

**ORGANIZATIONAL JUSTICE, MORAL IDEOLOGY, AND
MORAL EVALUATION AS ANTECEDENTS OF MORAL INTENT**

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Dissertation submitted to the faculty of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State
University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Human Development

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April 17, 2007
Falls Church, Virginia

Key Words: Organizational Justice, Ethical Decision-making, Moral Intent

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Human Development

The present research in ethical decision-making draws from the fields of moral philosophy, social psychology, and organizational theory with the intention of establishing links among social/organizational influences, individual cognitive elements of moral behavior, individual difference characteristics, and the intention to act ethically. Ethical decision-making, by investigating the moral judgment (evaluation) and moral intent components of an ethical decision-making model, was examined. This augments existing research concerning inconsistencies between the ethical behavior of an individual and the individual's level of moral development, which in the workplace are hypothesized to be related to organizational factors. Research questions developed from this groundwork, as well as research on moral ideology and organizational justice, were formulated to examine how moral ideology, moral evaluation, and organizational justice work together to explain moral intent. Moral evaluation explained 55% of the variance in moral intent after controlling for moral ideology and organizational justice. For a subset of the data, three organizational justice variables explained a very modest proportion of the variance in moral evaluation after controlling for two moral ideology variables. Implications for future research and considerations for practice are presented.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am deeply grateful to the members of my committee who have guided me throughout this dissertation process. They have been exceptional scholarly role models, and I have benefited enormously from their professional expertise. They have given me the gifts of their scholarship, insight, support and time.

I would like to extend very special thanks to Dr. Albert Wiswell who guided me along the path of higher learning as my primary advisor and chairperson. He always gave generously of his time, his ideas and suggestions to guide this research study. I feel most fortunate to have had him as my chair and advisor.

Additionally, I have been fortunate to have been associated with other wonderfully capable and supportive professors, staff and colleagues in the Virginia Tech Adult Learning and Human Resource Development Program. Special thanks go to Barbara Nussbaum who was a regular supporter throughout this process. She consistently helped me by listening to my ideas, reading what I had written, and providing suggestions, encouragement, and friendship.

I wish to honor my late mother, Corrine Lukasek Johnson, who was my first teacher. She valued education and passed this on to me through her loving encouragement and support. She too has been alongside me throughout this journey. I continue to learn through the memory of that loving relationship.

I am profoundly thankful for the support of my family, Chris, Dan, Laura and Theresa, who have always opened their hearts to me, but also opened their home, making it possible for me to dedicate the time I needed to complete this research. Finally, my companions Eric and Ivan, who have never been too far away when the computer was on, have been the most loyal and loving of study companions. They provided balance throughout this process by walking on my desk and my papers, knocking books on the floor, and occasionally demanding my attention.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Although espousing ethics as a priority and key ingredient for successful functioning, many organizations fail to follow-through in addressing unethical behavior in the workplace, with the effect that ethical concerns are not successfully ingrained in the standard operating procedures. The important function of ethics is thus often ignored by organizations, despite the perceived level of decline in ethicality of organizations of all types, and individual actions of sharing information about ethical problems in an organizational setting represent courageous, extra-role citizenship behavior on the part of the stakeholder (Trevino & Weaver, 2001). This chapter provides an overview of ethical decision-making and then examines the antecedents of moral intent: moral ideology, moral evaluation, and organizational justice. In summary, it will be concluded that there is a gap in the knowledge related to our understanding of ethical decision-making in organizations, which gives rise to the research questions forming the basis of this research study.

Background Discussion on Ethical Decision-making

Diverse research by scholars such as Kohlberg (1969), Rest (1986) and Gilligan (1987) has addressed the process of individual moral development and the social psychology involving the influence of others on an individual's decision-making and consequent actions. In a later work Kohlberg (1984) observed a normative social-moral atmosphere in both organizations and groups, which is a significant factor in the ethical decision-making process of the individual. Consequently, to understand individual ethical decision-making within organizations, group and organizational factors must be considered in addition to levels of individual moral development and the various philosophical theories of ethics. Perhaps the most important of the above-cited descriptive models of ethical decision-making is Rest's (1986), which will form the basis for the present discussion followed by a presentation of the interactionist model of ethical decision-making.

Four-Component Model of Ethical Decision-making

In Rest's model (1986) four components are identified in the ethical decision-making process: (1) awareness; (2) moral judgment (Kohlberg, 1969); (3) moral intent; and (4) moral behavior. This constellation of components forms the basis of most ethical decision-making studies (Barnett & Vaicys, 2000; Jones, 1991; Kelly & Elm, 2003; Trevino, 1986; Trevino & Youngblood, 1990). The first component, awareness, provokes the initial step in ethical decision-making. Highly nuanced, complicated, or ambiguous situations of individual experience must first be identified as having ethical relevance in order to activate the decision-making process. Pardales (2002) refers to making this first step as the capacity to perceive moral issues, exhibited as an issue enters individual awareness.

The second component in this model of ethical decision-making process is moral judgment, an unconscious and cognitive evaluation made by individuals depending on the level or stage of their moral development. Theories of cognitive moral development, described by Kohlberg (1969) and Rest (1986), explain how levels of moral reasoning evolve over a lifetime and have been found to be linked to education level and age.

The interaction between moral judgment and moral development has been studied variously, with authors attempting to measure the level of moral judgment by identifying hierarchical stages of development of the individual. The results of this research, called stage theory, are questionable, as the findings correlate level of moral development with age and education. According to Krebs, Vermeulen and Denton (1991), the explanation that the level of moral development increases with education fails to explain variation in judgment among educated, mature adults, demonstrating how research on the level of moral judgment seems to have limitations.

Wark and Krebs (1997) examined stages of moral judgment comparing individuals' projected behavior in hypothetical situations compared with real life situations and found that in real life situations these people exhibited significantly lower judgment levels than in those projected hypothetically. Critics of Kohlberg, Krebs, Denton and Wark (1997) demonstrated that when students were asked to consider philosophical dilemmas similar to the ones used in Kohlberg's (1984) test, they generally exacted the highest stages of moral judgment available to them. However, when faced

with personal, real life situations they found that the students used different forms of moral judgment, suggesting that the type of moral issue acted differently in context despite fixed cognitive structures available to the person. These and other limitations suggested by Robin, Gordon, Jordon and Reidenbach (1996a) indicate that alternatives to measuring the judgment component of the ethical decision-making process must be found. Consequently, research in ethical decision-making in the last decade has started to use moral evaluation (Reidenbach & Robin, 1988; 1990) as the individual's context specific response to a moral dilemma based upon organizational and situational factors.

The third step in the ethical decision-making process, moral intent, directly precedes the actual ethical or unethical behavior. A very difficult area to assess, this component has largely been overlooked in the relevant research (Low, Ferrell & Mansfield, 2000) or somewhat superficially handled. Essentially, intent can be described as the individual's internal decision in relation to the issue (Meiland, 1970), and the most immediate determinant of behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). Moral evaluation and moral intent will be discussed further in Chapter 2.

The final step in the four-step decision-making model is the expression of intent, the resulting behavior either ethical or unethical. Specifically, the behavior of the person is expressed in ethical terms as the commission or omission of action. The ethicality of the behavior is subjective, determined by the actor and/or observer of the behavior.

Interactionalist Model of Ethical Decision-making

An interactionalist model expands the four-component ethical decision-making model by including individual differences (individual factors), organizational factors, and issue-specific factors. Several variations of this model exist (Johnson & Wiswell, 2006; Jones, 1991; Kelley & Elm, 2003; Trevino, 1986). Individual factors such as decision style (Pennino, 2002) and religiosity (Barnett, Bass & Brown, 1996) have been studied together with parts of this ethical decision-making model. Organizational factors, such as, hierarchy (White, 1998) and organizational climate (Barnett & Vaicys, 2000; Flannery & May, 2000; VanSandt, Shepard & Zappe, 2006), have also been studied. Also appearing in the research are issue-specific factors, referred to by Jones (1991) as moral intensity factors, including magnitude of consequences or benefits, probability of effect, temporal immediacy, proximity, concentration of effect, and degree of social agreement on the

morality of the issue. While the direction and the relationship among these factors and ethical decision-making has been the interest of researchers for 20 years, there are literally hundreds of contextual and individual factors that could be identified and related to the ethical decision-making process.

Moral Intent

The factor of moral intent is the third step of the four-component model of ethical decision-making which acts as the proxy for actual behavior in the research. Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) define intent as the subjective probability that a given behavioral alternative will be performed. Preceded by moral awareness and moral judgment/evaluation, moral intent is the immediate antecedent of behavior. Thus the key to understanding behavior rests with understanding intent.

Moral intent forms from two other constructs, moral ideology and organizational justice, as these factors may inform employees' intention to take an action, a relationship that cannot occur in reverse. Both organizational justice and moral ideology are relatively fixed factors, existing as organizational context and an individual difference respectively. An individual's moral ideology is also a relatively stable trait, not particularly susceptible to situational and contextual variability (Forsyth, 1980). Therefore, it is reasonable to consider that the three variables, moral ideology, moral evaluation and organizational justice, are antecedents of moral intent, representing a temporal sequence with moral ideology representing the distant past, organizational justice, the recent past, moral evaluation, the present, and moral intent, the future.

Although moral intent is a critical element of the interactionalist model of ethical decision-making, it is not readily measurable. In past research, only three or four similar questions, or in most cases, only one question, have been employed to measure moral intent. However, the salience of moral intent to the model alongside the understanding of ethical decision-making demonstrates the need for better measures of moral intent. Although moral intent is difficult to measure, measuring behavior may be more difficult.

This interactionalist model of ethical decision-making formed the basis for the present study, omitting, however, behavior and awareness. The complete model was not

studied in this research, however, organizational justice was used to operationalize an organizational factor and moral ideology was used to operationalize an individual factor.

The antecedents of moral intent: organizational justice, moral evaluation and moral ideology are discussed in the next section.

Antecedents of Moral Intent

The research focused on three antecedents of moral intent: moral ideology, moral evaluation, and organizational justice, as introduced above. These antecedents combine to explain moral intent.

Moral Ideology

Differences among individuals have long interested researchers seeking to explain the decisions people make. Individual factors including moral ideology interact to play a prominent role in models of ethical decision-making in organizations (Jones, 1991; Trevino, 1986). Forsyth (1980) describes a moral ideology in terms of the degree to which an individual is relativistic or idealistic, where relativism can be described as the extent to which individuals accept or reject universal moral principles. Ethically relativistic individuals thus act in the belief that the morality of their actions corresponds to the specifics of the situation and persons involved. On the other hand, idealism is defined as the extent to which an individual believes that ethically correct actions will consistently result in desirable results. Idealistic individuals believe that for an action to be moral, it must not harm others. In seeking to define moral ideology, it should be seen that, regardless of its orientation, it precedes moral intent as a stable characteristic of the individual.

Moral Evaluation

Although models of ethical decision-making differ, they all recognize that individual decision-making in organizations cannot be understood without considering the decision-making context (Jones, 1991; Kelley & Elm, 2003; Trevino, 1986; Vitell, 1986). Moral evaluation refers to an individual's reaction to a situation, and suggests the nature of the decision to act lies within that context. Moral evaluation is multidimensional, and can be considered as the degree to which a behavior within a certain context is determined to be morally acceptable by the individual (Barnett, et al.,

1996). In contrast to moral ideology, moral evaluation is considered a dynamic variable – changing across situations – where moral ideology is more static and relatively stable over time. It is reasonable to suggest moral evaluation likewise precedes moral intent because it constitutes the judgment made about an ethical situation.

Organizational Justice

Justice is a fundamental social value motivating behavior among individuals with the terms “justice”, “fairness”, and “equity” used interchangeably in the literature (Adams, 1963; Leventhal, 1980; Moorman, 1991). Over the last 30 years, organizational justice has been researched extensively in social psychology, specifically in organizational contexts by psychologists and management researchers, among others interested in the construct (Blakely, Andrews & Moorman, 2005; Moorman, 1991; Trevino & Weaver, 2001). Perceptions of organizational justice constitute an important heuristic in organizational decision-making, as research relates it to job satisfaction, turnover, leadership, organizational citizenship, organizational commitment, trust, customer satisfaction, job performance, employee theft, role breadth, alienation, and leader-member exchange (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001). Organizational justice describes an individual’s experience in an organization in terms of fairness, and therefore it is a part of the context within which ethical decisions are made. It is thus the *state of organizational fairness* in which individual moral intent is formed.

Organizational justice is a multidimensional construct. The precise dimensionality of justice perceptions is still under debate. Various contemporary theorists have argued that justice is anything from a single dimension to four dimensions (Colquitt, Greenberg & Zapata-Phelan, 2005). The research in this study relied on the widely accepted three-dimension typology similar to that of Folger and Cropanzano (1998), which includes distributive, procedural and interactional justice.

Distributive Justice. Distributive justice refers to employees’ perceptions of the rewards they experience. Typical examples include perceptions of human resource management practices, such as hiring decisions, the outcomes of performance appraisals, raise requests, decisions about downsizing, layoffs, etc. The overarching concept of distributive justice derives from equity theory (Adams, 1963), which purports that

individuals compare their rewards to their output and with the output and rewards of other workers.

Procedural Justice. Procedural justice refers to employees' perceptions of the formal procedures that are used to determine employee rewards. Attributes of procedural fairness come from Leventhal (1976; 1980), who calls them consistency, bias suppression, accuracy, correctability and ethicality. For example, a procedure should be consistent across time and the workforce, and the decision maker should be aware of his/her own personal biases, which should not play a role in decision-making. Procedures should also be perceived as accurate (e.g., a procedure should correctly identify the person who is most qualified for the job). Correctability refers to the existence of an appeals mechanism to challenge alleged mistakes, and ethicality refers to prevailing ethical norms upon which basis the decisions are made.

Interactional Justice. This type of justice refers to employees' perceptions of the fairness related to their relationship with their supervisor. Greenberg (1987) refers to such justice as the interpersonal treatment employees receive from organizational leadership, including how well formal decision-making procedures are explained. Bobocel and Holmvall (2001) describe fair interpersonal treatment as clear and adequate explanations for allocation decisions, and treating decision recipients with dignity and respect while decisions are implemented.

Implications of Ethical Decision-making and Justice in Organizations

Both the researchers and practitioners in many disciplines are concerned with understanding the ethical decision-making process in organizations because subsequent behavior results from it. Understanding why and how ethical decisions are made should improve the chance that decisions are made ethically within the context of the workplace. Human resource development professionals in particular have an interest in helping their organizations achieve the goals of their strategic plans (Gilley & Maycunich, 1998), and several prominent authors have argued that elevating the levels of ethics in an organization may facilitate better organizational performance (Hatcher, 2002; Swanson, 1999). Human resource development practitioners are concerned about ethical decision-making and their understanding why and how decisions are made will improve decision-

making processes in the context of the workplace because these same professionals are often involved in learning interventions for managers and employees related to decision-making and ethics. They have other roles related to ethics in organizations, as well. According to a national business ethics survey, 40% of professionals in human resource management and development roles must respond to their organization's ethical snafus and in 70% of organizations, these same professionals are viewed as their organization's point of call experts on ethics (Joseph & Esen, 2003).

The world at present is experiencing a new economic paradigm - characterized by speed and profit – which makes organizations increasingly susceptible to the fallout of unethical decisions and potential wrongdoing, with the concomitant of increased scrutiny, in both scope and intensity, by shareholders and the public in general regarding these decisions. Without understanding the process of ethical decision-making, nothing can be done to assure ethical outcomes and overcome unethical ones.

Organizational justice is thus a possible key in developing ethical strategies as an extension of its primary concern, the “ways in which employees determine if they have been treated fairly in their jobs, and the ways in which those determinations influence other work-related variables” (Moorman, 1991, p. 845). Lind and Tyler (1988) established the link to procedural justice in two ways, the first proposing that employees use perceptions of the current process to predict how they will fare in future encounters with the organization. The other position suggests that employees will behave in a manner to assure they feel wanted within the organization, and fair procedures are a sign that they are indeed valued and accepted by the organization. Leventhal (1980) refers to this as voice.

Brockner and Weisenfeld (1996) found that procedural justice is more important to employees when the outcome was unfavorable, or alternatively, the favorability of the outcome matters more when procedures are perceived as unfair. Even if the outcome is unfavorable, employees will still react well if the procedure was fair.

The result of justice research suggests that the effects of injustice within organizations may be much broader than previously thought. (Cropanzano, Golman & Folger, 2003). Not only do victims directly affected by organizational injustice consider and sometimes take retributive actions, but so also do neutral observers (Kray & Lind,

2002). In a fast-paced, global economy where change is constant, it is difficult to develop rules and regulations for every situation; therefore today's organizations need to generate ethical climates where perceptions of organizational justice are carefully developed.

Organizational justice is considered a barometer of employees' experiences of fairness within their particular organizations. Past research has looked at ethical decision-making in relationship to organizational climate, which may include some component of organizational fairness, however, the relationship between various types of organizational justice and ethical decision-making has been overlooked. Justice and fairness underlie ethical principles. This study proposed that perceptions of an organization as fair or unfair may relate not only to how decision outcomes are perceived, but to the decision-making process itself within an organizational context.

Statement of the Problem

Research is needed to incorporate an individual's moral ideology, which theory tells us is stable over time, and an individual's moral evaluation of a particular situation which is more *state*-specific because it relies on contextual factors relating to the situation and organization. Before this present study, the role of perceived organizational justice in ethical decision-making had not been specifically addressed. Although both ethics and organizational justice distinguish between process and outcome concerns, to date, minimal research exists to integrate the two. This research was designed to extend beyond that boundary, looking at ethical decision-making and organizational justice together. Doing so was a way to create insights into the open and complex question for research, ethical practice, and management which is, *how do organizations influence the moral choices and behavior of individuals in the workplace?*

Research Questions

The relationships among the constructs of organizational justice, moral ideology, moral evaluation, and moral intent were explored. Three specific research questions were explored in this study.

1. What portion of the variance in moral evaluation is explained by organizational justice after controlling for moral ideology?

2. What portion of the variance in moral intent is explained by moral ideology and organizational justice after controlling for moral ideology?

3. To what extent and on which of the measures of moral evaluation and moral intent do the two groups, representing the actor perspective and the observer perspective differ?

Purpose of the Study

In studying adult moral development, it becomes increasingly clear that the relationship between an individual's level of moral judgment (cognitive ability to evaluate a situation as unethical) and subsequent behavior is not well understood or researched. The research on ethical decision-making needed to be expanded. Climate has been studied in conjunction with components of the interactionalist model of ethical decision-making process; however, organizational justice was an overlooked organizational factor despite its relevance to climate and fairness. Although the present research did not directly answer the question about the inconsistency that sometimes exists between moral judgment and moral action, it approximated a partial answer based on previous theories of ethical decision-making of Rest (1986), moral ideology of Forsyth (1980), and organizational justice of Moorman (1991).

Summary

This chapter provided an overview of the research and an initial introduction to the constructs that were examined in this study as part of the interactionalist model of ethical decision-making. The next chapter begins with the philosophical underpinning of ethics and then moves on to a review of the literature to date relating to the interactionalist model of ethical decision-making which includes individual, issue-specific and organizational factors as well as a review of the literature on moral ideology and organizational justice.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter begins by discussing the philosophical underpinnings of ethics and the works providing definitions of ethics and morals. Afterward, the discussion will turn to issues in moral development theory, which provides part of the foundation for ethics research. It will then be shown in the discussion of literature relating to the interactionist model of ethical decision-making that moral ideology, moral evaluation, moral intent, and organizational justice, taken together are important for furthering our understanding of ethical decision-making in organizations. This will then explain the three types of organizational justice and the hypothesized relationship between organizational justice and ethical decision-making.

Philosophical Underpinnings of Ethics

Ethics is also termed the science of morality or moral philosophy and involves complex philosophies defining what is “good.” The concept involves positions with conflicting priorities, such as between the rights of the individual versus those of the community, between the universality of ethical principles versus situational ethics, and between goodness as determined by the results of the action versus whether the means by which the results are achieved are good. Although some thinkers differentiate between the words *ethics* and *morals*, and *ethical* and *moral*, most of the time these terms are used synonymously (White, 1993). Technically, the roots of these words are not related, as “ethics” is derived from the Greek, “ethos”, related to “ethnic” in meaning “character.” “Mores”, from which “morality” is derived, relates to social convention or etiquette (Onions, 1979). These distinctions, if respected, would lead us to think about ethics as characteristic behavior, and morals as conventional behavior, as well as explain some of the tension that exists between an inner-driven and outer-driven view of what constitutes a “good” choice.

Ethics as a general term allows us to make statements about what is good, for both the individual and society. As a field of study, it involves systematizing, defending, and recommending concepts or principles of right and wrong actions. However, the

idiosyncratic world-view of individual scholars and researchers causes approaches to ethics to involve individual priorities. As a result, in categorizing our thinking about the topic, it is necessary to recognize that any concept or paradigm concerning category boundaries may not be perfectly distinct. For the purpose of a general discussion, however, philosophical and theoretical frameworks of ethics are customarily divided into three major perspectives or subject areas: metaethics, normative ethics, and applied ethics (Kagan, 1998).

Metaethics concerns the investigation of ethical principles in the context of understanding the field per se. As such, metaethical answers respond to questions of universal seeking - God's will, the logic and language of moral reflection, and actions. Metaethical issues include discerning the origin of human rights, and what kinds of beings (i.e., human, animal) possess rights, as well as meta-discourse involving the fundamental question, *why be moral?*

Normative ethics, by contrast, has a more practical focus, with a goal of regulating behavior along prescribed moral standards. Theories regarding what norms human behavior exemplify what falls under this branch of study. However, propositions of normative ethics should not be confused with the statements having to do with law. As Kagan (1998) writes, "determining what people morally should do is not the same thing as determining what the law says they should do" (p. 9). Normative ethics strives to produce an adequate account of the various aspects involved in a moral situation. A normative statement, sometimes called an ethical sentence, is one that uses either a positive or negative (moral) evaluation and usually includes words like good, bad, right, wrong, moral, and immoral.

Dewey and Tufts (1908) took the position that people need to examine alternative moral positions to discern which one is most pragmatic. As a philosopher, Dewey (1916) spoke against fixed moral positions, and as an educator, he espoused that active problem-solving by learners is the most genuine form of learning.

His original position was greatly expanded into the present understanding of normative ethics by Kagan (1998), who suggests that numerous factors form the basis of teleology and deontology. The labels used for these are: promoting the good, well-being, the total view, equality, culpability, fairness, and consequentialism. Like Dewey, Kagan

suggests that we must choose between the various moral positions, viewing them not as alternative ways of saying the same thing, but “genuine rivals, making it impossible for all views to be right” (p.11).

Applied ethics relying on metaethics and normative ethics has been extended to examinations of very controversial issues such as nuclear war, capital punishment, abortion, and stem cell research. For example, in a popular work, Kidder (1995) joins many of the principles from the fundamental theories of normative ethics to provide guidelines for applying ethics to real life situations.

The field of applied ethics has been further divided into numerous subjects defined by area. Among these are business ethics, professional ethics, medical and biomedical ethics, feminist ethics, environmental ethics, technological ethics, legal ethics, and global ethics. Social morality and sexual morality are also part of applied ethics. Clearly, there are as many potential classes of applied ethics as there are areas of society.

The following presentation remains essentially within the confines of the major theoretical foundations of normative ethics. While the discussion focuses on more practical issues than metaethics, there is no pragmatic focus for applying the theory to a situation where right and wrong must be determined.

Table 2.1 provides a summary and an overview of ethics where it can be seen that normative ethics falls between metaethics and applied ethics. A discussion of normative ethics by focusing on the principles or approaches under each of the normative theories: teleological and deontological follows.

Table 2.1 Philosophical and Theoretical Frameworks of Ethics

Philosophy/Theory	Description
Level 1: Metaethics	Concerned with investigating from where our ethical principles come and what they mean.
Level 2: Normative ethics	Concerned with arriving at moral standards that regulate behavior.
A. Teleological theory	Actions are right or wrong based upon consequences.
B. Deontological theory	Actions are based on obligations; they are intrinsically good or bad, regardless of consequences.
Level 3: Applied ethics	Uses the concepts in metaethics and normative ethics to examine controversial issues.

Teleological Ethics

The word “teleological” has its root in the Greek word “telos,” which means “goal.” Kidder (1995) refers to teleology as ends-based thinking. Teleological theory, sometimes referred to as consequentialist theory, places its emphasis on the consequences or results of an action or decision, that is, the rightness or wrongness of an action depends on whether harm or good occurs as a final result of the action. Teleological ethics is also referred to as outcome-based ethics. A teleologist believes that acts have no intrinsic value separable from their outcome. They are independent of the motives behind the behavior or presumptions of the rule that is used to arrive at a decision to act, and they should be judged simply on the basis of the outcome they provide. All consequentialist principles suggest that correct moral conduct is determined solely by the benefit analysis of an action’s outcomes. Major contributors to teleological thinking are Bentham and Mill. Common principles associated with teleology are utilitarianism and egoism.

Utilitarianism Principle. The ideas of two British philosophers, Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill both writing in the mid-nineteenth century, formulated the basis of utilitarianism although Bentham (1983) is generally credited with the term. Cohen (1961) summarized Mill’s philosophy on ethics. His idea, which is consistent with Bentham’s, is that the measure of the rightness of an act is determined when the outcome is found to provide the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people. This approach is sometimes referred to as act-utilitarianism. The analysis of the outcome would involve

looking at which action is best for the greatest number of people. In Bentham's later works, he tried to make this form of ethics practical, and proposed a way to measure the amount of pleasure and/or pain that an action produces. This part of Bentham's theory is known as hedonistic utilitarianism.

Mill further distinguished pleasure and pain as "high quality" and "low quality" (Cohen, 1961). He regarded pleasures relating to physical health, intelligence, sensitivity to others, and learning as intrinsically superior pleasures. Inferior pleasures were those driven by indulgence, selfishness, and ignorance. Mill's approach has been referred to as rule-utilitarianism. Although not without flaws, both Bentham's and Mill's approaches to utilitarianism try to impose an objective method for ethical analysis to avoid prejudice and, according to Mill, avoid stupidity and self-interest, while providing ways to identify the consequences of actions. After Bentham's and Mill's work, other types of utilitarianism emerged such as ideal utilitarianism where qualitative criteria, not only pleasure and pain, are used, specifically good and bad. Another approach, preference utilitarianism, involves looking at consequences that fulfill our preferences. Preference utilitarianism is related to the principle of egoism.

Egoism Principle. The egoism consequentialist principle is the obverse of utilitarianism in that an action is considered morally right if the consequences of that action are more favorable than unfavorable to the agent performing the action. The term employs the psychological construct of egoism which holds that all of our actions are selfishly motivated. The agent of an action realizes it is better to live in a world with moral rules than one without them only for selfish reasons motivated to adopt a basic set of rules supporting their own, civilized community. White and Taft (2004) expanded the egoism construct to represent not only a single agent's actions with a view to one's own self-interest, but to the action of an organization consistent with its self-interests.

Regardless of which construct is applied, the teleological approach presents substantive difficulties. It is often implausible to take into account all of an action's real or potential outcomes and beneficiaries. The immediate consequences must be analyzed, as well as the more far reaching and perhaps more subtle subsequent effects of the result. As Mill himself was aware, an accurate teleological analysis requires much patience,

good observation skills, and an understanding of how people actually respond to various situations (Cohen, 1961).

Deontological Ethics

The concept that actions themselves have intrinsic moral value has produced this major tradition in ethics, which specifically emphasizes the relationship between duty and morality in human actions. Deontology is also called ethics based on reason, the word deriving from the Greek word “deon”, meaning duty, and “logos”, science. It was also called the categorical imperative as described by Kant (1988), propounding that a person can be ethically bound to take actions in certain situations, a major contribution to deontological thinking, or rule deontology. The fundamental principle is that there are clear moral obligations shared by all human beings and the morality of any action can be determined by the single principle of duty. Common principles associated with deontology are rights, justice, and virtue.

Rights Principle. The rights principle, largely associated with the work of Kant (1988), relates to overcoming basic human and social injustices or restrictions on personal freedom by asserting the universality of human rights. It is thus held that all people are born possessing inalienable rights, regardless of nationality, intelligence, or economics. The rights principle does involve a hierarchy allowing for one kind of right to override another. Human rights are often aligned with justice and underlie remediation of a fundamental injustice.

Justice Principle. The justice principle also involves universal concepts such as equality of all persons and respect and dignity of all human beings as individuals. It is a position prescribing that judgment of persons, situations, dilemmas, and actions is to be fair, objective, and impartial. Rawls (1971), examining justice in the social context, further divided justice by function, into distributive justice, retributive justice, and compensatory justice. Distributive justice is the process of assigning benefits and burdens in society equally. For addressing transgressions in society, retributive justice acts to punish individuals through due process. Compensatory justice has to do with remedying the injury or loss suffered by parties through compensation.

Virtue Principle. Aristotle (McKeon, 1941), Plato (Vlastos, 1971), and Socrates (Benson, 1992) suggest that actions should be motivated by recognized virtues. In such a

framework, the primary goal of a moral life is to develop virtues such as living in moderation and following the golden mean.

Analyzing actions by the principle of virtue means placing less emphasis on rules while encouraging the development of good habits and character, such as generosity, self-respect, sincerity, fortitude, benevolence, courage, honesty, friendliness, and truthfulness. Likewise, it discourages the development of bad character traits or vices such as injustice, vanity, and cowardice. The virtue principle in ethics focuses on the individual, trying to answer the question, *what kind of person should I be?*, and explains actions as an expression of one's virtues as defined within one's culture, religion, or life circumstances. Virtues can be further categorized or grouped as types of virtues: faith and hope fall within theological virtues; cardinal virtues are wisdom and courage.

Like teleology, deontology plays a role in every ethical dilemma; however, analyzing actions deontologically is relegated to a much narrower focus. There are no projections of short- and long-term consequences, and there is no substitution of an individual for a group. The primary questions remain: are the actions inherently good, without deception and manipulation? As such, the approach is inflexible, suffering no compromise, and setting a very difficult standard by which to live.

Care Principle. The principle of care is associated with the work of Gilligan (1987) and focuses on responsibilities towards others and views morality as an imperative to care for others. This is the morality that has a "responsibility orientation". When mature, the care principle is exemplified through relationships with self and others that are characterized by attentiveness, support and accountability.

Next, the discussion will turn to moral development theory in general and then in particular to Kohlberg (1969) credited with developing moral stage theory, primarily based upon the ethic of justice.

Moral Development Theory

Moral development has been researched most energetically under the heading of developmental stage theory, also referred to as structural development theory, the structural developmental approach, or as the invariant sequence approach. The three salient characteristics of developmental stage theory are: (1) qualitative differences

between stages; (2) invariant sequence of the stages; and (3) a hierarchical integration of the stages.

Examples of developmental stage theory can be found in *Modes of Being* (Pedler, Burgoyne & Boydell, 1997), Kohlberg's (1969) theory of moral development, and Armon's (1988) theory of the Good Life. These are often labeled *postformal* to characterize them as stages of development stage theory addressing post adolescence, along the lines of Piaget's (1965) theory. While critics of development stage theories stress its problems, there is still much empirical evidence in their support.

Kohlberg's (1969) work demonstrates how certain aspects of human reasoning develop through an invariant sequence of developmental stages, supporting the validity of the sequential stage model in adult development in relationship to moral judgment. Kohlberg's (1984) moral judgment interview, a real-life dilemma questionnaire, has been used to research moral developmental stages particularly in developmental psychology and education. This model identifies three levels of development, pre-conventional, conventional, and post-conventional which in turn subsume six stages of development progressing from the individual to a societal to a universal perspective. Kohlberg's theory has been criticized for its justice orientation by Forsyth (1981) as it represents only a subset of the moral domain.

Moral judgment and moral behavior (action) have been researched primarily by using moral intent as a proxy for behavior. There are some reports that the differences between them are inherent to factors involving the issue considered (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Jones, 1991). Krebs, Vermeulen and Denton (1991) and Wark and Krebs (1997) demonstrate that while hypothetical situations are correlated with higher levels of moral judgment, in contrast, real life issues result in lower levels of moral judgment. Haviv and Leman (2002) explained this is the difference between "should you do" versus "would you do". Real life considerations involve factors like functional concerns. Thus decisions made in real situations relate to real outcomes during an individual's practical, self-serving and less rational experience rather than when reasoning about hypothetical situations. The difference manifested is then between *what should I do* and *what should one do* in differing situations.

Critics of Kohlberg (Krebs, Denton & Wark, 1997) found that when students were asked to consider philosophical dilemmas similar to those found in Kohlberg's (1984) test, they generally used the highest stages of moral judgment available to them. However, when faced with personal, real-life situations, those students did not use the same levels of moral judgment, suggesting an interaction between the types of moral issue and the cognitive structures available to the person.

Following from Kohlberg, Rest (1969; 1986) developed the four-step ethical decision-making model. Additionally, he took Kohlberg's (1990) interview protocol for determining the level of moral development and created a measurement, the Defining Issues Test (DIT). Like Kohlberg, Rest's work was primarily focused on the stage of adolescence and character education. The DIT has been used in some research relating to ethical decision-making primarily in developmental psychology and education, but has not been widely implemented in the business and management literature. Regardless, the research on ethical decision-making grew out of the question related to the inconsistencies between what an individual is capable of doing (moral development level) and actual behavior.

In 1996, Robin, Gordon, Jordan and Reidenbach completed a study of the empirical performance of cognitive moral development (as measured by the DIT) and moral evaluation (as measured by the Multidimensional Ethics Scale (MES) and reported that the MES outperformed the cognitive moral development measure. In the scenarios used in the study, 59% to 71% of the variance in moral intent was explained by moral evaluation, while the DIT performed poorly, only explaining 6.2% of the variance. Additional studies in this area have not been completed.

Moral evaluation is an individual's issue-specific response to a particular moral situation. Moral evaluation is unstable, in contrast to Kohlberg's (1969) theory of moral development, which describes an invariant transformational stage sequence of moral maturation, and will vary across situations. In criticizing Kohlberg, Forsyth (1980) asserts that the explanations only apply to the reasons for accepting moral principles, not to the principles themselves; the theory may explain why individuals believe as they do, but not what they believe, nor how they act in all instances. Even more importantly, moral development theory is not context specific.

Because of the context specificity, moral evaluation measures have generally performed well in correlating with measures of moral intent. The simplicity of the statements used in the DIT, a measure of level of moral judgment, cannot produce the effects of instruments using scenarios. The instrument to measure moral evaluation (MES) makes the moral evaluation context specific (Robin, et al., 1996a) and is a more precise tool for scenario-based research. As an invariant transformational stage sequence in the moral invariant hierarchy, cognitive moral development appears to function more as a measure of what a person is capable of doing (or what they should do). On the other hand, moral evaluation, based upon research in ethical decision-making, yields a better indication of what the individual may actually do in a situation. What follows is a summary of various research studies based upon the interactionalist model of ethical decision-making, including moral evaluation and other constructs germane to the model.

Studies Using the Interactionalist Model of Ethical Decision-making

As described in Chapter 1, various versions of an interactionalist model of ethical decision-making exist. All include moral awareness, moral evaluation, moral intent and moral behavior influenced by either individual, issue-specific, and organizational factors, or some constellation of these factors. A review of twenty-two research studies using elements of the interactionalist model of ethical decision-making revealed that eleven were in the marketing/sales literature with similar participants, four studies involved managers, and six involved students. One each involved physicians and accountants. A summary of these studies are found in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2 Type of Participants in Ethical Decision-making Studies

Marketing Professionals	
· Barnett, Bass, Brown & Hebert, 1998	· Fritzsche, 1988
· Barnett & Vaicys, 2000	· LaFleur et al., 1996
· Barnett & Valentine, 2004	· Rallapalli et al., 1998
· Bass, Barnett & Brown, 1994	· Singhapakdi, Vitell & Kraft, 1996a
· Dubinsky & Loken, 1989	· Singhapakdi, Vitell & Franke, 1999
Managers	
· Chia & Mee, 2000	· Paolillo & Vitell, 2002
· Flannery & May, 2000	· Watley & May, 2004
Students	
· Barnett, Bass, Brown, 1996	· Davis, Johnson & Ohmer, 1988
· Barnett, Brown & Bass, 1994	· May & Pauli, 2002
· Beekun, Westerman & Barghouti, 2005	· Robin, et al., 1996a
Physicians	
· Eastman, Eastman & Tolson, 2001	
Accountants	
· Flory, Phillips, Reidenbach & Robin, 1992	

When reported, response rates in ethical decision-making studies were typically low. A listing of response rates and corresponding studies can be found in Table 2.3. They ranged from 12.4% to 62.8% with the majority under 30%. The average response rate based upon this listing was 24.8%.

Table 2.3 Response Rates in Ethical Decision-making Studies

Response Rate	Study
12.4%	Barnett & Valentine, 2004
12.4%	Eastman, Eastman & Tolson, 2001
15.1%	Paolillo & Vitell, 2002
16.0%	Rallapalli, Vitell & Barnes, 1998
16.4%	Watley & May, 2004
19.0%	Barnett, Bass, Brown & Hebert, 1998
20.0%	Flannery & May, 2000
20.7%	Barnett & Vaicys, 2000
22.7%	Singhapakdi, Vitell & Franke, 1999
23.0%	Singhapakdi, Vitell & Kraft, 1996a
24.2%	LaFleur, Reidenbach, Robin & Forrest, 1996
26.4%	Karande, Shankarmahesh, Rao & Rashid, 2000
26.0%	Robin, Reidenbach & Forrest, 1996b
26.5%	Singhapakdi & Vitell, 1990
33.2%	Bass, Barnett & Brown, 1999
44.3%	Dubinsky & Loken, 1989
62.8%	Flory, Phillips, Reidenbach & Robin, 1992

In their critique of ethical decision-making research, Randall and Gibson (1990) noted that response rates are typically low in ethics studies due to the nature of the topic, and recommended that researchers provide an incentive to encourage higher response rates. None of the studies reviewed provided incentives to potentially improve response rates, and only Watley and May (2000) reported checking for non-response bias.

Studies varied on the number of scenarios or ethical issues presented from one to twenty-six. Davis, Johnson and Ohmer (1988), Singhapakdi, Vitell and Franke (1999), and Singhapakdi, Vitell and Kraft (1996a) pre-tested scenarios in a pilot study prior to the main study, and Flannery and May (2000) interviewed managers in the metal finishing industry to create an appropriate ethical scenario for their study. Randall and Gibson (1990) and Taylor (2006) recommended that scenarios be developed from previous

qualitative research and/or use scenarios from previous research, or those that have been pre-tested. Prior to their main study, Watley and May (2004) conducted a pilot study. Few studies reported pre-testing scenarios or pilot studies.

Social desirability is a construct often controlled for in research involving sensitive self-report information. Chia and Mee (2000) and Flannery and May (2000) were the two studies that specifically addressed social desirability bias.

Many studies examined only one type of factor, individual, issue-specific or organizational with Flannery and May (2000) looking at all three factor types associated with the interactionist model in their study. Paolillo and Vitell (2002) incorporated both moral intensity and organizational variables but no individual variables. These studies used scenarios and measured either moral evaluation or moral intent, or both constructs.

Moral Evaluation and Moral Intent

Information about moral evaluation was presented earlier in this chapter during the discussion of moral development theory and level of cognitive moral development. The relationship between moral evaluation and moral intent has been documented in several studies that will be discussed in this and the following sections. Moral evaluation and moral intent are the second and third steps of the ethical decision-making process within the interactionist model of ethical decision-making.

The theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991), an extension of the theory of reasoned action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980) founded in social psychology, describes intent as the individual's internal decision about the issue, and the most immediate determinant of behavior. It is based on the premise that when faced with a decision to act, individuals make a systematic, rational use of available information in forming intent. Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) suggested that the most immediate determinants of behavior are the individual's behavioral intention, which is a result of the individual's attitude toward the behavior, and subjective norms. They explain subjective norms as the social pressure put on the individual to perform or not perform the behavior in question. This social pressure is akin to Jones's (1991) social consensus component of moral intensity, an issue-specific component of ethical decision-making and a construct researched as part of the interactionist model of ethical decision-making. According to Ajzen (1991), intention also depends on the individual's perceived behavioral control, i.e., the individual must

find the behavior in question under volitional control. The theory of planned behavior has been used primarily in social psychology to examine individual intent, particularly as related to participating in self-improvement behaviors such as weight loss, exercise, and smoking cessation.

Rest's (1986) model and concept of intent have been used in ethical decision-making research. The third step in this model is moral intent, described as a particular motivation to behave, and the step in the ethical decision-making process where the individual places one value above another. Rest says moral intent occurs when an individual calculates self-interest against moral principles. Rest acknowledges that factors exist that activate different motives other than moral motives at the time intent forms.

Intent has become a principal construct in understanding and predicting behavior in ethical decision-making, consumer behavior, and social psychology, referring to the *determination to act in a particular way*. Presumably, the greater the intention to act, the more likely that action is to occur. This is the primary reasoning used in research to consider intent a valid proxy for behavior.

According to Meiland (1970), intent as a concept is often confused with belief, expectation, or desire. Noting that intention is a theme of great interest to philosophers, he outlined a systematic and extended study of the many aspects of intention in manuscript. The result became a theory of intention subsequently published in the book, *The Nature of Intention* (1970). The purpose was to develop a satisfactory theory of intention not only for philosophers, but for people active in areas of moral and legal responsibility. He also included a description of the relationship between intention and other mental states, such as trying and wanting. Meiland describes outcomes of intentions as "objects of an intention" (p. 15). The object is what the intention is aimed toward – the ultimate action or inaction. He also delineated two important characteristics of intent: purpose and condition.

For the purposes of this study, condition is taken as a characteristic of intention. It is accepted that intent is always conditional, revealing a cognitive structure of the type: "he intends to do X if C obtains" (Meiland, 1970, p. 16), where C stands for some circumstance. Further, every intention is conditional even if no condition is expressed as

Meiland explains, “For it is taken for granted that the act in question will be performed if and only if certain conditions obtain” (p.16).

Studies have been undertaken that combine both moral evaluation and moral intent. Bass, Barnett and Brown (1999) found a strong positive relationship between evaluating an action as acceptable and the stated intentions to perform the act. In a related study, Barnett and Vaicys (2000) found that respondents were less likely to say they would engage in questionable selling practices (intent to act) even though they did not believe the practice to be unethical (in their moral evaluation) when the organization’s climate emphasized social responsibilities.

Numerous studies of moral intent have involved moral intensity, which represents an issue-specific factor in the interactionalist model of ethical decision-making, using scenarios to measure intent (Chia & Mee, 2000; Frey, 2000; Singhapakdi, et al., 1996a). Barnett and Vaicys (2000) used work-related statements and a four-item semantic differential scale to measure moral intent. These will be discussed later under the issue-specific section related to the interactionalist model of ethical decision-making.

Moral evaluation as an antecedent of moral intent has been documented in seven studies. It explained a statistically significant portion of the variance in intent, in studies using one to twenty-six scenarios by Barnett and Vaicys, 2000; Barnett and Valentine, 2004; Bass, Barnett and Brown, 1999; Flory, Phillips, Reidenbach and Robin, 1992; May and Pauli, 2002; Rallapalli, Vitell & Barnes, 1998; Robin, et al., 1996a. Flory, et al., 1992 found in a study of accountants with four scenarios, that moral evaluation explained 45% to 76% of the variation in moral intent.

Individual Factors

Of these studies involving the interactionalist model, the majority looked at individual factors including rule orientation (LaFleur, Reidenbach, Robin & Forrest, 1996), demographic variables such as age (Bass, Barnett & Brown, 1994), five antecedents to intent (Flannery & May, 2000), and one on cross-cultural moral philosophies (a newly developed concept and measure) (Beekun, Westerman & Barghouti, 2005), and another with attitudes (Dubinsky & Loken, 1989). Five studies (Barnett, Bass, Brown & Hebert, 1998; Bass, Barnett & Brown, 1998; Bass, et al., 1999; Eastman, Eastman & Tolson, 2001; Singhapakdi, Vitell, Rallapalli & Kraft, 1996b) have

looked at moral ideology as an individual factor influencing ethical decision-making and a construct becoming increasingly important to understanding ethical decision-making.

Moral Ideology: An Individual Difference

In their research, Schlenker and Forsyth (1977) hypothesized that moral decisions are made by individuals by a personal, inherent behavior. They developed the Ethics Position Questionnaire (EPQ) based primarily upon teleological and deontological principles to measure predominant ethical perspectives. A factor analysis of the results of their preliminary study revealed two dimensions underlying differences in moral thought, relativism and ideology. It was Forsyth (1980) who expanded upon this aspect of individual difference and coined the term “moral ideology,” referring to the elements of his theory. He contended that individual variations in moral thinking must be taken into consideration when examining an individual’s moral evaluation of a situation as they are stable across situations.

Relativism. According to Forsyth (1980), relativism is a degree to which an individual accepts or rejects universal rules when making an ethical decision. Higher relativism is correlated with greater rejection of the theory of universal moral rules. Relativistic attitudes commonly persuade decision-makers that the degree of their own moral behavior should be in accordance with the nature of the situation and the other people involved. Relativists place more emphasis on details of the circumstances than on an overarching ethical principle being violated (Forsyth, 1992). Individuals low in relativism are not persuaded to bend their own moral rules when making moral decisions affecting others. They believe that morality requires behaving in ways that are consistent with rules, regardless of the people affected. Thus relativism can be seen as the extent to which individuals base their decisions on universal ethical rules.

Idealism. This describes the degree to which individuals believe that desirable results will always be obtained (Forsyth, 1981) so long as the expression concerning the well-being of others is likewise desirable, thus basing action in the belief that one must avoid harming others. Less idealistic decision-makers allow that some harm will sometimes be necessary to produce good, overriding the imperative to avoid harming others.

Substantive research exists on the construct of moral ideology, dating from the 1970s. Schlenker and Forsyth (1977) found that individuals make decisions based upon their ethical ideology. Forsyth and Berger (1982) and Barnett, Brown & Bass, (1994) found that ethical ideology predicted differences in moral evaluation. While Forsyth, Nye and Kelley (1988) found that those with high idealism, and low relativism more strongly espoused an ethic of caring for others, Bass, et al., 1999 found that idealism had a direct effect on moral evaluation, and an indirect effect on moral intent through evaluation. They found relativism, on the other hand, had no direct effect on moral evaluation but an indirect one on moral intent through Machiavellianism.

In a study of physicians working for health maintenance organizations (HMO), LaFleur, et al., (1996) found physicians were more idealistic than relativistic. They hypothesized that relativistic physicians made decisions in favor of the HMO, and the idealist physicians were more likely to make decisions in favor of the patient. The study, however, did not confirm their hypotheses. Barnett, Bass, Brown and Herbert (1998) in three of three scenarios used in the study, and Barnett, Bass and Brown (1996) in 14 of 26 scenarios used, found that idealists made harsher evaluations of unethical scenarios than relativists.

Issue Specific Factors: Moral Intensity and Actor/Observer Difference

Issue specific factors in the interactionalist model of ethical decision-making refer to the characteristics of the issue that influence the decision-making process. Numerous studies of moral intent have involved moral intensity, using scenarios to measure intent (Chiai & Mee, 2000; Frey 2000; May & Pauli, 2002; Singhapkdi, Vitell & Franke, 1999; Singhapakdi, et al., 1996a; Watley & May, 2004). Barnett and Vaicys (2000) used work-related statements and a four-item semantic differential scale to measure intent. On the other hand, few studies have looked at all six areas of moral intensity. Most focused on two or three, or were based upon factor analysis performed as a result of the study, reporting only those factors that emerged as a result of the factor analysis.

Moral intensity had a statistically significant relationship with moral intent in studies by Barnett and Valentine (2004), Paolillo & Vitell (2002), and Singhapaki, et al., (1999). Singhapaki, et al., (1996a) found that moral intensity of an issue had both a direct

and indirect effect on moral intent, while Flannery and May (2000) found that moral intensity moderated the relationship between five antecedents (individual characteristics) of moral intent, and moral intent itself. Watley and May (2004) found that knowing something about the issue, specifically personal information about the victim, was related to moral intent. Davis, et al., (1988) found that social consensus had the greatest effect on moral evaluation.

According to Jones (1991), moral intensity consists of six factors: magnitude of consequences, social consensus, probability of effect, temporal immediacy, proximity of effect, and concentration of effect. Only one of the six measures of moral intensity, magnitude of consequences studied by Chia and Mee (2000) was related to moral intent. Social consensus had a statistically significant effect on moral intent in all but the subjects in the study by Chia and Mee; probability of effect was measured by all but Barnett and Vaicys (2000) and it had a statistically significant effect on moral intention in all but Chia and Mee's study. Temporal immediacy had a statistically significant effect only in the Singhapakdi, et al., 1996a study. Concentration of effect had a statistically significant effect in the Singhapakdi, et al., (1999) study, but not in Chia and Mee, nor in the Frey (2000) study. Proximity of effect did not have a statistically significant effect on moral intent in any of the studies, except in the Barnett and Vaicys' study; moral intent increased in correlation to an increase in the perception of similarity between the victims of actions and the respondents.

We see evidence that many aspects of moral intensity have an effect on moral intent but the results are mixed. There is less information available on moral intensity's impact on moral evaluation.

Part of the issue itself may be an actor/observer difference; whether the individual him/herself (person A) is involved in the situation as the actor, or another individual (person B) is involved as the actor, and person A is the observer. The actor/observer difference comes from attribution theory (Jones & Harris, 1967), and represents an attributional (cognitive) bias; that is, people involved in an action view things differently from those people outside the situation. This is such as individuals are generally more aware of the forces acting upon them versus those acting upon others. This actor/observer difference can affect our perceptions of the situation in all settings and is active in the

workplace (Wiswell & Lawrence, 1994). Saltzstein (1994) indicated that the self and observer perspectives are an important distinction that has been largely overlooked in ethics literature. Likewise, Cavanagh and Fritzche (1985) reported that studying these two perspectives can provide valuable and quite different information. The actor/observer phenomenon is very important in organizations where individuals at work might tolerate behaviors in others that they view as wrong and would not engage in themselves.

Organizational Factors

Since 2000, organizational factors have been studied in conjunction with the interactionist model. Flannery and May (2000) examined climate, Barnett and Vaicys (2000), and Paolillo and Vitell (2002) looked at job satisfaction, commitment, codes of ethics, and size of organization.

Trevino is credited with introducing the interactionist model of ethical decision-making, laying out her rationale for the model with a preliminary research agenda in 1986. In addition to individual factors influencing ethical decision-making, she encouraged researchers to look at organization specific factors in relation to the process. She suggested looking first at aspects of culture and climate as influencing factors, arguing that some cultures are effective in guiding positive behavior while others are not, and that some, perhaps, enhance cognitive moral development, while others unknowingly discourage it. Further, she hypothesized that certain cultures and climates can work to defuse responsibility for actions, and collective norms regarding right and wrong are a part of the fabric of an organization. She encouraged researchers to look at employee and manager perceptions that reflect their experiences within the organization.

We see that some researchers (Barnett & Vaicys, 2000; Flannery & May, 2000; VanSandt, Shepard & Zappe, 2006) have started to look at climate, using Victor and Cullen's (1988) measure of organizational climate. Flannery and May (2000) found that climate contributed moderately to the variance in moral intent; however, perceptions of organizational climate, characterized by four aspects, self-interest, friendship, social responsibility and rules, did not explain the variance in moral intent (Barnett & Vaicys, 2000). Further evaluation together with certain aspects of climate, social responsibility and friendship, explained a statistically significant portion of the variance in moral intent (Barnett & Vaicys, 2000). No organizational variables, organizational commitment, job

satisfaction, enforcement of ethics codes nor size of organization helped explain moral intent in Paolillo and Vitell's (2002) study. Most recently, VanSandt, Shepard and Zappe (2006) found that ethical work climate is a primary predictor of individual moral awareness. Research using organizational variables, specifically climate and the interactionist model of ethical decision-making, is still very immature.

Climate is defined as perceptions that "are psychologically meaningful molar descriptions that people can agree characterize a system's practices and procedures" (Schneider, 1975, p. 474), affecting a broad range of decisions. Climates provide an important source of information to employees regarding their own behavior. It can be argued that the concept of organizational justice, as well, is a psychologically meaningful description of an organization's practices and procedures. As is, climate has the potential to influence the ethical decision-making process, and should be explored within the interactionist model of ethical decision-making. The following section discusses organizational justice, its history and contribution to the organizational behavior literature.

Organizational Justice

Why consider organizational justice in ethical decisions? The field of organizational behavior is relatively new, beginning by investigating the fundamental matter of justice in the workplace around the middle of the 20th century. As in social psychology, which has looked at fairness in wealth acquisition, medical care, education, interpersonal dynamics, politics and other areas, conceptualizations of workplace justice focus not on an idealized justice, but as it is perceived by individuals. Organizational justice is based upon an individual's experience related to fairness as perceived within an organization.

The concept of justice in organizational settings started with concerns about the fairness of resource distributions, including pay, rewards, promotions and the outcome of dispute resolutions. From 1949 to 1976, distributive justice theory grew and focused on the subjective process involved in equity and other allocation norms (Colquitt, et al., 2005). During this time, Adams (1963) introduced equity theory. By 1976, Leventhal

(1976) discussed distributive justice not just in terms of equity, but including equality and need.

Organizational justice was expanded in 1975 by Thibaut and Walker when they introduced procedural justice, which took root in the late 1970s. In addition to distributive justice, employees also pay attention to the equity issues and fairness of procedures that lead to distributed outcomes, meaning employees attempt to understand why and how decisions regarding outcomes are made.

In the ensuing 20 years, procedural justice became linked to attitudes about organizational leaders (Tyler & Caine, 1981), job attitudes (Alexander & Ruderman, 1987), and procedural justice concepts were thereafter applied to human resource management systems (Folger & Greenberg, 1985), and found in the participation literature (Greenberg & Folger, 1983). Procedural justice thus spawned interactional justice as it relates to the human side of organizational practices. While distributive justice and procedural justice pertain to *what* an organization does, interactional justice has to do with *how* those in control of rewards and resources behave toward the given recipients. An interactional sense of justice focuses on interpersonal behaviors and communication by representatives of an organization's management. Unlike distributive and procedural justice, interactional justice relates directly to the perception of an employee's immediate supervisor. Within distributive models, reactions occur to the organization as a whole, and within procedural models, to a specific outcome. Tyler and Lind (1992) suggest that all perceptions of organizational justice are important because employees use their judgments of justice to generate an overall impression of the fairness and legitimacy of organizational leadership.

In a meta-analysis, Cohen-Charash and Spector (2001) examined 190 studies of distributive, procedural, and interactional justice and found that the distinctions among the three types of organizational justice are merited. They are "related yet distinct constructs" (p. 307). The meta-analysis also revealed that the perceiver's characteristics (age, gender, race, education level, tenure) were found to have little effect on perceptions of organizational justice.

Research in organizational justice focuses on the belief of employees at work, positing that their behavior will not become dysfunctional if employees feel certain that

they are treated fairly by the organization. Perceptions of organizational justice outcomes, however, extend to job performance, organizational citizenship, extra-role behavior, counterproductive, dysfunctional behavior, attitudes and emotions. The plethora of factors gives rise to a diverse basis of study. Research on counterproductive behavior, for example, has involved absenteeism, stealing, destroying company property and spreading rumors. Research related to attitudes has included commitment, trust, attitudes toward specific outcomes, and attitudes toward the organization in general. Negative mood and anger were among the emotions investigated. According to Cohen, et al., (2001), results of the research are likewise diverse, including: (a) all forms of justice are related to organizational citizenship behaviors; (b) procedural justice is the best predictor of job performance and counterproductive behavior; (c) interactional justice demonstrated a weak relationship with job performance; (d) counterproductive behavior is related to distributive justice; (e) job satisfaction and trust are related to all three types of justice; (f) commitment is predicted by all three justice types, but best by procedural justice; and (g) perceptions of injustice are related to negative emotions such as anger and moodiness.

Thibaut and Walker (1975) were the first to theoretically link justice and decision-making choice or control in organizations. Later, Greenberg and Folger (1983) applied the *fair process effect*, to various forms of organizational participation, including decision-making. The fair process effect originated with Folger, Rosenfield, Grove and Corkran (1979) and refers to perceptions of fairness resulting from giving employees a voice in decision-making.

In 2001, Trevino and Weaver were the first to study organizational justice and ethics per se. They looked at employers who did not follow-through on stated ethics policies as violators of employees' expectations of procedural justice. Employees' perceptions of general organizational justice and their perceptions of ethics program follow-through were considered, defined as employees' willingness to help the organization by reporting potential ethical problems. They found a strong relationship between organizational justice and ethics-related outcomes, and concluded that observed unethical conduct happened more often in organizations where employees perceived less organizational justice. The types of observed unethical conduct they found included: dragging out work to receive overtime pay, unauthorized use of company materials,

falsifying reports, falsifying time records, padding expense accounts, concealing errors, stealing from the company, taking longer than necessary to finish jobs, and lying to supervisors.

Conclusion

Ethical decision-making is complex and multifaceted. Despite the high level of interest in ethical decision-making in organizations, research needs to move forward to illuminate the nexus between individual and contextual factors and ethical decision-making, and ultimately the connection between ethics and organizational performance, a connection that is assumed by some authors. Additional research in this area may help to clarify the benefits of elevating levels of organizational justice in the workplace. Empirical work is sometimes useful in resolving contentious issues in the social sciences (Cross & Belli, 2004). This study therefore focused on exploring the antecedents of moral intent, an essential step toward a better understanding of how ethical decision-making functions within organizations.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

This chapter provides an overview of the research methods that were used for this study. The main constructs explored in this study were organizational justice, moral ideology, moral evaluation, and moral intent. A possible actor/observer perspective difference was also explored. Hierarchical multiple regression analysis and multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) were used to explore the research questions which focused on the amount of variance in moral evaluation and moral intent that can be explained by organizational justice and moral ideology.

This chapter also includes information about participants, the sampling plan, and the research instruments used. In addition, the chapter contains demographic questions that were included as part of the questionnaire sent to participants, describes the questions, and outlines the procedures that were used to collect the data from participants. The chapter continues with information on the main analyses that were performed using the data collected to answer the research questions addressing the relationships among the four principle constructs, organizational justice, moral ideology, moral evaluation, and moral intent. The three research questions explored in this study were:

1. What portion of the variance in moral evaluation is explained by organizational justice after controlling for moral ideology?
2. What portion of the variance in moral intent is explained by moral ideology and organizational justice after controlling for moral ideology?
3. To what extent and on which of the measures of moral evaluation and moral intent do the two groups, representing the actor perspective and the observer perspective differ?

This chapter ends with an explanation of a pilot study conducted in July 2006 to determine the reliability of newly created items to measure moral intent.

Instruments

Three principal instruments were used to explore the research questions, chosen specifically because of their strong theoretical base, their relevance to my research questions, and their demonstrated reliability and validity. An additional ten questions related to moral intent and four demographic questions are included in the questionnaire. The format of the questions, representing the combination of the three instruments and the other questions mentioned above can be found in Appendix A.

Organizational Justice

Three dimensions of perceived organizational justice were measured in this study: distributive justice, procedural justice, and interactional justice.

Distributive Justice Index (DJI). The DJI is a six-item justice scale created by Price and Mueller (1986) and is intended to measure respondents' perceptions of the fairness of the rewards they receive for their contributions to their work organizations. Several studies based upon the work of Price and Mueller provide reliability and validity data for the measure. In three of their studies, Price and Mueller reported Cronbach's alpha scores of .94, .94, and .95. Moorman (1991) reported a Cronbach's alpha score of .94. The distributive justice items are questions A1 through A6 on the questionnaire that is in Appendix A.

Procedural Justice Measure. The study used the six-item procedural justice measure created by Moorman (1991) for his research of organizational citizenship. It is the most frequently used and comprehensive measure of the construct (Colquitt, 2001), and judged highly reliable. The six items measured the respondents' perception of the fairness of the formal procedures evident in their work organizations. The questions were concerned with how consistent, unbiased, accurate, correctable, and ethical procedures are within a given organization. Moorman reported Cronbach's alpha score of .94. The procedural justice items are questions A7 through A12 on the questionnaire in Appendix A.

Interactional Justice Measure. Moorman (1991) also created a six-item scale to measure interactional justice which focuses on the manager of each respondent. Moorman reported Cronbach's alpha for interactional justice as .93.

All of the justice measures used a 7-point Likert-type scale with response categories (1 = Strongly Disagree; 7 = Strongly Agree). The interactional justice items used were questions A13 through A18 on the questionnaire in Appendix A. These original items were answered by a 6-point Likert-type scale with responses strongly disagree to strongly agree. These items are numbers A13 through A18 on the questionnaire in Appendix A.

There were no reverse scored items in the distributive, procedural or interactional scales.

Moral Ideology

Two dimensions of moral ideology, relativism and idealism, were measured using the Ethics Position Questionnaire (EPQ). Forsyth (1980) developed the items and reported Cronbach's alpha coefficients of .73 and .80 for relativism and idealism, respectively. Davis, Anderson and Curtis, (2001) reported that in two studies they obtained satisfactory alphas for relativism of .81, .83, and for idealism, .83 and .87. Each scale in the EPQ consists of ten items. The moral ideology questions used a 7-point Likert-type scale with response categories (1 = Strongly Disagree; 7 = Strongly Agree). The original questions were developed as a 9-point Likert-type scale with responses strongly disagree to strongly agree. Questions B1 through B20 are the moral ideology questions on the questionnaire in Appendix A. Questions B1 through B10 are related to idealism and questions B11 through B20 are related to relativism. There are no reverse scored items.

Scenario-based Measures

Ethics research often relies on the use of scenarios because they allow researchers to present specific decision-making situations approximating real-life situations (Bass, Barnett & Brown, 1999; Alexander & Becker, 1978; Weber 1992). They have been used across a variety of disciplines to evaluate ethical judgments (Reidenbach, Robin & Dawson, 1991). Studies of moral intent include either a scenario or a statement describing a situation to which participants respond.

Taylor (2006) suggested that scenarios selected for a study should be based upon practical knowledge, previous research, or a preliminary qualitative study. In developing the present research, a scenario was sought that had been previously used in a research

study that had mean and standard deviation data available related to measures of moral evaluation or moral intent for the scenario. The scenario chosen for this study was previously used in research by McMahon (2002) which was an analysis of the factor structure of the Multidimensional Ethics Scale (MES), a measure of moral evaluation.

In the McMahon (2002) study, the mean and standard deviation for the scenario were 4.2 and 1.4 respectively, indicating variability across responses. The measures used were on a 7-point Likert-type scale with response categories of 1 – 7, strongly disagree to strongly agree. The scenario is general in nature, meaning almost anyone could be expected to relate to it. Additionally, it is gender neutral (e.g., Pat can be male or female). This helped prevent any bias in responses based upon gender.

Scenarios in research also provide a means for examining different variables while keeping other variables constant. In their review of several scenario-based ethics studies, Cavanagh and Fritzsche (1985) found that the majority of the studies used scenarios containing constant variables; however, several manipulated variables within the scenario. Taylor (2006) states it is appropriate to select variables to vary from a previous qualitative study or a review of the literature. In this study the variable manipulated is referred to as the actor/observer perspective, which emerged from Saltzstein's (1994) study. He indicated that the self and observer perspectives are an important distinction that has been largely overlooked in ethics literature. Likewise, Cavanagh and Fritzsche reported that studying these two perspectives can provide valuable and quite different information. The actor/observer phenomenon is very important in organizations where individuals at work might tolerate behaviors in others that they view as wrong and would not engage in themselves.

In this study, the respondent in one scenario is put in the position of acting out a particular behavior, and in the other, the respondent is placed in the position of observing that same behavior performed by another. Through the instructions for answering the intent questions, which are discussed later in this chapter, together with the scenarios, the respondent is put in the position of "Pat" in the scenario (if I were Pat, I would . . .). The two scenarios used in this study appear in the questionnaire in Appendix A and are below.

Actor Perspective Scenario. Pat decided to buy a new laptop computer. Pat was able to purchase a state-of-the-art computer at a very affordable price, but the trade-off for getting the low price was that it came with a very limited amount of pre-loaded software. One day at work Pat decided to install the software licensed exclusively to the workplace onto the new laptop computer recently purchased for personal use.

Observer Perspective Scenario. Pat's co-worker decided to buy a new laptop computer. Pat's co-worker was able to purchase a state-of-the-art computer at a very affordable price but the trade-off for getting the low price was that it came with a very limited amount of pre-loaded software. One day Pat saw the co-worker in the office installing software, licensed exclusively to the workplace, onto the new laptop purchased for personal use. Pat decided to ignore the situation.

The moral evaluation and the moral intent questions for this study described in the following sections relate to the scenarios. In this study, for purposes of measuring moral evaluation, participants read a scenario and responded to the action described in it by choosing one of seven responses anchored between two opposites (e.g., fair – unfair), reflecting the individual's belief about the action, thus capturing their moral evaluation of the situation. For purposes of measuring moral intent, the participants read a scenario and responded to a series of questions, on a scale of 1 to 7 (strongly disagree to strongly agree), asking about the likelihood of them engaging in the behavior. The intent questions (the manner in which they are worded, e.g., if I were Pat, I would ...), together with the scenario, create the actor/observer perspective.

Moral Evaluation

The Multidimensional Ethics Scale (MES) (Reidenbach & Robin, 1988; 1990) was used with a scenario measuring moral evaluation. The MES provided multiple-item measures of decision dimensions used in ethical decision-making. The eight items do not exhaust all possible aspects of ethical evaluation, but incorporate normative, deontological and general ethical principles. Normative questions regarding family and traditional norms are included as well as deontological questions which have to do with obligation and duty. General ethical questions address fairness. The scale produces one total score. Reidenbach and Robin (1990) report alphas ranging from .71 to .92 with an average of .80 and McMahon (2002), in an extensive study of the instrument, reported an

alpha of .79. In this research study, participants read a scenario and responded to the action described in it by choosing one of seven responses anchored between two opposites (e.g., fair to unfair) reflecting the individual's belief about the action, thus capturing their moral evaluation of the situation. The original scale provided response options from one to seven and this study did the same. The MES has been widely used in ethical decision-making research in the last decade and is used in conjunction with one or more scenarios. MES items are questions C1 through C8 on the questionnaire in Appendix A. All questions were reverse scored except questions C4 and C7.

Moral Intent

Most studies addressing moral intent have attempted to measure this construct with very few items (Barnett, Bass & Brown, 1996; Barnett & Vaicys, 2000; Barnett & Valentine, 2004; Bass, Barnett & Brown, 1999; Beekun, Westerman & Barghouti, 2005; Chia & Mee, 2000; Flannery & May, 2000; Flory, Phillips, Reidenbach & Robin, 1992; Karande, et al., 2000; May & Pauli, 2002; Robin, Gordon, Jordon & Reidenbach, 1996; Robin, Reidenbach & Forrest, 1996; Singhapakdi, Vitell & Franke, 1999; Singhapakdi, Vitell & Kraft, 1996a; Vitell, 1986; Watley & May, 2004). Some have used a semantic differential scale; others have measured moral intent with one item similar to: *if I were in this situation, I would ...*; still others have used three items with nearly identical wording. Table 3.1 provides a summary of moral intent items used in previous research.

Table 3.1 Summary of Items Used in Previous Research to Measure Moral Intent

Authors	Questions	Response Scales
Single Item Measures		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chia & Mee, 2000 • Dubinsky & Loken, 1989 • Flannery & May, 2000 • Flory, et al., 1992 • Robin, et al., 1996a • Robin, et al., 1996b • Beekun, et al., 2005 • Paolillo & Vitell, 2002 • Karande, et al., 2000 • Singhapakdi, et al., 1996a • Singhapakdi, el al., 1999 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How likely is it you would ... • What is the likelihood that you would ... • What is the probability that you would ... • The probability that I would take this action is ... • I would likely ... • I would act in the same manner as XXX did in the scenario 	<p>Extremely likely to Extremely unlikely (1-7)</p> <p>Highly probable to Highly improbable (1-7)</p> <p>High to Low (scale not reported)</p> <p>Definitely would – Definitely would not (1-7)</p> <p>Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree (1-9)</p>
Agreement to Three Likelihood Statements		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May & Pauli, 2002 • Watley & May, 2004 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is likely I would ... • I would ... • I would not ... 	<p>Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree (1-7)</p>
Four Semantic Differential Responses to a Probability or Likelihood Statement		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barnett, et al., 1996 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you were Pat, rate the probability that you would engage in ... 	<p>Likely – Unlikely Probable – Improbable Possible – Impossible Definitely would – Definitely would not (1-8)</p>
Agreement to Different Time Bound Items		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barnett & Vaicys, 2000 • Bass et al., 1999 • Vitell, 1986 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicate the likelihood of engaging in a behavior <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - in the near future - next year - in the next 5 years • Indicate the likelihood of engaging in a behavior <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - now - in the near future - next year - next five years 	<p>Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree (1-7)</p>

The exclusive use of a single item calls into question the reliability of the measure. However, this assumption related to single item measures has been challenged. Through two studies (Wanous & Hudy, 2001; Wanous, Reichers & Hudy, 1997), one based on a meta analysis of research that used single item measures of job satisfaction, and another which used correction for attenuation and factor analysis, concluded that for individual level data, .70, and for group data, .80 are reasonable single item reliabilities.

A. Singapakdi (personal communication, March 31, 2006) indicated that he and other researchers who have used primarily one item to measure moral intent acknowledge its limitations. They also acknowledge that using one item has come under common criticism by journal reviewers. At least in the business ethics literature, this criticism has become a *reviewer's mantra* repeatedly suggesting they need to use more items. The items measuring moral intent come mainly from the consumer behavior literature which has a primary emphasis on consumers' likelihood of purchasing, not repurchasing, or repeat purchasing.

Although single item measures of intent have been acknowledged as a problem and are often discouraged for the conduct of scholarly research, the questionable reliability and limitations of intent items used in previous research have not been overcome effectively. Consequently, Wiswell and Johnson (2006) developed several items to measure moral intent and created a 10-item scale to pilot. The new items were based upon discussions of conditional intent and the conditions surrounding ethical situations found in the literature (Joseph & Esen, 2003; Meiland, 1970). The pilot study is described in detail at the end of this chapter.

After reading a scenario, participants selected their answers to the moral intent questions based upon their likelihood to act in the same manner as described in the scenario. The moral intent questions are found in the questionnaire in Appendix A, numbers D1 through D10, with items D2, D9 and D10 scored reverse.

Table 3.2 below contains a summary of the measures that were used in this study which included measures for organizational justice, moral ideology, moral evaluation and moral intent.

Table 3.2 Summary of Measures Used in This Study

Measure	Authors	Subscales	No. of Items	Reliability
Organizational Justice	Price & Mueller, 1986	1. Distributive	6	.94
	Moorman, 1991	2. Procedural	6	.94
	Moorman, 1991	3. Interactional	6	.93
Moral Ideology	Forsyth, 1980	1. Relativism	10	.73
	Forsyth, 1980	2. Idealism	10	.80
Moral Evaluation	Reidenbach & Robin, 1990	N/A	8	.80
Moral Intent	Wiswell & Johnson, 2006	N/A	10	.94

Demographic Information

Demographic information was gathered in the final section of the questionnaire including gender, length of time with the organization, and length of time with current supervisor. Demographic questions are number E1 through E4 on the questionnaire in Appendix A.

At the beginning of the questionnaire, three questions were asked to determine with which type of organization the participant had an affiliation. These are questions 1, 2 and 3 of the questionnaire found in Appendix A. These questions were also used to identify unemployed persons and graduate assistants in the study. When the respondent was employed at a university (answered yes to question 1), the survey logic moved to question 3 which identified full time graduate assistants. This made it possible to differentiate between graduate assistants and other university-employed persons. Graduate assistant experiences with their organization may be different than the experience of others (faculty, department heads, administrators, human resource professionals, etc.) within the university environment. When a participant answered no to both question 1 and question 2 (which would indicate the person was unemployed), the survey logic moved to the last page of the questionnaire. The individual was thanked for participating and had an opportunity to enter the drawing.

Participants

The participants for this study were drawn from the membership list of an association for professionals interested in human resource development. The majority were affiliated with a university. The membership of the association was 669 persons at the time the research was conducted. From the list of 669, only members with an organizational affiliation were used. This was a requirement so that measures of organizational justice were captured. This resulted in a list of 640 possible participants which formed the target sample group.

This membership list was chosen as a sample of convenience. Contact with the association's management office confirmed that their membership list could be used for research purposes. The list included fields for: member name, title, organization affiliation, address (street number, address, city, state and zip code), telephone number and email address.

Procedures

The questionnaire, correspondence sent to participants and other required documentation were submitted and approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University for both the pilot study conducted in association with this research study and the main study itself.

The survey questionnaire, found in Appendix A, was first tested with a group of six persons who were asked to complete the questionnaire and record the amount of time required to complete it. Additionally, they were given the option to provide feedback or ask questions about the questionnaire. The final questionnaire was distributed electronically via Survey Monkey (www.surveymonkey.com), an on-line service which I paid to use. It was sent to 640 members that had been identified as having an organizational affiliation. Members with an organizational affiliation were identified by looking at the organizational affiliation column. Email addresses were available on the list because the association communicates exclusively with members via email. The data from completed questionnaires were later uploaded into SPSS after the comments related to the two open-ended questions were removed and saved in an Excel spreadsheet. The distribution of the two questionnaires, one containing the actor perspective scenario, and

the other containing the observer perspective scenario was effected using a randomization procedure available in Excel.

Randall and Gibson (1990), in their review of 94 empirical articles related to ethics found that ethics research suffers from low response, due to “the nature of the research” (p. 464). Consequently, they recommend using free gifts or financial incentives in addition to persuading respondents of the importance of the research. As an incentive to participate in the survey, respondents were given an opportunity to participate in a raffle for three possible prizes: a \$100.00 American Express gift certificate, or one of two \$50.00 American Express gift certificates.

Three days prior to the distribution of the questionnaire, respondents were sent an email announcement that they were invited to participate in an important survey that would be distributed in three days. Simsek and Veiga (2001) recommended prior email or postal notification as one way to potentially increase the response rates on internet surveys. The announcement used in this study for this purpose can be found in Appendix B.

Three days later, an email invitation to participate in the study (Appendix C) introduced the survey to participants, explained the purpose of the study, outlined the procedures for entering the drawing, and contained a link to the survey. At the end of the survey, respondents could choose to submit his or her email address in response to the final question for the drawing which was held on November 28, 2006. More information about the drawing follows in the next section. For analysis purposes, the email addresses were separated from the survey responses. To accomplish this, the last question on the survey asked the respondent to click “next” if they wanted to participate in the drawing. Doing so took them to another page, which was a separate survey in Survey Monkey, where they typed their email address. This resulted in a list of email addresses, separated from the main survey. The content of the email invitation is in Appendix C. Appendix F contains the follow-up emails sent to those who did not respond after one week, and those who did not respond after two weeks. All emails sent to participants provided them with the option to opt out of the survey, if desired. Those who opted out were considered non-responders and were not sent subsequent emails.

Drawing Procedures

After the survey was closed, the list of email addresses was transferred into an Excel spreadsheet and the randomize function was used to place the email addresses in random order. The first three email addresses were awarded the gift certificates, \$100.00, \$50.00 and \$50.00. An email was sent to each email address (Appendix G) informing the three participants that they won and asking them to claim the certificate by providing a mailing address no later than December 31, 2006. Two gift certificates were sent by priority mail one week later. The third certificate was not claimed.

Main Analyses

SPSS was used for the data analysis. Initially, I uploaded the data set from Survey Monkey into an Excel spreadsheet and then into SPSS. In SPSS, reversed items were transposed and single item scores for each of the scales were transformed into a composite score of means for each scale for all respondents. These scores were subsequently used as the basis of the further analyses. Initial analysis included descriptive statistics to capture means and standard deviations. Reliability estimates for the scales were also calculated. In addition, correlations between the demographic characteristics of the respondents and the subscales of the major constructs of organizational justice, moral ideology, moral evaluation and moral intent were explored. Scale correlations were also computed for all scales within and between the actor perspective and observer perspective sets of scores. A factor analysis was computed on the newly created moral intent items.

Hierarchical multiple regression and MANOVA were used to test the relationship among the variables, organizational justice, moral ideology, moral evaluation, and moral intent, and to determine to what extent the two groups, representing the actor perspective and the observer perspective, differed.

MANOVA was used because it makes assessing group differences across multiple metric dependent variables (moral evaluation and moral intent) simultaneously possible, based on a set of categorical variables (actor perspective and observer perspective) acting as independent variables. MANOVA compared the groups on moral evaluation and moral intent. All of the results are explained in detail in Chapter 4.

In addition to predictor and criterion variables in regression, there may also be one or more control variables. In this study, past research and the temporal sequence of the variables studied were considered explaining first the variance correlating to moral evaluation and then to moral intent, after controlling for other variables. These considerations are presented in the following two research questions:

1. What portion of the variance in moral evaluation is explained by organizational justice after controlling for moral ideology?
2. What portion of the variance in moral intent is explained by moral ideology and organizational justice after controlling for moral evaluation?

Based upon the literature, moral evaluation would be expected to explain the greatest portion of the variance in moral intent. In studies of moral evaluation and moral intent, it is shown that moral evaluation generally explains a statistically significant portion of the variance in moral intent (Barnett, Brown & Bass, 1994; Barnett & Vaicys, 2000; Barnett & Valentine, 2004; Bass et al., 1999; Flory et al., 1992; May & Pauli, 2002; Rallapalli, Vitell & Barnes, 1998). Moral ideology is an individual characteristic, which from a temporal sequence perspective, occurs first in the individual's experience, and represents the distant past. Individuals bring this characteristic with them to the workplace. From there, perceptions of organizational justice are formed which reflect the individual's experience in that particular organization, and therefore is more recent in the temporal sequence of the variables, representing the recent past.

Although the literature does not indicate a possible relationship between demographic variables and moral evaluation and moral intent, the demographic variables were tested to be sure that none of them had a statistically significant relationship to moral evaluation or moral intent.

The research question tested by MANOVA related to the hypothesized actor/observer perspective follows. This difference has not been tested empirically within the interactionist model of ethical decision-making thus the present study provides a first look at this difference within this context.

Question 3: To what extent and on which of the measures of moral evaluation and moral intent do the two groups, representing the actor perspective and the observer perspective differ?

Thus far, this chapter has provided a review of the research methods that were used for this study as well as information about the measures of organizational justice, moral ideology, moral evaluation and moral intent. Information about the reliability of the previously established scales was provided together with a description of the scenarios that were part of the questionnaire, and an explanation regarding how those scenarios were varied. I used correlation analysis and multiple regression to look at the relationships between the constructs examined in this study. MANOVA assessed group differences. Next in this chapter, the pilot study of the moral intent questions discussed earlier in this chapter that was conducted in July 2006 is explained.

Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted which included the new 10-item moral intent scale to determine the scale's usefulness. The intended outcome was to create a scale for the main study that had acceptable reliability.

Instruments

Three instruments were used in this pilot study. A total of 39 questions were included in the questionnaire and consisted of two measures of moral intent and one measure of social desirability. A copy of the electronic questionnaire for this study can be found in Appendix D.

Newly Developed Moral Intent Questions. The 10 moral intent items are questions 1 through 10 and questions 25 through 34 on the questionnaire found in Appendix D. All these items were measured using a 7-point Likert-type scale with response categories (1 = Strongly Disagree; 7 = Strongly Agree). Items 2, 9, 10, 25, 33 and 34 are reversed scored items.

I developed the items using Joseph and Esen's (2003) business ethics survey which incorporated employee attitudes about organizational ethics and also the conditional approach to intention first discussed by Meiland (1970). According to this theory of intention, there are two important characteristics of intent, purpose and condition. For the present study, condition as a characteristic of intention was important. Meiland believed that intent is always conditional: "he intends to do X if C obtains" (p. 16), where C stands for some circumstance. Based upon Meiland's theory, conditional

intent items were created for the pilot study using information found in Joseph & Esen's study.

The 10-item scale was used twice (once for each scenario) for a total of 20 items to measure intent. Table 3.3 provides more details on the relationship between the conditional intent items and information reported in Joseph and Esen's (2003) business ethics report. The reasons why employees do not report ethical misconduct, and reasons why employees do or do not participate in ethical behavior helped form the conditional part of the moral intent items. One challenge in creating the items was to craft them so that they could be used for both scenarios, actor and observer perspectives. For example, the potential item, "I would not take the same course of action because I do not want to be known as a whistle blower," was rejected because it could only be used with the observer perspective scenario. The statements needed to make sense from both the actor and the observer perspectives. Two items, numbers 1 and 10, are from previous research. They were included as part of the newly created moral intent scale and are not conditional in nature.

Table 3.3 Rational for Moral Intent Items

Conditional Moral Intent Item: If I were Pat, ...	*Background Behind the Development of the Items
I would not choose the same course of action because of the potential negative consequences	Employees reported potential negative consequences associated with reporting unethical behavior: they feared that it would not be kept confidential, retribution by peers and/or manager would occur, they would be labeled a whistle-blower, and/or they wouldn't be viewed as a team player
I would choose the same course of action if there was no rule against it	Employees thought that although unethical behavior occurs, most employees follow the organization's code of ethics, policies and procedures
I would choose the same course of action if no one will be harmed in the situation	Employees reported that they did not want harm to come to themselves or others (particularly job loss) and that unethical behavior was sometimes required to save jobs, and ensure the organization's survival (prevent harm to the organization)
I would choose the same course of action because everyone does it	Employees reported that the behavior of co-workers on the job influenced their own on-the-job behavior
I would choose the same course of action because there is nothing wrong with doing this	Employees reported that they believe many employees rationalize unethical behavior as normal workplace behavior
I would choose the same course of action because no one cares	Employees reported that nobody cared about business ethics in their organization and/or no action would be taken if instances were reported, and there was no commitment to ethics in the organization.
I would choose the same course of action because of the benefit to me	Employees reported that ethical conduct was not rewarded and participating in unethical behavior advanced their own career interests
I would not choose the same course of action because it is not right	Employees reported that they believed in the values and standards of their organization

* Source: Joseph & Esen, 2003

Semantic Differential Intent Scale. The four semantic differential intent items (Barnett, et al., 1996) are questions 11 through 14 and questions 35 through 38 on the questionnaire found in Appendix D. All these items were measured using a 7-point Likert-type scale with response categories. The four items were used twice (one for each scenario) for a total of eight items. The semantic differential scale was included in the pilot for comparison purposes.

Social Desirability Scale. The Marlowe-Crowne 2 (Strahan & Gerbasi, 1972), a social desirability scale was included in the pilot study to determine if either the newly developed scale or the previously established semantic differential scale were influenced by social desirability. It consists of 10 true and false questions and can be found in Appendix D, questions 15 through 24. Questions 17, 19, 22, 23 and 24 of this scale are reverse scored.

Social desirability is a style of responding to questions in a way that is socially acceptable so that the respondent can manage impressions of him/herself. A measure of social desirability is a recommended control in studies of self-report data, particularly data that may be considered sensitive in nature (Nederhof, 1985), such as responses about one's ethicality. A measure of social desirability is used as a statistical control because social desirability bias could influence the questions being researched. It controls for lying or less than truthful answers. A strong correlation between the social desirable measures and moral intent measure could distort or contaminate the moral intent measure. A social desirability scale was included in the pilot study to determine if it should be included, or could be eliminated, in the main research study.

One item on gender was asked and is the last item, question 39 on the questionnaire in Appendix D.

Both moral intent scales are scenario dependent. The scenarios used in this study were:

Actor Perspective Scenario. Pat decided to buy a new laptop computer. Pat was able to purchase a state-of-the-art computer at a very affordable price, but the trade-off for getting the low price was that it came with a very limited amount of pre-loaded software. One day at work Pat decided to install the software licensed exclusively to the workplace onto the new laptop computer recently purchased for personal use.

Observer Perspective Scenario. Chris and Lee share the responsibility for ordering and distributing supplies for their department. In this week's shipment of supplies, Chris discovered a package containing several laser printer ink cartridges that did not appear on the invoice. Chris asked if Lee knew anything about the ink cartridges that were included in the week's order, and mentioned that they looked like the same type that fit Chris' printer at home. Both Chris and Lee concluded that the office supply store

sent the cartridges in error. At the end of the day, Lee saw Chris put the cartridges into a bag and take them home. Lee decided not to say anything to Chris about it, and not to tell anyone about what occurred.

The observer perspective scenario is different than the first (actor perspective) scenario. Different scenarios were used in the pilot study because data were needed on both perspectives; participants were required to answer moral intent questions relating to each perspective. If the scenarios were too similar (i.e., only varied on the actor/observer perspectives), there was a likelihood that participants would confuse the two scenarios. The second scenario was chosen because it was general in nature (i.e., most people can relate to the situation), and the language was gender neutral. It had been used in previous research by McMahon in 2002 related to the moral evaluation measure, the MES. The mean and standard deviation were 4.1 and 1.4 respectively indicating some variability among responses. In retrospect, the last sentence of the observer perspective scenario would have been more clear if it had stated “Lee decided to ignore the situation,” instead of ending the scenario with a statement that included two actions.

Participants

One hundred business students and 60 human resource development graduate students were invited to participate in this study. The business students were primarily senior and graduate level, attending a regional university located in the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States. The students were at the university’s main campus and in five distance learning centers that are within a five-hour radius of the main campus. This university has an extensive distance learning capability, with classes originating from, and broadcast to, various sites. The human resource development graduate students were from a different university in the same general area. There was a 47% response rate (n = 75). Males represented 32% of the respondents.

Procedures

Classroom participants included 41 students from one of my classes. Other instructors teaching business courses allowed me to use their class time to talk to students about the survey. Once permission was received from the instructors, I went to the classes and gave a brief description of the purpose of the pilot study and told students their participation was voluntary. Afterwards, all the students were sent an email which

explained the survey’s purpose and procedures with a link to the electronic survey. This can be found in Appendix E. Students were asked to complete the questionnaire within two weeks. At the close of the survey, data were uploaded into SPSS and analyzed.

Results

Descriptive statistics and correlations among the scales and items, and reliability were computed. This information appears in Tables 3.4, 3.5, and 3.6. The means and standard deviations for the moral intent scales and semantic differential items were fairly consistent and not greatly skewed to one end of the rating scale. They all were somewhat in the direction of disagreeing with the action depicted in the scenario.

Table 3.4 Descriptive Statistics for the Pilot Study

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Intent (Actor)	74	1.00	7.00	2.6	1.3
Intent (Observer)	71	1.00	7.00	2.7	1.3
Semantic Differential (Actor)	75	1.00	7.00	2.6	1.7
Semantic Differ. (Observer)	73	1.00	7.00	2.7	1.8
Social Desirability	74	1.00	7.00	1.5	0.2

Correlations among the moral intent scales were high, as would be expected. The Marlowe-Crown 2, social desirability scale, was not statistically significantly correlated with the moral intent measures, except for one weak but statistically significant correlation ($r = .25$) with the moral intent scale for the second scenario.

Table 3.5 Scale Correlations for the Pilot Study

	Intent (Actor)	Intent (Observer)	Semantic Differential (Actor)	Semantic Differential Observer	Social Desirability
Intent (Actor)	1.00				
Intent (Observer)	.59**	1.00			
Semantic Differential (Actor)	.78**	.42**	1.00		
Semantic Differ. (Observer)	.48**	.68**	.56**	1.00	
Social Desirability	.17	.25**	.16	.04	1.00

** Correlation is statistically significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)

*Correlation is statistically significant at the .05 level (2-tailed)

A correlation matrix for the moral intent items is shown for the first scenario in Table 3.6. The matrix for the second scenario was very similar. A range of moderate to high correlations among the items was indicated. These range from a low of .35 to a high of .86.

Table 3.6 Item Correlations for the Pilot Study

	Item 1	Item 2	Item 3	Item 4	Item 5	Item 6	Item 7	Item 8	Item 9
Item 1	1.00								
Item 2	.62	1.00							
Item 3	.67	.35	1.00						
Item 4	.86	.63	.71	1.00					
Item 5	.65	.46	.57	.64	1.00				
Item 6	.75	.48	.61	.68	.80	1.00			
Item 7	.76	.51	.60	.74	.68	.80	1.00		
Item 8	.74	.54	.65	.75	.59	.72	.83	1.00	
Item 9	.79	.72	.60	.85	.57	.58	.63	.67	1.00
Item 10	.75	.61	.55	.69	.52	.60	.62	.67	.75

The correlations demonstrate a moderate to high degree of homogeneity between the moral intent items and suggested that the items measure the same phenomenon.

Internal consistency (Cronbach's Alpha) was examined for the moral intent items. The obtained alphas (including when single items were deleted) were above .93, suggesting a very reliable measure. Additional reliability coefficients were calculated for

a smaller number of items, eight, six, and four. The alpha coefficients decreased slightly, but not below .90.

Similar results were found for the moral intent measures from the second scenario. There were no statistically significant differences between the two scenarios for the moral intent items or the semantic differential items based on a paired t-test comparing the two sets of scores.

A principal component factor analysis performed on the 10 moral intent items (one for each scenario) produced one factor, accounting for 68 to 69 percent of the variance. Two additional factor analyses using Varimax rotation were conducted on the data from both scenarios. Tables 3.7 and 3.8 display the factor loadings for the moral intent items.

Table 3.7 Factor Loadings for Moral Intent Questions

Question	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
O-1	.87		
O-4	-.82	.33	
O-10	-.82		
O-2	.82		
O-7	.80	.39	
O-5	.77		
O-6	.75	.38	
O-8	.71		
O-9	-.70		
O-3	.68	.46	
A-6		.84	
A-8		.82	
A-7		.82	
A-1		.79	
A-4	.32	.74	
A-5		.73	
A-3		.72	
A-2		.35	.75
A-9	.31	.54	.66
A-10		.54	.64

A 1 - A 10: Actor Perspective Questions
 O 1 - O 10: Observer Perspective Questions
 Loadings below .30 are omitted

Factor loadings above .40 are meaningful (Hatcher, 1994). In the actor perspective scenario, seven items loaded on one factor and three loaded on a second factor. This indicated that the items potentially represented more than one construct. In the observer perspective scenario, all 10 moral intent items loaded on one factor, giving an indication that the items are essentially measuring one construct. When two factors were forced, 65 to 68% of the variance was explained.

Table 3.8 Factor Loadings for Moral Intent Questions: Two Factors Forced

Question	Factor 1	Factor 2
A-1	.89	
A-4	.85	.35
A-7	.79	.32
A-6	.79	
A-8	.78	.32
A-9	.77	.34
A-10	.77	
A-5	.76	
A-3	.72	
A-2	.65	
O-1		.87
O-4		.83
O-10		-.83
O-2		-.82
O-7	.38	.81
O-5	.32	.78
O-6	.40	.76
O-8	.32	.72
O-9		-.71
O-3	.32	.68

A 1 - A 10: Actor Perspective
O 1 - O 10: Observer Perspective
Loadings below .30 are omitted

Conclusion

This was a preliminary study to determine if items, grounded in the ethics literature, could be created to measure moral intent, demonstrate sufficient reliability and overcome some of the weaknesses of previous research related to the interactionist model of ethical decision-making. The results although preliminary, appeared promising. The results of the factor analysis, specifically the loadings on a third factor in Table 3.7 raised some questions that could not be answered. Additionally, although the scale had face validity, a validation study of the scale needs to be conducted. The scale needs additional testing with different populations and scenarios, as well. The main study, presented in this paper, was an opportunity to test the scale with a different population and larger sample size. It provided an opportunity to conduct another factor analysis on the ten moral intent items. The results are discussed in Chapter 4. The pilot study also provided data regarding social desirability and the moral intent scale. A strong relationship was not found between the newly created moral intent measures and social desirability; therefore, the Marlowe-Crowne 2 was not used in the main study. Not using the ten item social desirability scale also reduced the overall number of questions presented in the main study.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH FINDINGS

In this chapter I have presented a description of the sample, results of preliminary analyses, and answers to the research questions posed in Chapter 3.

As a result of completing the analyses to answer the research questions, it was found that moral evaluation is a predictor of moral intent; however, moral ideology and organizational justice contributed little to our understanding of moral intent. In addition, there is no statistically significant difference between moral evaluation and moral intent from the actor/observer perspectives. Analyses were performed first using all respondents, and a second time removing graduate assistants ($n=18$). This is explained in more detail later in the chapter.

Survey Response Rates

An announcement about the survey (found in Appendix B) was sent to potential participants via email three days prior to the electronic distribution of the questionnaire. This invitation was sent to 640 members of an association for professionals interested in human resource development found on their membership list with both an email address and an organizational affiliation. Two versions of the questionnaire were used, differing only by the scenario presented. The first contained a scenario placing the respondent as the actor referred to as the actor perspective or “actor” throughout this chapter. The other placed the respondent as an observer and as such is the observer perspective, referred to as “observer” throughout this chapter. A total of 319 actor questionnaires and 321 observer questionnaires were initially distributed. These groups were determined through a randomization procedure in Excel which did not divide the groups equally. Thirty-five (21 actor and 14 observer) email addresses were eliminated because the emails were returned as undeliverable. This was likely due to incorrect or outdated email addresses present on the membership list. As a result, 605 actual questionnaires were distributed electronically, 298 contained an actor perspective scenario and 307 contained an observer perspective scenario. After one week, a reminder email (Appendix F) was sent to non-responders ($n = 450$). Again, after another additional week, a final reminder (Appendix F)

which included a link to the on-line questionnaire was distributed to the remaining non-responders ($n = 406$). The response rates for each distribution are summarized in Table 4.1. The overall response rate for this study was 37%.

Table 4.1 Response Rates

	Response Rate after First Email	Response Rate for Second Email	Response Rate for Third Email	Total
Actor Perspective				
Sent	298	215	196	
Returned	83	19	15	117
Response Rate	27.9%	8.8%	7.7%	39.3%
Observer Perspective				
Sent	307	235	210	
Returned	72	25	11	108
Response Rate	23.5%	10.6%	5.2%	35.2%
Total				
Sent	605	450	406	
Returned	155	44	26	225
Response Rate	25.6%	9.8%	6.4%	37.2%

Of the 225 total responses received, 14 were eliminated because these individuals were unemployed. Additional cases were also eliminated due to missing data. A number of cases contained a substantial amount of missing data. There were 65 items on the questionnaire and the amount of missing data for those questions ranged from as few as one missing to as many as 56. It is not possible to know why data were missing, however I can speculate why this may have occurred. Perhaps participants decided they did not want to participate after answering the first three or four questions once they read the nature of the questions, or participants may have been curious about the survey, and only interested in viewing the questions, not answering them. Another possibility is that participants wanted to enter the drawing by participating in the survey, so they answered some, but not all of the questions.

The comments regarding the survey itself provided some insight about respondents' reactions to some of the questions on Forsyth's (1980) moral ideology scale.

Some found the questions difficult to understand and/or answer. The comments received from participants are discussed in more detail at the end of this chapter. Regardless, because of the missing data, the number of cases used for analyses was reduced not only by the number of unemployed persons, but by those cases that had more than 19 responses missing; these were removed from the data set. Those cases with 19 or fewer missing responses were retained for data analyses. This reduction in the number of cases resulted in a total of 181 valid responses used in the data analyses. A summary of this information is provided in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Valid Usable Responses

	Total Responses	Unusable Responses		Valid Responses
		Unemployed	Missing Data	
Actor	117	8	16	93 (51.4%)
Observer	108	6	14	88 (48.6%)
Total	225	14	30	181

Description of the Participants

Participants in the survey were all volunteers. They were asked to identify themselves as either a university employee or an employee of another organization (not a university employee). Table 4.3 shows the distribution of participants by type of employment and gender. In both groups, actor and observer groups, university employees predominated, with 70% of all participants working for a university. Relatively few (12%) of the university employees were full time graduate assistants. Females dominated both actor and observer perspective groups with an overall distribution of 60% female and 40% male. Chi square computation revealed no statistically significant difference between the groups, university and non-university, and male and female.

Table 4.3 Distribution of Respondents by Type of Organization and Gender

	Actor	Observer	Total	
Organization	N=93	N=88	N=181	Chi Square (Sig.)
University	63 (67.7%)	64 (72.7%)	127 (70.2%)	.374 (.276)
Not University	30 (32.3%)	24 (27.3%)	54 (29.8%)	
Gender	N=90	N=85	N=175	
Male	40 (44.4%)	30 (35.3%)	70 (40%)	1.525 (.217)
Female	50 (55.6%)	55 (64.7%)	105 (60%)	

The mean age of participants was 43.3 years. They averaged 7 years with their organization and 3.3 years with their current supervisor. As shown in Table 4.4, the mean age, years with organization and years with supervisor were similar for both actor and observer perspective participants. T-tests for the two groups revealed no statistically significant difference between them on these three demographic variables.

Table 4.4 Mean Age, Number of Years with Organization and Number of Years with Supervisor

	Total	Actor	Observer	
	Mean (Std.Dev.)	Mean (Std.Dev.)	Mean (Std.Dev.)	t-test (Sig.)*
	N=172	N=89	N=83	
Age	43.3 (10.8)	42.7 (10.3)	44.0 (11.2)	.793 (.429)
Yrs. w/organization	7.0 (6.6)	6.4 (5.5)	7.5 (7.5)	1.102 (.272)
Yrs. w/supervisor	3.3 (3.8)	3.0 (3.0)	3.7 (4.5)	1.208 (.229)

Preliminary Analyses

Wave Analysis

One-way analyses of variance (ANOVAs) were conducted on the responses received from participants to determine if there were statistically significant differences in the means of the scales across the three waves of responses. The three organizational justice scales (distributive, procedural, interactional) and the two moral ideology scales (idealism, relativism), and the moral evaluation and moral intent scales were used in the analysis. None of the scales was statistically significant at the .01 level although

distributive justice was statistically significant at the .05 level. The table with the ANOVA results can be found in Appendix H.

Reliability of Measures

Cronbach's alpha scores were used to check the reliability of the subscales for all instruments. All scores fell within an acceptable usage range of .82 to .95. The exact values are given in Table 4.8. A minimally acceptable level of reliability based on Nunnally's (1978) recommendation is .70. The scores obtained in this study mirrored previously published alpha scores for all instruments as summarized in Table 3.2 in Chapter 3.

Examination of the Moral Intent Scale

The 10 item moral intent scale was used for the first time in this study after having been developed and explored in the pilot study described in Chapter 3. Therefore analyses were conducted to see how the scale performed in this study.

Factor Structure of the Moral Intent Scale. A principal component factor analysis conducted on the 10 moral intent items produced one factor that accounted for 66% of the variance. The factor loadings for each moral intent item are listed in Table 4.5. According to Hatcher (1994), factor loadings above .40 are meaningful. All items loaded on one factor with loadings ranging from .71 and .91 with the exception of Question 53. This item loaded below .40 at .37.

Table 4.5 Factor Loadings for Moral Intent Questions

Question If I were XXX, I ...	Factor Loading
Q52: would choose the same course of action	.91
Q61: would not choose the same course of action	.90
Q57: would choose the same course of action because everyone does it	.89
Q59: would choose the same course of action because of the benefit to me	.88
Q58: would choose the same course of action because no one cares	.85
Q55: would choose the same course of action if no one would be harmed in the situation	.83
Q56: would choose the same course of action because there is nothing wrong with doing this	.83
Q60: would not choose the same course of action because it is not right	.80
Q54: would choose the same course of action if there is no rule against it	.71
Q53: would not choose the same course of action because of the potential negative consequences	.37

Moral Intent Item Correlations. Correlations were computed on the moral intent items and with the exception of correlations with Question 53 all ranged between .45 and .86. This demonstrated a moderate to high degree of homogeneity between the items suggesting that the items measured the same phenomenon. All correlations were statistically significant at the .01 level. These correlations are seen in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6 Moral Intent Item Correlations

	Q52	Q53	Q54	Q55	Q56	Q57	Q58	Q59	Q60	Q61
Q52	1.00									
Q53	.35	1.00								
Q54	.58	.11	1.00							
Q55	.76	.24	.71	1.00						
Q56	.64	.24	.51	.62	1.00					
Q57	.74	.29	.55	.65	.69	1.00				
Q58	.69	.27	.57	.65	.65	.76	1.00			
Q59	.78	.31	.59	.71	.66	.78	.78	1.00		
Q60	.70	.38	.45	.57	.63	.61	.60	.61	1.00	
Q61	.86	.35	.56	.70	.71	.71	.66	.74	.81	1.00

Question 53, “I would not choose the same course of action because of the potential negative consequences,” did not perform as well as the other items in both the pilot study and this study. In the pilot study this question loaded on two factors. Based upon the results of the factor analysis shown in Table 4.5, the correlations in Table 4.6, and the question’s performance in the pilot study (see Tables 3.7 and 3.8), question 53 was removed from the scale for the remaining analyses. The Cronbach’s alpha for the scale with this item removed changed from .93 to .95.

Relationships of Organizational Justice, Moral Ideology, Moral Evaluation, and Moral Intent

The focus of this study was on the relationships among the constructs organizational justice, moral ideology, moral evaluation and moral intent. The subscale scores for organizational justice, moral ideology and overall scores for moral evaluation and moral intent were considered. In this section, the actor and observer perspective difference (research question 3) is discussed first because the answer to this question determined whether the data were analyzed as two groups or one.

Actor and Observer Perspective Difference

One of the variables of interest in this study was the actor and observer perspective. This difference was a manipulation in the study through the use of two different scenarios. These scenarios formed the actor and observer perspectives represented in the two scenarios. The research question related to this aspect of the study

asked “to what extent do the two groups, representing actor perspective and observer perspective differ on the measures of moral evaluation and moral intent?”

Using MANOVA in SPSS, the actor perspective and the observer perspective were found not to be statistically significantly different on measures of moral evaluation and moral intent. Because no difference was found, the remaining analyses in this study were performed combining the actor and observer perspective data.

Table 4.7 provides means and standard deviations categorized by actor and observer perspective for the seven measures in the study. The means and standard deviations for the two perspectives were similar. No appreciable differences in the correlations between the actor and observer perspective scales were found from those listed in Table 4.8.

Table 4.7 Descriptive Statistics for Measures by Actor/Observer Perspective

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Dev.
Distributive (Actor)	93	1.00	7.00	4.3	1.5
Distributive (Observer)	88	1.00	7.00	4.2	1.7
Procedural (Actor)	93	1.00	7.00	4.1	1.3
Procedural (Observer)	88	1.00	7.00	4.0	1.4
Interactional (Actor)	93	1.00	7.00	5.2	1.3
Interactional (Observer)	88	1.00	7.00	5.3	1.4
Idealism (Actor)	93	1.00	7.00	5.0	1.0
Idealism (Observer)	88	1.00	7.00	5.1	1.0
Relativism (Actor)	93	1.00	7.00	3.9	1.1
Relativism (Observer)	88	1.00	7.00	3.5	1.0
Moral Evaluation (Actor)	91	1.00	7.00	2.8	1.1
Moral Evaluation (Observer)	87	1.00	7.00	2.7	1.1
Moral Intent (Actor)	90	1.00	7.00	2.7	1.4
Moral Intent (Observer)	86	1.00	7.00	2.8	1.3

Demographic Variables, Moral Evaluation and Moral Intent

Although the literature does not indicate a possible relationship between demographic variables and moral evaluation and moral intent, I tested the demographic variables to be sure that none of them had a statistically significant relationship with moral evaluation and moral intent. These variables were included in the hierarchical multiple regressions used to explore two of the research questions. There was no first order effect. Their betas were not statistically significant; therefore the demographic variables were excluded from the final analyses.

Correlation analyses were used to examine the relationships between the scales measured in this study. Correlations among scales were computed along with means, standard deviations and Cronbach's alphas. They can be found in Table 4.8. The statistically significant correlations between the three justice measures are consistent with organizational justice literature, as is the statistically significant relationship between moral evaluation and moral intent. When an individual evaluates an act as "wrong," the individual will also report that they "would not participate in the act". The correlation between idealism and moral intent was weak, but statistically significant.

The means and standard deviations were not skewed to one end of the rating scale. The mean for moral evaluation was somewhat in the direction of judging the acts described in the scenarios as "wrong". The mean for moral evaluation was somewhat in the direction of disagreeing with the actions depicted in the scenarios.

Correlations for the actor perspective and observer perspective and males and females were also calculated. As mentioned earlier, no appreciable differences in the correlations between actor and observer perspectives were found from those listed in Table 4.8. For males and females however, there were differences found related to moral ideology and moral intent. For females both moral ideology variables (idealism and relativism) were weakly related (.20 and .21) to moral intent but neither moral ideology variable related to intent for males (.05 and .13).

Age and moral ideology variables were correlated to see if an expected correlation between age and relativism (Forsyth, 1980) would be found. Idealism was not correlated with age and relativism and age were negatively correlated (-.24).

Table 4.8 Scale Correlations

Scale	Mean	Std. Dev.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Organizational Justice									
1. Distributive	4.3	1.6	(.95)						
2. Procedural	4.0	1.4	.57**	(.92)					
3. Interactional	5.3	1.3	.42**	.42**	(.93)				
Moral Ideology									
4. Idealism	5.1	1.0	.01	.05	.02	(.86)			
5. Relativism	3.7	1.1	-.03	-.04	.01	.04	(.84)		
6. Evaluation	2.7	1.1	.07	-.03	.14	.07	.14	(.82)	
7. Intent	2.8	1.4	.06	-.04	.13	.14	.18*	.78**	(.95)

** Correlation is statistically significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)

* Correlation is statistically significant at the .05 level (2-tailed)

() denotes the Cronbach's alpha for the scale

Organizational Justice and Moral Ideology as Predictors of Moral Evaluation

The first research question was “what portion of the variance in moral evaluation is explained by organizational justice after controlling for moral ideology?” Given the set of correlations doing regression analysis would normally not be indicated, however they were conducted to complete the analyses suggested by research questions. As would be expected from the correlations, and shown in Table 4.9, the two moral ideology measures and the three organizational justice measures explained a statistically non-significant 5.6% of moral evaluation. By themselves, the moral ideology variables did not relate to moral evaluation nor did the organizational justice variables after controlling for moral ideology.

Table 4.9 Portion of Variance in Moral Evaluation Explained by Organizational Justice after Controlling for Moral Ideology

N=176 Step	R-Sq. (Sig.)	R-Sq. Change (Sig.)	Betas by Regression Step		
			Step 1	Step 2	Sig. Step 2
1. Moral Ideology	.020 (.166)	.020 (.166)			
Idealism			.062	.064	.389
Relativism			.127	.120	.109
2. Organizational Justice	.056 (.077)	.036 (.096)			
Distributive				.073	.438
Procedural				-.160	.089
Interactional				.176	.039

Organizational Justice, Moral Ideology, and Moral Evaluation as Predictors of Moral Intent

The second research question focused on moral intent. I was specifically interested in determining what portion of the variance in moral intent is explained by moral ideology and organizational justice after controlling for moral evaluation. As would be expected from the correlations, and shown in Table 4.10, the two moral ideology measures and the three organizational justice measures explained a statistically non-significant 1.1% of the variance in moral intent after controlling for moral evaluation. Moral evaluation explained a statistically significant 61% of the variance in moral intent.

Table 4.10 Portion of Variance in Moral Intent Explained by Moral Ideology and Organizational Justice after Controlling for Moral Evaluation

N=176 Step	R-Sq. (Sig.)	R-Sq. Change (Sig.)	Step 1	Betas by Regression Step		
				Step 2	Step 3	Sig. Step 3
1. Moral Evaluation	.607 (.001)	.607 (.001)	.779	.764	.758	.001
2. Moral Ideology	.618 (.001)	.011 (.086)				
Idealism				.080	.080	.095
Relativism				.068	.067	.163
3. Org. Justice	.620 (.001)	.001 (.926)				
Distributive					.019	.757
Procedural					-.030	.626
Interactional					.028	.611

For research question 2, the variables of interest were entered in this order because most of the literature indicates that we can expect that moral evaluation will explain variance in moral intent. The other constructs were entered in their temporal sequence. Given the temporal sequence of the variables, I completed an additional hierarchical regression analysis. I entered the independent variables in another sequence: moral ideology subscales (idealism, relativism) were entered as step 1 because this is an individual variable that precedes the contextual variable, organizational justice. In the second step, the organizational justice subscales (distributive, procedural, interactional) were entered, and moral evaluation was entered as the last step because a judgment made about a situation, from a temporal standpoint, flows from the individual and contextual variables. Moral evaluation explained a statistically significant 55% of the variance in moral intent after controlling for five other variables – two moral ideology variables and three organizational justice variables. The two moral ideology measures explained a statistically significant 4.8% of moral intent and the organizational justice variables did not relate to moral intent after controlling for moral ideology. These results can be seen in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11 Portion of Variance in Moral Intent Explained – Temporal Sequence of Variables

<i>N</i> =176		Betas by Regression Step				
Step	R-Sq. (Sig.)	R-Sq. Change (Sig.)	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Sig. Step 3
1. Moral Ideology	.048 (.015)	.048 (.015)				
Idealism			.136	.136	.080	.095
Relativism			.167	.159	.067	.163
2. Organizational Justice	.077 (.018)	.029 (.154)				
Distributive				.069	.019	.757
Procedural				-.149	-.030	.626
Interactional				.157	.028	.611
3. Moral Evaluation	.620 (.001)	.549 (.001)			.758	.001

Analyses Excluding Graduate Assistants

Additional analyses were conducted removing the graduate assistants ($n = 18$) from the data set. This was warranted because it was anticipated at the onset of this study that there could be a difference in responses received from graduate assistants particularly in the organizational justice dimension. For that reason, questions were included in the original questionnaire to capture full-time graduate assistants that allowed for identifying and excluding them from the analyses.

Again, a correlation analysis was used to examine the relationships between the scales measured in the study. Correlations among scales were computed along with means and standard deviations. These can be found in Table 4.12.

All means and standard deviations were similar to those found in the analysis which included graduate assistants (Table 4.8). Correlations, however, differed to some extent and included a statistically significant ($p < .05$) but weak relationship between interactional justice and moral evaluation and weak but statistically significant ($p < .01$) relationships between moral evaluation and relativism and moral intent and relativism.

Table 4.12 Scale Correlations – Graduate Assistants Excluded

Scale	Mean	Std. Dev.	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.
Organizational Justice									
1. Distributive	4.2	1.5	1.00						
2. Procedural	4.0	1.3	.55**	1.00					
3. Interactional	5.2	1.3	.39**	.40**	1.00				
Moral Ideology									
4. Idealism	5.0	1.0	-.01	.03	.01	1.00			
5. Relativism	3.7	1.0	-.10	-.09	-.04	-.01	1.00		
6. Evaluation	2.8	1.1	.07	-.04	.16*	.11	.22**	1.00	
7. Intent	2.7	1.3	.04	-.04	.13	.17*	.23**	.80**	1.00

** Correlation is statistically significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)

* Correlation is statistically significant at the .05 level (2-tailed)

In addition to the correlation analysis, means and standard deviations, the three hierarchical regression analyses represented in Tables 4.9, 4.10, and 4.11 were repeated excluding the graduate assistants. Based upon these subsequent analyses, no differences were found except in the first research question related to moral evaluation.

In this case, moral ideology explained a statistically significant 5.4% of the variance in moral evaluation and organizational justice explained a statistically significant 4.7% after controlling for moral ideology variables. As shown in Table 4.13, the beta for relativism was statistically significant and positive (beta = .207, $p = .008$), indicating that relativism was modestly and positively related to moral evaluation. The beta for interactional justice was also statistically significant and positive (beta = .206, $p = .018$).

Table 4.13 Portion of Variance in Moral Evaluation Explained by Organizational Justice after Controlling for Moral Ideology – Graduate Assistants Excluded

Step	R-Sq. (Sig.)	R-Sq. Change (Sig.)	Betas by Regression Step		
			Step 1	Step 2	Sig. Step 2
1. Moral Ideology	.054 (.013)	.054 (.013)			
Idealism			.113	.117	.128
Relativism			.206	.207	.008
2. Organizational Justice	.101 (.006)	.047 (.050)			
Distributive				.077	.418
Procedural				-.163	.088
Interactional				.206	.018

Comments from Participants

Participants were asked to respond to two open-ended questions on the questionnaire. The first open-ended question provided respondents with an opportunity to comment on aspects of organizational justice in their university or company. All of the comments can be found in Appendix I. The comments are listed by open-ended question. The first open-ended question which stated “add any comments you wish about the fairness of rewards and formal procedures in your organization,” solicited comments to provide some insight regarding respondents’ perceptions of organizational justice in their workplaces. In total, 50 participants (28%) chose to respond to this question. Seventy percent of these were female and 70% worked for a university, which is a similar profile of the total sample. Six percent were graduate assistants and the remaining 24% worked for an organization other than a university. The comments were summarized into categories of distributive justice, procedural justice, and interactional justice. By far, most of the comments were negative with the exception of those related to interactional justice which had seven positive comments out of a total of nine comments. Another category contained general comments, most of which were not related to the open-ended question.

Organizational Justice Variables

Table 4.14 provides an overview of the 38 comments related to distributive justice, procedural justice, and interactional justice. The remaining 12 comments were general in nature and no themes emerged from these comments, nor could one say that these comments were particularly positive or negative in nature.

Table 4.14 Positive and Negative Comments about Organizational Justice

	Distributive Justice	Procedural Justice	Interact. Justice	Total
Positive Comments	1	1	7	9
Negative Comments	10	17	2	29
Total	11	18	9	38

A brief summary of the comments related to the three types of organizational justice, is provided here.

Distributive Justice Comments. Two themes emerged related to distributive justice based on comments from 11 respondents. The comments seemed to imply that two characteristics existed about rewards in their organizations: (a) A biased, “subjective” or “opaque” process related to rewards, and (b) rewards were not based on merit; indicating that “there is no pay for performance” and that rewards are generally “straight across the board”.

Procedural Justice Comments. Related to the fairness of procedures in their organizations, 17 comments seemed to imply unfair or discriminatory practices, referring to the “good ole boy network”, “cases of personal biases”, procedures that are “suspect” and “violate ethical principles”.

Interactional Justice Comments. Participants made seven positive comments and two negative comments specifically about their immediate supervisor. Positive comments were “great working relationship”, “outstanding mentor”, “excellent role model”, and “fair and honest person”. The five negative comments were related to lack of support and fair treatment.

Comments about Moral or Ethical Standards

The second open-ended question asked participants to “make any comments about moral or ethical standards”. This question followed the 20-item moral ideology scale questions. Forty-four participants provided comments in this section. This represented 24% of the total respondents. Of these 46% were female and 52% were male. One response was missing gender information. A total of 57% worked at a university, 36% at an organization other than a university, and 7% were graduate assistants. The comments

have been summarized into five categories: ethics as contextual in nature, ethics as universal in nature, ethics as reliant on social norms, comments about the questionnaire itself, and general comments.

Most comments for the second open-ended question were related to the respondents' beliefs that ethics are a matter of context, or not, and the questionnaire. These represented 48% and 30% of the comments respectively. Related to context, respondents made statements such as "context will determine what was good and what was bad", "everything in life is contextual", "depends on the circumstances", "I do think that context is important" and, "ethics can be viewed as relative". On the other hand, there were comments regarding the universality of ethics such as "ethical and moral standards are absolute", and "there are no gray areas."

Of the 15 comments that were focused on the wording of the items in the instruments used for the survey, most were related to the wording of the items as overly complex, "poorly worded or written", "confusing", "misleading" or "hard to figure out". Some referred to questions by their number and inferred that the wording used may have impeded their accurate or complete responses to the questions. When identified by question number, comments of this nature related to items in Forsyth's (1980) 20-item moral ideology scale. If similar comments have been made in previous studies about this scale, they were not reported by the researchers.

Summary

The focus of this research was on the possible relationship among the constructs chosen for this study related to the interactionist model of ethical decision-making -- organizational justice, moral ideology, moral evaluation and moral intent. In addition, a possible actor/observer differences was explored as an issue-specific factor. However, no statistically significant difference among the two groups were found which was the hypothesis reflected in research question 3 related to a possible actor/observer difference.

The analysis conducted to answer question 1 and excluded graduate assistants (see Table 4.12) found that two moral ideology variables explained a small and statistically significant amount of the variance in moral evaluation by themselves. The

organizational justice variables explained a small and statistically significant amount of the variance in moral evaluation after controlling for the two moral ideology variables.

Consistent with the literature and the hypothesis reflected in research question 2, moral evaluation was found to have a moderate, statistically significant relationship with moral intent. In one analysis 55% of the variance in moral intent was explained by moral evaluation after controlling for the two moral ideology and the three organizational justice variables. In another analysis, moral evaluation explained 61% of the variance in moral intent.

Comments from respondents were not of sufficient number to generalize about the themes that emerged within the two sections of comments originating from two open-ended questions posed to participants. I did learn that some respondents reacted negatively to the wording of some of the questions, especially those related to the 20-item moral ideology scale. These comments from respondents may indicate the need for refinement of the moral ideology instrument. This issue is discussed further in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Ethical decision-making will likely remain a complex and multifaceted area of research for years to come. Despite the high level of interest in ethical decision-making in organizations, there continues to be a need to move forward to illuminate the nexus between individual and contextual factors and ethical decision-making, and ultimately the connection between ethics and organizational performance. At the heart of a continuing debate among researchers who have been studying workplace ethics is the question of the determinants of ethical decision-making. This debate also includes which determinants may best explain how organizations may be influencing the individual cognitive ethical decision-making process.

Using elements of an interactionalist model of ethical decision-making this research study examined how two components of the ethical decision-making process, moral evaluation and moral intent are related to an individual factor, moral ideology and an organizational factor, organizational justice. There were seven variables measured in this research study: three measures of organizational justice (distributive, procedural and interactional), two measures of moral ideology (relativism and idealism), one measure of moral evaluation, and one measure of moral intent. The moral ideology variables were used to operationalize an individual factor, one of the elements of an interactionalist model of ethical decision-making. Organizational justice variables were used to operationalize an organizational factor, another element of an interactionalist model of ethical decision-making. A different operationalization may have produced different result than those discussed in this chapter.

The purpose was to examine the relationships among measures of organizational justice and moral ideology and parts of the ethical decision-making process, specifically, moral evaluation and moral intent, and to determine the extent to which moral intent is explained by moral evaluation, if at all. A hypothesized actor and observer perspective difference related to ethical decision-making was also tested. Two different scenarios, one that was supposed to represent the actor perspective and the other the observer perspective, were sent to two groups of participants of volunteers. No differences were

found between the actor perspective and observer perspective groups. Consequently, the analyses were based on the total number of valid responses received, which was 181.

The participants were members of an association; 70% were university employees and 60% were female. The participants' average age was 43 years; they worked for their organizations on average for 7 years, and reported to their current immediate supervisor for an average of 3 years. There was a 37% overall response rate.

No statistically significant relationship was found among the measures of organizational justice and measures of moral ideology with moral intent. The study found that none of the organizational justice variables related to moral intent. However, when included together as a set, the three organizational justice variables explained a very modest proportion of the variance in moral evaluation after controlling for two moral ideology variables. In some cases, graduate assistants ($n = 18$) were excluded from the analyses. It is reasonable to think that graduate assistants' experiences with their organizations may be different than the experience of others within the university environment such as faculty, department heads, administrators, human resource professionals, trainers, etc.

The remainder of this chapter presents a discussion related to the findings, the limitations of the study, suggestions for future research, and implications for human resource development practitioners.

Discussion

What follows is a discussion of the findings related to moral ideology, organizational justice, moral evaluation, moral intent and the actor/observer perspective addressed in this research study. The discussion relates to the findings based upon all participants except where noted that the findings are discussing the results which excluded the graduate assistants.

Moral Ideology

In this study, respondents indicated a relatively high level of idealism (mean = 5.0 on a 7-point scale), compared to the level of relativism (mean = 3.7). This indicates that participants believed that ethically correct actions produce desirable results and should

not harm others. This belief is stronger than their belief that the morality of actions corresponds to the specifics of the situation and persons involved.

Although moral ideology is considered a stable characteristic over time, there is some evidence that relativism may decrease with age (Forsyth, 1980). In this study, the age and relativism were negatively correlated ($-.24, p < .05$). Forsyth's research produced similar results ($-.25$).

Related to gender, moral ideology variables, idealism and relativism related to moral intent weakly for females (.20 and .21), but neither one related to moral intent for males (.05 and .13). Granted, the relationship for females is very weak, but it is a potentially interesting one. It suggests that females' actions (as measured by moral intent) appear to be related to their ideology. For idealism, moral intent is related to their belief that all ethical actions produce desirable results and should not harm others. The "should not harm others" can be compared to Gilligan's (1987) ethic of care. The ethic of care purports that females rely on an ethical principle which emphasizes relationships and caring about other people.

Relativism is the belief that morality corresponds to the specifics of the situation and person(s). Again this parallels Gilligan's (1987) research related to the ethic of care. In particular, the ethic of care and relativism both emphasize consideration of others involved. In this study, this consideration was weakly related to females' moral intent.

The reliabilities for the subscales of all the instruments used in this study were satisfactory (Table 3.2). The reliabilities for idealism and relativism were .86, and .84 respectively. While this level is respectable, reliabilities above .9 would have been preferable in order to further reduce the error in measuring the data collected in this study.

The wording of the moral ideology questions may have influenced the responses received. Comments from participants indicated that some of these questions were confusing. A revised instrument that is easier to understand might have produced different results.

Moral ideology may relate to other elements in an interactionist model of ethical decision-making. For example, it may be related to awareness which was not addressed in this study.

Organizational Justice

Respondents indicated a fairly high level of interactional justice (mean = 5 on a 7-point scale) compared to distributive (mean = 4.3) and procedural (mean = 4.0) types of justice. It was hypothesized that organizational justice, as the barometer for employees' perceptions of fairness in their workplace, may have a relationship to ethical decision-making, specifically, the measures of moral evaluation or moral intent. No relationship was found between organizational justice and moral evaluation or moral intent. After removing the graduate students (n = 18) from the data set, the three organizational justice variables explained a very small portion (4.7%) of the variance in evaluation after controlling for the two moral ideology variables.

The lack of findings may be contributed to the sample. Perceptions of organizational justice in a university environment may be different from employees' perceptions found in other organizations such as government and for-profit organizations. Relationships with supervisors may be particularly different for university faculty. We do not know how many in the sample may have been faculty, however, the majority (70%) of the participants in this study worked for a university.

As expected and found in previous research (Alexander & Becker, 1978; Moorman, 1991), the organizational justice variables were moderately related to one another.

The study results would seem to indicate a reason to exclude organizational justice from further consideration in studies of ethical decision-making. However, upon further consideration, excluding these subscales may be premature as organizational justice remains a psychologically meaningful description of organizational practices and procedures. Organizational justice may be related to other elements of the interactionalist model of ethical decision-making not addressed in this study.

Moral Evaluation

In this study moral evaluation was explored together with a new measure of moral intent. Alone, moral evaluation explained 61% of moral intent. After controlling for two moral ideology and three organizational justice variables, it explained 55% of moral intent. The findings from this study indicate that moral evaluation and moral intent were highly correlated (.78). The more an individual evaluated a situation as

unacceptable or wrong, the more likely he/she reported no intention to participate in the behavior. Conversely, the more an individual evaluated a situation as acceptable or right, the more likely he/she would participate in the behavior. This is consistent with some of the previous research which included measures of moral evaluation and moral intent (Barnett & Vaicys, 2000; Bass, Barnett & Brown, 1999; Barnett & Valentine, 2004).

The reliability for the moral evaluation scale was .82 which is good however, as mentioned regarding the idealism and relativism scales, reliabilities above .9 would have been preferable in order to further reduce the error in measuring the data collected in this study.

Moral Intent

The only variable that predicted moral intent was moral evaluation. We know, however, from other studies that other contextual factors are known to contribute to the variance in moral intent, particularly elements of Jones' (1991) moral intensity construct (Barnett & Valentine, 2004; Paolillo & Vitell, 2002; Singhapakdi, Vitell & Franke, 1999), In this case, the organizational factor provided no meaningful result.

The reliability for the moral intent scale was .95 however; this is a new scale and has not been validated. Moral intent may be related to other individual and organizational factors not used in this study. It may be related to awareness and/or behavior.

Actor/Observer Perspective

Scenario-based research is more productive when one or more variables of interest are manipulated within the scenario. Cavanagh and Fritzsche (1985) and Saltzstein (1994) believed that these are important distinctions that have been largely overlooked in the ethics literature. The present research attempted to test whether such a difference existed in the ethical decision-making process using actor and observer perspective scenarios. No statistically significant difference between the groups was found. This could suggest a number of things; (a) there is functionally no difference in these perspectives; (b) while this sample demonstrated no significant differences, other populations, sectors, industries and organizations might; (c) the scenarios presented did not distinguish the two perspectives sufficiently, so no difference was detectable; (d) the two scenarios confounded the actor/observer perspectives with intensity or severity of the act (stealing versus whistle blowing), and (e) the actor/observer perspective may be

related to other aspects of the interactionalist mode of ethical decision-making, such as awareness which was not addressed in this study.

Although the questionnaire containing the scenarios had been tested on a small group, determining how much time the questionnaire took to complete, and whether anything in particular surfaced as being unclear, those who tested the questionnaire were not specifically asked if they understood one scenario to represent an actor perspective and the other to represent the observer perspective. There is room to doubt, therefore, that the present scenarios did adequately distinguish these perspectives. If this was the case, it would explain why no difference emerged in this study. This possibility is presented here as well as below as one of the study's limitations.

The test for actor/observer perspective in ethical decision-making was not separated from the bystander effect (Latane & Darley, 1969) which manifests itself in the workplace through diffusion of responsibility; employees observe others "doing wrong," considering the behavior acceptable for others, but not for themselves. More research from this social psychological perspective in relationship to ethical decision-making is indicated.

The inconclusive results related to the actor/perspective may not necessarily indicate that this perspective should be excluded from future ethical decision-making research. Scenarios, however, should be pre-tested more rigorously.

Limitations of This Study

A limitation of the research was that the analyses depended on self-reported response to the survey questions based upon respondents' perceptions of their organizations and a report of their own personal ethical beliefs. The responses were not verified by any other means, for example, through observation, however the reality is that any such study would have to rely on self-report data.

The comments about the moral ideology questions shown in Appendix I indicate that some respondents answered negatively or neutrally to items in the questionnaire related to moral ideology. Some of the participants felt that the wording of the questions or lack of context provided may have impeded making accurate and complete responses to the questions. This may suggest a refinement of the instrument is needed and represents a further limitation to this study. Additionally, responses, in general may have

been influenced positively or negatively by recent or salient experiences at work or elsewhere. Although the pilot study did not indicate a need to use a social desirability scale in the main study, it is possible that participants in this study may have responded to questions in a certain way to enhance traits they deemed desirable. We also do not know if the persons that chose not to participate in the study were in some way different than the actual participants.

The study results may also have been limited by the instruments that were used to measure organizational justice, moral ideology, moral evaluation and moral intent. The moral intent scale developed by Wiswell and Johnson (2006) was used for the first time in this study after being explored in a pilot study. Although it had sufficient reliability in both the pilot study and this study, it has not come under the scrutiny of psychometricians.

Some researchers have found that moral development levels are greater with persons with more education and with increased age (Kohlberg, 1969; Rest, 1986). This sample with 70% university employees is likely to have been more highly educated than other populations. Perhaps the outcome of the study would have been different with less educated and younger populations. Other types of organizations such as government, nonprofit and for-profit organizations may have rendered different results.

As mentioned in the section on the actor/observer perspective, qualities related to the scenarios may have presented limitations in the study as well. In addition to the possibility that the scenarios did not distinguish actor/observer perspectives adequately, the content (type of scenario) may have affected the results. It is possible that the scenarios may not have been important enough to the participants, although there was variability among responses.

The response rate could be another limitation. There is some evidence that mail surveys produce higher response rates than electronic surveys (Simsek & Veiga, 2001). Although this study had a response rate (37%) higher than the average (25%) mentioned in Chapter 2, perhaps it may have been higher if a mail survey had been used.

Contributions of this Research

This study, despite its limitations, and lack of statistical significance, has contributed to the ethical decision-making research in the following ways: (a) it presented a new measure of intent that was developed and tested which has the potential to replace less reliable single item measures; (b) it overcame many of the criticisms of past ethical decision-making research by: (1) providing a strong theoretical basis for the research; (2) using a sample other than students, and (3) employing methods to increase the response rate, thus obtaining a higher than average response rate for ethical decision-making studies.

Implications of the Findings for Future Research

A plethora of research exists on ethical decision-making; however, the research has been somewhat fragmented and has been largely confined to particular academic domains. Research in the arena of ethical decision-making should concentrate on arriving at a common conceptual understanding and framework. Then, as this study did, the framework can be explored in a systematic way, various individual, issue-specific and organizational factors which may exert important influences on the ethical decision-making process. Future research may help clarify how much of the variance in moral intent is explained by organizational justice and other key organizational constructs. Although the data in this study did not provide evidence for the relationships suggested in the research questions, other researchers pursuing this topic can look to this study for recommendations that may benefit their own research. Additional research is needed to clearly understand the antecedents of moral intent, and individual and contextual influences on ethical decision-making (Low, Ferrell, & Mansfield, 2000) and the nexus between ethics and productivity and profitability for private sector organizations. Some recommendations are:

1. Develop and test new scenarios.
2. Further test the existing scenarios with other samples, specifically pre-testing scenarios for the actor/observer perspective.
3. Create a clearer conceptualization of moral intent which may lead to improved approaches to measurement.

4. Conduct a validation study and further refine the intent scale.
5. Replicate this study with samples other than university employees.
6. Test organizational justice and moral ideology with other elements (awareness and behavior) of an interactionalist model of ethical decision-making.
7. Test moral evaluation and moral intent with Victor and Cullen's (1988) measure of ethical climate, an organizational factor, which was related to other elements of the interactionalist model of ethical decision-making, specifically awareness (VanSandt, Sheppard & Zappe, 2006).
8. Incorporate other moral ideologies as an individual factor potentially related to ethical decision-making, such as the ethic of care (Gilligan, 1987).
9. Use other individual factors to operationalize the interactionalist model of ethical decision-making.

Considerations for Practice

We still have a long way to go in understanding the intricacies of ethical decision-making in the workplace. Additionally, we have a limited understanding of the nexus between ethical decision-making and organizational factors. The more we learn about the relationships among moral evaluation, moral intent, and organizational factors, the more opportunity management, under the leadership of human resource development, can focus on possible behavior changes that may positively influence ethical decision-making in their workplaces. Small improvements could yield substantial results. Practitioners need to focus on building ethical workplaces by encouraging managers in their organizations to demonstrate ethical behaviors and to talk about ethics on a regular basis.

Human resource development professionals are often involved in learning interventions for managers and employees related to ethical decision-making. Improved understanding of how the constructs of the interactionalist model of ethical decision-making are related can inform human resource development and management practice as well as theory. Based upon my opinions, ideas and experiences, but not necessarily the outcomes of this research, some considerations for practice include:

1. Extend and refine ethical decision-making theory to inform human resource development and management interventions and to sharpen future research efforts.
2. Consider the complex nature of individual responses to different contextual factors and what can be done to help create contexts favorable to ethical decisions.
3. Take a more holistic view of the ethical decision-making process (including the four steps of the process – awareness, evaluation, intent, and behavior), and how context relating to the different steps function.
4. Heighten awareness of organizational justice and human resource development activities and programs related to the three types of organizational justice.
5. Renew emphasis on the role of managers related to interactional justice – the one type of justice which can be influenced through training;
6. Use new knowledge to inform organizations of their role in the ethical decision-making process of employees;
7. Include normative and descriptive models of ethical decision-making in management development programs.
8. Target interventions at the individual and organizational levels as implied by the interactionalist model of ethical decision-making.
9. Develop further research questions to explore and find answers based upon empirical evidence; this may help develop practical human resource applications for organizations as well as support the human resource development professionals who are striving to become research-influenced and evidence-based practitioners.

Conclusion

This research addressed the relationship among various variables in the individual cognitive ethical decision-making process. The results indicate that moral evaluation explained 55% of the variance in moral intent – the individual’s intent to act ethically or unethically, when controlling for moral ideology and organizational justice.

In addition, this research grew from a hypothesized relationship between individual cognitive ethical decision-making and organizational variables and looked at organizational justice as an influence on an individual's cognitive process of arriving at decisions related to ethics. The study found that none of the organizational justice variables related to moral intent. However, when included together as a set, the three organizational justice variables explained a very modest proportion of the variance in moral evaluation after controlling for two moral ideology variables. The complexities of this phenomenon, as well as the results of this study, indicate the need for continued research along similar lines.

Researchers recognize that empirical research is imperative in guiding the social sciences; however, we should not lose sight of the fact that we are researching questions that have truly profound effects on people's lives. I believe that questions related to ethical decision-making are profound. What needs to remain central to our quest for knowledge related to ethical decision-making in the workplace are those employees who lost their life's savings when their companies went bankrupt due to breaches in ethics, as well as many others who have suffered other negative consequences of unethical decision-making practices. Those employees want to know why others made the choices they did and what could have been done to prevent their situations. In time, and through science, perhaps we will be able to answer these questions with more confidence.

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APPENDIX A

Questionnaire

General Information

This questionnaire is about decision-making and organizational practices related to justice (sometimes referred to as fairness). It will take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Instructions are listed for each part of the questionnaire. Please carefully read and honestly answer each and every question. Be assured that all your responses will be anonymous. The survey results will be reported only in aggregate for research purposes. You will never be individually identified. Participation in the survey is completely voluntary. Your response is important and greatly appreciated.

Please check any that apply:

1. I am a full time or part time employee at a university.
2. I am a full time or part time employee in an organization outside a university.
3. I work exclusively as a graduate assistant.

Part A. Instructions

The following statements concern the organization where you are employed. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement. Use the following scale:

Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1 2 3 4 6 7 = Strongly Agree (SA)

Circle the appropriate number for each statement.

	SD							SA
A1. I am rewarded fairly considering the responsibilities I have.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
A2. I am rewarded fairly in view of the amount of experience I have.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
A3. I am rewarded fairly taking into account the amount of education and training I have.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
A4. I am rewarded fairly for the amount of effort I put forth.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
A5. I am rewarded fairly for the work I have done well.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
A6. I am rewarded fairly for the stresses and strains of my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
A7. My organization's procedures provide for collecting accurate information for making decisions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
A8. My organization's procedures provide opportunities to appeal or challenge decisions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
A9. My organization's procedures generate standards so that decisions can be made with consistency.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

A10. My organization's procedures are constructed in a manner to hear concerns of all affected by the decision.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 = Strongly Agree (SA)							
	SD						SA
A11. My organization's procedures provide for useful feedback regarding a decision and its implementation.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A12. My organization's procedures allow for requests for clarification or additional information about the decision.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
For questions A13 through A18, your immediate supervisor refers to the person who evaluates your work performance. That may be a manager, director, department head, dean, etc.							
A13. My immediate supervisor considers my point of view. my viewpoint	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A14. My immediate supervisor suppresses personal biases.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A15. My immediate supervisor provides me timely feedback about decisions and their implications.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A16. My immediate supervisor treats me with kindness and consideration.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A17. My immediate supervisor shows concern for my rights as an employee.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A18. My immediate supervisor takes steps to deal with me in a truthful manner.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Please add any comments you wish about the fairness of rewards and formal procedures of your organization.

Part B. Instructions

Statements B1 – B20 are designed to allow you to indicate the extent to which you agree with each statement. Each represents a commonly held opinion and there are no right or wrong answers. We are interested in your reaction to such matters of opinion. In answering, use the following response scale and circle the number corresponding to your level of agreement with each statement.

Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 = Strongly Agree (SA)

	SD						SA
B1. A person should make certain that their actions never intentionally harm another even to a small degree.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B2. Risks to another should never be tolerated, irrespective of how small the risks might be.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B3. The existence of potential harm to another is always wrong, irrespective of the benefits to be gained.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B4. One should never psychologically or physically harm another person.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B5. One should not perform an action which might in any way threaten the dignity and welfare of another individual.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B6. If an action could harm an innocent other, then it should not be done.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B7. Deciding whether or not to perform an act by balancing the positive consequences of the act against the negative consequences of the act is immoral.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B8. The dignity and welfare of people should be the most important concern of any society.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B9. It is never necessary to sacrifice the welfare of others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B10. Moral actions are those which closely match ideals of the most “perfect actions”.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B11. There are no ethical principles that are so important that they should be part of any code of ethics.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B12. What is ethical varies from one situation to another.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B13. Moral standards should be seen as being individualistic; what one person considers to be moral may be judged to be immoral by another person.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B14. Different types of moralities cannot be compared to as “rightness”.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B15. Questions of what is ethical for everyone can never be resolved since what is moral or immoral is up to the individual.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

B16. Moral standards are simple personal rules which indicate how a person should behave, and are not to be applied in making judgments of others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B17. Ethical considerations in interpersonal relations are so complex that individuals should be allowed to formulate their own individual codes.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B18. Rigidly codifying an ethical option that prevents certain types of actions could stand in the way of better human relations and adjustment.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B19. No rule concerning lying can be formulated; whether a lie is permissible or not permissible totally depends upon the situation.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B20. Whether a lie is judged to be moral or immoral depends upon the circumstances surrounding the action.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Please add any comments you wish about ethical or moral standards.

Part C. Instructions

Please read the following scenario and follow the instructions below that relate to the scenario.

Scenario: Pat decided to buy a new laptop computer. Pat was able to purchase a state-of-the-art computer at a very affordable price, but the trade-off for getting the low price was that it came with a very limited amount of pre-loaded software. One day at work Pat decided to install the software licensed exclusively to the workplace onto the new laptop computer recently purchased for personal use.

OR

Pat's co-worker decided to buy a new laptop computer. Pat's co-worker was able to purchase a state-of-the-art computer at a very affordable price but the trade-off for getting the low price was that it came with a very limited amount of pre-loaded software. One day Pat saw the co-worker in the office installing software, licensed exclusively to the workplace, onto the new laptop purchased for personal use. Pat decided to ignore the situation.)

Please respond to the action described in the scenario above by circling the number between the opposites that most accurately reflects your beliefs about the action.

C1.	Fair	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Unfair
C2.	Just	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Unjust
C3.	Culturally acceptable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Culturally unacceptable
C4.	Violates an unwritten contract	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Does not violate an unwritten contract
C5.	Traditionally acceptable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Traditionally unacceptable
C6.	Morally right	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Not morally right

C7.	Violates an unspoken promise	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Does not violate an unspoken promise
C8.	Acceptable to my family	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Not acceptable to my family

Part D. Instructions

Questions D1 – D10 also relate to the scenario described above. Please indicate how strongly you disagree or agree with each statement by circling the appropriate number for each one. Use the following scale:

Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 = Strongly Agree (SA)

If I were Pat:

	SD							SA
D1. I would choose the same course of action.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
D2. I would not choose the same course of action because of the potential negative consequences.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
D3. I would choose the same course of action if there is no rule against it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
D4. I would choose the same course of action if no one would be harmed in the situation.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
D5. I would choose the same course of action because there is nothing wrong with doing this.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
D6. I would choose the same course of action because everyone does it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
D7. I would choose the same course of action because no one cares.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
D8. I would choose the same course of action because of the benefit to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
D9. I would not choose the same course of action because it is not right.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
D10. I would not choose the same course of action.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

Part E. Demographic Information *(Please complete for descriptive purposes)*

E1. Are you _____ Male _____ Female

E2. How long have you been with your current organization? _____ Years _____ Months

E3. How long have you served with your current immediate supervisor? _____ Years _____ Months

Thank you very much for completing this questionnaire!

To enter the drawing for one of three American Express gift cards, please click the DONE button. You will then be directed to a screen where you will be asked for your name. Type your email address in the blank provided. Your email address will not be attached to your responses. **CLICK HERE <DONE**

APPENDIX B

Email Announcing Survey

Dear Member:

In three days you will receive an email inviting you to participate in a very important research study related to decision-making and organizational justice. Completion of this survey will contribute to HRD knowledge in these two areas.

Your participation is important and I hope you will take 15 minutes of your day to complete the survey. All participants will have the opportunity to enter a raffle for American Express gift cards for completing the survey. All responses will be confidential and anonymous, and all information will be aggregated.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions about the study.

I hope you will seriously consider participating in this worthwhile project.

Please note: We hope you will participate, however if you do not wish to receive further emails from us, please click the link below, and you will be automatically removed from our mailing list.

[RemoveLink]

APPENDIX C

Email Invitation to Participants

Dear Member:

Please take 15 minutes to complete the survey associated with a research study to address the important topics of decision-making and organizational justice. Your participation in this study will help expand the research base in these two important areas. The questions relate to your perceptions of fairness in your organization, and ask your opinions and reactions to scenarios and statements which you will be asked to read.

To say THANK YOU, those that complete the survey will have the opportunity to win one of three prizes. Everyone who completes the survey, and who submits his or her email address in response to the final question will be entered in a drawing to be held on November 28, 2006. For analysis purposes, your email address will be separated from your survey responses. The three prizes are:

First Prize: \$100.00 American Express Gift Card

Second Prize: \$50.00 American Express Gift Card

Third Prize: \$50.00 American Express Gift Card

Completion of this online questionnaire is voluntary. Confidentiality is guaranteed. No individual or organization will be identified. The responses will be aggregated.

Thank you for assistance in this data collection. If you have any questions, comments or concerns, please feel free to contact me. Please respond to this by November 24, 2006.

CLICK ON THIS LINK TO BEGIN THE SURVEY:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=422552334857>

APPENDIX D

Questionnaire for Pilot Study

You are invited to participate in this survey that is part of an important research project examining decision-making in organizations. The survey will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. There are no right or wrong answers. We are only interested in your opinions and reactions to the information presented.

Your participation is important and is part of a larger study that will contribute to our understanding of individuals and organizations.

Completion of this online questionnaire is voluntary. Confidentiality is guaranteed. No individual will be identified. The responses will be aggregated.

[CLICK HERE TO BEGIN THE SURVEY](#)

Part I: Instructions

Part I. Read the following scenario and answer questions 1 - 14 that relate to the scenario.

Scenario: Pat decided to buy a new laptop computer. Pat was able to purchase a state-of-the-art computer at a very affordable price, but the trade-off for getting the low price was that it came with a very limited amount of pre-loaded software. One day at work Pat decided to install the software licensed exclusively to the workplace onto the new laptop computer recently purchased for personal use.

Using the following scale, answer questions 1 - 14 as if you were Pat.

Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 = Strongly Agree (SA)

If I were Pat,

1. I would choose the same course of action.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I would not choose the same course of action because of the potential negative consequences.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. I would choose the same course of action if there is not rule against it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I would choose the same course of action if no one would be harmed in the situations.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I would choose the same course of action because there is nothing wrong with doing this.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. I would choose the same course of action because everyone does it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. I would choose the same course of action because no one cares.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

8. I would not choose the same course of action because of the benefit to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. I would not choose the same course of action because it is not right.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. I would not choose the same course of action.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Questions 11 -14 are designed for you to rate the probability that you would engage in the action described in the scenario that you read. Indicate the number that most accurately reflects your response about personally engaging in the action described in the scenario.

11.	Likely	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Unlikely
12.	Probable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Improbable
13.	Possible	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Impossible
14.	Definitely Would	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Definitely Would Not

Part II. Instructions

Questions 15 – 24 are statement concerning personal attitudes and traits. Read each item and decide whether the statement is true or false as it pertains to you personally.

15.	I never hesitate to go out of my way to help someone in trouble.	<input type="checkbox"/>	True	<input type="checkbox"/>	False
16.	I have never intensely disliked anyone.	<input type="checkbox"/>	True	<input type="checkbox"/>	False
17.	There have been times when I was quite jealous of the good fortune of others.	<input type="checkbox"/>	True	<input type="checkbox"/>	False
18.	I would never think of letting someone else be punished for my wrong doing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	True	<input type="checkbox"/>	False
19.	I sometimes think of letting someone else be punished for my wrong doings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	True	<input type="checkbox"/>	False
20.	There have been times when I feel like rebelling against people in authority even though I know they are right.	<input type="checkbox"/>	True	<input type="checkbox"/>	False

21.	I am always courteous, even to people who are disagreeable.
<input type="checkbox"/>	True
<input type="checkbox"/>	False
22.	When I don't know something I don't mind at all admitting it.
<input type="checkbox"/>	True
<input type="checkbox"/>	False
23.	I can remember "playing sick" to get out of something.
<input type="checkbox"/>	True
<input type="checkbox"/>	False
24.	I am sometimes irritated by people who ask favors of me.
<input type="checkbox"/>	True
<input type="checkbox"/>	False

Part III. Instructions

Read the following scenario and answer the questions 25 – 38 that relate to the scenario.

Scenario: Chris and Lee share the responsibility for ordering and distributing supplies for their department. In this week's shipment of supplies, Chris discovered a package containing several laser printer ink cartridges that did not appear on the invoice. Chris asked if Lee knew anything about the ink cartridges that were included in the week's order and mentioned that they looked like the same type that fit Chris' printer at home. Both Chris and Lee concluded that the office supply store sent the cartridges in error. At the end of the day, Lee saw Chris put the cartridges into a bag and take them home. Lee decided not to say anything to Chris about it, and not to tell anyone about what had occurred.

Using the following scale, answer questions 25 – 38 as if you were Lee.

Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 = Strongly Agree (SA)

If I were Lee,

25.	I would choose the same course of action.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26.	I would not choose the same course of action because of the potential negative consequences.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27.	I would choose the same course of action if there is no rule against it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28.	I would choose the same course of action if no one would be harmed in the situation.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
29.	I would choose the same course of action because there is nothing wrong with doing this.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
30.	I would choose the same course of action because everyone does it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
31.	I would choose the same course of action because no one cares.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
32.	I would choose the same course of action because of the benefit to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
33.	I would not choose the same course of action because it is not right.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

34. I would not choose the same course of action.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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Part III, Continued

Questions 35 – 38 are designed for you to rate the probability that you would engage in the action described in the scenario that you read.

Indicate the number that most accurately reflects your response about personally engaging in the action described in the scenario.

35.	Likely	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Unlikely
36.	Probable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Improbable
37.	Possible	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Impossible
38.	Definitely Would	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Definitely Would Not

39. You are:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Male
<input type="checkbox"/>	Female

Thank you for participating in this survey!

APPENDIX E

Email Invitation to Participants in Pilot Study

Subject: Your Invitation to Participate in a Decision-making Survey

Dear Student:

You are invited to participate in a survey that is part of an important research project examining decision-making in organizations. The survey will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. There are no right or wrong answers. We are only interested in your opinions and reactions to the information presented.

Your participation is important and will contribute to our understanding of individuals and organizations.

Completion of this online questionnaire is voluntary. Confidentiality is guaranteed. No individual will be identified and all responses will be aggregated.

CLICK ON THIS LINK TO BEGIN THE SURVEY

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=215132352795>

If you have any questions about this survey, please contact one of the researchers. Thank you for your participation. Please respond by Friday, July 21, 2006.

APPENDIX F

Follow-up Email Sent to Participants Intermediate and Final Reminder

Subject: Important Research Project - Please Consider Participating

Dear Professional:

Last week you received an invitation to participate in an important research study regarding decision-making and organizational justice. For your convenience, I have included a link to the survey and ask that you consider taking a few minutes to complete it now. Your participation is important to advancing HRD knowledge regarding individual decision-making and organizational fairness. This survey will take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

Your responses will be handled confidentially and the data will be aggregated. **Additionally, for participating, you have the opportunity to win one of three American Express gift cards.** Be assured that your responses will be separated from your entry in the drawing.

I hope you will seriously consider participating at this time.

If you have any questions about this study, please feel free to contact me. Thank you for your consideration.

Please click here to begin the survey <ENTER>

This is an individual research project not affiliated with _____.

APPENDIX G

Email Sent to Gift Certificate Recipients

Dear (email address):

Recently you participated in a survey regarding decision-making and organizational justice, and entered an associated drawing. Congratulations, you have won a \$100.00/\$50.00 American Express gift card.

Please provide me with an address where I can send this to you. It must be sent to a street address, not a P.O. Box. After I hear from you with this information, I will let you know when it has been sent, so you can anticipate its arrival.

Thank you for your interest and participation in the survey.

APPENDIX H
Analysis of Variance Table

Analysis of Variance/Wave Analysis

Source (Scale)	Mean	Std. Dev.		df	F	Sig.	
Distributive Justice	Wave 1	4.3	1.6	Between Groups	2	3.5	.03
	Wave 2	3.8	1.5	Within Groups	178		
	Wave 3	5.0	1.3				
	Total	4.3	1.6				
Procedural Justice	Wave 1	4.0	1.4	Between Groups	2	.86	.42
	Wave 2	4.0	1.3	Within Groups	178		
	Wave 3	4.4	1.3				
	Total	4.0	1.4				
Interactional Justice	Wave 1	5.4	1.2	Between Groups	2	2.40	.09
	Wave 2	4.8	1.6	Within Groups	177		
	Wave 3	5.5	1.3				
	Total	5.3	1.3				
Idealism	Wave 1	5.1	.9	Between Groups	2	.38	.69
	Wave 2	5.0	1.1	Within Groups	178		
	Wave 3	4.9	1.0				
	Total	5.1	1.0				
Relativism	Wave 1	3.8	1.1	Between Groups	2	.97	.38
	Wave 2	3.7	.9	Within Groups	178		
	Wave 3	3.4	.9				
	Total	3.7	1.0				
Moral Evaluation	Wave 1	2.7	1.1	Between Groups	2	.55	.58
	Wave 2	2.8	1.0	Within Groups	175		
	Wave 3	2.5	.9				
	Total	2.7	1.0				
Moral Intent	Wave 1	2.8	1.4	Between Groups	2	2.42	.09
	Wave 2	2.8	1.3	Within Groups	173		
	Wave 3	2.0	.7				
	Total	2.8	1.4				

* $p < .01$

APPENDIX I

Comments from Survey Participants

The following is a listing of the comments received from participants of the survey. Participants were given the opportunity to comment twice. The first time, they could comment on organizational justice issues. The second time, they could comment on moral standards.

First Open Ended Question: Please add any comments you wish about the fairness of rewards and formal procedures of you organization.

I. Distributive Justice

Negative Comments

- The reward and compensation system at my company is not really based on anything but subjective opinion. All reviews are conducted using subjective measures and can not be objectively tied to performance.
- The rewards process is not in place.
- I do not think that fairness and justice are considerations with regards to rewards and formal procedures at my school. Those things are guided more by (1) individuals people in key roles and (2) the organizational climate where only those things that have to be addressed are – people have to make things an issue in order to get them addressed.
- My role within the organization has not been defined, nor have clear expectations been given, so it's difficult to assess the fairness of rewards.
- The monetary rewards are usually straight across the board no matter what our performance evaluation states (great performer or poor performer).
- Rewards are not based on merit and accomplishments, but on titles and position. (When I did receive a professional award, but it was not announced of several (sic) weeks and then only (sic) to part of the staff!)
- There is not pay for performance or formal performance review process in my organization; there is no financial incentive for improving on the job performance.
- I am a graduate assistant and I feel we are not paid fairly. Many of us, including me, are non-traditional students with many years of relevant professional experience and we are using that experience on the job. However, our pay does not reflect that.
- Efforts are made to be fair but it is difficult when you don't have a consensus of what is fair.
- The governance structures of my institution are a bit strange, often opaque, and often lead to 'interesting' outcomes.

Positive Comments

- I am satisfied with the rewards I get.

II. Procedural Justice

Negative Comments

- My organization provides procedures for managers and employees to use to deal with issues and most individuals choose not to use them. In my experience, the majority of managers and employee do not want to directly confront issues or concerns and expend a lot of energy avoiding them.
- Because the organization lacks procedures, all decisions are made in a vacuum, resulting in many poor decisions, decisions are arbitrary and/or conflict with other decisions and decisions that sometimes appear to reward those who straddle the fence politically and with their work. The people are great and would be much more effective if there were a system to work within.
- I think at the college level, new administrators are really making decision processes transparent and more participatory. At the department level, there is certainly some of it, but the gender of the leaders make a bit of a difference here. Sometimes the “good old boy” network is alive and well. And, sometimes, there is inconsistency across departments on such issues.
- We do not discuss things/decisions/feedback in terms of ‘rights’ of the employee – we tend to work through things using a fair process and then try to do what is best for the individual and the organization not at the expense of the organization – ‘right’ indicates an adversarial relationship which is about effectiveness.
- The University for which I am an adjunct instructor uses discriminatory practices and shows favoritism towards women at the satellite campus of my primary employment.
- Our organization seems to reinvent processes without clear guidelines or rationale.
- In many ways my organization appears to be something that it is not. Its core is w/out examination. People are asked to contribute, engage in discussion, give feedback however the President of the college runs the place. Make no difference about the advice of many professionals might give him.
- The performance appraisal is suspected that it does not provide reward equally and does not depend on productivity.
- The system is based on who you know and who you are. Similar situations are not treated similarly. They are out of compliance with federal law and university policies and HR and grants and contracts. This isn’t a sour grapes statement. I am leaving the university because practices violate my ethical principles – and I am an administrator!
- Mediation is not a regular component in conflict resolution at my organization.
- Although my immediate supervisor is fair, the organization as a whole is not. The formal procedures of our organization do not take our department (adult education) into consideration when making decision.
- Part of the disagreements stem from the fact that even though practices, procedures, etc. are in place, the success of implementation evolve around the

readiness and competence of the ‘supervisor’. Often times, inconsistency occurs within work units and from one department to the next and across the organization.

- Overall, they try to be fair – they lack a structure that spells standards – a structure would help consistent fairness – this is missing however.
- A gap exists between the formal procedures and the informal practices of department chairs. I am from a majority class and gender so I do not experience problems first hand that some of my colleagues have experienced.
- In the past, the organization was led by a small group of paternalistic ‘old boys’ and there was not doubt at all about the lack of fairness and use of data that governed decision. 18 months into a new presidency, there have been major changes towards a more open and possibly fairer governance style. Most of the employees aren’t sure whether or not to trust it – I suspect perceptions of lack of justice will persist.
- The procedure is fairly equitable. However few cases of personal biases are visible.
- The question on procedures assumes there are procedures. Thus I often answer somewhat agree as in some cases roles and responsibilities around decisions are unclear. Thus some do not know what authority they have to make decision. Which decisions can they make and which must be sent higher in the organization.

Positive Comments

From my view, my Department I work in treats people respectfully and allows employees to feel that they are valued and have a say in important matters. I cannot speak for the entire organization as we are 30,000 strong.

III. Interactional Justice

Negative Comments

- It’s not just what he does with me, however, I don’t think he treats others fairly all of the time and that bothers me. I do think I am treated fairly, as far as I can tell, but I do notice myself questioning his interactions with other and the implications that may have for me.
- Very little support for entry level faculty members. It is sink or swim – if you don’t make it – well we just hire someone else.

Positive Comments

- My supervisor has created an environment in which merit is appropriately awarded. My only concern is that this environment could change when my supervisor retires.
- I have a great working relationship with my supervisor.
- My Director (my supervisor report to the Director) consistently considers my point of view, shows concern for my rights as an employee, deals with me in a truthful manner, treats me with kindness and consideration, provides timely feedback about decision, and to some degree, suppresses personal biases.

- Graduate teaching assistants do not get a lot of respect at the university administrator level. My teaching mentor is quite the opposite and exceeds expectations with regard to creating opportunities to excel at both the personal and professional levels. The same can be said for the research mentor. These individuals have also been recognized by the University for being outstanding members of the staff as both teaching and research mentors. I am very fortunate to be working this (sic) both of these individuals. Peers are not so fortunate.
- My supervisor is my former graduate advisor and has always been an excellent role model. Efforts are made to be fair but it is difficult when you do not have a consensus about what fair means.
- I believe that whether or not a university faculty is unionized greatly influences the organizational culture regarding fairness of rewards and formal procedures. In our case, we do not have a union. But, we are lucky in that the supervisors in the college are good, decent people. As a senior faculty member, I have worked in previous setting in which supervisors have been very authoritative and unsupportive of employees' needs. In many universities, because department chairs and deans have considerable freedom to act out their chosen managerial style, the fairness of rewards and formal procedures rests in their hands. They have considerable latitude in how they carry out roles.
- My supervisor is a fair and honest person.

IV. Miscellaneous

- There is no place here to address situations in which you are a consultant.
- Organization's ability is also an important factor.
- No comment.
- I work in a Thai university and am on the fringe of the normal business that is discussed in Thai so I cannot generalize beyond my own experience.
- I am a full time employee of a 4-year college not a university.
- Concerns one of my supervisors in the last 1 year.
- I'm a faculty member. My 'supervisor' would be my Chair, but this is an employee elected from the ranks of other faculty. He's not really a supervisor in the usual administrative sense or meaning of the term in most organizations.
- I work in a large corporation ...It would have been helpful to somehow define the term 'organization' in this instance ... is it the team I lead" Is it the team that my boss leads? Is it the entire corporation?
- I am a GRA and thus generally removed from the day to day operations at the university. For this reason, I am not familiar with the rewards/formal procedures at the university and was unable to comment on several of the survey questions.
- I don't have an immediate supervisor
- Our college is run like a strategic business.
- The final scenario seems not so simple. I believe it depends on license agreements.

Second Open Ended Question: Please add any comments you wish about ethical or moral standards.

I. Ethics is a Contextual Matter

- This is a touch subject to objectively answer one way or another without situations to portray oneself in, and cultural diversity can play a hand in this, as well.
- Your use of absolutes in the questions seemed contradictory to my belief in the contextual nature of ethics.
- Tough set of questions! It was difficult to choose an appropriate response due to missing contextual information. This is also one of the major limitations associated with using this research design to assess a person's character which is grounded and also influenced by cultural practices.
- It is so hard to answer these questions for ALL situations: lying to my mother to give her peace of mind is okay for me – lying to my co-workers about the status of the organization is NOT ok of me. THUS, a lot of my answers straddle 'neither disagree or agree.
- I believe that ethical and moral standards are individualized and actions taken are dependent on specific circumstances. An ethical doe for one person may be different for another.
- There is no good and bad in morals and values. The context will determine what was good and what was bad. The context will decide the (sic) appropriateness of the action. Morals should not be judged based on the actions/behavior. But it teh (sic) undying human principles that govern the actions that needs to be addressed. Principles should be consistent and same if need to be ethical.
- Questions 23 – 28 are not in context. By this measure, dentist, physicians physical therapists, learner-centered education are immoral.
- I think that a person's faith plays a huge role in how you determine what is ethical or moral. Personally, I have strong beliefs about what is moral and what is not moral, but unless other people share my faith, it is hard and inappropriate to judge them by the same standards. It is also important to appreciate the historical, cultural and economic context when determining what people consider ethical and moral. (What would be an acceptable standard during the mid-1500's in China is different than what we would define as moral today in America.).
- I answered with respect for cultures and the fact that I work in other countries.
- The above questions are complex and difficult to answer. Because several of your questions were context dependent, your future research should involve qualitative methods that dig deeper into these issues.
- Individual morality may or may not correspond to the larger society's normative views; there is no such thing as a 'moral authority' capable of deciding what is right or wrong contextually for everyone.
- Some of these questions are very challenging. I do believe that ethics can be viewed as relative and also from a consequentiality perspective. Sometimes context is so critical and what is deemed ethical and moral in one context is not in another. I try to follow the 'do no harm' rule and usually my instincts are a good

- guide. I do think that some basic codes of conduct need to be established to provide basic guidance though.
- This is really difficult and I do think context is important. I'm not sure that you can every do anything that is important without hurting someone (at least from that person's perspective). The civil rights movement was important and necessary but there is not question that some felt it was immoral because it did not uphold state's rights and miscengation laws to some were considered immoral though today many people see not problem with mixed marriages. However, I think that if there is no basis for morality, there is no basis for laws either and that would result in anarchy.
 - Everything in life is contextual to some degree. Would I kill? Normally, of course not. If it were to save my wife's life? Yes
 - The response to many of these questions depends on the circumstances and what we mean by the terms like 'harm'.
 - Many situationd (sic) depends on whether you are talking about small lies in personal situations ('that dress is ugly') or lies in business/political situations

II. Ethics as Universal in Nature

- I do believe that there is a code of morality that must be adhered to. I believe that it is inherent in all of us as well. What happens if a person chooses not to follow his/her moral compass and that's why it appears that there aren't any absolute truths.
- The basic tenants of personal values such as (1) Truth telling (2) Promise keeping (3) Concern for other and (4) Respect for all – are common for all nationalities and civilizations and can be practiced by every individual to form bedrock of ethical behavior.
- Society begins to break down when too much emphasis is put on the individual versus what is best for the whole. While often we can create moral standards that have not basis in good practice or can be oppressive. It is critical that a ethical standard exists that prevents drift to any one individual's or special interest group's defining of what is acceptable, right, or moral.
- Morality and ethics are very challenging subjects. While it's difficut (sic) to define an individual's morals and ethics in terms of an employee, an organization can define ethical behavior within their environment.
- Ethical and moral standards are absolute. There are not gray areas.

III. Ethics as Reliant on Social Consensus/Norms

- Ethical standards are adopted by a society in its laws. These are the accepted beliefs that everyone needs to adhere to in order for society to operate and function coherently. However, there are some within the society who may believe the law or laws are morally wrong. If those individuals chose not to adhere to the ethical standards of the society, then they are making a decision. Others may judge them as morally wrong based on their own personal moral standards (beliefs about what is right and wrong). However, there are still others within the society who may not judge them as morally wrong based on their own beliefs.

- Even though we have individually ethical judgment (sic), we should obtain ethical or moral standards associating with social norms.
- Because situations vary widely and the challenges of ‘greater good’ and ‘do no harm’ can be in conflict, there can be no absolutes. But exceptionality and relativism provide such elasticity that serious abuses can occur. Ultimately, we must try to seek social consensus about those aspects of critical issues upon which we can agree, then agree to disagree about others.

IV. About the Questionnaire

- Some of these items are poorly written and difficult to know if response will be taken as intended.
- The wording of some of the questions seem to obscure the question, for example #33. (Refers to question B12 in Appendix A)
- Several of these questions are poorly worded.
- I did not understand Q36 and Q40 (Refers to question B15 in Appendix A)
- Did not understand Q 40 (Refers to question B 19 in Appendix A)
- Some of the questions lack clarity, e.g., #25... we live in a permanent state of ‘the risk of potential harm to another’, does the question refer to decision making about self and others? Define ‘harm’... ‘action which might in any way threaten’ – pretty ambiguous. ‘Harm’ is a matter of interpretation and therefore no decision or action, or for that matter, inaction can ever be made/conducted with the assumption that it ‘harms’ no one. Someone may always feel ‘harm’ (Refers to question B 4 in Appendix A)
- I would suggest conducting interviews with at least a small sample to get a better understanding of your survey data. For example, question 26 contains two very different constructs to describe harm, psychologically and physically. I would have answered ‘strongly agree’ if it were just physical harm, but instead had to respond ‘agree’ because one never knows if personal actions or comments may psychologically harm another. For example, a supervisor may need to let go of an employee. This may ‘psychologically’ harm that employee. On the other hand, if I resist firing the employee to obviate imposing psychological harm, I may be fostering psychological harm in colleagues by keeping that person employed, depending on the circumstance. In summary, whilst I understand the noble intent of not harming others, and would like to have responded ‘strongly agree’ I don’t believe such a response is realistic. A qualitative analysis might help.
- Question 38 is problematic – too compound and it’s possible to differ with one element and not the other. (Refers to question B17 in Appendix A)
- #33 is poorly written. (Refers to question B12 in Appendix A)
- These questions are confusing and somewhat leading.
- There is a typo in question 25. (Refers to question B4 in Appendix A)
- Why is there not N/A response?
- You are likely to get so many different responses to this survey due to not defining ‘harm’, ‘ethics’ or ‘morals’. I realize you might want people to use their own definition, but your results may be all over the board not due to the question at hand.

- Some of the questions, like #40 were hard to figure out what was being said. (Refers to question B40 in Appendix A)
- You may have some inconsistent responses due to the wording of your questions

V. Miscellaneous/General Comments

- Tough but interesting questions
- For example, the ideal of keeping taxes at a minimum is noteworthy, However, if the implementation leads to drastically reduced taxes on low and high income, at the expense of those with middle income seems not to be fair. Also, no abortions for the sake of the unborn seems worthy, but when someone is carrying a baby that will be grossly deformed or ill, that is another matter. Government doesn't fully care for the welfare of those with extreme disabilities. So the law should have some flexibility.
- No comment.
- Morality and ethics are two different things. One's morality can involve religion and vary from one person to the next. One's morals are their moral standards,
- Sometimes the common good must outweigh the individual good.
- These are complex matters and it is hard to capture the complexity in a sentence that could be interpreted differently and is an oversimplification of this complex issue.

VITA

Jennie Susan Johnson

Professional Experience

Assistant Professor, University of Texas at Brownsville (starting Fall 2007), College of Business, Department of Business Administration.

Adjunct Faculty, Old Dominion University (2006). Taught courses in management and organizational behavior to upper-level undergraduate students at Sterling, Virginia campus.

Administrative Faculty, Old Dominion University (2005 – 2006). Adviser for graduate education programs.

Graduate Assistant, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (2005 – 2006).

International Relations Senior Manager for the largest association representing workplace learning and performance professionals (1997 – 2005).

Program Development Manager for a multi-national company (1995 – 1996).

Training and Employment Specialist for a county government agency (1994 - 1995).

Trainer and Volunteer for the Peace Corps of the United States (1991 – 1993).

Management and Organizational Development Regional Manager for a multi-national company (1989 – 1990).

Human Resources Director for a major insurance company (1986 – 1989).

Graduate Assistant at Eastern Michigan University (1984 – 1985).

Operations management, provider and customer service, and marketing positions for a major insurance company (1977 – 1984).

Publications, Recognition and Service

Assessing Intended Behavior. Published Conference Proceedings, Asia Human Resource Development Research Conference, December 2006.

Integrating Conceptual Models of Ethical Decision-making. Published Conference Proceedings, Human Resource Development International Research Conference, February 2006.

Ethics for Trainers. ASTD, 2004.

Project Management Institute Leadership Development Advisory Board, 2004-2005.

Symposium Chair, Human Resource Development International Research Conference, Indianapolis, IN, March 2007.

Education

Ph.D. Candidate, Virginia Polytechnic and State University, Department of Human Development, Adult Learning and Human Resource Development Program.

M.S., Organizational Behavior and Development, Eastern Michigan University, Department of Management, College of Business.

B.S., Management and Psychology, Oakland University, Rochester, Michigan