global Ethics, 1995, p 16f.
and to achieve it, Gerle points out that there must be some “broad moral principles with universal claims”.\textsuperscript{61} One assumption would be that an exposure to potential global ethics would lead to an increased sharing of some basic values. The Declaration of the Parliament of the World’s Religions claims to teach global values but still there is an opposite point residing in the differences between religions.\textsuperscript{62} Whether the values are found in the biblical scriptures or in different spiritual sources, they need to have a human basis, according to Gerle.\textsuperscript{63}

Global ethics refers to a kind of moral universalism, where a system of ethics applies universally, regardless of culture, race, sex, religion, nationality etc. The basic idea of universal respect is ancient and corresponds to the golden rule “Do unto others as you would have others do unto you”.\textsuperscript{64} In the Gospel according to St. Matthew the Golden Rule is visible in several pieces of work, especially in the seventh chapter, with the purpose of being useful in ethical standpoints.\textsuperscript{65}

Göran Bexell, professor at the Theological Institution in Lund, is in charge of a project for which he studies value traditions and value fellowship in modern Swedish society.\textsuperscript{66} Bexell believes that we need global ethics because it is in everyone’s interests to have a good environment and a world with peace and welfare. This joint interest makes it possible to try and achieve a global common basis of values, which could function in harmony with cultural differences.\textsuperscript{67}

The existence of global ethics norms are questioned by many moral philosophers and moral theologians. They claim ethics norms to be relative, which means that they are dependent on certain cultures in a certain time and place on earth.\textsuperscript{68} Basically they believe in “live and let me live”, be tolerant and do not criticize me or judge my actions, because what might be right for you in your culture may not be right for me in my culture.\textsuperscript{69} António Barbosa da Silva (professor in systematic theology at Misjonshøgskolen, Norway) does not agree that there are no global values and puts forward truth and justice as examples. He points out that those who deny the existence of global ethics norms have to accept actions that occur outside their own culture, for instance racism, torture, incest etc.\textsuperscript{70} If we believe in an

\textsuperscript{61} Gerle, Elisabeth, \textit{In search of a Global Ethics}, 1995, p 16f.
\textsuperscript{63} Gerle, Elisabeth, \textit{In search of a Global Ethics}, 1995, p 214.
\textsuperscript{64} Gerle, Elisabeth, \textit{In search of a Global Ethics}, 1995, p 205.
\textsuperscript{65} Bibeln, Matt. 7, 1999.
\textsuperscript{66} http://www3.lu.se/info/lum/LUM_07_99/24_etik.html, 2007-04-16, p 1f.
\textsuperscript{67} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{70} Ibid.
existence of global ethics norms instead, it will prejudice all evil actions of this kind. Barbosa’s opinion is that human rights should function as global ethics norms on a governmental level and as the golden rule on the individual level. According to Barbosa, human rights are global ethics norms which promote everyone’s interests and welfare without harming anyone.\(^{71}\)

Lars Paulson (author, Sweden) presents Leonardo Boff and his brother Clodis Boff, liberation theologians from Brazil, who have put together a pedagogy system representing a global ethics.\(^{72}\) Leonardo Boff defines ethics as a collection of universal values, which are connected to humanity and which exist in every person. He strives not only for sustainable development but also for a sustainable society. His pedagogy is divided into seven items and every item has the purpose of stimulating different spirits of the times.\(^{73}\) His theology presents different perspectives on spirituality and ecology and stresses the importance of interplay between humans and the environment. Leonardo Boff has specifically emphasized the need for an eco-theology for sustainable development, including special care for the environment, humans and all the creatures in nature.\(^{74}\) He claims that a new spirit of the times can only be successful if it responds to a meaningful need for change. The question is if individuals, society and the world community have such a need. The new spirit of the times omits the fact that “we have to understand the multi-dimension context; where the local is associated with the global”\(^{75}\). According to Leonardo Boff a new paradigm demands “a new language, a new imagination, a new politics, a new pedagogy, a new ethics, a new discovery of the sacred, and a new process of individuation (spirituality)”\(^{76}\). Far-reaching progress in our moral thinking could be achieved by increasing knowledge, imagination, and making use of the golden rule in schools. Knowing how our actions influence the lives of others and imagining ourselves in the other person’s place could lead to improved understanding and moral behaviour amongst students.\(^{77}\)

There are international networks that support social justice and ecological sustainability, and one of them is Future Earth. Future Earth has member organizations in Latin America, Asia and Sweden and their main task is to “support the progress of knowledge and the

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\(^{75}\) Ibid.
exchange of ideas”. The network’s projects are not only to create ecological and social awareness among people, but also to give poor people the strength to take control of their lives and take responsibility for the environment. To achieve their goals and strengthen the communication between South and North they are organizing pilot projects, education, information and exchange. Whether Swedish and Brazilian schools take part in these projects, and partaking of information or exchange is something yet to be established.

In the curriculum for Swedish high schools an emphasis is placed on an international perspective on teaching. International teaching is designed to give the students the ability to see their own reality in a global context and create international solidarity, as well as prepare them for a society with international contacts across national and cultural borders. Whether or not teachers use certain ethics questions in their teaching in order to give a global context, or cooperate with different international networks in order to develop and sustain international/global teaching in schools is something that remains to be looked into.

The education trade across national borders and the international trade in education services are increasing. One of the most commonly-used forms of international trade in education is the student exchange program, which offers students the possibility of travelling and studying. To further develop and adapt the international programs to a global society, globalization of the curriculum is proposed. A globalized curriculum could offer a broad independence of the local context of the student. Local independency does not necessarily mean leaving out local questions, but rather finding a balance between the local and global context, and scholars give the digital technologies as an example. Digital technologies can help create an image of a relationship between the local and the global aspects and how these two could interplay. Whether schools could take advantage of these tools to improve ethics teaching in demands further investigation.

4.4.1 A global responsibility

Within the ethical debate another concept appears: that of moral responsibility. Olof Franck, for instance, emphasizes that moral responsibility is the main difference between humans and

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81 Apple, W., M., Kenway, J., Sing, Michael., Globalizing Education, 2005, p 93f.
animals because of the human possibility of taking ethical-moral decisions.\textsuperscript{84} According to António Barbosa da Silva, the development of a fair world demands that rich and poor countries are conscious of their increasing responsibility.\textsuperscript{85} Such responsibility requires global ethics norms, in other words a global ethics. Since negative aspects are partly caused by human actions it demands global responsibility, which should promote and increase good and develop justice in the world. According to Barbosa global moral responsibility is based on global ethics norms, for instant a global human perspective. From a global human perspective, all people shall be equal and have the same rights, in other words human rights. The Tibetan leader, the Dalai Lama, speaks about universal responsibility, where “every individual act has a universal dimension”.\textsuperscript{86} As the Dalai Lama says, universal responsibility demands a universal consciousness.\textsuperscript{87} Universal responsibility constitutes caring not only for oneself but for others too, and includes concepts such as honesty and justice. The main basis for peace and harmony is the individual feeling of responsibility towards others, according to the Dalai Lama.\textsuperscript{88} Whether the concept of global responsibility has put made a mark on schools and teaching has not been clarified.

\textsuperscript{84}See Franck, O., \textit{Etik, moral och mening}, 1993, p 22.
\textsuperscript{85}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{87}Lama, D., \textit{Etik för ett nytt millennium}, 2002, p 166f.
5. Results

The questionnaire answers given by the six informants will be presented in three categories: ethics definitions, ethics questions and cooperation from a global perspective.

5.1 Definitions of ethics

In order to see what kind of opinions the six informants have on ethics and global ethics, I first let them give their own definition of the two concepts mentioned above. Below is a presentation of each informant’s definition.

Kristin defines ethics as “a sense of what is right or wrong”, both personally and in wider contexts, for instance it can be both within the family and in “national and global” society. According to Kristin ethics is also “how one views occurrences and actions and the consequences of them”. She uses keywords like “good, evil and right and wrong”.

Global ethics is when “one personally or in a society takes decisions about subjects like environment / energy / infrastructure / trade / aid etc.” and “about the repercussions these decisions will have on the rest of the world, from an ethical perspective”. Kristin gives examples of global ethics: “trade ethics”, “HIV” and a “fair world”. For Kristin a fair world includes economical, social and environmental matters, for instance distribution, trade, conditions of life and the earth’s resources.

Ulla defines ethics as “a reflection on moral conditions” and global ethics as “a reflection on the possibilities of relating in a moral way to global challenges and global problems, such as poverty, migration, the ecological threat, respect for human rights etc”. For Ulla global ethics includes questions like “what kind of possibilities are there of living morally globally, and which institutions could contribute to that?”

Karin points out that she doesn’t have her own definition of ethics but that she agrees with the definition of ethics that The National Encyclopaedia gives. Neither does Karin have her own definition of global ethics but she ”presumes that it is about the study of ethics and moral ideas on a global level and/or to see if there could be common denominators so all humans could reach some kind of form of consensus when it comes to ethics and moral valuations”.

89 The definition of ethics by National Encyclopaedia: “with ethics, the theoretical reflection on human values and their basis applies”.

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Ines claims that “the most extended meaning of the word Ethics is related to value or values, values placed in practice” or “transformed into actions”. She points out that “the concept of ethics is directly attached to the basic principles of the human behaviour”. Ines relates universal ethics to a “code”. Her own opinion is that “from a social and cultural point of view universal ethics is plural and understood in accordance with the rules of behaviour of each society”. Ines points out that “ethics is related to actions” and “becomes universal through unilateral actions of solidarity”. She gives some examples of universal ethics actions: “respect for others, comprehension and tolerance”.

For Marco “ethics is a permanent attitude of practical analysis regarding the group of rules and norms that establish moral values”. He believes that “ethics develops gradually as individuals come to understand moral values better” and that moral values are “subjective”. His conclusion is that “a higher quality of life in a group (related to moral values) involves an adaptation of the norms of good coexistence and putting them into daily practice”, which for Marco consists of “more ethics”. Marco prefers to not speak about “a model of universal ethics”. For him the existence of “universal ethics” means a tacit belief in a “universal culture”, as the set of habits, customs and traditions determines the way people are connected to moral values.

Joana defines ethics as a “motivating parameter of conduct”, which must be “present in human relationships”, and must “serve as an orientation shelter for human fragility in the face of the freedom of choice, of free will”. From Joana’s point of view, ethics is different from morals. Unlike morals, ethics “proposes a permanent construction of practice”. She describes it “like a fluid dialogue, but with protection, and with pseudo-flexible limits”. According to Joana “ethics looks for answers, which are not pre-designed, not inside moulds, but committed to the human being and the project of humanity”. In the project of humanity Joana includes “humans’ time on earth, quality of life, the protection of nature” and “the welfare of human relations”. The meaning of universal ethics according to Joana is based on questions that “involve all people, regardless of race, ethnicity, or belief”. She believes that “the way that men explore and destroy nature affects any individual” and therefore everybody must be willing to analyze the practice of universal ethics.

5.2 Ethics questions

To form an idea of the six informants’ opinions on ethics teaching, I asked them to write down the ethics questions they consider most important to convey in schools, not only from a
national perspective but from a global perspective, which could contribute to a better understanding of people’s different backgrounds, living conditions, etc.

Kristin feels that important ethics questions in school are constituted by: egoism, friendship, respect for others and yourself. She also mentions the environment and the need for differences within it. Kristin believes that “from the small, the bigger grows” and if we start with the small it will be transmitted to the whole world. She means that attitudes and “actions” take affect and important key words are sense, understanding, insight, empathy, action and reflection. From a global perspective Kristin believes that there are certain ethics questions which could increase students’ understanding for people’s different backgrounds and living conditions, for instance environmental questions. She claims that it is not an easy issue, but that it is important to discuss how to go forward in matters like cultivation trade, communication and different kinds of production versus “short-sighted survival”. Kristin believes that we could develop an ethics teaching system from a global perspective, in the sense that there are common values we all could agree on, independent of religious belief, cultural background and political opinions. She thinks that “we should be able to agree on the fact that the earth’s resources are not endless and that a common perspective is needed on how we should deal with resources and environmental questions”. She also mentions human rights and all that these contain, including “food, shelter, peace, education etc.” These common values are already goals in many countries, according to Kristin. She claims that the big question is “how we shall achieve these goals”.

Ulla mentions several global ethics questions she feels could increase the understanding of people’s backgrounds and living conditions, for example “human rights, poverty biocide, ecological threats, water supply, refugees and migrations’ rights, human beings, especially women and children’s situations in countries with war and conflict” and “fair trade”. She believes that with knowledge on all of these matters we could contribute to “deepening an insight which will increase the understanding of people’s different conditions of life”. She points out that it is important to “convey hope” and that it is “possible to influence” and gives “micro credits” as an example. Ulla partly agrees that we could develop global ethics teaching in schools and emphasizes that human rights function as global ethics today, to a certain extent. She points out that human rights are “important for the work of global norm creation”. According to Ulla there are also many people who claim that all global ethics is based on Western conditions and “therefore claims a contextual, particular ethics which assumes that people live differently within different regions”. Ulla evokes a gender perspective which shows that many questions are “shared among women” all over the world and “patterns
describe them as subordinated”. The Western World has always been seen as “stating the individual” but personally Ulla thinks this is something that develops “in connection with modernization”. According to Ulla, “religion, ideology, politics and culture influence the way we think and work for human rights and global ethics”.

Karin considers ethics questions such as sexual morals, sexual minorities’ rights, consciousness of gender perspectives, work versus increased egoism, wealth in religion and cultural variety as important matters to convey in schools. From a global perspective she thinks that ethics questions like “international fairness and solidarity” could increase understanding for people’s different backgrounds and living conditions. She points out that “one has to strike on the local level in different parts of the world in order to really get to know them and to reach a level of commitment for the people who live there”.

Ines thinks it is important to discuss ethics questions such as “solidarity, attitude, respect, tolerance”. To her “these questions should be attended to not in a conceptual way, but in a practical way, with social actions”. For instance, solidarity may consist of “charity campaigns, voluntary visits to institutions, hospitals” etc. Ines gives an example of practicing respect by “contacts with Indians in villages, visits to museums and exhibitions, supporting cultural or heritage preservation projects, preservation of species”. She believes that “ethics is related to practice and the more actions the merrier”. According to Ines ethics questions are important both from “a micro (community)” and “macro (planet earth) point of view”. Even though Ines points out that it is a hard task to develop universal ethics teaching she believe it is “possible to speak of an ethical universality and make it possible through education”, for instance through political and cultural education. Education from a broad perspective “would be a universal value and a larger action to achieve would be the debate of universal ethics”, according to Ines.

To Marco “the first important point in an ethics study is the acknowledgment of the individual as a participant of multiple social systems”. He believes that it is important to make the student aware of “his familiarity with different symbolic-representative systems” as well as “his responsibility in the maintenance and preservation of the several social groups that he is part of”. Marco’s suggestion is to make students “co-players of the society” that they are living in. From a global perspective Marco emphasizes three different ethics questions. First he points out that “respect for opposing ideas is a very important step for the students, in order to begin to stimulate their tolerance for different ways of religiosity, traditions, customs, habits and politics that structure the different societies around the planet”. Secondly he emphasizes the need to include the ethnic minorities and poorest citizens in society. He
believes that “the formation of a standard of social wellbeing for everybody is very important” and that “dignity conquers for those with fewer resources”. And the third “important point to discuss in schools is related to eco-development”. To Marco, its importance is based on the fact that “nature has been predatorily explored and if this is not restrained we run the risk of disappearing as a living species”. He doesn’t believe in universal (global) ethics but “in spite of the differences produced socially by the several cultures”, he believes it is possible to establish “extra-cultural groups for the study of some moral values”. According to Marco “these groups could define certain rules of behaviour for the achievement of desired common aims, which would be the movement of the ethics attitude”. Marco points out though, that the way knowledge would reach every society “would depend on its historical level of significance for the social community in question”.

To Joana “values and beliefs must be a focus of high thinking in school”. She believes that it is “very important to re-think the human attitude towards nature, because we depend on it to live” and according to her “the students don’t feel responsible for it” and such an attitude does not produce a change. Another more important question “is respect for differences”. Joana believes that this is a very relevant question in Brazil because an inclusive school is being constructed, which means that it does not “exclude, classify, measure abilities” but instead “proposes exchange and places values on new things, different things”.

Joana believes it is possible to develop universal teaching ethics but she feels it is difficult because “we are not prepared yet for the complete developing of this universal ethics teaching”. According to Joana, “we are only at the beginning of this project” and many things are about to happen. To her “the dispute or competition for power” is one of the “main obstacles”. She thinks that the viability of universal teaching might depend more on people than governments because “when people perceive their strength, they believe in themselves and they excel”. Joana believes that it is necessary to establish some common values, for instance “self-esteem, respect for the people, a desire to preserve, which is the value of life or the value of peace”

5.3 Cooperation

The second aim of my study was to find out if there was any kind of cooperation between schools and different field areas, a task which could contribute to improved ethics teaching from a global perspective. I shall now present the six informants’ answers. Kristin presents different projects which the school takes part in, for instance a European project called Fit for
Europe.\textsuperscript{90} The project consists of an exchange between schools in Sweden, Estonia, Austria and Great Britain, which focuses on preventive health care. Kristin describes the project as a long term generator. The personal visits, for instance a visit to a Latvian school and orphanage which \textit{Friends Supporters}, teachers and representatives from the Church of Sweden paid last fall give an insight into the situation of other children, and fair conditions of life.\textsuperscript{91} Kristin believes that the feeling of “empathy increases” during visits “with direct contact”. She points out that the Swedish school also cooperates with the Church of Sweden during holidays like “All Saints’ Day, Christmas, Easter, Confirmation and when school breaks up”. Kristin also mentions the magazine \textit{Globen} which “brings many international questions to the fore”, for instance it “describes children’s experiences and thoughts from different cultures around the world” and serves as good discussion material for the older students, aged 11 to 12.\textsuperscript{92} According to Kristin the Swedish school has cooperated with \textit{United Nations Children Villages}, which tries to establish networks between countries, for instance summer camps in different United Nations countries. Kristin believes that exchange could “increase knowledge and friendship” and create a more open-minded attitude towards global questions. She thinks that the magazine \textit{Globen} contributes with discussion material, which can give the students the ability to see their own reality in a global context. Ethics questions found in \textit{Globen} could be taught and discussed in different ways and Kristin points out that it is important to give students basic facts “for understanding and arousing curiosity about other cultures and countries”. She gives several examples of how ethics teaching could be improved from a global perspective: “movies, inviting people who could give talks, arranging exchanges, letters / mails / chats / personal meetings with children / young people from other countries”, literature, media and discussions. Kristin also mentions “reflection and thoughts about their own reality in comparison to others”, “finding what there is in common and what unites us and from that perspective one can work towards increasing globalization”. Ulla wrote her dissertation about global ethics and has been involved in a project called \textit{Global Civilization}. According to Ulla there are scholars from different parts of the world who participate in this project and they “reflect on global ethics and global institutions”. She

\textsuperscript{90} http://www.fit-for-europe.info/webcom/show_page.php?wc_c=15878&wc_id=1, 2007-04-29.

\textsuperscript{91} Friends is a foundation that works on preventing harassment in schools and a friend supporter is a student who has been educated on what harassment is and shall act as a good example and report any kind of harassment in schools.

\textsuperscript{92} The magazine \textit{Globen} was first published in the year 1990, and the founder was Magnus Bergmar, a Swedish journalist and film maker. \textit{Globen} is a magazine about children all over the world and human rights and every year a prize called “The world children’s prize” is awarded. The magazine is published in eight different languages, 800 000 copies are printed and it is read by more than five million children between the ages of 10–16 in schools.
believes that by letting students meet children and young people from different parts of the world and read about experiences not only from our part of the world, we can give them a global context. Ulla points out that by stimulating and facilitating international exchange for teachers we can improve our ethics teaching from a global perspective.

According to Karin the Church of Sweden Mission gives economic support to the organization Iser Assessoria, among others. This economic support consists of development cooperation, the purpose of which is to create a better world together. The Church of Sweden Mission is also “economically supporting the Institution for Adult Education, SECA, social projects with the Lutheran Church, IECLB and the ecumenical organization Koinonia”. Karin points out that some aid goes through Sweden and some through the World Church’s council. She mentions another organization, Cebi, which is one of the Brazilian ecumenical Bible organizations that supports liberation theology. According to Karin, they work with so-called “Bible circles, where the method see, judge, act” is applied, which means “one shall analyze the context and the social reality one lives in and thereafter interpret it through the light of the Bible”. Karin mentions that she has been working as a religion teacher at university and that most of the missionaries who are sent to foreign countries work with ethics questions in different ways when they return to Sweden. Besides this, the cooperation between schools and the Church of Sweden Mission is basically “informal”, in Karin’s opinion. She points out that “Brazil is not a very highly prioritized country by the Church of Sweden and therefore there is not much cooperation”. Karin believes this is due to the language differences and the fact that the Church of Sweden’s mission prioritizes Africa. Nevertheless, the Church of Sweden does develop material on its mission activity in Brazil for teachers and students.

Karin feels that we could improve ethics teaching in schools from a global perspective through “examples from other parts of the world”. She means that we should “not only focus on personal morals but on questions that concern social fairness and international solidarity”. According to Ines the Brazilian school is part of a project called Emauis, which was created in France “with the main goal of promoting the common good” and she points out that the founder of the project Emauis (Love and Justice) was Father Abbé Pierre.93

Marco emphasizes that the Brazilian school also “cooperates in an active way in the social and educational inclusion of children from poor communities related to Balé Edisca” and one example of this is the teaching bags and school material they receive free. According

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93 Catholic Movement, present in different Brazilian cities. Promotes courses in human values, Christianity and the common good to evangelize young people. In ethics and political science promoting the common good means benefiting members of society. Abbé Pierre, a French Roman Catholic priest, was the founder of the Emauis movement. http://www.emaus.org.br/
to Marco, in this way all the teachers and employees are directly attached to the ethical practices of educating and socially including all these children.

Joana thinks that “they develop different works to promote the reflection of human ethics through the teaching in different subjects and through actions” in her school. She puts the example of mixing “children from a very high class with poor children with deficiencies and syndromes” and “actions like the election of the group leader or studies about the Indians help them to reflect on democracy and human rights”.

Below I proceed to analyze my results in relation to the history of research.
6. Analysis

As I mention in 5.1 *Definitions of ethics*, ethics is an ambiguous concept and there are several definitions of it. According to Göran Bexell and Carl-Henric Grenholm in *Teologisk Etik* ethics is moral values and norms and consists mainly of three questions: “What is moral good and evil? What is moral right and wrong? What is a good person and what does a good society look like”? For the six teachers who participated in my study, the definition of ethics was similar to the one Bexell and Grenholm give. They mention the keywords “right” and “wrong”, “reflection on moral conditions”, “basic principles of human behaviour”, “rules of behaviour”, “ethics looks for answers”, “group of rules and norms that establish moral values” etc.

The question as to whether global ethics could exist and which ethics questions could represent ethics teaching from a global perspective in schools seemed more complex to the six teachers. There were no clear definitions of what global ethics is, but different perspectives regarding what it could contain. In 4.4 *Global Ethics* I presented scholars’ different opinions, expressions and keywords about global ethics, for instance Christian ethics emphasized the value of life, respect, peace, solidarity, responsibility, the golden rule and the common good. Many of the scholars are priests, for instance Leonardo Boff (Catholic), Elisabeth Gerle (Lutheran) and Göran Bexell (Lutheran) and therefore it is not surprising that they base their theories on Christian ethics and use words like the common good, responsibility, peace and the golden rule when they speak about global ethics. After studying the teachers’ answers I found similar keywords. Five of six teachers, Kristin, Ulla, Karin, Ines and Joana agree in principle with the opinion that global ethics could and should exist. Mainly they point out that global issues demand global responsibility. To Kristin global responsibility consists of respect for the future generations. She shares many of the liberation theologian Leonardo Boff’s thoughts about sustainable development and society. Ulla relates global ethics to a moral reflection, a reflection on which institutions could contribute to living morally globally. Whether schools could represent such institutions is unsaid. Ethics becomes universal through unilateral actions of solidarity, according to Ines. To her, such actions consist of respect, comprehension and tolerance. Göran Bexell, priest and professor in ethics pointed out that a norm should be universal and Joana give the same idea based on ethics matters like the exposure and destruction of nature, which affects all people, regardless of race, ethic, belief etc.
Unlike the five teachers mentioned above Marco does not believe in universal ethics. Marco has a more relative perspective on ethics and thinks that a set of habits, customs and traditions determines the way people are connected to moral values. To speak about universal ethics is the same as speaking about a universal culture, according to Marco. Instead of developing global ethics, Marco believes it is possible to establish extra-cultural groups to study moral values, which could define some rules of behaviour for the achievement of desired common aims.

From a school perspective schools should function as institutions that lend stability and equality to ethics, as well as conveying knowledge and understanding from a broad perspective. Martha C. Nussbaum claims that teachers need to educate students to become world-citizens, so they can function in a local multi-cultural context and understand how common needs and goals are realized in different ways depending on different circumstances. Michael Grimmit stresses the importance of making teachers reflect more on their value assumptions by asking themselves questions like “why should I teach it?” Grimmit agrees with Nussbaum that a multi-cultural / multi-faith society demands reflection on what kind of knowledge teachers should convey to students in a more global society. The Christian Democrats in Sweden also believe that we should introduce more discussion material and bring more ethics questions to the fore in schools.

On the basis of my own results, all the teachers reflect on what could represent global ethics. Three of the teachers, Kristin, Marco and Joana talk about influencing students’ attitudes. In chapter 4.5.1, Universal responsibility, I presented Olof Franck, author and senior lecturer in Philosophy of Religion and his perspectives on responsibility; some of these perspectives are shared by the Tibetan leader Dalai Lama. For instance both point out the importance of taking responsibility, not only for oneself but for others. My informants Joana and Ulla emphasize the importance of letting students’ feel responsibility for themselves and others. Ulla also believes it is important as a teacher to convey hope, meaning that there always is something we can do to help in different matters. All six teachers think it is important to bring global ethics questions to the fore and the keywords that keep on appearing are respect, solidarity, tolerance, attitude and responsibility. The meaning of these words needs to be discussed in schools, according to the six teachers. Marco also points out the need to include ethnic minorities and the poorest citizens in society.

The big questions among scholars are: “Is a global ethics possible, or not?” and if yes, “How shall we achieve these goals?” and “Are we ready to develop global ethics?” Gerle believes a Global ethics exists (based on current shared ethics matters, for instance
environmental issues) but she sees it as difficult to implement in a society where uneven relationships to power and influence affect humanity and sustainable development. **Kristin** is of the opinion that we could develop a global ethics with common values but wonders how we shall achieve all the goals. According to Joana it is difficult because we are not prepared yet for the complete development of global ethics teaching. She gives a similar explanation to Gerle’s; one of the main obstacles is the dispute or competition for power. Despite the doubts, my results have already turned up good evidence that we can achieve a global ethics in the society and globalize ethics teaching in schools. Human Rights already function as a global ethics, according to scholars like Barbosa, and teachers like **Kristin** and **Ulla**.

In society several scholars, organizations and international networks cooperate to develop a sustainable environment and society, for instance Leonardo Boff, Iser Assessoria, the Church of Sweden Mission’s department, Future Earth etc. On the basis of my informants’ answers I can also see that several activities take place in schools to work towards sustainable development. The Swedish school has joined a European Union project called *Fit for Europe*, which is an exchange between schools in Sweden, Estonia, Austria and Great Britain. In this project *Friends Supporters*, teachers and representatives from the Church of Sweden are present. The Swedish school also cooperates with the Church of Sweden during the holidays. There has been cooperation between the United Nations and the Swedish school but lately they have mostly been working with a magazine called *Globen*. **Kristin** believes that different kinds of cooperation and exchange can increase students’ knowledge and understanding. Personal visits bring empathy and insight into the situation of other children and fair conditions of life, like the magazine *Globen*, which brings up many global questions and describes children’s experiences and thoughts from different cultures around the world. **Kristin** points out that we can improve ethics teaching from a global perspective in schools by showing movies, inviting lecturers, arranging more exchanges, using more global literature and discussing more. She believes that it is important to discover what common ground is and what unites us. **Ulla** has been part of global projects where different scholars have reflected on global ethics and global institutions. From her point of view it is important to let students meet children and young people from all over the world. We cannot give students a global context from only one perspective (the western one) on the world, and therefore **Ulla** points out the richness inherent in letting students read about experiences other than their own. She also believes that one way to improve ethics teaching from a global perspective is to stimulate and facilitate international exchanges for teachers.
Karin has been cooperating with different churches and organizations. One of the organizations that have been given economical support by the Church of Sweden Mission is Iser Assessoria in Brazil. Karin points out that the cooperation with schools is basically informal even though most of the missionaries sent to foreign countries are teachers who work with ethics questions in different ways when they return to Sweden. She agrees that giving examples from other parts of the world could improve ethics teaching from a global perspective in schools.

The Brazilian school is part of a project called Emaús, a movement with the main goal of promoting the common good. Even though the school is religiously independent, the founder of the project was Father Abbé Pierre. Marco points out that the school also cooperates in an active way in the social and educational inclusion of children from poor communities, called Balé Edisca. Joana believes that it is important to develop different works to promote the reflection of human ethics through teaching in different subjects and through actions. She gives examples like mixing children from higher classes with poor children and, for instance, personal visits and studies on Indians to help students reflect on democracy and human rights.
7. Discussion

The purpose of my study was to gain an insight into how different teachers reflect on ethics teaching from a global perspective. As a future teacher in religion it is interesting to be aware of different perspectives on ethics teaching and how we can cooperate to improve teaching globally. I believe that every person has their own perspective of what ethics consists of, depending on their social and cultural background, but that because of increasing globalization, we strive to find some common aims. Among scholars and organizations the concept global ethics is known, but in schools the concept appears complex and unfamiliar.

From my own results I could see that teachers do not find it hard to speak about different global matters but they rarely use the word global ethics in their teaching. From previous experience I have noticed that different concepts, for instance cultural heritage, are mostly used by teachers in their teaching when they are mentioned in the curriculum. To really achieve global teaching, which several scholars and all the teachers who participated in my study feel we need, I believe we need to globalize the curriculum, not only in theory but in practice. The meaning of global has to be noticed and practiced in teaching, for instance by increasing the global exchange between schools in different parts of the world and between schools and different organizations. My opinion is that we need to go one step further, and not only teach students to take ethical responsibility for global matters but to let them do it, through different workshops, charities and in places where they can feel needed and that they help other people.

From my results I can see that there is limited cooperation between schools and different organizations but none between schools outside Europe. The Swedish curriculum emphasizes a Swedish, Nordic, European and global perspective in teaching but from a previous study find the global perspective is easily left out. In my opinion, global exchange between schools is very important for increasing and improving global teaching.

One of my hypotheses was that teachers in Brazil might have a different perspective on ethics to Swedish teachers, and this was partly right. Because of the situation of the country global issues have a greater impact on the Brazilian school and the Brazilian teachers who are educating children than the Swedish ones. For example, poverty is noticed in a physical way. I believe that if teachers from different schools all over the world cooperated more, they could exchange ideas and experiences that they could later make use of in their own teaching. As an example, Swedish teachers could complement their teaching material on Indians with the Brazilian teachers’ materials. In this way the Swedish students could share the Brazilian
students’ personal experiences during their visits to the Indian camp and increase their understanding about the Indians’ situation and their living conditions.

Before my visit to Brazil and the Brazilian school I had read a great deal about the situation of the country and how we, the Western countries, could help the developing countries. After my visit I realized that the Brazilians can help us, maybe on different levels, but their genuine knowledge and experience could not be found in a modern Western society. Their past history and the present situation of their country has not only brought a great deal of destruction but also a lot of wisdom, which is important to pass on to the next global generation. Therefore I claim that one way to make students understand different cultures and people’s different life conditions is to improve global exchanges between schools.

As a result of increasing globalization, I believe ethics teaching, with a broad, global perspective can and will be developed in schools in the near future. Scholars discuss the possibility of such ethics development but organizations like Human Rights and global teaching in schools have already proven that it is happening.

Since there are numerous scholars and organizations that work towards a global ethics, my opinion is that more notice should be taken of their work and results in schools, and not only on a federal level. If students took part in these projects and experiences in different ways, it could increase their knowledge of global matters and hopefully make them reflect on their responsibility in the achievement of a more sustainable form of development.
8. Conclusion

In my conclusion I will compile and analyze my results and present them under my three research questions: How would six different teachers in Sweden and Brazil define the concepts ethics and global ethics? What kinds of ethics questions do six different teachers in Sweden and Brazil feel it is important for the school to convey? Is there any form of cooperation between two schools in Sweden / Brazil and different organizations, to improve ethics teaching from a global perspective?

8.1 Definitions

The six teachers gave similar definitions of the concept of ethics. Mainly it was defined as a reflection and analysis of moral conditions and as a group of rules and norms that establish moral values. Such a reflection includes questions related to humanity, such as what is right or wrong, good and evil.

There were some differences in the teachers’ definitions of global ethics. Marco did not believe in the existence of a global ethics because in his opinion it is the set of habits, customs and traditions that determines the way people are connected to moral values. To Kristin and Joana global ethics includes a sustainable environment and society, global matters that involve everyone, regardless of race, ethnicity, belief etc. To Ines global ethics consists of unilateral acts of solidarity, like respect, comprehension and tolerance. The meaning of these concepts is not specified and therefore they give only a notion of what Ines means by global ethics. Ulla and Karin describe global ethics as a reflection on moral conditions, a study of ethics and moral ideas on a global level.

8.2 Important ethical questions

According to six different teachers important questions to convey in schools mainly contain concepts like respect, eco-development, human rights, attitude, understanding, responsibility, solidarity and consciousness of increased egoism. Kristin also mentions insight, empathy, action and reflection. Ines points out that concepts such as solidarity, respect and tolerance should not only be studied theoretically from micro and macro perspectives but practiced, for instance by visiting an Indian camp. To Karin it is important to discuss sexual morals and sexual minorities’ rights and to see the importance of religious and cultural variety. Ulla
points out that it is good to study different matters from a gender perspective, for instance how the situation is for women and children in countries with war and conflict. She believes it is important to speak about poverty and Marco goes further by emphasizing the need to include ethnic minorities and the poorest citizens in the society and schools.

8.3 Cooperation

According to my results cooperation does exist between schools and different organizations, for instance the United Nations, the Church of Sweden Mission and Balé Edisca both in Sweden and Brazil, but there is none between different schools in these two countries. The global cooperation between the Swedish school and different organizations is based on different projects, for instance Fit for Europe, Children Villages and Friends. According to Kristin these different projects have helped and can help students to gain a better insight into the situation of other children and fair conditions of life in the same way that an exchange of experiences can lead to a more open-minded attitude towards global questions. The Church of Sweden has taken part in the Fit for Europe project and been making a contribution during holidays. Kristin would like to do more cooperation in schools and emphasizes the fact that the ethics teaching could improve by using different media, inviting lecturers and establishing mail contacts with children in other countries.

Ulla, who is working in the Church of Sweden’s research department, has been in contact with different scholars and projects related to global matters and attaches importance to stimulating and facilitating international exchanges for teachers. She also believes that it is important to let students read and meet children from other parts of the world in order to be able to give them a global context.

Karin points out that the Church of Sweden Mission in Brazil supports and cooperates with different Brazilian organizations and Institutions, for instance Iser Assessoria, SECA, IECLB, Koinonia and Cebi. According to Karin most of the missionaries are teachers and they carry out further work on their ethics questions in schools when they return to Sweden. Sometimes there is developed material about their mission activities for teachers and students. But besides that, Karin is of the opinion that the cooperation between The Church of Sweden Mission and schools is basically informal. Like Kristin and Ulla, she believes that we can improve the ethics teaching in schools from a global perspective using study experiences from different parts of the world.
The Brazilian school also takes part in global projects. One of the projects is called Emaús and promotes the common good. Another is a project related to Balé Edisca, the social and educational inclusion of children from poor communities. Joana points out that the inclusion of children from poor communities, other works that promote the reflection on human ethics, like visiting the Indians or reflection of democracy and human rights, gives a wider perspective and leads to better understanding among students.

For a future study, a student perspective would be interesting in comparison to the six teachers’ perspectives on ethics, for instance on what kind of knowledge, ethics questions and cooperation students attach importance to for conveying and establishing in schools, and how they would like to work with the global matters in their lessons.
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Questionnaire

Profession:

1. How would you define the conception ethics?

2. How would you define the conception global ethics?

3. Which ethics questions do you consider to be of importance to convey in schools?

4. Are there any certain global ethics questions, which could be used in the teaching to increase an understanding for people’s different background and conditions of life? If yes, which ones?

5. Do you believe we could develop a global ethics teaching, meaning are there any common values, independent from religious belief, cultural background and political opinions? If yes, which ones?

6. Do you cooperate with any organisations/schools in projects related to global ethics questions?
Profissão:

1. Como definiria a concepção da “ética”?

2. Que questões éticas pensa ser importante discutir na escola? Explique por favor.

3. Como definiria o conceito “Ética universal”? 

4. Existem, numa perspectiva global, questões éticas que sejam de maior importância discutir na escola? Se sim, quais e porquê?

5. Acha possível desenvolver um ensino éticamente universal, quero eu dizer: baseado em valores comuns, que todos possamos concordar, independentemente da religião, cultura ou opinião política? Se sim, como e que valores tornariam possível essa consonância?

6. O Senhor(a) ou a escola coopera com organizações ou alguma Igreja nestes assuntos?
Yrke?

1. Hur skulle du definiera begreppet etik?


3. Hur skulle du definiera begreppet global etik?

4. Anser du att vi skulle kunna utveckla en global etikundervisning, d.v.s. finns det några värderingar som vi människor borde kunna enas om, oberoende av religiös tro, kulturell bakgrund och politiska åsikter? Om ja, vilka?

5. I Läroplanen för gymnasieskolan (Lpf 94) betonas vikten av ett internationellt perspektiv i undervisningen för att kunna se den egna verkligheten i ett globalt sammanhang. Hur skulle etikundervisningen kunna internationaliseras på bästa sätt, enligt dig?


7. Samarbetar du/skolan med någon person/organisation som arbetar med globala etikfrågor (exempelvis Mänskliga Rättigheter)? Om ja, på vilket sätt?

9. Hur ser Svenska kyrkans mission ut i Brasilien? (biståndsarbete, vilka områden fokuseras, vilka medel används etc.)

10. Samarbetar Svenska kyrkans mission i Brasilien med några särskilda organisationer som bedriver biståndsverksamhet. Om ja, med vilka och på vilket sätt?

11. Delar Svenska kyrkans mission Leonardo Boffs tankar om befrielseteologi? Om ja, hur reflekteras det i Svenska kyrkans mission i Brasilien?

12. Sker ett samarbete (i form av exempelvis föreläsningar) med skolor/universitetet i Sverige/Brasilien, där lärare/elever kan ta del av svenska kyrkans mission och biståndverksamhet? Om ja, hur och med vilka?

13. Eftersom globaliseringen ökar i samhället diskuterar man en mer globaliserad undervisning i skolan. Hur anser du att man skulle kunna globalisera exempelvis etikundervisningen i skolan?


15. Utifrån egna erfarenheter som missionär i Brasilien, vilka etikfrågor anser du vara av vikt att diskutera i svenska och brasilianska skolor?

16. Anser du att Svenska kyrkans mission skulle kunna komplettera etikundervisningen i svenska och brasilianska skolor? Om ja, på vilket sätt?