

**EDUCATIONAL LEADERS' DECISION-MAKING:
PRESENCE, INFLUENCE, AND STRENGTH OF PERSONAL
VALUES, MORALS, AND ETHICS**

By

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IN

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND POLICY STUDIES

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the degree to which the personal values, morals, or ethics of educational leaders enter into their decision making processes. A review of the literature suggests that leadership preparation programs for educators do not adequately equip aspiring administrators for the ethical challenges in a global society. The scholarship of John Dewey and Donald Willower in the field of educational leadership laid the groundwork for the dual methodology pilot study conducted with high school administrators and retired superintendents. Retired division superintendents from Virginia were interviewed to yield a database of thematic strands for developing ethical construct statements. Demographic data was collected in the first portion of the survey. In the second portion of the instrument, respondents indicated strength of relevance for each of twenty valuation statements applied to each of the four ethical scenarios. The third section ended by respondents assigning one of four value labels to each of the ethical scenarios. Implications for further research include early administration to members of new leadership preparation cohorts for comparison at program completion.

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to the educators that throughout my life and professional career have inspired me by their devotion to students and their practice of genuinely ethical teaching. Foremost among them is Mrs. Carrie Lucas, my second grade teacher, whose love, caring, and encouragement for every one of her students has been an integral part of my life as an educator.

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CHAPTER 1

Context of the Study

The power to improve public education in this country lies within the authority granted to educational administrators to make decisions. The driving force in their decision-making depends often upon whom or what is demanding attention. It may be the loudest, most popularly accepted source; it may be the most politically threatening and powerful source; or it may be the most resilient, tireless, and unpleasant voice. Whether the influential force originates with the media, politicians, some unpopular but vocal group in the minority, or any of hundreds of influential forces, a committed educational leader must be aware of all forces when deciding how to best meet an educational outcome or mission. But do some forces warrant more of the leader's attention than others? Should any one be more influential than another?

Leaders in education must take stock of the responsibilities of their office. The exigent responsibility of the position, yoked with modern day career pressures, magnifies the significance of each decision. Those things that coerce the decision-maker are less germane to attaining outcomes or to meeting standards of effectiveness, equity, and fairness. These coercive influences have increasingly championed decisive, swift, efficient, and politically correct decisions over the last three decades and it is for those factors education is paying a price (Dempster & Berry, 2003; Schon, 1983; Greenfield, 2004).

Conversely, the process of reflective decision-making, espoused by Dewey (1938) and Schon (1983), calls upon the educational leader to utilize all previous training, teaching, and leadership experience, to dismiss the narrowness of political or self interests, and to commit to the undertaking of reflective inquiry (Willower, 1994). By reflectively considering each plausible solution to a dilemma, the educational leader has the greatest opportunity to ensure that the final outcomes will be successful. However, because acting reflectively does not look decisive (Feldman, 2002), the committed 21st century educational leader who seeks effective and ethical education will be criticized.

Today's educational leaders are often trained to believe that effective leadership appears decisive and must swiftly resolve situations and challenges (Law, Walker & Dimmock; (2003). Consequently, when an educational leader delays a decision in order to become better informed regarding the dilemma at hand, his critics may interpret the delay as a satisfier for their agenda as

well as a justifier for further demands. The reflective decision-making process utilizes a broad inquiry that responds to educational interests rather than public anxiety and fears. Reflective decision-making also tests individual scholarship and constantly challenges the integrity of educational leaders (Assor & Oplatka, 2003).

Callahan's seminal study (1962) of decision-making focused on the goals of leading and teaching versus efficiency. As a result, the way was paved to recognize the time-honored quality of efficiency as a deterrent to effective education. In later studies, Greenfield (1986, 1995) and Begley (1997) allowed researchers and critics alike to question whether the quality of efficient leadership was valued for its benefit to education or for its advancement of the efficient leader. Trevino et al. (2003) found that leadership qualities, including efficiency, influenced leaders to lean toward one of two directions: ethical or ethically neutral. The former is more keenly attuned to personal success over the organization; the latter sees personal disappointment in the failure to advance the organizational mission. In the present context of educational accountability, educational leaders who have a conviction to ethical practice, must put aside self-interest and demonstrate individual commitment to the responsibilities of leadership, even amid personally challenging situations, (Begley, 1996). This introspective assessment begins with admitting whether or not one can be faithful to selflessly lead fellow educators through challenges to a common goal. For example, does one produce successful instructional programs that address the achievement gaps of all students or does one accommodate mediocre outcomes for most students in order to appease small interest or politically-motivated groups?

Leadership in education should not be attained by popularity or political expedience. Educational leaders usually come from the teaching ranks. Trained through advanced-degree programs and lengthy internships, new administrators are like dry sponges in a sea of demanding, fast-paced educational leadership. Without seasoned, mature, and ethically-grounded mentors, these new administrators eagerly seek advancement without fully appreciating the responsibilities and challenges that inextricably accompany and accumulate with it (Assor & Oplatka, 2003).

Unfortunately, some who pursue educational leadership leave their classrooms for the reasons that Lortie (1975) cautioned the would-be administrator against—a profession that is “uncertain...unpredictable...the lot of those who teach” (p.133). Our present educational leadership career-path often attracts and rewards entry-level candidates who are lacking a

passion for stewardship of education (Levine, 2005). These position-seekers have the minimum classroom experience required. They attain immediate placement and seek quick advancement which feeds aspirations for further promotion and larger salaries. There are few opportunities for prolonged development of leadership skills and administrative expertise when an educational leader has accumulated less than ten years of instructional experience upon which to reflect.

For decades, training programs for potential educational administrators have required a strong component focusing on oral and written communication skills. Yet, leadership training programs have only recently included the topics of reflective inquiry and decision-making as elements within the curriculum. Most institutions have not embraced the need to specifically examine the importance of adeptness and skill in decision-making within the traditional topical areas of their degree programs. Willower (1994) states that what students of educational administration call practice is chiefly an ethical undertaking. That is, practice is “a matter of the reflective appraisal of the values served by various decision options” (p.13). Willower cited Dewey’s position that growth is the expansion and fullness of experience. Educational leaders will be expected to frequently and effectively transition this country’s educational programs in reaction to global influences. The preparation of these leaders, therefore, must include training that inculcates the importance of value recognition in every aspect of the decision-making processes they will need in their leadership practice. The focus of this study is to examine values that are of great magnitude to successful leaders in education.

Research Questions

The following primary question is addressed in this study:

Can an instrument be developed to measure the degree to which the ethical constructs of trustworthiness, beneficence, individuality, or justice are used by educational administrators in their decision-making?

Secondary questions to facilitate the gathering of data include:

How do administrators determine which constructs, if any, to use for a particular ethical decision?

Does an administrator’s professional background and training affect how he/she makes ethical decisions?

Does an administrator’s professional position affect how he/she makes ethical decisions?

Does an administrator's personal background affect how he/she makes ethical decisions?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore the presence or degree of values/ethics as it relates to the development/maturity of school administrators' decision-making process. To accomplish this study, a two-phase, multi-method approach was employed. The first phase, the qualitative research phase, included the construction of an interview protocol to be administered to retired superintendents from Virginia school divisions. The second phase, the quantitative research phase, employed data from those interviews to construct and administer a survey instrument to evaluate the presence or strength of values, morals, or ethics that educational leaders incorporate in their decision-making processes and why those particular elements are chosen. Based on findings and conclusions of this study, institutions with educational leadership preparation programs may be able to find useful insights for the inclusion, if not an infusion, of greater rigor in the decision-making component of advanced degree programs.

Overview of Methodology

The qualitative methodology of interview analysis was used to gather data from key informants. Data from those interviews were used to construct a pilot survey in order to quantitatively examine the results and presentation of finding as advocated by Yin (1994). The pilot survey was distributed to members of post-bachelor degree programs in educational administration who agreed to be participants. Cross-interview analysis of the data resulting from the execution of the study design was utilized to formulate conclusions and subsequent questions for future research.

Limitations and Assumptions

The study was limited in scope in that all research participants came from Virginia school divisions. Further limitations occurred due to the unavailability of willing interview participants from the pool of nominees.

It was assumed that all participants were factual and accurate in their responses to the survey prompts. It was also assumed that the key participants would agree to full use of their anonymous, transcribed conversations after reviewing the transcripts. Although leadership experience for all participants occurred within Virginia school divisions, it was assumed that intensity and depth of experience depended upon their tenure as an educational leader.

Definitions

Educational leader - educational leaders are selected by upper levels of organizational hierarchy and have authority, which includes decision-making, over those levels of the organization below them in the organizational hierarchy. In education these positions would range from the division superintendent to the building level principal. (Hodgkinson, 1991).

Valuation - the assignment of value to any entity that has a personal reference to the degree that it is prized and influences attitude, action, or choice (Dewey, 1939)

Decision-making process - evaluation of alternatives in the course of achieving an objective where expectations of achievement cause the decision-maker to choose a course of action that will most likely bring about the desired result (Harrison, 1999).

Ethics - how values are applied to the actual work of decision-making when determining right from wrong in the workplace initiates an action (Josephson, 2002).

Morals - relating to the practice, manners, or conduct of men as social beings in relation to each other, in respect to right and wrong, so far as they are properly subject to rules. (On-line Dictionary, 2004)

Reflective practice - the informed, deliberate, and purposeful incorporation of what has been learned and become valued from training and experience during the actual conduct of work (Willower & Licata, 1997).

Beneficence - practice of doing good; active goodness, kindness, or charity; bounty springing from purity and goodness (Dictionary.com, 2009)

Individuation - discriminating the individual from the generic group or species (Dictionary.com, 2009)

Justice - the quality of being just; righteousness, equitableness, or morally rightness (Dictionary.com, 2009)

Trustworthiness : the trait of deserving trust and confidence (Dictionary.com, 2009)

Organization of the Study

This document consists of six chapters. Chapter 1 contains the overview, problem, purpose, and significance of the study. Chapter 2 contains the review of relevant literature that ground and support the study. Chapter 3 is made up of the proposed research procedures used to conduct the study. Chapter 4 reports the qualitative findings of the participant interviews. Chapter 5 reports the quantitative findings of the survey administration. Chapter 6, the final chapter, contains a discussion of research results, conclusions, and recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER 2

Review of the Literature

“In any moment of decision the best thing you can do is the right thing, the next best thing is the wrong thing, and the worst thing you can do is nothing.” Theodore Roosevelt

Studying educational problems that occur daily is daunting, given the number and significance of unique problems that occur in districts. Each week, some new reformer diagnoses another critical problem and offers a solution to that problem. Callahan (1962) noted that politicians, the media, businessmen, and economists readily diagnose problems within our profession and prescribe an endless number of solutions and reforms. Applying Weber’s (1996) standard, the situational characteristics of these laypersons and their milieus have a strong and questionable bearing on their proposed solutions. Educators might reply that situational characteristics outside of education have little to do with the work of educating children. The reasonable person might wonder why the effective solutions to educational problems proposed by active professional leaders most able to grasp the essence of each critical issue are nowhere to be found. However, few of those solutions are truly effective.

Responsibility for Ethical Leadership

Providing the solutions for today’s educational problems for whole schools, as well as individual students, is a responsibility that must be accepted by administrative leaders in education (Beck, 1996; Hodgkinson, 1991; Telford, 1996).

Leaders in educational administration are usually appointed to their positions after having met educational, career, and certification requirements. Laub (2004) differentiates between the position held by a leader and the person holding a position. There are those who are appointed to leadership positions because of their leadership ability. There are also appointees to positions that lack leadership ability. Laub (2004) further noted that leadership skills can be learned and practiced effectively; conversely, those skills can deteriorate, diminishing administrative effectiveness with them. The clearer point from Laub is that organizations and scholars confuse the intended function of leadership with the various positions of leadership (p.3). His paper points to the vagueness of any delineation between leading and managing. One difference that is crystal clear is that leaders make decisions over issues arising from their immediate involvement

with what or who they lead; managers follow directions, decisions, or solutions of their superiors. For the purposes of this study, educational administrators or principals are considered educational leaders.

Leaders in education are accountable for providing effective solutions for positive outcomes. For educational outcomes to be positive, their solutions must address multiple problems, as in the multiple methods utilized to address the different ways children learn the skill of reading.

When focusing on educational leaders, one must recognize that principals are the chief architects of teaching and learning cultures, both positive and negative, by virtue of their decision-making authority (Beck, 1994; Begely, 1998; Begely & Leonard, 1999; Cunningham & Gresso, 1993; Dewey, 1922; Murphy, 2002; Quicke, 2000; Wendel, Hoke, & Jeokel, 1996; Willower, 1994).

Schminke, Ambrose, and Nebaum (2005) explored ethical climate and employee attitude where an educational leader displays moral actions that model moral reasoning. Although these researchers found that the organization in which the study took place exerted influences that could be oppositional; the moral and ethical development of the educational leader was a key determinant in how committed employees were to the mission of the division. Employee commitment was, in turn, a key determinant of the commitment of the division to the overall organizational mission and, ultimately, its success in attaining its goals. In their discussion of the findings, the authors noted that the educational leaders very often underestimated their influence. Day-to-day performance of the leadership component, which modeled individual moral and ethical maturity, had the strongest effect on the division as a whole and often balanced the climate-influence of the organization versus the division.

Trevino (et al., 2000) indicated that moral/ethical maturity of the moral/ethical leader exerted influence both wide and focused. Mature reasoning and application of well-developed skill-sets on the part of the leader are required to resolve situations that uncover high and low extremes of the ethical climate residing within a division.

Tymo (1995) studied the effectiveness of principals in what he termed ill-defined or unfamiliar situations that were difficult to describe in terms of previous successfully-navigated situations. Among the list of descriptive characteristics for each participant was whether or not a

sense of moral/ethical value had a place in the participant's problem-defining, problem-solving, or decision-making processes. Tymo did not seek value identification or categorization within his study. However, his findings did indicate that four of five principals, whose superiors found them to be effective, reflected on their personal, moral/ethical values in stages of problem defining, problem solving or decision-making in unfamiliar situations. Tymo noted that unfamiliar situations are rarely predictable or foreseeable and the success of principals in resolving them may lie in the rigor of the principal's administrative preparation program.

The earlier part of the 20th century ushered in the Demming industrial model of management as the basis for principal's training (Beck & Murphy, 1997). This model was criticized for its heavy emphasis on economy in educational efforts gained through practices more closely akin to manufacturing than to effective school administration. Spady (1997) notes that the middle third of the century witnessed a divided transition from an economic-industrial model toward several leadership styles that stressed collaboration, consensus, or manipulation. During the 1970's, several initiatives, educationally provocative and politically based, took aim at the existing structure of public education. That faction charged that the public schools failed to properly prepare American students for productive, successful lives in the new global economy (Watson, 1977). In *A Nation At Risk* (1983), education, its leadership, and preparation programs became the focus of nationwide criticism. Education reform became the buzz word that as yet has not lost its scope or intensity. Today, national issues, deficiencies or shortcomings in the news automatically attribute educational performance as the root cause.

The discourse from this thrust hotly impugns the decision-making rationale of school boards, superintendents, and principals. They are condemned for their failure to anticipate and prepare students for tomorrow's challenges, while being held accountable to leave no student behind. Unfortunately for leaders in education, many administrators within our ranks provide high profile fuel for that fire.

Beck and Murphy (1997) found that the traditionally accepted values of society dating back to the beginning of the 20th century are no longer traditionally reflected in our society's school communities, nor are they consistently reflected in the practice of today's educational leaders in our schools. The authors attribute this erosion of values to the decline of such traditional social structures as a stable home life for children with two biological parents or an instilled patriotic allegiance to our country. Today, these examples of traditional structures

compete with single parent, blended family, or same-sex parent homes and a multi-faceted focus on globalization.

Normore (2004) pointed out that traditional value-set infusion to students was always strongly tied to the value-set of our country's schools and their leadership and that the current decline in values structures is strongly affiliated with our present day schools and decreased leadership effectiveness. Callahan (1962) noted that midway through the past century educational leaders were trained to manage schools as a business enterprise and adopt the value sets that would enable them to do so. As the world leader in industry, our society's values were reflective of dominance and power, the values implicit in leadership training programs. These findings are completely congruent with Levine's (2005) premise that leadership preparation programs in our country do not evolve at the same pace as global educational challenges.

More recently, high-profile, public scandals and examples of unethical educational leaders have come into the public light. In Maryland, a popular superintendent who continually publicized his system-wide educational achievements recently resigned after having benefited monetarily from a contract he negotiated with an educational technology vendor who employed his live-in companion. In the same region, a highly regarded assistant superintendent, with resounding, multi-state successes in raising school achievement levels, resigned after being indicted, and eventually convicted, for money laundering in association with a long time companion, who was an indicted, multi-state drug trafficker.

Locally in Virginia, less newsworthy but equally numbing examples include a principal who chose to resign after 15 years of service to a district recognized throughout the state for its effectiveness and equity. This sudden jolt to the school community came about when he accompanied a group of division employees and students on an out-of-state-trip, and consumed an alcoholic drink while dining with adults.

Dempster and Berry (2003) urge caution about the "minefield" that educational leaders must navigate as they progress through their careers. The long standing analogy of the 'fishbowl' in which all educators exist has become more relevant for present-day educational leaders. The analogy grows even more precarious as the poignant topics of ethics, morals, and values are now benignly labeled 'character education.' Missteps in the fishbowl are proving to be even more disastrous to professional reputations in this desensitized era when connected to leaders' conduct. Begely (2000) and Murphy (2002) highlight the juxtapositions of professional success,

task efficiency, political correctness, and notoriety against the qualities of morality, ethicality, truthfulness, and fairness. Any single paradox should be the necessary impetus to retool leadership training which prepares educational leaders for this new era of accountability, rife with ethical pitfalls.

Furman (2003) writes concerning the implied links between ethical leadership practices and student outcomes. The specific leadership skill Furman refers to is decision-making. I am compelled, however, to be concerned about missing the implied ethical links in educational leadership. These missing links provide ammunition for the media, politicians, and special interest groups seeking a target.

Writing more than a decade ago, Hoy (1990) and Swanson (1995) stated that the ethics and defined values of the principal as decision-maker evolved from concepts developed in the Dewey era. Tempered and infused with ethical valuation, these concepts have become critical elements of the contemporary decision-making process. This critical evolution, coupled with increasing dissolution in the profession, was the impetus for this study of educational leaders' decision-making processes and the valuations they encompass.

Decision-Making

Decision-making is one of the most, integral tasks in the administrative process. All of the professional experiences in an administrator's career comprise the frame against which he/she stretches each ensuing dilemma. Dewey (1930) determined that reflective thinking, what the Greeks called 'praxis,' was the most crucial component thoughtful action that results in a choice or decision. The context within which a decision-maker must take action determines both the need to begin the decision-making process and the intensity of the reflection leading to a commitment to act.

Willower (1994) extended Dewey's viewpoint when he referred to the practice of reflective administration in education. In Willower's perspective, the administrator or principal is prepared for the decision-making process because of a prior commitment to the reflective process, which inevitably includes anticipation of the problematic.

Leigh (1983) enumerated environmental issues which compel a leader to begin the decision-making process. They are: (1) a difference between what is expected and what actually exists, (2) the difference perceived to be problematic in terms of being an obstacle to success, (3)

the impetus to remove the obstacle resides in the leader, and (4) the aptitude to remove the obstacle resides in the leader.

Harris (1987), Hoy and Miskel (1987) and McNamara and Chisholm (1988) classified decision-making situations using a variety of adjectives: structured and unstructured, defined and undefined, expected and unexpected. It is noteworthy that each pair of labels, when used within the context of a continuing activity, represents two ends of a spectrum. Sandwiching the forceful presence of all emerging issues sharpens the definition of the two extremes. Each emerging issue requires the decision-maker to process previous reflections within the present context. Leithwood and Steinbach (1995) noted that in some instances, an emerging issue requires an untested form of reflection or response.

Glover (1991) studied individual decision-makers confronted with moral/ethical dilemmas to observe their self-monitoring and self-consciousness during the reflection phase of their decision-making process. Her study was precipitated by the research of Ravlin and Meglino (1987). Their studies suggested that a decision-maker's personal values were influential, if not key, factors in the deliberative process because decision-makers use their values to indirectly filter the acceptance of workplace factors. Although Glover's analysis of the data did not support the hypothesis of the study, the study's qualitative evidence suggests the need for continued focus on a decision-maker's values assigned to factors and influences. The same influence may be inferred when looking at codes of conduct or ethics in a decision-maker's work environment.

According to Schnebel (2000), the significance of a code of ethics in the conduct of an organization's mission is shaped at the administrative levels of leadership. The significance is influenced by the sum of individuals' varying sense of responsibility and their cultural backgrounds. This significance of a code of ethics affects decision-making by leaders in relation to their levels of responsibility, authority, and hierarchical status. An educational leader has specific decision-making freedom within an organization based on the line of authority. The significance of the code of ethics on decision-making is uniquely influenced by personal ethics plied against the corporate expectation. Schnebel also found that the decision-maker's unique values set is one measure of the level of responsibility that the decision-maker accepts within the organization.

Schnebel (2000) also found that the personal values of the decision-maker may be reliable guides for ethical practice. Yet, organizational values may be in conflict to the degree

that the decision-maker either breaks from the organization when following personal values or follows organization values while failing him- or herself. Identifying the values used in decision-making, allows one to categorize the motivating factors as either personal or organizational.

Feldman (2002) states the burden of decision-making very plainly, “The past offers a way to evaluate the present, to gain distance from its seductiveness of power and pleasure. Within this heritage, the individual’s authorization to choose holds the individual responsible for the choices made” (p. 80).

Marshall (1992) finds that an ethical blur exists for all educational administrators because of competitions between commonplace organizational forces. Internal forces prevent the school organization from experiencing wide variances in outcomes valued and expected by the school communities. External forces demand modification of both outcomes and the entire organization. Focusing on fledgling administrators, Marshall found that they battle not only external and internal competing forces as they hone their professional skills, but they battle ‘positional’ forces that constantly test their values, morals, and ethical resolve. Because they occupy the lowest rung on the administrative ladder, these novice administrators are usually designated the first line of contact with difficulties rising from the teacher level. New principals bow to the demands of the internal forces of the organization to survive in the administrative realm, while they have little input concerning the external forces. They are, in many respects, observers and, as observers, they begin to examine and form their administrative values, morals, and ethics.

Armstrong (2004) accurately notes that the environment of educational administration since the 1990’s has become a fast-paced setting that responds to pedagogical and non-educational forces alike. Completing routine administrative tasks, taking on menial supervisory duties, and facilitating classroom instructional needs do not build high level administrative skills. Eagerness to attain those skills can initiate conflict. Successfully accomplishing an agenda, emanates from the top of many educational organizations very often depends on blind and flawless execution of strategy by subordinates. This execution includes absorption and disposal of negative reactions.

Dewey (1939) said that the actions we take in daily life, other than those that are either routine or second nature (such as breathing or blinking), involve valuations of varying degrees. A person carries out specific actions based on the degree of value or worth the perceived result has with that person.

Assigning a value to any action or endeavor, to the extent that a decision is made to specifically act, means that the process and anticipated outcome are significant, prized, or valued in relation to the thousand other-than-routine, decision-less actions carried out each day. Dewey states that this assignment infers a possible involvement of emotion. The more emotion that an action or endeavor has associated with the decision to carry it out, the greater the worth or value it has with the individual.

In the process of carrying out actions or endeavors jointly with others or in concert with their actions or endeavors, the display and estimation of value can be derived from the emotion evidenced together or individually. This observation and derivation then may become useful in eliciting certain responses or actions from others by either evoking the emotion associated with it or introducing a conflicting outcome valuation.

Husted (2001) determined in his research that the values and priorities used in the decision-making processes of individuals are shaped by their cultures. His research extended to the interplay of individuals from different cultures in similar decision-making situations where the outcomes were markedly different. Using terminology of Erez and Earley (1993), Husted examined and divided the cultural research into two camps. The distinctions he illuminated were between the decision-maker influenced by a culture with collectivist mores and a decision-maker influenced by a culture with individualistic mores.

Leadership Preparation

Martin (1999) indicates that aspiring professionals must find their desire to succeed in “consciousness and commitment,” rather than in the benchmarks of moral or ethical minimums” (p.43). The moral standard should be the implementation of personal conscience “within and beyond the expected dilemmas of the job, and at the same time should provide new, positive levels of expectation by inspiring others to take up the same challenge... not the opposite” (Martin, 1999, p.45).

Educational leadership preparation programs have been under fire for the last 25 years. Levine (2005) proclaims that the rain of criticism has risen to an unprecedented level during this time. The criticisms focus on specific failures of education reform to produce results in students’ readiness for success amid the rapid changes in our world. He specifically reports on university programs that train principals, claiming that they largely ignore the core problems confronting

contemporary educational leaders. Although Levine's report (2005) raised firestorms of defensive reactions from many of those institutions, scholars affirm much of Levine's report. Values and ethical practice, once explicit components in these programs, are now blurred and sometimes unfamiliar requisites to fledgling educational leaders.

My leadership preparation program in the mid 80's stressed fidelity, integrity, professionalism, trustworthiness, and truthfulness. Kitchner (1985) emphasized these traits as essential to winning the confidence of the publics educational leaders serve. Those publics, while focusing intently on classroom outcomes, leap at educational leaders' lapses in professional or personal ethics which damage the credibility of the profession. Begley (2000) notes a renewed importance for including ethics and values as essential elements in leadership preparation programs and required professional development. Schon (1987), however, warned that the introduction of any new topic into time-honored university training programs would be an uphill battle, as earlier noted by the outcry against Levine (2005).

The bulk of the readings in the area of values, with the emphasis on ethical practice, came from the studies of Dewey, Hodgkinson, Greenfield, and Willower. These scholars as well as Beck and Murphy (1997), Evers (1988), Foster (1988), Griffith (1983), Kaminsky (1986), Kimbrough (1985), Lakomski (1987), Sergiovanni (1987, 2001), and Strike (1993), have promoted an ongoing discussion of ethics within educational administration.

As Dewey (1939) defined educational leadership, he wrote that it is "chiefly an ethical undertaking... a matter of the reflective appraisal of the values served by various decision options" (p.8). Strike, Haller, and Soltis (1988) note that educational leaders will have to make difficult choices in situations that are unfamiliar and in circumstances that are less than well defined, if not clearly controversial. It is their agreement with Dewey (1939) and Popper (1979) that the leaders' ethical reflection and justification of decisions should be imperative components in their performance appraisal.

Leadership preparation reform includes many components, one of which is the development of decision-making skills. Murphy (2003), in his examination of reform efforts, writes that in the last 25 years there has been an upheaval time-honored preparation of educational leaders. One of the causes for this change is the failure of educational leaders to successfully enact and manage reforms. This failure is acknowledged by many researchers (Burns, 1996; Mawhinney, 1999; Quicke, 2000; Young, Peterson & Short, 2002; Scribner,

Aleman & Maxcy, 2003) in their examination of reform criticisms within the context of their research. Griffith and Tarraban (2002) report that widespread pressures during the 1980's brought about significant changes in principal preparation at New York University during the following decade. The use of on-line, case method models for leadership skill and experiential development materialized as the dominant methodological shift there.

Weaknesses or deficiencies in leadership preparation programs have been recognized in countries other than the United States. Griffith & Taraban, (2002) completed a study in Ontario, Canada, where training institutions revamped leadership preparation programs to address the "new complexities" of their educational system. Canadians determined that educating their children for the future requires a new global perspective as opposed to the traditional French-Canadian perspective. A lack of reflective decision-making skills in many newly-accredited Canadian administrators was discovered when the union relationship between principals and teachers dissolved due to teacher accountability testing. This dissolution disrupted the traditional, collegially-grounded relationship in schools between administration and staff. Griffith and Taraban found that comfort zones for administrators created in settled leader/follower relationships did not produce novel or challenging dilemmas that stimulate creative thinking, problem solving, or reflective decision-making skills. Because their administrators did not have, or had not been forced to develop, decision-making skills, the Ontario leadership preparation programs have been retooled. Specifically, they employ case study models for on-line interactions among dissimilar groupings of administrator candidates. Merseth (1997) called the use of case study methodology in leadership training an ideal context in which to develop the critical skills needed for reflective decision-making.

The Interstate School Leadership Licensing Consortium (ISLLIC), under the sponsorship of several pre-existing educationally-based research organizations, formulated a set of seven standards to guide renewed leadership preparation program formation and by which applicants for principal licensure might be evaluated (Tannenbaum, 1999). Because of the broad-based support of ISLLIC and its research-based work over the course of the last decade, many college and university programs have adopted the standards into their curricular course of study for leadership preparation (Murphy, Yff & Shippman, 2000). At the same time, many state departments of education and school divisions incorporated the essence of these seven standards

into coursework, seminars, job descriptions, professional development opportunities, or the nexus of protocols for school administrators.

Begley (2000) and Willower (1991) researched and espoused the reformation of components of training for principals by specifically addressing the individual skill sets which new principals must bring to the evolving task of effectively leading schools.

Willower (1994) specifically acknowledged and agreed with Dewey (1939) about the necessity of reflective decision-making. Grounded in the Greek term *praxis* which translates to “thoughtful practice,” Dewey wrote that the diligent, ethical practitioner must carefully examine all possible outcomes before choosing a solution to a dilemma. Willower and Begley (1998) further delineated the process by exploring the differences in terminology between efficiency, effectiveness, and excellence as they were applied to leadership preparation and the subsequent practices of the new educational leaders.

A key term found throughout the discussion of professional ethics is *value*. Dewey’s value theory (1939) dealt with how the carnal human arrives at different sensory levels of values, and how each level translates into a resulting worth. Begley and Willower (1998) address the lack of reflective practice in educational leaders’ decision-making. Value assumes a very exacting prominence as these three scholars explore the layers of the decision-making process and the affected multiple dimensions of both the success and failures of public education.

Callahan (1988) states that principals either make decisions based on the values of the communities served by their schools or based on the concept that their schools are to be marketplaces of ideas. This view balances educational professionals precariously between challenging students to be prepared for an evolving global society or instilling the cultural values that form the foundational cornerstone of community support for schooling and the initiatives offered by its leaders.

Ethical Decision-Making

Not all decisions made in the course of a day qualify as ethical decisions. Callahan (1962) notes that many decisions are perfunctory; they are repeated over and over because much of the administrative function is repetitive. He recognizes that there is a pause in the process when the problem before an administrator is neither routine nor simply right or wrong.

Kimbrough (1985) delineates the responsibilities that define the educational administrator in the context of the ethical confrontations that regularly occur. Without memory of the moral accomplishments of the past, the individual has little capacity for a radical criticism of present ethical confrontations (Rieff, 1979). Without the inhibiting art of memory, self interest grows to corrupt the whole decision-making process. At first the risks look small to the decision-maker in comparison to his or her potential rewards, but this is only because the risks to others have been left out of the equation.

Rest (1986) describes ethical decision-making as a four step process. Step one is moral awareness, where the decision-maker determines if the situation is a moral one. Step two requires a moral judgment as to the correct course of action. In the third step, the question of moral intent comes into play when the decision-maker weighs all the variables and their value to insure the moral value is chosen. Step four is the moral behavior exhibited when execution of the deliberation in steps one, two, and three are implemented.

Specific factors in the human condition have positive and negative relationships when making ethical decisions. In their review of literature published in 2005 on ethical decision-making, O'Fallon and Butterfield reported that when studying the relationships among specific personal factors in the context of the decision-maker, there were consistent positive and negative relationships between individual philosophy and value orientation. For example, idealism and ethics showed a strong positive relationship, but relativism and economic status generally shared a negative relationship.

Weeks' research (et al., 1999) showed that longevity in a position, particularly later in the career, has a progressively positive influence when ethical judgment is required. Logically, principals who are promoted quickly during the early years of their careers would have weaker positive or even negative influences toward ethical judgment.

Campbell-Evans (1991) credits Evers, Lakomski, Hodgkinson, and Greenfield with research and scholarship that has illuminated the significance influence of values on the decision-making processes of leaders in education. She further notes that this illumination allows consideration of the individual decision-maker outside the accepted "exclusive rational frameworks" and also allows examination of the specific actions of educational leaders in practice.

In order to better understand the principals' influence on decision-making, Campbell-Evans (1991) examined the point at which values mattered in principals' decision-making. This examination, in two phases, focused on identifying the inclusion of values in the processes of eight decision-makers participating in the study. Phase one was a single question-generated discussion; the second phase was a common set of decision situations requiring reactions. More than one hundred values, categorized into four value types, were defined for the purpose of the study. The four categories included: (1) basic human values, such as survival and happiness; (2) moral values, such as responsibility and truthfulness; (3) social-political values, such as tolerance and citizenship; and (4) specific values, such as possessions and friends.

After interviewing the eight participants, the resulting data were sorted using the four categories. Three categories were most prevalent: basic human values, moral values, and social-political values. Two of these three were dominant in their importance to the participants: social-political and basic human values. The act of 'participation' was mentioned most often in the phase one discussion and was runner-up in phase two behind the act of 'sharing'. When the phase one and two categories were combined, 'knowledge' was ranked highest by all participants and given third place status overall.

From the interviews, Campbell-Evans (1991) identified two categories of other influences that were evident in the decision-making process. 'Internal' or personal influences which stood out included concern for students, effect of the decision, and commitment to the decision by those affected. The other category, 'external' or non-personal influences, included time, money, and factual information (p.174). The most frequent internal conflict experienced was an uncertainty as to what value was most relevant for the decision at hand. The most frequent external influence was a directive from a superior which contradicted a personally-held value. Campbell-Evans (1991) determined that values became the filters for the reflective component of the decision-making process and "possibly" served as filters influencing action.

Holmes (1985) writes that in making any decision, a principal wishes to have the decision accepted, which actually signifies that the principal wants to be accepted not only as a leader but as a person. This desire exists because of a basic human understanding that an individual's values are reflected by that individual's perception of facts which affect not only that individual's actions, but also how the actions of others are judged. It is this aspect of judgment or

discernment as an individual that must be tempered by training and studying the collective educational challenges.

Kitchener (1985) identifies and discusses a key occurrence in decision-making for educational administrators that is more than just an ethical dilemma. The dilemma occurs when two ethical 'rights' compete against one another. Kitchener suggests that the solution lies in selecting the action that yields the greatest benefit. Kitchener further states that one ethical principle may only be ignored by the ethical decision-maker when juxtaposed against another ethical principle.

According to Humphrey, Janosik, and Creamer (2004), if there is a single ethical issue involved in the defined problem, then the only action that an ethical practitioner can take is to do the right and ethical thing.

CHAPTER 3

Overview of Methods

This chapter describes the mixed methodology that was used to investigate the research questions. Using qualitative methodology, conversations were held with key informants to provide strands of valuation data that were qualitatively analyzed to produce a group of valuation constructs. The constructs served as the basis for constructing a survey. Using quantitative methodology, the survey was administered, responses coded, and resulting data analyzed. This combination of qualitative and quantitative methodology allowed the researcher to examine the personal feelings and values of participating decision-makers as they discussed their values formulation and integration into their decision-making as well as to survey participants in Virginia leadership training cohorts and examine their reflective reactions to value laden scenarios.

Significance

This study is significant to the ongoing formulation of a new leadership-training paradigm that has been the center of debate and criticism for more than a decade (Quick, 2000). The widespread mandate to school districts, their leadership, and individual schools to produce improved student outcomes requires a new and more reflective array of leadership training criteria than was available to prospective administrators in earlier decades. The exploration of what is incorporated and valued by virtue of its inclusion into leaders' decision-making processes may yield data beneficial to the ongoing formation of a body of knowledge to better equip future educational leaders with pertinent skills and strategies to become more effective, more successful, and more reflective moral stewards.

Qualitative Research Methodology

Qualitative Research Question

The first phase of the research addressed the overall research question:

Can an instrument be developed to measure the degree to which the ethical constructs of trustworthiness, beneficence, individuality, or justice are used by educational administrators in their decision-making?

This phase explored whether an instrument could be developed to measure the degree to which the ethical constructs of trustworthiness, beneficence, individuality, or justice are used by educational administrators in their decision-making.

Secondary research questions to facilitate the gathering of data include:

How do administrators determine which constructs, if any, to use for a particular ethical decision?

Does an administrator's professional background and training affect how he/she makes ethical decisions?

Does an administrator's professional position affect how he/she makes ethical decisions?

Does an administrator's personal background affect how he/she makes ethical decisions?

Conceptual Framework for the Qualitative Research

This conceptual framework for this study flows from a model developed by Trevino (1986) for examining the variables in decision-making, as it relates to ethics within an organizational environment. This model suggests a sequence that most closely approximates decision-making in an educational environment, recognizing alternate sequences dependant on inputs. This model also embraces the Interstate School Leader's Licensure Consortium Standard #5 which states that "...a school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner" (Counsel of Chief State School Officers, 1996, p.25). Trevino's model is prescriptive in that it promotes identification of the influences and issues at the attribute level of decision-making (Carroll & Johnson, 1990). Because the goal of this study was not to seek data for predicting or influencing decisions, the Humphrey, Janosik, and Creamer (2004) model was particularly appropriate due to its prescriptive intent meshed with the promotion of reflective practice as promoted by Dewey (1922) and Willower (1994).

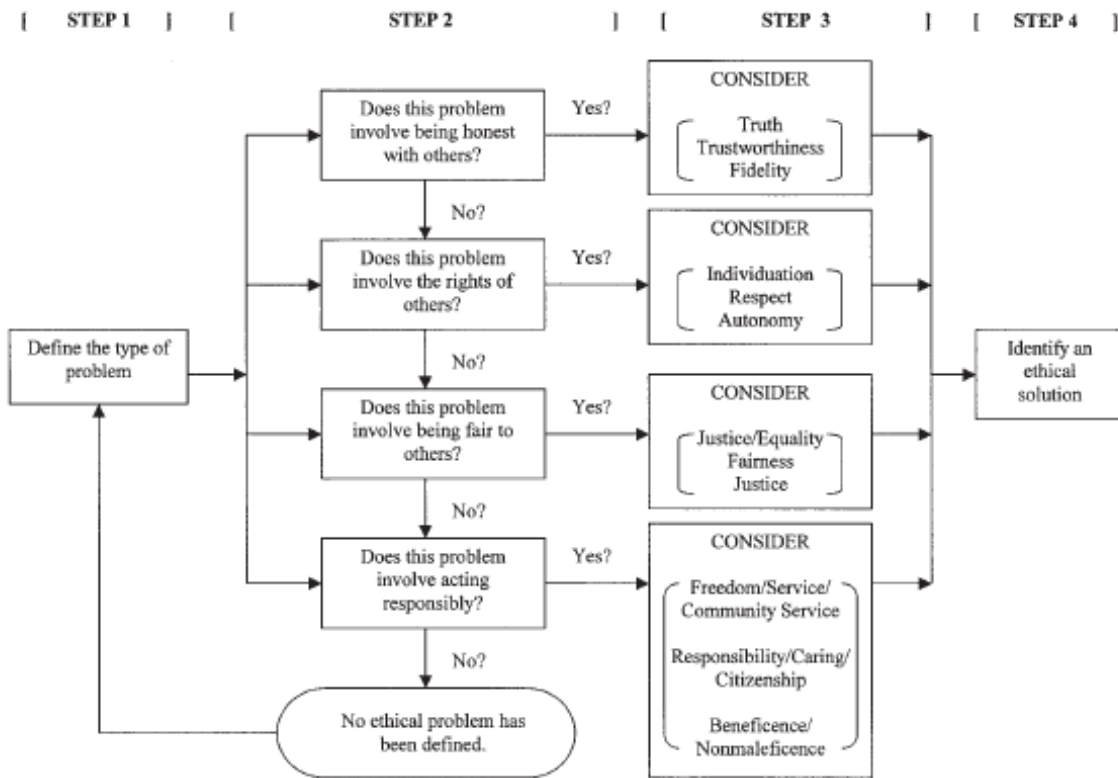
Purpose of the Qualitative Study

The purpose for this study was to explore the presence or degree of values/ethics as it relates to the development/maturity in the decision-making process of school administrators. Willower (1994) acknowledged that field research in the area of educational administration, specifically studying praxis, or reflective practice, can provide insights toward the "emotional, symbolic, and irrational" elements of educational leaders (p.60). To accomplish this, the

researcher conducted and tape-recorded open-ended interviews with participants in the qualitative phase of the study. The resulting data, analysis, and cross-matrices helped verify element valuation as identified in the decision-making model of Humphrey, Janosik, and Creamer (2003). (See Figure 1.) Combined with the quantitative survey responses to vignettes, the resulting dissemination of the data may help to identify how decision-makers chose their valued elements for incorporation into their decision-making. Ultimately, the results of this study may contribute to the ongoing research of value driven decision-making and the restructuring efforts to educational leadership training.

Figure 1 Ethical Decision-Making Model: Humphrey, Janosik, Creamer (2004)*

Flow Chart for Ethical Decision-Making



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Assumptions and Rationale for a Qualitative Design

Philosophy and debate over the prerogatives for effective, reflective decision-making have arisen from the use of multiple methodologies within qualitative research. The

philosophies, characteristics, motivations, and goals of educational decision-makers have been gathered through qualitative methods such as interviews, observations, document analysis, and combinations of the three (Willower, 1983). The qualitative component of this study was conducted using in-depth interviews with retired administrative decision-makers. Yin (1994) maintained that the qualitative case study has several advantages, two of which are particularly aligned with this proposal. The first advantage and “most important is to explain the causal links in real-life interventions that are too complex for the survey or experimental strategies” (p 15). The second advantage is that the case study may allow situations that have no definitive, easily defined set of outcomes within a case to be probed.

Type of Design

A multiple interview study method for this portion of the research was employed because of its appropriateness to the context of educational decision-makers and of explaining their choices and processes (Merriam, 2001; Yin, 1994). This design was exploratory in nature, as the case of reflective decision-making was examined using key informants engaged in the same process. Cross case analysis of gathered data resulting from the execution of the study design was utilized to form conclusions and formulate subsequent questions, constructs, strands, and topics for future research. As Yin (1994) instructed, the objective of this portion of the study was not to count instances of like frequency, but to gather data that allows a generalization toward one or more theories (p.10). The anticipation that the results of this study may generate further research allowing development of further conclusions is a goal of any worthwhile study (Merriam, 2001). The examination of decision-making in the context of today’s educational leader starts with examining it through the lens espoused by Dewey (1938): identifying the possible evolution or mutation of incorporated values. Including multiple decision-makers in this study provides the opportunity to explore a wider array of observed valuations within the constructed context enhanced likelihood of data verification.

The Researcher’s Perspective

The care and diligence required for preparing the design of this study and its procedural steps are the main elements necessary to have any data and resulting analysis accepted in the same critical light as a quantitative study (Yin, 1994). Speed toward completion of this study was not an issue. As Strauss and Corbin (1998) pointed out, researchers must resist racing toward conclusions with analysis that points toward established theory.

As the researcher completed his 31st year in education, he was able to bring insights from experiences and situations like those examined or measured in this study. The researcher was also able to reflect as an educational leader, which provided both a biased and nonbiased research perspective. From the very beginning of the construction of this proposal, the researcher kept field notes documenting conversations with mentors and prospective members of field test panels, trial interviews, pointed discussions concerning elements of the topic, relevant literature, and the interesting revelations that all of the above elicited. Reviewing these notes facilitated initial adjustments in the interview protocol that allowed participants to consider themselves less a research subject than a participant in a conversation. By editing and refocusing the list of interview questions, the researcher attained a revised schedule of topics for thoughtful conversation with key informants. The fruit of these conversations produced frames of reference relating to the sense-making of professional leaders as they reflected on daily issues with far-reaching outcomes.

With each educational leader, the conversation revealed personal, professional, and philosophical enlightenments. Miles and Huberman (1994) reminded researchers that their judgment must prevail over procedure in order for meanings and interpretations to be trustworthy. Great care was taken to insure that what was unspoken but inferred remained as such. Readers and subsequent researchers of this study will make assumptions and follow their own methodologies to test such inferences. The researcher's subjectivity remained bounded by accurate transcription of the interviews examined across the framework of literature and appropriate studies presented in Chapter 2.

By following the requirements from the University's Office of Research Compliance for confidentiality, adhering to the rigors of procedural preparation and protocol construction, faithfully recording and duplicating data, and finally reporting the findings, the researcher was committed to this process and dedicated to the avoidance of bias.

Qualitative Research Procedures

The first phase of the study uses qualitative data derived from interviews of key informants. The key informants were former or retired superintendents from Virginia school divisions who agreed to be interviewed as a part of this study. These key informants were chosen from a list of 12 retired superintendents that were suggested by a colleague. A letter that introduced the researcher and this study was sent to the list of superintendents. The varying

location and size of school divisions in which they served offered the opportunity to examine factors influenced by geographic and socioeconomic location that might affect educational leaders' decision-making in school divisions with varying stresses, paces, and priorities.

Setting

The preferred key informants were administrative leaders whose experience is represented in all three sizes of schools, defined by student membership designations of the Virginia High School League. These designations are based upon the freshman through senior populations in the high schools of each division. Miles and Huberman (1994) cited that the inclusion of different case samplings in a study helps alleviate doubt in potential findings.

Participant Selection

Purposeful and specific participant selection was advocated in Merriam (2001). As described in the literature review, most administrative leaders are in place because they have proven through a combination of performance and experience over time that they are capable of assuming the responsibilities of an educational leader. Analytical decisions are made by educational leaders at two levels within school divisions: building level and central administration.

Gaining Access and Entry

The population of participants was initially contacted through an email with a letter introducing the researcher, the topic of this study, and the request for their participation. A letter that included an explanation, the definition, and the intentions of the study as well as a request to participate was emailed to 12 retired superintendents in Virginia. Appendix A includes a sample of the letter soliciting their participation. The letter explained the purpose of the study, its significance to the study, the criteria for selecting participants, and the value of their contribution, as well as the possible implications that resultant data may lend to leadership training or its reform. The letter also gave the reporting procedure for the results and how the researcher could be contacted. Each of the potential participants was assured of the utmost confidentiality. Three retired superintendents responded to the solicitation letter; one from the southern Shenandoah Valley, one from the Tidewater area, and one from southern Central Virginia. Once a recipient of the letter responded affirmatively, the researcher telephoned that participant to further confirm willingness to be included in the study. Interviews occurred from

August 2007 through October 2007. This three-month period allowed for concentrated review of the interview recordings, transcription, coding, and analysis while the data was still fresh.

Data Collection Procedures

Interviewing Informants

Merriam (2001) stated that three techniques of data collection, interviewing, observing and analyzing documents are common in qualitative studies. This study leaned most heavily on interviews with retired educational leaders who agreed to participate. The researcher's observations of the participants during those interviews were recorded and transcribed. Relevant documents were utilized when they were made available.

Means of Collecting Data: Instrument Selection

The conduct of this study used semi-structured interviews as a conversational component. During the interviews, the participants' questions were crafted in a manner that invited genuine, open comments on the topic. Yin (1994) and Merriam (2001) stated that case study data may be obtained by means of interviewing. Yin categorized interviews into three types: open-ended, focused, and survey. This investigation utilized the focused interview in a conversational style, allowing continuation of a participant interview in the event that time restrictions or unforeseen events presented interruptions. A continuous journal of field notes was kept to record the researchers perceptions, interactions, and thoughts throughout the course of the study.

Interview Procedures and Protocols

In addition to reviewing the literature, interviewing with loosely structured questions was the method used for data collection for the study. Interviewing each of the participants followed the ethnographic technique of asking a common set of predetermined questions to gain initial information. (See Appendix B.) Follow-up questions included extemporaneously-formulated questions that were introduced to gain clarification and deeper understanding of the initial response in order to provide richer and thicker description (Merriam, 2001). The interviews, held in a location amenable to the participant, were tape-recorded with permission obtained prior to the interviews. Interviews were also documented by field notes made during the interviews to verify the responses and to allow accurate analysis of insights from each participant. Interview material was subsequently checked for accuracy by providing opportunity for full review by the participants. The participant set the amount of time for the interview with the understanding that

subsequent appointments could be made to complete any unfinished portion of the protocol. No further sessions were required to complete any of the superintendent interviews.

Pilot Study

Decision-makers, such as superintendents and principals, are often wary of offering responses to issues that may be sensitive in terms of ongoing building or school division concerns. For this reason, four educational leaders who are close acquaintances of the researcher participated in a research trial of the intended interview instrument. Their responses and subsequent reflections concerning the construction and content of the questions were not included in the study, but rather served as a test of the appropriateness of the questions, as well as indicators as to the nature of the response one might expect. These trial responses also served as practice and predictors to coding and categorization of the legitimate research interviews.

The interview questions were field tested with administrative leaders who were close acquaintances of the researcher. This field test is a recommended step in qualitative research prior to the inception of an actual collection of study data (Fetterman, 1997). This field test afforded the opportunity to discover weaknesses in question construction and possible problems with content. The conditions of the setting in which the test interviews took place were office-like and resembled the work environment of the respondents' present employment in a school division administrative office setting. Sufficient time was allotted between the field test and the actual beginning date of the study to allow for correction and revision to interview strategies. The field test provided feedback to allow the researcher to alter the interview questions where necessary.

Areas that were evaluated in the field test were as follows:

- 1) Did the participant clearly understand the wording of the question?
- 2) Did jargon, terminology, or language usage present problems?
- 3) Did the questions motivate the participant to respond with detail and interest?
- 4) Were the questions appropriate to the study focus and did they elicit genuine and realistic responses?
- 5) Were responses or details limited due to the scope of the interview?
- 6) Did the participants ramble and move from the study focus because the questions were too broad?

- 7) Were the questions, as a whole, structured in a manner that addresses the research question and provides the data needed to conclude the study? (Fetterman, 1997 p.121).

The comments of the field test participants, resulting transcription, and the researcher's field notes determined any adjustments to the interview protocol. All adjustments were completed before the interactions with key informants.

Analyzing the Data

The information to be learned and described was derived with a minimum of interpretation by strictly and systematically analyzing and then reanalyzing the data which arose from the constant comparative method to generate propositions (Maykut & Moorehouse, 1994). These propositions related to each of the participant's feelings as they emerged from the interviews, as well as the focus of the content. Identity of concepts occurred in a coding stage that identified each page of transcribed data for later reference and comparison. This process occurred anew after each of the interviews. Coding of the data from each page allowed emergence of themes, categories, and subcategories as each interview initiated yet another stage of the process (Makut & Moorehouse, 1994). Ideally, using constant comparative analysis, there would be corresponding or matching bodies of concepts that would reoccur as analysis of the complete body of data takes place with the introduction of each new interview (Merriam, 2002).

Through the coding process, themes emerged prompting the construction of matrices. These matrices allowed conclusions to be drawn through continual comparing and contrasting of the resulting themes and their patterns. By constructing the matrices, with the full text narratives as a companion piece, the conclusions drawn as a result of this phase of the research became more evident through production and arrangement of the noted patterns, trends, and themes.

Quantitative Research Methodology

The purpose for this portion of the study was to examine the reflections of the participants on situations within a familiar context that introduces a possible juxtaposition of values. The five purposes of this portion of the chapter were to 1) describe the quantitative portion of the mixed methodology and its rationale, 2) describe the research methodology, 3) explain population and sample selection, 4) describe the specific instrument design and data collection procedures, and 5) provide justification for the chosen methods of data analysis.

Quantitative Research Questions

The purpose for this phase of the study was to explore whether administrators recognize ethical constructs, such as trustworthiness, individuation, beneficence, or justice when presented with scenarios and value statements. The research questions that facilitated the gathering of data are as follows:

Do educational administrators perceive statements related to trustworthiness as relevant to a scenario that illustrates an ethical dilemma of trustworthiness?

Do educational administrators perceive statements related to beneficence as relevant to a scenario that illustrates an ethical dilemma of beneficence?

Do educational administrators perceive statements related to individuation as relevant to a scenario that illustrates an ethical dilemma of individuation?

Do educational administrators perceive statements related to justice as relevant to a scenario that illustrates an ethical dilemma of justice?

Conceptual Framework

As advocated by Trochim (2001), descriptive research methodology is utilized for the second portion of this study. As he states, “The research survey is one of the most important tools of measurement in applied social science research” (p107). The instrument for collecting data in the second phase of the study was a forced choice, multiple response survey. Utilizing the common strands of qualitative input gleaned from interviewing the key informants in the first phase of the study, a multiple response survey instrument was constructed to assess the reflections of selected educators in leadership training programs to four scenarios. Respondents were asked to rate 20 value responses to each construct. Nardi (2003) cautions that survey items must be constructed clearly so as to accurately operationalize the concepts and variables within the study. The 20 construct response items reflect a single value or a combination of values expressed by the key informants in the phase one interviews of this study. According to Nardi (2005), conceptualizing the response items in a manner similar to the way they were offered in interviews helps insure the construct validity of the instrument.

Sample

The methodology for sample selection was purposeful. The purposefully selected sample of participants included members of administrative masters or doctoral cohorts enrolled in

Virginia universities. If the sample accurately represented administrative leaders in Virginia school divisions, it was expected that the results would be generalizable to the population of administrative leaders as a whole. The sample was selected from the groups of active cohorts whose professors agreed to allow the survey to be administered.

Instrumentation

Respondents were asked to complete a demographic section so that the researcher could examine any connection between the demographic variables and scaled scores. Instrument reliability was measured using Cochran's Q statistics and construct validity was measured using confirmatory factor analysis. Trochim (2001) writes that scenarios may serve three main purposes in social research: 1) to allow exploration of actions in their context; 2) to clarify judgments; and 3) to allow a less personal and therefore less threatening means of studying sensitive topics. The survey used in this study served as an instrument to record the perceptions of selected administrative leaders regarding the value sets personally elicited after reading each of four scenarios. It was a cross-sectional study, administered one time to the sample population of educators in leadership training cohorts. The survey instrument consisted of four sections. Each section contained an ethically, value-laden scenario and 20 construct response items to categorize according to the ethical construct that best embraced the item in the context of the scenario. The four constructs represented emergent value strands from the qualitative conversations with the three key informants.

Four scenarios were composed based on actual situations experienced during the researcher's 31-year career in education. Each scenario embraced one of the four value constructs. Twenty value construct statements were developed to embody the value strands gleaned from the qualitative data gathered from the key informants. These statements were presented for reflection in the context of each of the four scenarios. Field-testing the survey items with peer administrative colleagues enabled me to make adjustments or corrections to the survey. Once needed adjustments or corrections were made, the survey was administered in person or by a teaching professor.

The justification for the constructs is depicted by the ethical decision-making model (Figure 1) of Humphrey, Janosik, and Creamer (2004) included in Chapter 3. The four scenarios are found in Appendix C.

Data Collection Procedures

Surveying Participants

The survey was administered to as many cohorts of masters and doctoral candidates as possible. A letter introducing the researcher, the study and the confidentiality statement served as an introduction to the teaching professor so to allow administration of the survey instrument.

Data retrieved from the completed surveys was converted to analyzable form using SAS's JMP statistical software package. This software package was used for all statistical analysis.

Methods of Analysis

In order to analyze whether the context or decision defined by one of four scenarios determined the value constructs brought to bear on the decision, four scaled scores representing each of the value constructs were calculated. Each scaled score was computed by adding the items related to that construct. Repeated Measures ANOVA were used to determine if any of the value construct scores related to a scenario were significantly different. This analysis was repeated for each scenario. To answer whether demographic variables affect the construct scores, a two-way, repeated measures ANOVA was calculated. Additionally, descriptive statistics were reported for all survey variables.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to explore the presence or degree of values/ethics as it relates to the development/maturity of the decision-making process of school administrators. The researcher's hope is that the resultant data from the research will be of value to the on-going examination and exploration of refinement and change to degreed leadership training programs in colleges and universities. The review of literature and current research gives credence to the need for reform in several areas. The inclusion of valuation in educational leaders' decision-making as a program component is one that the researcher hopes to contribute toward through this research.

CHAPTER 4

Report of the Findings - Participant Interviews

In the fall of 2007 three retired Virginia school division superintendents were interviewed. The resulting data gleaned from those interviews was used to construct a survey to administer to school principals in Virginia. The superintendents are referred to by first names 'Steve', 'Roger', and 'John' for the sake of confidentiality assured to them. This chapter describes the results of the analyses of the interview data and includes a discussion of implications for the instrument design.

The purpose of the interviews was to explore the presence and/or degree of values and ethics related to the decision-making processes of school administrators. The analyses of those data were intended to provide a basis for the design of an instrument to explore the degree to which administrators use four ethical constructs in making ethical decisions. The four constructs are trustworthiness, beneficence, individuality, and justice.

The guiding research questions are:

- (1) *Do administrators consider ethical constructs such as trustworthiness, beneficence, individuation, or justice when making ethical decisions?*
- (2) *How do administrators determine which ethical construct to consider when making a particular ethical decision?*
- (3) *Does an administrator's professional background and training influence how he/she make ethical decisions?*
- (4) *Does an administrator's professional position of status influence how he/she make ethical decisions?*
- (5) *Does an administrator's personal background influence how he/she make ethical decisions?*

The Interview Protocol

Of the twelve superintendents who were solicited for interviews, three superintendents agreed to participate. The interviews of the three participants were conducted at locations of their choosing. Each interview lasted between 90 and 210 minutes. The variation in time was based upon the input and the desire of each superintendent to elaborate.

The interview protocol consisted of 18 questions/prompts offered to each superintendent for consideration. (See Appendix B.) The interview protocol was constructed to elicit stories of ethical decision-making incidents which would help the researcher understand the process these superintendents used and understood; therefore, many of the interview questions were designed to elicit only such stories and not to directly address the research questions. The protocol questions were meant to help with exploring particular ethical decision stories, from which answers to the guiding questions would be extrapolated.

Each participant was given the opportunity to have the questions/prompts in advance. One superintendent declined the chance to preview them. In each interview, the crux of the question/prompt and its significance within the administrative decision-making process and professional practice were discussed.

The interview questions were derived from the researcher’s reading and research; however, ethical and value-laden themes came to the forefront as scenario topics or actual happenings. After two trial interviews with organizational CEO’s, the questions were written and edited for administration. See Figure 2 for the interview protocol, intent of each question, and the intended ethical construct elicitation.

Figure 2.

Qualitative Interview Prompts, Descriptions, and Elicited Ethical Constructs

Interview Protocol Prompt for Informants	Description of the Prompt	Ethical Construct
Has there ever been a time when as an educational leader you were moved to question a decision, made by someone else, that had ethical implications? Would you tell me about an example or two?	This prompt centers around the issue of the informant questioning the ethicality of a decision made by a peer, superior, or board member.	Justice Trust
In your mind, are there absolute character traits, or values that an educational leader working for you must possess?	This prompt centers around the informant’s opinion of necessary character traits or values of educational leaders.	Beneficence Individuation Justice Trust
Can you explain an occasion when you found it necessary to address, motivate, or boost the ethical or moral resolve of your principals?	This prompt seeks discussion of instances where the informant was moved to address peers, subordinates, or superiors about ethical resolve within the scope of their duties.	Beneficence Individuation Justice Trust
When weighing the possible outcomes of a decision, and the interests of parents, teachers, principals or superiors, what effect does their interest have on your decision-making process? Does each interest have a different effect on the process?	This prompt delves for separate value sets for different groups affected by decisions; whether a group carried more consideration than another; and what effect if any that had on in the decision-making process.	Beneficence Individuation Justice

Interview Protocol Prompt for Informants	Description of the Prompt	Ethical Construct
Tell me about a time when you had to make an uncertain decision, and there was a possibility of an adverse public reaction. How did you manage the situation?	This prompt seeks elements of the decision-making process within the context of possible adversity.	Justice Trust
Have ever encountered a situation where “doing the right thing” ran opposite to legal or policy strictures?	This prompt seeks the personal ethics or values of the informant interacting with system or organizational procedures.	Beneficence Individuation Justice Trust
How would you manage a situation where you believed that something was not in compliance with professional ethics? Have you ever faced such situation? If so, tell me more about it.	This prompt seeks a discussion of leadership intervention by the informant where performance of duties or a decision was unethical.	Beneficence Individuation Justice
What would you do if you were aware that a board member was behaving in an unethical manner in terms of their board duties?	This prompt seeks a discussion of the informant’s ethical practice in the case of school board unethicality.	Justice Trust
Is ambition in a principal a must? If so, ambitious to what degree? Do you think you were ambitious?	This prompt seeks the informant’s opinion on ambition in aspiring administrators.	Beneficence Individuation Justice
Are there any personal goals that come to mind, outside of recognized accomplishments or positions attained, that educational leaders should include on their “to-do list” as effective leaders?	This prompt seeks the informant’s expectations of, or opinion on, attained benchmarks in leadership to be considered effective.	Beneficence Individuation Trust
Was there a time when you were aware of a serious mistake made by a superior? Did you feel that you could address it and were you able to do so? Can you tell me about a situation(s) where you were aware of a serious mistake made by principal and what you did about it?	This prompt seeks reflection, discussion or criticism(s) of decisions made by others and what the informant did or wanted to do.	Beneficence Individuation Justice Trust
Can you tell me about a time when you had to be very careful in determining to whom, or how to, communicate sensitive information?	This prompt seeks the informant’s ethical guidelines when dealing with sensitive or private information.	Beneficence Individuation Trust
Can you remember a time when you had to put a point of ethics across in a meeting, where most of the people were reluctant to hear it?	This prompt seeks discussion of the informant’s ethical intervention in an unethical situation.	Beneficence Individuation Trust
How might you deal with a request where a parent is asking for something, in the best interest of their child, but which is not in the interest of a board agenda, or which would violate a policy/regulation of the system? What value factors would enter into your decision-making?	This prompt seeks discussion of the informant’s decision-making process when two or more agendas are juxtaposed to one another.	Beneficence Individuation Justice Trust
Have you ever felt, during course of your career, that the existing systems and solutions were not sufficient to meet the needs of students properly, and/or that they needed to be changed? What factors, ethical or otherwise go into making such a decision?	This prompt seeks discussion of the informant’s reflections concerning personal values, morals, or ethics as opposed to those of the organization.	Beneficence Individuation Justice Trust
How would you routinely proceed in a situation where you needed to make an immediate decision? Are there ethical “rules-of-thumb” that immediately come into play?	This prompt seeks specific discussion of the informant’s decision-making process when time for deliberation was short.	Beneficence Individuation Justice Trust
Can you tell me how you went about carrying out a directive? Did you ever face a situation when you had to make a decision which only offered	This prompt seeks discussion situations where the informant was compelled to act in a manner that did	Beneficence Individuation

Interview Protocol Prompt for Informants	Description of the Prompt	Ethical Construct
alternatives that did not fall within your ethical moral boundaries? Can you talk a little about that? What were your thought processes as you went about resolving the dilemma? What factors were prevalent?	agree with his personal values, morals or ethics.	Justice Trust

Finally, each participant was asked if there were issues initiated by their reflections that they felt should be contributed to the discussion. Also, each participant was asked for their thoughts on future ethical issues for educational leaders.

The prompts were formulated from four constructs resulting from the work of Humphrey, Janosik, & Creamer (2004). These constructs are the classifications of decision dilemmas resulting from an ethical decision-making process tool these researchers devised. The four ethically principled constructs for decision placement, in terms of those affected by the ethical decision, are trust, individuation, justice, and beneficence.

The responses from the participants ranged from explanations of their ethical stance, or value structure, to detailed sharing of events and situations during their careers as an assistant principal through their years as superintendent. Their responses elicited a total of 61 'stories' exemplifying their understanding of the moral, ethical or value-centered nature of the prompt.

The stories were analyzed for thematic strands that fell within the defined meanings of the ethical constructs derived from the Humphrey, Janosik, & Creamer (2004) decision-making model. After the stories in each interview were analyzed, they were categorized by the ethical construct that was exemplified in them. Illustrative examples for each construct are described and discussed below.

Analysis of Interview Stories

Trustworthiness

Using analysis based upon the ethical constructs from Humphrey, Janosik, & Creamer (2004), trustworthiness was exhibited in nine events or stories from the participant interviews.

In an example from the participant interviews, one former superintendent, referred to as Roger from this point, described an investigation of his school system while he was a principal. The Philadelphia office of the NAACP sent a representative to interview administrators, teachers, students, and parents to determine if the school system was deliberately tracking African American students in non-college bound courses. The representative had chosen to

interview teachers at one of the schools before going to the central office. As it happened, a sheet of paper with the questions to be asked of all who were interviewed was left in one of the classrooms at a school. The teacher alerted the superintendent of the discovery and he directed her to bring the sheet to him, rather than alert the interviewer. Roger, as a principal, was instructed by his superintendent that he should answer specific questions on the discovered sheet about the implementation of initiatives to advance African American students to college. His answers would ensure agreement between the school and the central office. As Roger related to me, "It wasn't that we were intentionally not doing them; it was just that we had overlooked them. And I had a real problem with that! I thought we ought to be honest." The implication here alluded not only to the recognition of a superior's decision not to have the interviewer contacted to retrieve his question sheet, but also the inner dilemma of answering the interviewer with honest explanations, yet being instructed to do the opposite by his superior. The Humphrey, Janosik, & Creamer (2004) model requires the decision maker to be honest with himself first, in order to be honest with others. The character trait of trustworthiness is exemplified when his professional practice requires valuing the truth. This superintendent, in a subordinate role during this situation, chose to act on his value for the truth, even though the suggested action from his superior was to the contrary.

Another superintendent, referred to as Jim from this point, spoke about the trust that he had established with his school board in situations where the local politics eroded relationships quickly. The community was very small, with the 'haves' controlling much of the business of the 'have-nots.' Jim spoke of micro-management issues that had to be worked out time and time again. Personnel seemed always to be an issue where influence was plied. "I had tremendous local pressure to hire certain people and I wouldn't do it. And if I didn't feel like the person didn't meet the criteria that I talked about up here, then I couldn't hire them." Jim was originally from the community and had a practical knowledge of how that influence was won and plied. Residents who were well-to-do and well-connected were always able to gain the ear of the board. "I kind of learned how to answer it straight and say no when I didn't think it was the right thing..." He shared instances where he suffered greatly from the local media, thanks to certain people who he disappointed by maintaining his ethics, from which he never varied. That pressure was at times brought to bear on board members who supported him. "I had the agreement with the board and only twice did I have to remind the board; and I said, 'I'm asking you to trust me

to do this.' I just had to have that conversation." Jim had recently retired when he was interviewed and was very proud of the fact that the trust he had established with the school board was never shaken by the criticism he drew. As the Humphrey, Janosik, & Creamer (2004) model suggests, the inter-related character traits of trustworthiness and respect hinge upon one another. The respect that a professional earns also gains the trust of those with whom he works. For a decision maker to have the freedom to act independently, despite the criticism not only of himself but his superiors, illustrates the respect as well the trust that he has earned from those who depend on such. Jim realized that he had asked for, and had been granted, the trust of the school board, and he expressed his value of that trust by making it a part of his deliberative practice, as he described in this instance.

The third superintendent, referred to as Steve from this point, spoke most passionately about the relationship of trust that he established with the school principals in the division during his tenure as an assistant superintendent of administration. Quickly growing in population, numbers of schools, and state-wide recognitions, the division had talented and effective principals who recognized the need for attracting and retaining quality teachers in order to maintain steady improvement and student success. Steve spoke of a period in the 1990's when an assistant superintendent for finance, acting outside of authority, was refusing to forward the principals' requests for program funding to the school board. Because Steve was a local product of the school system in which he worked, he was able to verify that certain principals were receiving funds for their pet projects by virtue of drink machine funds from other principals' activity accounts. In addition, the finance department was receiving salary steps and advancements beyond those outlined in the policies and regulations. "It was totally unethical... I was the person to whom they came...they were just so frustrated...so I eventually went to the superintendent." Over a period of three years, Steve steadfastly stated the case of the principals; the staff and salaries of the finance department grew, while the salaries of teachers and school project funding leveled. When he broached the principals' unethical treatment, this superintendent was challenged by the finance assistant superintendent to "leave funding concerns to the finance office." Steve again took his concerns and the challenge to the superintendent of schools. In the end, the relationship with the principals "...eventually cost me...I resigned," rather than continue in an unethical administration. Nine years later, the school board recruited Steve to fill their opening for superintendent and he declined their offer. As seen in the

Humphrey, Janosik, & Creamer (2004) model, trustworthiness has a position of prominence as the first order of consideration. For a leader to continually justify criticism and negative attention toward himself on behalf of others indicates not only the obligation to those who grant their trust but the value of their trust above personal gain or safety in his practice. Again, a superintendent, describing a dilemma as a subordinate, shows the ethic of practice that establishes a leader's faithful following by the display of his/her values in practice.

All three of these stories shared by the superintendents spoke to a phase of situational assessment that considered the value that they placed on their relationship with a person or group of people. Truth-telling was a common factor among the three situations; that is, the superintendents came to an informed or experiential position that complete honesty was a requirement in addressing the dilemma they described. The person or persons they reported to, or spoke for, trusted these men to perform their duties with integrity and truthfulness. In each of three situations, the superintendents made a decision that could or did have a negative implication for them as individuals. Roger answered questions differently from what his boss had wanted. Jim chose not to hire some administrative candidates who were being promoted via political channels, counting ultimately on his established trust with the school board when it came to hiring administrators. Steve had the trust of the principals under his supervision; he knew that they came to him with concerns that would be reported up the organizational chart. In the story that he described, he even confronted his peer with the concerns that he would take to his boss. The lack of concern or action by his supervisor when presented with the unethical or illegal practices of another assistant superintendent contributed to his resignation.

In the analysis of these three stories, the character trait of trustworthiness in the ethical leader is prominent. Trustworthiness is granted to these men because there is confidence in the ethical principles evident in their decision-making.

Beneficence

The final category speaks to the quality or act of a decision maker to choose to give benefit or provide assistance to another or to the community outside the fulfillment of his responsibilities. There were discussions with all three superintendents that covered situations where choices were made for the benefit of agendas, board members' personal favors, and more.

One poignant instance from a superintendent provided rich detail about the night he resigned during an executive session. The politics of the school board had swung in a very ugly direction after a recent election. Roger was in his third contract with the school system, had made substantive improvements in personnel recruitment and retention, had repaired many damaged bridges between the schools and the communities they served, and had implemented financial oversight that seemed to please everyone. The new board was beginning to move in the direction of a micro-management philosophy rather than a policy-making philosophy. Their new philosophy was hurting morale and tearing down the strengths that had brought their school system admiration and praise. As superintendent, Roger was being asked to execute, or put into motion, actions that were quickly causing antipathy from the central office to the teachers. He stewed over the situation for several weeks and at first became angry that he was the instrument through which these damaging desires were making their way into reality. After several days of consideration, Roger arrived at a decision. At the next board meeting, he took the board into executive session and explained, "For the last several months you have asked me to do certain things and I just haven't done them." He told them that at first he was mad at them for taking the route that they had chosen, but that he was no longer upset over it. They were elected; they should take the positions and actions they felt were warranted and that was that. He felt that for their new course of leadership to move along, it was evident that they were going to need a change in division leadership, so he was tendering his resignation as the end of his current contract. At that, one of the new board members wanted Roger to commit to her that he was able to continue in his duties or else he would have to leave his post the next day. Roger told me that it was with restraint that he politely assured the woman that he could not only continue to perform his duties, but that he would offer his help in compiling a list of candidates for them to examine as possible successors. Roger finished his story by saying that the remaining "...months of my contract comprised my most stress-free and satisfying period of time as a superintendent," because he felt he was free of any mandate from the board while earnestly trying to provide names of candidates who might fit with their philosophy.

The natural feeling a reader attains as this story unfolds is disappointment. When hard work and achievement gained seemed to be of little significance to the new board, Roger went through a time of frustration and anger. Yet, his character and ethic of practice compelled him

not only to withdraw from an untenable philosophical milieu, but to do so as the consummate professional, helping to transition at a time when he no longer had a contractual obligation.

Being kind and caring about employees' well-being outside of the workplace was a detriment to Steve. "I got some criticism from the superintendent in the county where I was for so long, for being a teacher's principal and not understanding the administrators' concerns." He shared that one of his veteran elementary teachers had become very ill and was having to use a great deal of sick leave. She had months accumulated and would not run out. The teacher unfortunately was the bread winner for her family and had used practically no sick leave until then. There were parents who were unhappy with the fact that substitutes were in her class almost as often as the teacher was and they were calling the superintendent to complain. In turn, the calls from the central office about how the students were doing and how the faculty was coping seemed to be more like a challenge for Steve to fire the teacher than seemingly polite inquiries. "I was fully aware of the critique by some people, who thought I was too nice... maybe I had too many scruples." Steve solicited the faculty members to work with the substitutes to keep the absent teacher's class of students on track with the others. The superintendent visited the school to put Steve on the spot to pressure the teacher to resign. "But I felt like ethically the teacher has been with us a long time, was having serious problems... that was the right thing to do... and it did work out." The health issues were worked out by the end of the year and the teacher was able to return to work full time.

The personnel situation that Steve faced as an elementary principal was commonplace, but nonetheless troubling. Workplace pressures aimed at an employee on sick leave because of a serious illness often forces a request for a leave of absence. Sometimes, those pressures, combined with a long convalescence, result in a letter of resignation if only to be rid of the workplace pressure. The leadership exhibited in this story defines not only the value of an individual to a teacher culture, but the extent to which this leader managed a difficult instructional situation in order that one teacher on his faculty could recuperate without the stress of losing her job.

The final story from Jim illustrated his philosophy about disciplining students. "We got into this zero tolerance thing... I remember kids bringing pen knives to school and they were expelled. I mean that was craziness. I think there were times when a kid brought a pocket knife to school and he was a farmer and had never been in trouble. I would say discipline him, but

don't bring it to the board! Now, is that wrong? The policy may have said, 'Bring it to the board,' but it's a case where a kid had a pocket knife he always has! I mean it's not a weapon. I carried one all my life in school. You have to use your judgment." This was the strongest positive statement from a superintendent relating specifically to, and contradicting, what many see as the primary job of a principal...punishing students. Yet, in a very basic example, Jim, who left education at the top of his profession, delivered his strongest statement about interceding on behalf of students others saw as problems. "I saw kids as kids who will make bonehead decisions. I also saw those kids as kids who need to be taught to make better decisions... more responsible decisions. I didn't ever see them through the lens of policy or law enforcement as criminals. As educators, I think our job is to teach them while holding them accountable."

The identified educational needs of children often involve elements that are not found in the curriculum. Jim recognized that the discipline code allowed easy dismissal of difficult students when strict adherence eclipsed reason and logic. While not rejecting the need for discipline, he believed that the need to recognize contextual issues before applying a zero tolerance standard would provide greater benefit for children in the end.

Individuation

The second category deals with respecting or valuing the rights of others and how their autonomy, growth, and development are modeled and supported by the ethical decision maker. Ten situations related by the participants exemplified the criteria that define respect for dignity while the individual matures and grows to autonomy.

A very pointed example of this from Roger's interview involved explaining this concept to his school board. A very ugly scenario had played out in private and then public arenas; an administrator had had an extramarital affair with a subordinate. The peers of both had been privy to this information, were concerned, and offered warnings to the administration that such a relationship was ill advised and potentially harmful, not only to their personal lives but to the school system. After some time, the relationship was terminated and there was no indication of anything but normalcy in the conduct of business. Only after a lawyer from the community informed this superintendent that his client, the female subordinate, intended to file suit against the school system, was the board made aware of the affair. The suit was ultimately dropped, but in a closed session, the members of the board directed Roger to bring each of the peers of the administrator and his subordinate before them for questioning and possible discipline for failing

to alert the superintendent at the first sign of the indiscretion. Roger countered that these two peers and their co-workers had been loyal and very tightly knit as a work unit for years, and were friends who socialized in many forums within the community. They had been more than concerned for the private lives and work futures of each as they interceded, while maintaining excellent performance of their duties to the school system. Roger warned the board that to bring them before their employers, after the fact, and berate them for their respectful intercession with their valued colleagues would only destroy the existing line of communication and their trust in the superintendent and the board. There was no further discussion of the matter after the closed session ended.

This story illustrates the respect that Roger had for the individuals within the school system's organizational culture while recognizing the respect they have for their coworkers and their responsibility to the organization. The individual respect displayed by this superintendent compelled the school board to make a similar decision.

Two other shared stories from the interviews spoke directly to the rights and individuality of students. Steve took personal charge of the registration of the first student in his division with AIDS. The student was 15 years old and had been refused registration in three other school divisions because her condition was divulged to teachers and then to students. The community pressure to prevent her from entering each one had been catastrophic for the family. Steve personally selected the school where the principal and school nurse would be the only two people in the division who would be aware. "I just remember that child sitting there with sores, not open sores, but sores... and nobody would ever touch her... and I just remember going over there and taking her hand and I said, 'You are welcome here and we're going to make it work and nobody is going to know'...and she just cried." With tears in his eyes, Steve went on to say that she died after four uneventful months of attending school but that the situation "had such a profound impact on my life!"

Identifying, respecting, and making decisions in the context of the rights of others in the Humphrey, Janosik, & Creamer (2004) model occupies the second most important aspect of ethicality after trustworthiness. Multiple layers of responsibility became evident in this story. As with the AIDS student in this situation, the concern for an individual's rights is often the crux of ethical decision-making in educational administrative practice. The responsibility of the individual decision maker weighs the rights of others to be in a safe environment while at the

same time considering what the student has suffered before coming to his school system. The legality of confidentiality, though, is overshadowed by Steve's decision to take sole responsibility for the placement and induction of this student, acting to insure the student's dignity and privacy.

The third story of valuing student individuation concerned Jim taking office in a division where high test scores were valued above all else...even ethicality. One of the elementary schools had continually lagged in test scores and a new principal had been appointed two years prior to the new superintendent being hired. After Jim took office, he began to work closely with his special education supervisor and discovered two things about that elementary school. First, in two years the principal had made extraordinary strides in raising test scores. Second, the special education population of that school had tripled in the same two years. Jim's background as an elementary counselor gave him an instant clue as to the reason for both. When he went to visit the principal, his suspicions were confirmed: students, who were performing below average, were set up with an IEP and were not tested. The principal "...was one of the smartest people in our system...brilliant." She was following the explicit intentions of the former superintendent by using division policy to the letter. He told the principal "...it's wrong to hang a label on somebody that's going to affect them for life...when in fact they may not have a disability!" Even after issuing a directive to correct the situation, the practice continued the following year. "I couldn't believe it; I was beside myself. So I went down there and took my assistant with me as a witness and it was one of the few times I really, totally lost my cool. I mean you talk about immoral, or unethical, or unprofessional...it's wrong in so many ways!" The principal was moved to another school rather than being demoted; children were re-evaluated and properly assigned for the following year.

This story also reveals a leader making decisions that deal with multiple layers of responsibility and individuation. The most immediate concern was for the individual students who were given an unwarranted special education label because of their low pretests. The second, and perhaps surprising concern, was that of respect the elementary principal. Despite repeating the labeling tactic, she was moved, rather than fired, because her capabilities and potential value to the school division were acknowledged, and her intent was not to mislead, but to follow her former supervisor's explicit intentions.

These three stories reflect concern for individuals, students as well as employees, who are under ultimate care or authoritative supervision of superintendents. In the large scheme of a school division, subordinates of a superintendent have student affairs or employee matters delegated to their care, leaving a superintendent to deal with division wide, community, or political issues. In all three of these instances, the CEO of a school division took it upon himself to intervene in the affairs of individuals, gaining first hand details that usually might only come to light as a result of a briefing or written report. The sense of duty the CEO showed toward individuals' difficulties, when that duty could clearly have been, and most often is, delegated, pinpoints a personal value for others' individuation as an emotional, caring, moral anchor.

Justice

The justice category addresses the end result of processes or decision-making in which equity and impartiality are realized. All three superintendents cited two or more instances in which they purposefully strove to ensure outcomes that were just or equitable.

One of the shared stories about justice involved pressure from a school board member to appoint his wife to an administrative position. The wife had been a good teacher in the elementary school and had completed her administrative degree several years prior to the time in question. There were a number of persons who met the credential qualification for consideration, in addition to the board member's wife; the issue simply put was that this teacher had not successfully shown capacity to take a leadership role when given the opportunity among her fellow teachers. Jim had been able to recommend more qualified persons each previous time that an opening had arisen, with the unanimous backing of the board members. The pressure that the board member applied at the time in question was based upon the facts that all of the other qualified candidates, who were much better suited for an administrative position, had far fewer years of service in the division and also that the administrative vacancy was located in the school where this wife had taught nearly her entire career and, thus, was very friendly with all of the staff. Jim made up his mind that there was no way, in fairness or good conscience, that he could recommend this woman as an administrator for the vacancy and decided to appeal directly to her board member-husband's sense of reality. Jim visited the board member one evening when the wife was away and put the situation fairly bluntly, but caringly, before the husband. Jim told the husband that he was concerned about a recommendation of his wife being brought forward for the appointment because of the possibility that she may find herself in a position where he

could not support her. Her successful teaching career to date could not be discounted, but there was a kind of trap waiting to ensnare the wrong person placed in the position. Jim reasoned that even though she considered her friendships with the existing staff a plus, if she were an administrator, the on-going personnel actions by the principal, and approved by Jim, would dissolve those friendly relations. For her to cater, as a new administrator, to faculty desires would put her in position where she would be labeled insubordinate. With this situation looming, along with the fact that her husband was a school board member, would mean she would be a very lonely, unhappy, and probably ineffective new administrator. He wanted the board member to know that his wife was considered a fine teacher and that he was valued as a reliable and reasoned board member. Jim did not want to be in a situation where both the board member and his wife would find themselves isolated in the long run for a short-term accomplishment. Jim left the board members home with the parting comment. "Let me tell you something, if I did that, I would have done something horrible to your wife!" Before the next day was over, the board member's wife withdrew her name from consideration.

Decisions concerning the appointment of effective administrators are rife with pitfalls without the added burden of nepotistic pressure. This story reveals that making a just decision which counters political pressure and assuages the one applying the pressure is possible without being overbearing. The character trait of fairness connected displayed in the explanation allows a deep disappointment to exist within an ethic of justice.

A second justice-laden story concerned Roger's oversight of a rural community's challenge to a book in the fifth grade reading program. The concerns of community representatives addressed the language used in the biographical stories of four young inner city girls. The book met the standards to be included in the program and had been judged on a par with several other books, which Roger did not particularly care for himself. He was very careful to ensure that all challenges were fairly heard and assessed. The vote of whether to drop the book rested with an English teacher who community members were certain would vote to keep it. She told Roger that she was having a difficult time because of the perception of censorship from her colleagues. Roger said, "Okay... then tell me really what is the value of this book for students?" Roger continued by explaining that the teacher looked as if a burden had been lifted. She remarked that it was very fair to say that the book was a 'good' book and it would have been a great book without the inclusion of the stories of the four girls. She explained that she was voting

to remove the book because the school system would be guilty of censorship if only those four stories were excluded. Roger was very impressed with the uniformity of practice included in her very evenhanded assessment and decision that was acceptable to all parties. The book was donated to the public library and students would be allowed to use it in their reading lists if they chose to go to the library to check it out.

As this story unfolded, the competing positions of justice that Roger embraced appear equally important and appropriate in context. Even though Roger felt his own judgment qualified him to make the decision, by allowing the teacher to offer her rationale, he achieved the most just outcome, pleasing all parties.

A third situation from the interviews speaking to fairness and equity revolved around cheerleaders, alcohol, and community friendships. Steve was an assistant superintendent at the time, which called for him to hear all discipline cases before they passed to the seven member board. Three cheerleaders returned to an evening football game after having consumed beer. Only a year ago, the school board had enacted a very strict alcohol policy which required suspending students for 10 days, as well as carrying a recommendation for long term suspension. The parents of the three girls were all prominent members of the professional community: one in banking and two physicians. All three suspensions were upheld at the hearing officer level and appealed to the full board. The board's standard procedure for hearing appeals that were linked to the same code of conduct violation was to hear the appeals in closed session, then come to their decisions. Steve, having lived in the community, knew that two of the female board members played tennis regularly with the girls' mothers. He even received calls and messages from family friends reminding him of how the girls' parents had been influential in their lives, or they had known the girls as babysitters. One of the female board members was known to be especially steadfast in voting to suspend or expel students. On this evening, after all four appeals were heard, Steve gave his recommendations as was the procedure. Immediately, the two women began the deliberation by saying, "Why don't we not do this? We have discretion to back off the policy." Steve spoke to their concerns stating, "Because we have certain associations with people or their families, it probably doesn't mean we should treat them any differently from anybody else, and we're setting a terrible example. Ethically, it's wrong...it's discriminatory!" The other board members disengaged from the debate, while the two females reacted negatively to the equity argument. "That was one of the worst nights in my life because they were just furious

with me; I could tell! The other board members voted to suspend the girls as we would have suspended anybody else.”

While the blunt injustice that Steve faced was not a surprise, the dual dimension of ethicality that was proposed was very disturbing to him because it was so easily offered. This story was about a leader who held fast to his ethic of practice and dared to question a level of authority above him. The story provided exactly what the interview question solicited: a leader maintaining his ethic of practice despite his superiors' lack of ethics.

Further Study

After the interviews were transcribed, coded, and separated into categories, a survey was constructed. (See Appendix D). The elements of the survey were developed from the literature review and data garnered from the interviews. Chapter Five discusses the collection and analysis of the data resulting from the survey.

CHAPTER 5

Report of the Findings – The Survey

In the fall of 2008, the survey instrument, constructed from the superintendent interview results and literature review, was administered to 41 participants in two doctoral administrative cohorts and one masters administrative certification cohort. The data from the survey were analyzed for descriptive statistics using SAS's JMP statistical software (Lehman, et al, 2005). The data is reported for each of the demographic and construct domains.

Return Rate

The survey was administered to 41 individuals in three post graduate cohorts. Thirty-eight (93%) surveys were returned. The surveys were administered to an entire cohort at the Virginia Tech Northern Virginia Center. The instructor of the Hampton Roads Center administered surveys to his cohort and an instructor in Fredericksburg administered them to his cohort. The limited number of administrations was due to the reduction in cohorts, their meetings for the 2008 fall semester, and my inability to travel to the Blacksburg campus to administer surveys to those cohorts.

Instrument Characteristics

The survey consisted of responses to four scenarios involving ethical dilemmas. For each scenario, respondents were asked to rate 20 statements as (1) not relevant, (2) slightly relevant, (3) of some relevance, or (4), a lot of relevance, This yielded a four-point Likert-type response scale. The 20 statements were further divided into four groups of five statements, one group for each of the following constructs: trustworthiness, [insert concepts here]. Twenty items per scenario were used so that five of the construct item statements could be structured to be 'more relevant' to the scenario than others and the other 15 statements could be structured to be 'less relevant' than the others. Ideally, if respondents understood the scenario and the ethical dilemma contained therein, they would rate the five statements designed to be the most relevant to the scenario higher than the other 15 statements. This logic is repeated for each of the four scenarios resulting in the same 20 responses repeated for each scenario and 80 responses overall.

Each group of five items was converted into a scale score; a response of 'not relevant' and 'slightly relevant' were awarded no scale points. A response of 'some relevance' converted

to a scale value of one and a response of 'a lot of relevance' converted to a value of two, thereby resulting in a scale score that could range from zero to ten for each group of five items.

Responses to each scenario yielded four scale scores; a primary scale score for that group of five items most relevant to the scenario and three secondary scores for the three groups of items designed to be not relevant to the scenario. Overall, this process resulted in four primary scale scores, one per scenario, and nine secondary scores, three per scenario. Those scores were then recorded on the Excel spreadsheet and uploaded into the JMP (2005) statistical software. See Table 1 for clarification and explanation of data labels.

Table 1
Conceptual Structure of Constructs, Responses and Scoring Rubric

Scenarios	Constructs	Rubric	Construct Score
¹ First Scenario - designed to elicit higher relevance ratings for the five trustworthiness items.	² Trustworthiness	³ 5 Items measuring trustworthiness	Items Scored using 1 point for a (3) "some relevance" and 2 points for (4) "lot of relevance" for the 5 items designed to measure the construct, yielding scores ranging from 0 to 10. The construct score matching the scenario construct is the ⁴ primary construct score for that scenario.
	Beneficence	5 Items	Same process for each constructs yielding ⁵ <u>secondary construct score</u> .
	Individuation	5 items	Same process for each constructs yielding secondary construct score.
	Justice	5 Items	Same process for each constructs yielding secondary construct score.
Second Scenario - designed to elicit higher relevance ratings for the five beneficence items	Trustworthiness	5 Items	Same process for each constructs yielding secondary construct score.
	Beneficence	5 items measuring beneficence	Items Scored using 1 point for a (3) "some relevance" and 2 points for (4) "lot of relevance" for the 5 items designed to measure the construct, yielding scores ranging from 0 to 10. The construct score matching the scenario construct is the primary construct score for that scenario.
	Individuation	5 Items	Same process for each constructs yielding secondary construct score.
	Justice	5 Items	Same process for each constructs yielding secondary construct score.
Third Scenario - designed to elicit higher relevance ratings	Trustworthiness	5 items	Same process for each constructs yielding secondary

¹ Scenario – a short situational narrative designed to elicit more positive responses on items designed to measure that construct, E.g., the first scenario is designed to elicit responses related to trustworthiness. There are five items that measure the relevance of the construct to that scenario.

² A theoretical construct describing a set of values used in making certain kinds of ethical decisions

³ For each construct there are five multiple-response scale items (1= no relevance to 1 = lot of relevance).

⁴ A summative score of the five items designed to measure the particular construct that matches the scenario as designed. The scoring rubric is 1=some relevance and 2=a lot of relevance. These responses are totaled across the five items yielding a primary construct score.

⁵ A summative score of the five multiple-response items for the each of the other three construct scores not matched to the scenario construct.

Scenarios	Constructs	Rubric	Construct Score
for the five individuation items	Beneficence	5 Items	Same process for each constructs yielding secondary construct score.
	Individuation	5 Items measuring individuation	Items Scored using 1 point for a (3) "some relevance" and 2 points for (4) "lot of relevance" for the 5 items designed to measure the construct, yielding scores ranging from 0 to 10. The construct score matching the scenario construct is the primary construct score for that scenario.
	Justice	5 items	Same process for each constructs yielding secondary construct score
Fourth Scenario - designed to elicit higher relevance ratings for the five justice items	Trustworthiness	5 Items	Same process for each constructs yielding secondary construct score
	Beneficence	5 Items	Same process for each constructs yielding secondary construct score
	Individuation	5 items	Same process for each constructs yielding secondary construct score
	Justice	5 Items measuring justice	Items Scored using 1 point for a (3) "some relevance" and 2 points for (4) "lot of relevance" for the 5 items designed to measure the construct, yielding scores ranging from 0 to 10. The construct score matching the scenario construct is the primary score for that scenario.

Respondents

The respondents included 12 (31.6%) males and 26 (68.4%) females. The total years of experience of each respondent in education was collected. Four (10.5%) respondents had one to five years experience in education. Five (13.2%) respondents had six to ten years experience in education. Eleven (28.9%) respondents had 11 to 15 years experience in education. Eleven (28.9%) respondents had 16 to 20 years experience in education. Seven respondents (18.4%) had 20 or more years experience in education.

Thirteen females and nine males (57.9%) of the respondents had 0-5 years administrative experience. Ten females and two males (31.6%) of the respondents had 6-10 years experience. Three females and one male (10.5%) of the respondents had 11-15 years experience.

Twenty females and 11 males (81.6%) of the respondents had earned a masters degree. Four females and 0 males (10.5%) had earned a doctorate. Two females and one male (7.9%) had not earned a graduate degree.

Descriptive Statistics of Scaled Scores

Descriptive statistics were gathered on all responses to the survey. Additionally, descriptive statistics were reported for construct scale scores, both primary and secondary, for each of the four constructs against each of the four scenarios. Table 2 indicates the mean, standard deviation and range for the scale scores for each of the four constructs (Trustworthiness, Beneficence, Individuation, and Justice).

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for Scale Scores for Each Ethical Scenario

Scenario	Scale Score *	Mean	S.D.	Minimum	Maximum
Trustworthiness	Trustworthiness	5.66	2.03	2	9
	Beneficence	5.32	2.13	1	9
	Individuation	4.50	1.75	1	8
	Justice	4.55	1.00	2	9
Beneficence	Trustworthiness	7.13	2.10	3	10
	Beneficence	5.66	1.87	2	9
	Individuation	4.34	2.37	0	9
	Justice	4.92	1.71	2	8
Individuation	Trustworthiness	5.21	1.83	2	9
	Beneficence	5.73	1.84	2	10
	Individuation	4.50	1.72	2	8
	Justice	5.08	2.03	1	10
Justice	Trustworthiness	4.03	2.58	0	9
	Beneficence	5.08	2.33	0	10
	Individuation	3.71	1.90	0	7
	Justice	5.32	2.09	0	10

* *Bolded scale score denotes Primary Scale Score*

Discussion of Scenario Ratings

Discussions of the survey instrument findings are organized by each ethical construct. The construct scale score for each ethical construct was determined by assigning a value to each item response that matched the scenario. A value of 2 was assigned to responses of a lot of relevance and a value of 1 to responses of some relevance to the construct statements that were correct descriptors of the scenario being rated by the respondent. A value of zero was assigned to

the responses 'none' or 'slight' to all other statements for the scenario being evaluated by the respondent.

The mean for all four of the primary construct scales ranged from the high of 5.66 out of 10 possible points for trustworthiness to the low of 4.50 for individuation. The standard deviation ranged from the high of 2.13 for beneficence to the low of 1.75 for individuation. The average of the primary construct scale means is 5.03. See Table 2 for the scale scores. The following sections include a discussion of each of the four constructs.

Trustworthiness Scenario

Do educational administrators perceive statements related to trustworthiness as relevant to a scenario that illustrates an ethical dilemma of trustworthiness?

The first scenario (Trustworthiness) had five items constructed to relate specifically to it. Respondents rated four of those five items, on average, as 'some' or 'a lot' in terms of relevance as expected. The item, *Communication from school administrators to teachers should be clear and unfiltered*, was rated as least relevant. Further reflection suggests that the item might alternatively be stated as *Communications from school administrators should be clear and reliable*, which may relate more explicitly to the first scenario regarding Henry's transfer and Jack's decision to tell him. In the same manner, the item *Teachers determine their degree of loyalty to a principal based on the values evident in her decisions*, might be improved by referring to principals' consistent truth telling.

Construct scale scores were calculated for each of the four constructs (trustworthiness, beneficence, individuation, and justice). The construct scale scores were designed to aggregate the perceived relevance of five relevant statements to a particular scenario, in this case the Trustworthiness scenario. (See Table 3.) Responses to the Trustworthiness scenario were on average 5.66, on a zero to 10 point scale, for the Trustworthiness ethical constructs. The mean construct score for the Beneficence ethical responses were nearly as high (mean = 5.32). The mean construct score for the Justice ethical construct was lower (mean = 4.55) and even lower (mean = 4.50) for the Individuation ethical construct. A re-examination of the items comprising each scale score as well as the clarity of the scenario would appear to be justified. It is possible that the Trustworthiness scenario regarding Henry's transfer might have been sufficiently complicated so as to require more thought from respondents, possibly leading to confusion in determining the relevance of the individual item statements.

Table 3
Descriptive Statistics for Item Responses for the Trustworthiness Scenario

*Construct Scale & Mean Score	Item	Mean (1-4 Scale)	S.D.
Trustworthiness Mean Score = 5.66	Trust is a two-way street	3.18	1.27
	Communications from School Administrators to teachers should be clear and unfiltered	2.16	1.28
	Teachers determine their degree of loyalty to a principal based on the values evident in his/her decisions	2.58	1.29
	Principals should agree to system directives that may be less beneficial to their schools.	3.18	0.73
	Principals demonstrate their trustworthiness by the decisions they make.	3.55	0.60
Beneficence Mean Score = 5.66	Preferential hiring (by ethnicity, gender, skill set, etc.) may be morally beneficial	2.32	.99
	Principals routinely make decisions that are best for those who depend on them, without regard to personal gain	3.21	0.91
	Principals should make decisions impartially.	3.24	0.75
	Principals should make decisions based on the benefit to all parties, including themselves.	2.97	0.85
	Successful principals place the welfare of the school systems, school, teachers, and students above their own.	3.18	0.77
Individuation Mean Score = 4.50	A principal must try to give his/her subordinates as much freedom of choice as possible.	2.55	1.08
	Ensuring student welfare justifies limiting teacher freedom to make decisions.	1.58	1.00
	Self-actualization is an important characteristic of an effective principal.	2.87	1.04
	When making decisions the first criteria is to do no harm to any of the parties.	2.79	0.93
	Principals are responsible for the growth of their subordinates.	3.39	0.86
Justice Mean Score = 4.55	A principal's decision requires treating all affected parties equally	3.13	0.96
	The best decisions result in win-win solutions for all affected parties.	2.84	0.89
	When a person or persons have been wronged in the past, principal should consider that fact when making decisions.	1.97	1.00
	Principals should hire the most qualified applicants regardless of other factors.	2.87	1.17
	Principals should consider differences in people when making decisions.	2.84	0.92

Items Scored using 1 point for a (3) "some relevance" and 2 points for (4) "lot of relevance" for the 5 items designed to measure the construct, yielding scores ranging from 0 to 10.

Beneficence Scenario

Do educational administrators perceive statements related to beneficence as relevant to a scenario that illustrates an ethical dilemma of beneficence?

Five item responses were constructed specifically to relate to the second scenario (Beneficence). Of those five items, four items were rated 'some' to 'a lot' in terms of relevance. The item, *'Preferential hiring (by ethnicity, gender, skill set, etc.) may be morally beneficial,* was rated as least relevant (mean = 2.12). Since the term 'beneficial' is included in the wording, it is unclear as to why the item was rated below the mean scale score (2.50). An alternative construction of the item wording might employ an action other than preferential hiring that would relate more closely to the scenario issue of Kim's dilemma in determining a de-staffing strategy. The item, *Principals should make decisions based upon the benefit to all parties, including themselves,* may be judged more relevant if the phrase 'including themselves' is deleted.

The construct scale scores were designed to aggregate the perceived relevance of the five statements to a particular scenario, in this case the Beneficence scenario. (See Table 4.) Responses to the Beneficence scenario were on average 5.66, on a zero to 10 point scale for the Beneficence ethical constructs. The average scale score for the Trustworthiness ethical constructs was noticeably higher (mean = 7.13), while noticeably lower (mean = 4.92) for the Justice ethical construct and even lower for the Individuation ethical construct (mean = 4.34). On re-examination, the dilemma of the scenario, Kim's use of enrollment as an arbitrary de-staffing determinant or her prerogative to employ tenure, or years of service, as a de-staffing determinant, may not be sufficiently clear as a choice for beneficence.

Table 4
Descriptive Statistics for Item Responses for the Beneficence Scenario

*Construct Scale and Mean Score	Item	Mean (1-4 Scale)	S.D.
Trustworthiness Mean Score = 7.13	Trust is a two-way street	3.42	0.92
	Communications from School Administrators to teachers should be clear and unfiltered	2.08	1.24
	Teachers determine their degree of loyalty to a principal based on the values evident in his/her decisions	2.42	1.22
	Principals should agree to system directives that may be less beneficial to their schools.	2.32	1.12
	Principals demonstrate their trustworthiness by the decisions they make.	3.68	.053
Beneficence Mean Score = 5.66	Preferential hiring (by ethnicity, gender, skill set, etc.) may be morally beneficial	2.26	1.08
	Principals routinely make decisions that are best for those who depend on them, without regard to personal gain	3.00	0.84
	Principals should make decisions impartially.	3.63	0.54
	Principals should make decisions based on the benefit to all parties, including themselves.	3.13	0.62
	Successful principals place the welfare of the school systems, school, teachers, and students above their own.	3.29	0.80
Individuation Mean Score = 4.34	A principal must try to give his/her subordinates as much freedom of choice as possible.	2.45	0.98
	Ensuring student welfare justifies limiting teacher freedom to make decisions.	1.71	0.96
	Self-actualization is an important characteristic of an effective principal.	2.79	1.04
	When making decisions the first criteria is to do no harm to any of the parties.	3.08	1.05
	Principals are responsible for the growth of their subordinates.	3.34	0.81
Justice Mean Score = 4.92	A principal's decision requires treating all affected parties equally	3.53	0.60
	The best decisions result in win-win solutions for all affected parties.	2.76	0.97
	When a person or persons have been wronged in the past, principal should consider that fact when making decisions.	2.39	1.08
	Principals should hire the most qualified applicants regardless of other factors.	2.84	1.20
	Principals should consider differences in people when making decisions.	2.76	0.97

*Items Scored using 1 point for a (3) "some relevance" and 2 points for (4) "lot of relevance" for the 5 items designed to measure the construct, yielding scores ranging from 0 to 10.

Individuation Scenario

Do educational administrators perceive statements related to individuation as relevant to a scenario that illustrates an ethical dilemma of individuation?

The third scenario (Individuation) had five item responses constructed specifically to relate to it. Four of the five items were rated ‘some’ to ‘a lot’ in terms of relevance. The item, *Ensuring student welfare justifies limiting teacher freedom to make decisions*, was rated least relevant. The item scale score (mean = 2.13) might be attributed to the perception that the item places teachers’ freedom to make decisions subordinate to student welfare. A rewording of the construct might be, *Administrative limitation to teachers’ decision making freedom should only occur to ensure student welfare.*”

The construct scale scores were designed to aggregate the perceived relevance of the five statements to a particular scenario. (See Table 5) Responses to the Individuation scenario were on average 4.50, on a 0 to 10 point scale for the Individuation ethical constructs. The average scale scores for the other sets of ethical constructs were all slight higher: Beneficence (mean = 5.73), Trustworthiness (mean = 5.21), and Justice (mean = 5.08). Comparing the mean scale scores for the ethical constructs, the lower mean score may be attributed to the participants’ lack of understanding of what individuation is or recognizing a portrayal of individuation as the alternative in the scenario.

Table 5
Descriptive Statistics for Item Responses for the Individuation Scenario

* Construct Scale & Mean Score	Item	Mean (1-4 Scale)	S.D.
Trustworthiness Mean Score = 5.21	Trust is a two-way street	3.27	0.97
	Communications from School Administrators to teachers should be clear and unfiltered	3.37	0.82
	Teachers determine their degree of loyalty to a principal based on the values evident in his/her decisions	3.63	0.49
	Principals should agree to system directives that may be less beneficial to their schools.	3.26	0.72
	Principals demonstrate their trustworthiness by the decisions they make.	3.50	0.83
Beneficence Mean Score = 5.73	Preferential hiring (by ethnicity, gender, skill set, etc.) may be morally beneficial	3.24	0.85
	Principals routinely make decisions that are best for those who depend on them, without regard to personal gain	3.11	0.95
	Principals should make decisions impartially.	3.50	0.76
	Principals should make decisions based on the benefit to all parties, including themselves.	2.97	0.91
	Successful principals place the welfare of the school systems, school, teachers, and students above their own.	3.37	0.54
Individuation Mean Score = 4.50	A principal must try to give his/her subordinates as much freedom of choice as possible.	2.61	0.97
	Ensuring student welfare justifies limiting teacher freedom to make decisions.	2.13	1.12
	Self-actualization is an important characteristic of an effective principal.	2.68	1.21
	When making decisions the first criteria is to do no harm to any of the parties.	2.97	1.00
	Principals are responsible for the growth of their subordinates.	2.71	1.14
Justice Mean Score = 5.08	A principal's decision requires treating all affected parties equally	3.32	0.70
	The best decisions result in win-win solutions for all affected parties.	2.97	0.85
	When a person or persons have been wronged in the past, principal should consider that fact when making decisions.	1.76	0.94
	Principals should hire the most qualified applicants regardless of other factors.	3.18	0.95
	Principals should consider differences in people when making decisions.	2.87	0.96

* Items Scored using 1 point for a (3) "some relevance" and 2 points for (4) "lot of relevance" for the 5 items

Justice Scenario

Do educational administrators perceive statements related to justice as relevant to a scenario that illustrates an ethical dilemma of justice?

The fourth scenario (Justice) had five item responses constructed specifically related to it. Four of the five items were rated 'some' to 'a lot' in terms of relevance. The item, *Principals should consider differences in people when making decisions*, scored at the middle ($m = 2.50$). Further consideration of the item construction suggests that the ethic of justice might better reflect when worded as, *Principals should consider people's diversity when making decisions*. Similarly, the item, *The best decisions result in win-win solutions for all affected parties*, scored slightly higher than the mean. A response score reflecting greater relevance for justice may be achieved by replacing this construct with one that conveys a just outcome rather than consensus.

The construct scale scores were designed to aggregate the perceived relevance of the five statements to a particular scenario; in this case, the Justice scenario. (See Table 6.) Responses to the Justice scenario were on average 5.32, on a scale of 0 to 10, for the Justice ethical constructs. The average scale score for the Beneficence ethical constructs was slightly lower (mean = 5.08). The average scale score for the Trustworthiness ethical constructs was noticeably lower (mean = 4.03) while the average scale score for the Individuation ethical constructs was even lower (mean = 3.71). The scale score for the Justice scenario may be attributed to the pair of ethical constructs that need reconstruction and their divergence from the intention of the scenario.

Table 6
Descriptive Statistics for Item Responses for the Justice Scenario

*Construct Scale & Mean Score	Item	Mean (1-4 Scale)	S.D.
Trustworthiness Mean Score = 4.03	Trust is a two-way street	3.20	0.99
	Communications from School Administrators to teachers should be clear and unfiltered	1.70	1.21
	Teachers determine their degree of loyalty to a principal based on the values evident in his/her decisions	2.20	1.32
	Principals should agree to system directives that may be less beneficial to their schools.	2.10	0.98
	Principals demonstrate their trustworthiness by the decisions they make.	3.00	1.21
Beneficence Mean Score = 5.08	Preferential hiring (by ethnicity, gender, skill set, etc.) may be morally beneficial	2.90	1.10
	Principals routinely make decisions that are best for those who depend on them, without regard to personal gain	2.80	0.99
	Principals should make decisions impartially.	2.70	1.43
	Principals should make decisions based on the benefit to all parties, including themselves.	2.60	1.20
	Successful principals place the welfare of the school systems, school, teachers, and students above their own.	2.90	1.11
Individuation Mean Score = 3.71	A principal must try to give his/her subordinates as much freedom of choice as possible.	1.90	0.98
	Ensuring student welfare justifies limiting teacher freedom to make decisions.	1.70	0.94
	Self-actualization is an important characteristic of an effective principal.	2.60	1.22
	When making decisions the first criteria is to do no harm to any of the parties.	3.20	0.98
	Principals are responsible for the growth of their subordinates.	2.60	1.16
Justice Mean Score = 5.32	A principal's decision requires treating all affected parties equally	3.00	1.09
	The best decisions result in win-win solutions for all affected parties.	2.90	0.82
	When a person or persons have been wronged in the past, principal should consider that fact when making decisions.	3.10	1.01
	Principals should hire the most qualified applicants regardless of other factors.	3.10	1.21
	Principals should consider differences in people when making decisions.	2.50	1.08

* Items Scored using 1 point for a (3) "some relevance" and 2 points for (4) "lot of relevance" for the 5 items designed to measure the construct, yielding scores ranging from 0 to 10.

Analysis of Demographic Variables and Construct Scale Scores

A Pearson Correlation analysis between correct construct scale scores was conducted. A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to determine any relationship between primary construct scale scores and the four demographic categories. The correlation of primary scale scores is reported by each ethical scenario.

Years in Education

The results of the ANOVA conducted between scale scores and participants' years in education are shown in Table 7.

Table 7
One Way Analysis of Variance of Scale Scores by Years in Education

	Degrees of Freedom	Sums of Squares	Mean Square	F Ratio	p(F)
Trustworthiness					
Categories of Years in Education	4	12.30	3.07	0.72	0.58
Error	33	140.25	4.25		
Total	37	152.55			
Beneficence					
Categories of Years in education	4	10.28	2.57	0.72	0.59
Error	33	118.28	3.58		
Total	37	128.55			
Individuation					
Categories of Years in Education	4	10.81	2.70	0.90	0.47
Error	33	98.68	2.99		
Total	37	109.5			
Justice					
Categories of Years in Education	4	2.44	0.61	0.13	0.97
Error	33	159.77	4.84		
Total	37	162.21			

Gender

Results of the ANOVA conducted for gender and each of the constructs are shown in Table 8.

Table 8
One Way Analysis of Variance of Scale Scores by Gender

Trustworthiness	Degrees of Freedom	Sums of Squares	Mean Square	F Ratio	P(F)
Categories of Gender	1	1.17	1.17	0.28	0.60
Error	36	151.38	4.20		
Total	37	152.55			
Beneficence					
Categories of Gender	1	5.79	5.79	1.70	0.20
Error	36	122.76	3.41		
Total	37	128.55			
Individuation					
Categories of Gender	1	0.12	0.12	0.04	0.84
Error	36	109.38	3.04		
Total	37	109.5			
Justice					
Categories of Gender	1	2.16	2.15	0.49	0.49
Error	36	160.05	4.46		
Total	37	162.21			

Level of Education

Results of the ANOVA conducted for participant's level of education (academic degrees) are shown in Table 9.

Table 9
One Way Analysis of Variance of Scale Scores by Academic Degree

	Degrees of Freedom	Sums of Squares	Mean Square	F Ratio	P(F)
Trustworthiness					
Categories of Academic Degree	2	4.79	2.39	0.57	0.57
Error	35	147.76	4.22		
Total	37	152.55			
Beneficence					
Categories of Academic Degree	4	2.70	1.35	0.38	0.69
Error	33	125.85	3.60		
Total	37	128.55			
Individuation					
Categories of Academic Degree	2	1.20	0.60	0.19	0.82
Error	35	108.30	3.09		
Total	37	109.50			
Justice					
Categories of Academic Degree	4	4.80	2.38	0.53	0.60
Error	33	157.44	4.50		
Total	37	162.21			

Years in Administration

The results of the ANOVA for the number of years in administration are shown in Table 10.

Table 10

One Way Analysis of Variance of Scale Scores by Years in Administration

	Degrees of Freedom	Sums of Squares	Mean Square	F Ratio	P(F)
Trustworthiness					
Categories of Years in Administration	2	2.02	1.01	0.24	0.79
Error	35	150.53	4.30		
Total	37	152.55			
Beneficence					
Categories of Years in Administration	2	17.86	8.93	2.82	0.73
Error	35	110.69	3.16		
Total	37	128.55			
Individuation					
Categories of Years in Administration	2	3.22	1.60	0.53	0.79
Error	35	106.28	3.04		
Total	37	109.50			
Justice					
Categories of Years in Administration	4	2.29	1.17	0.25	0.78
Error	33	159.92	4.57		
Total	37	162.21			

There were no statistically significant findings between any of the four demographic categories' relationship to the primary construct scale scores.

Analysis of Respondent's Identification of Ethical Dilemmas

The final section of the instrument asked the participants to identify each of the four scenarios by selecting one of the four defined ethical constructs listed below it. The results for matching each ethical scenario to the correct ethical construct are illustrated in Table 11 below.

For the trustworthiness scenario, 12 respondents correctly identified the ethical dilemma. Two respondents incorrectly identified the ethical dilemma as beneficence. Nine respondents incorrectly identified the ethical dilemma as individuation. Fifteen respondents incorrectly identified the ethical dilemma as justice.

For the beneficence scenario, 12 respondents correctly identified the ethical dilemma. Thirty-five respondents incorrectly identified the ethical dilemma as trustworthiness. Three

respondents incorrectly identified the ethical dilemma as individuation. Eighteen respondents incorrectly identified the ethical dilemma as justice.

For the individuation scenario, 13 respondents correctly identified the ethical dilemma. Six respondents incorrectly identified the ethical dilemma as trustworthiness. Eight respondents incorrectly identified the ethical dilemma as beneficence. Eleven respondents incorrectly identified the ethical dilemma as justice.

For the justice scenario, 16 respondents correctly identified the ethical dilemma. Seven respondents incorrectly identified the ethical dilemma as trustworthiness. Three respondents incorrectly identified the ethical dilemma as beneficence. Twelve respondents incorrectly identified the ethical dilemma as individuation.

Table 11
Correct Responses to Matching Ethical Scenario to Ethical Construct

Scenario	Respondent Identification of Scenario								
	Trustworthiness		Beneficence		Individuation		Justice		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	%
Trustworthiness	12	31.6	2	5.2	9	23.7	15	39.5	100
Beneficence	35	13.1	12	31.6	3	7.9	18	47.4	100
Individuation	6	15.6	8	21.1	13	34.4	11	28.9	100
Justice	7	18.4	3	7.9	12	31.6	16	42.1	100

*The correct identification is in bold print.

CHAPTER 6

Discussion of Findings

Overview

The purpose of this study is to explore the presence or degree of values/ethics as it relates to the development/maturity of school administrators' decision-making process.

The study was divided into two phases: a qualitative phase using key informant interviews and a quantitative phase using survey methodology. Data derived from interviewing three retired Virginia division superintendents were used to construct a survey instrument for use with school administrators. The qualitative portion of the study bore out the literature reviewed: educational leaders mature and gain experience in a multitude of areas within the administrative function, but decision-making appears to be the most challenging. The dozens of situations shared during the interviews by the superintendents represented many different and challenging ethical quandaries. Each interviewee related his own experiences, with detail and very personal insights, resulting in useful information for phase two.

A survey instrument was constructed by analyzing the ethical strands from the interviews and aligning them with the four ethical constructs identified by Creamer et al (2004): trustworthiness, beneficence, individuation, and justice. The administration of the survey, with its limitations, did bear out the noteworthy conclusion that educational decision makers, given the same scenarios, incorporate varying personal elements in the process of assessing each scenario. There were basic similarities in some respondents' assessment, but overall, there were wide differences.

Findings from the Interviews

This discussion of the findings from the interviews will focus on each of the secondary research questions that support the gathering of data. The decision-making model from Humphrey, Janosik, & Creamer (2004) and information derived from the literature review, served as the main impetus for creating the data collection instruments. The findings are presented in the organizational order of themes in the literature review.

First Subordinate Research Question

Do administrators consider ethical constructs such as trustworthiness, beneficence, individuation, or justice when making ethical decisions?

The transcripts of the superintendents' interviews frequently showed that recollecting and conveying their decision-making in situations gave them pause, allowing them to offer an evaluation or comment about the specific ethicality attached to the situation. It is important to note that each of the informants felt that the performance of all of their duties called for them to be ethical with decision-making not the least of those duties.

In one example, Roger, when confronted with an ethical dilemma by his superior's directive on how to answer an interviewer, stated "I had a real problem with that. I felt like we ought to be honest!" When John recalled an unethical practice toward elementary students, he exclaimed, "I couldn't believe it...I hadn't heard of anything like that in my life...I mean, you talk about immoral, or unethical, or unprofessional...it's wrong in so many ways!" Steve recounted how, in order to mask the incompetence of an employee hired through nepotism, he was given an order by his superintendent in direct contradiction to school board policies.

Concerning Steve's responsibilities as the crony's supervisor, he remarked,

I had to fight that kind of unethical behavior... Lord knows I'm not perfect, but don't question the things I'm doing for the right reasons, or in doing my job, insinuating they're wrong or I can't do the job, unless you have proof, and if you have proof, then that's fine...but don't accuse me of things because I'm not going to take it. I just could not sit by and let that continue to happen!

These reflections from the superintendents support the claims of Humphrey et al. (2003) that the reflective educational professional is often torn between competing interests and self-preservation. Callahan (1962), Kimbrough (1985), and Rieff (1979) all wrote that presentation of a dilemma, reflection on it, and subsequent action elicit strong responses that are tied to the decision maker's personal past experience.

Second Subordinate Research Question

Does an administrator's professional background and training affect how he/she make ethical decisions?

In the interviews, all three men remarked more than once that their earlier positions in leadership were integral to effective decision-making. Each man shared how different aspects of

his personal and career experiences with superiors informed and prepared him to deal with dilemmas faced throughout his career. Roger reflected on the fairness of the superintendent he worked for who encouraged honest and private debate and reflection: “You could tell him that you thought he needed to hear you... And he would say ‘Okay go ahead and tell me’.” An early mentor in John’s administrative career advised him that “You don’t always have to know the right answer. Most of the answers are there...you just have to get it out!” Steve related in emotional strains that, “I believe you treat others as you want to be treated. I’ve tried to have that premise all of my life... then you have to stick with that ethically, I think, and morally, for a better way to put it. It’s not been easy at times...but that kind of sums it up.”

The presentation of a dilemma, reflection on it, and subsequent action elicit strong, sometimes emotional responses that are tied to the decision maker’s personal past experiences (Callahan, 1962; Kimbrough, 1985; & Rieff, 1979).

The study by Tymo (1995) sought successful leaders’ decision-making steps and outcomes to determine their moral or ethical sense. Trevino (2000) identified mature reasoning and well developed skill sets in the successful ethical influence exerted by the moral leader. Feldman (2002) found that the memories of learned lessons or experiences throughout a leader’s career climb carried a moral responsibility to inform and lead subordinates through or around professional pitfalls.

Third Subordinate Research Question

Does an administrator’s professional position of status affect how they make ethical decisions?

Each of the three superintendents gave several instances of poor decision-making or unethical practice on the part of administrative subordinates or colleagues. Roger, while serving as a school board member, related an instance where a superintendent was dismissed for abusing his power; the superintendent had believed that his way was the right way and no one was to question any of his decisions. Roger also reflected, concerning some of his own decisions as superintendent, “...you make a lot of decisions over the course of your career...there were times when folks wanted a piece of my hide for making such a dumb call...I explained what happened and I said, “There’s no question...I made a mistake!”

On ultimate decision-making authority John shared that,

I never thought of myself like that... I've never, ever adhered to the old traditional top down hierarchy, because that's based on some very faulty assumptions that the people at the top know more than the people anywhere else. And that's an ethical issue in my mind... 'cause that's misrepresentation... that's manipulation...

When reflecting about position and authority, Steve stated emphatically,

I've seen too many principals and superintendents who seem to change completely when they get those jobs; they become... uh, they are enamored by their supposedly new power... they become control freaks, they become task masters, different people than the people we knew them as before...

Actual instances and news items, both regional and national, cited in the literature review, lead to the conclusion that neither the career level nor success of educational leaders inoculates them from allowing a lack of ethicality to supersede sound judgment gained from experience and training. Along with Beck and Murphy (1997), Normore (2004) points out that the decline of traditional family or community values in students' and schools over the last two decades translates ahead to a decline of those same values in some present and future educational leaders. This logic translates as well to the last subordinate research question.

Fourth Subordinate Research Question

Does an administrator's personal background affect how they make ethical decisions?

It was interesting and evident that as each of the superintendents shared their personal biographical information at the start of the interviews, their recollections of early youth, parental upbringing, and influences were very important to forming their ethics. John stated at the outset,

The interesting thing is that our beliefs, believe it or not, have a greater effect on what we do than all the mileage or anything else in the world! I mean, I'm not a saint. And I'm not a purist...but there are some basics! Maybe its ethics...but to me there is always a thing called human decency...if you have respect for people, one, you don't make decisions that effect people and do it lightly, you don't treat people as things ...you consider the human element... its almost like a common sense kinda human decency thing...

Steve reflected,

Personally, I had great struggles growing up... I had to make sure I grew personally. I needed that personal growth...spiritual growth. You have that background, that stuff in your head and in your heart, that maybe its going to pop out without any prearranged set or one particular thing you have to think about. It's just kind of assimilated there. I think that's huge in education.

Roger's personal reflection was very clear, "Character traits of integrity, honesty, doing the right thing...ethically they have to be second nature to you! It's an automatic thing! You have to make your decisions in that framework." Details of reflections related to parenting models or educational expectations were shared and cited throughout all three interviews.

Although he did not seek value identification or categorization within his study of leaders' decision-making, Tymo (1995) did find that four of five principals, judged to be effective through the approval of superiors, reflected on their personal and moral/ethical values in stages of problem defining, solving or decision-making.

Each of the informants, given opportunity at the end of their interviews, commented very poignantly about the ethical state of leadership in education. Steve commented very soberly about the superintendency,

Well, one thing that has bothered me terribly in the last ten years of watching... a sore subject with principals, but superintendents... state superintendents and superintendents of schools and others in leadership positions...they talk a lot of good things but they don't, and I don't mean to be trite, but they don't walk the talk. That bothers me so much in educational leadership today and there are a lot of people for whom I don't have much respect... I thought I did... I learned how they treated people privately, which was totally different than what they were pronouncing publicly, or geared toward their 'Christian' values, or their way of life, or what ever. They treated employees like dirt, or people on the line people, or are not honest with money...

John became passionate when asked to comment about leadership opportunities and those aspiring to leadership positions,

I appreciate the fact that you are focusing on something like this... God knows we need it... in all levels of organizations, government, and life today, I think that there are real serious issues with ethics and integrity... people generate their own understanding of things... create their own meanings and things and communicate them. Ambition... I don't like the word ambition, because ambition implies to me that it's all about position... it's all about status... or it's all about money... I have no interest in that; in fact if I think that's what's motivating somebody, that would work against them in my mind! That's somebody who is just putting in their time, and going through the motions and doing things designed to make them look good so they can get more jobs. To me, raw ambition has nothing to do with what you are there to actually do. It's more of 'It's just for me!' ...but there is a line! Maybe it's ethics.

Roger was the most emphatic in his final comments about preparing future leaders when he stated,

On the horizon for the ethical practitioner, if you want a better ethical person in your educational ranks then you have to attract the best and train them well...I don't know if we'll ever get there...because of the competition...but you have to do what is necessary to get them there. We don't always get the best people going into education...you get a lot of good ones, but not always the best. The best and the brightest are going where the best and the brightest can succeed and do well according to our standards. You don't want someone that says, 'I gotta do this and get it on my resume'... that kind of person that should never be a superintendent! These character traits of integrity, honesty, doing the right thing...ethically they have to be second nature to you! It's an automatic thing...that ethics, especially when it comes to children and students, just sort of rise to the top. You have to make your decisions in that framework...even if it costs you your job, or brings on conflicts with your superiors. You try to put it in a professional manner and you point out why you've done it that way. Why would you feel you have to go down the road where you violate morals and ethics? You just don't do that! If you don't learn from your mistakes and lessons, all that your experience amounts to is just a passage of time.

As already noted in the literature review, Martin (1999) stated that aspiring professionals must find their desire to succeed in "consciousness and commitment" rather than the benchmarks of moral, or ethical minimums (p.43). The moral standard should be the implementation of personal conscience "within and beyond the expected dilemmas of the job, and at the same time should provide new, positive levels of expectation by inspiring others to take up the same challenge...not the opposite." (Martin, p.45)

Findings from the Survey

Findings from the survey are discussed in relation to the Ethical Decision-Making Model described earlier. The survey instrument was designed to measure whether administrators considered ethical constructs such as Trustworthiness, Beneficence, Individuation and Justice when making ethical decisions. Twenty construct response statements were designed to be relevant to one of the four ethical scenarios. Overall, most of the 20-value laden ethical statements were considered relevant by respondents (mean > 2.5 as defined on a point scale, where points were awarded 1 for 'no relevance', 2 for 'slight relevance', 3 for 'relevant', and 4 for 'very relevant'). Findings related to each of the four constructs are discussed here.

Trustworthiness

Do educational administrators perceive statements related to trustworthiness as relevant to a scenario that illustrates an ethical dilemma of trustworthiness?

The first scenario was constructed to elicit responses to the ethical construct Trustworthiness, which had, on average, the highest construct scale score (mean= 5.66) for the first scenario. Creamer, et al, (2004) describe dilemmas that require trustworthiness as a necessary element to the solution, as those in which the decision maker's character is operational in his professional principles. In instances such as this, the fidelity of the decision maker is evidenced by the consistent truth of his practice. However, the Beneficence Construct Scale Score was not significantly lower on average (mean = 5.32). It is possible that the scenario, regarding Henry's transfer, was too complicated for respondents to easily analyze, resulting in some confusion between the existent qualities of beneficence and trustworthiness.

Of the five items included in the Primary Trustworthiness Construct Scale, respondents rate all but one at least 2.5 on a four-point scale. The item rated least relevant to trustworthiness concerned principals conveying trustworthiness by the decisions they made. To associate greater relevance, the item may be reworded to read, *Administrators are respected for the degree to which they tell the truth consistently and reliably.*

The first section of the instrument addressed whether administrators' professional background and training affects how they make ethical decisions. The results of the analyses of the variables related to respondents' background and training (years of educational experience, years as an administrator, academic degrees earned, or gender) did not result in any significant connection between these demographic categories and the respondents' indicating some or a lot of relevance of trustworthiness construct responses to the trustworthiness scenario. When examining the raw data, the respondents indicated that 3 of the 5 trustworthiness construct responses, respectively, (*Trust is a two-way street; Principals should agree to system directives that may be less beneficial to their schools; Principals demonstrate their trustworthiness by the decisions they make*) had some or a lot of relevance to the scenario. The respondents indicated by their relevance ratings that beneficence construct responses (*Principals routinely make decisions that are best for those who depend on them, without regard to personal gain; Principals should make decisions impartially; Successful principals place the welfare of the school systems, school, teachers, and students above their own*) were more relevant to the trustworthiness scenario than

any of the trustworthiness construct responses. The strongest response rating to the trustworthiness scenario was an individuation construct response (*Principals are responsible for the growth of their subordinates*), which showed that the respondents felt some or a lot of relevance between the two. The results show that the participants did not consistently match construct responses to the correct ethical scenarios, as supported by the literature.

Beneficence

Do educational administrators perceive statements related to beneficence as relevant to a scenario that illustrates an ethical dilemma of beneficence?

The second scenario was designed to elicit responses to ethical construct Beneficence. Beneficence was, on average, the second highest construct scale score (mean = 5.66) for the second scenario. The Trustworthiness Construct Scale Score for this scenario was higher (mean = 7.13). This higher response rating for the second scenario may have been due to the complexity of the interlaced ethical constructs and the implied relationship between Kim and her faculty. Creamer, et al, (2004) describe dilemmas requiring beneficence as a necessary element to the solution in that the ethical principle of doing no harm or advancing the autonomy of another is evidenced in the character and professional practice of the decision maker.

Of the five items included in the Primary Beneficence Construct Scale, respondents rated all but one at least 3.00 on the four-point scale indicated above. That item, rated least relevant to the beneficence scenario, related to the moral benefit of preferential hiring on a par with affirmative action. Closer relevance to the scenario might have been accomplished if the item were reworded to read,, *Determinants used by principals for retention, such as seniority, have benefit to organizational culture.*

Once again, The results of the analyses of the variables related to respondents' background and training (years of educational experience, years as an administrator, academic degrees earned, or gender) did not result in any significant connection between these demographic categories and the respondents' indicating some or a lot of of' relevance of beneficence construct responses to the beneficence scenario. When examining the raw data, the respondents, indicated by their relevance ratings that 3 of the 5 beneficence construct responses (*Principals should make decisions impartially; Principals should make decisions based on the benefit to all parties, including themselves; Successful principals place the welfare of the school*

systems, school, teachers, and students above their own) had some or a lot of relevance to the scenario. Respondents also indicated by their relevance ratings that two of the trustworthiness construct responses (*Trust is a two-way street; Principals demonstrate their trustworthiness by the decisions they make*) had some or a lot of relevance to the beneficence scenario. Nearly all of the respondents indicated by their relevance ratings that a justice construct response (*A principal's decision requires treating all affected parties equally*) had some or a lot of relevance to the beneficence scenario. The strongest response rating to the beneficence scenario was an individuation construct response (*Principals are responsible for the growth of their subordinates*), which showed that nearly all of the respondents felt some or a lot of relevance between the two.

Individuation

Do educational administrators perceive statements related to individuation as relevant to a scenario that illustrates an ethical dilemma of individuation?

The third scenario was constructed to elicit responses related to Individuation which, on average, had the lowest construct scale score (mean = 4.50) for the third scenario. The ethical construct from Creamer, et al, (2004) identified as individuation requires the character of the decision maker to honor or respect the ethical principle of autonomy for individual growth and experience while preserving and realizing the professional responsibility of supportive guidance. The construct scale scores of the Trustworthiness (mean = 5.21), Beneficence (mean = 5.73), and Justice (mean = 5.08) scenarios were on average higher, suggesting that the interplay of ethical issues that Andy assesses in the scenario complicate singling out individuation as the primary construct.

One of the five items included in the Primary Individuation Construct Scale, was rated lower than 2.5 on the four-point scale by respondents. This item rated least relevant to individuation concerned valuing student welfare over teacher decision-making autonomy. Rewording this item to rate higher in relevance might read as, *Teachers' decision-making freedom should not come at the expense of student welfare.*

The results from the first section of the survey instrument gave no meaningful connection between the demographic categories of years of educational experience, years as an administrator, academic degrees earned, or gender, and the respondents' indicating "some" or "a

lot” strength of relevance of individuation construct responses to the individuation scenario. When examining the raw data, the respondents, indicated by their relevance ratings that 3 of the 5 individuation construct statements (*Principals are responsible for the growth of their subordinates, Self-actualization is an important characteristic of an effective principal; When making decisions the first criteria is to do no harm to any of the parties*) had some or a lot of relevance to the scenario. Respondents indicated by their relevance ratings that 2 of the 5 justice construct responses (*A principal’s decision requires treating all affected parties equally; Principals should hire the most qualified applicants regardless of other factors*) had some or a lot of relevance to the individuation scenario. The respondents indicated by their relevance ratings that two justice construct responses (*Principals should make decisions impartially; Successful principals place the welfare of the school systems, school, teachers, and students above their own*) were more relevant to the individuation scenario than any of the individuation construct responses. The strongest response ratings to the individuation scenario were four of the trustworthiness construct responses (*Teachers determine their degree of loyalty to a principal based on the values evident in his/her decisions; Principals demonstrate their trustworthiness by the decisions they make; Communication from school administrators to teachers should be clear and unfiltered; Principals should agree to system directives that may be less beneficial to their schools*). The respondents felt some or a lot of relevance between the four trustworthiness construct responses and the individuation scenario more strongly than any of the individuation construct responses. This last observation inversely corresponds with the trustworthiness scenario and the individuation construct statements.

Justice

Do educational administrators perceive statements related to justice as relevant to a scenario that illustrates an ethical dilemma of justice? The fourth scenario was designed to elicit responses related to Justice. Justice was, on average, the highest construct score (mean = 5.32) for the fourth scenario. Creamer, et al, (2004) describe situations requiring justice as those where the process of fairness is pivotal to professional practice exhibiting equality through impartiality. The Beneficence Construct Scale Score was not significantly lower on average (mean = 5.08). The ethical dilemma in the justice scenario that leads the reader to formulate a remedy for Jane, may lead the reader to confuse the intervention of Alix as beneficence for Jane.

Of the five items included in the Primary Justice Construct Scale, respondents rated each of them at least 2.50 on the four-point scale. The item rated least of the five (mean = 2.50) related to principals' differentiation between persons affected by their decisions.

As before, the results of the analyses of the variables related to respondents' background and training (years of educational experience, years as an administrator, academic degrees earned, or gender) did not result in any significant connection between these demographic categories and the respondents' indicating some or a lot of strength of relevance of justice items to the justice scenario. When examining the raw data, the respondents indicated by their relevance ratings that 3 of the 5 justice construct responses (*Principals should hire the most qualified applicants regardless of other factors; A principal's decision requires treating all affected parties equally; The best decisions result in win-win solutions for all affected parties; When a person or persons have been wronged in the past, principal should consider that fact when making decisions*) had some or a lot of relevance to the scenario. The respondents indicated by their relevance ratings that a trustworthiness construct responses (*Trust is a two-way street*) had some or a lot of relevance to the justice scenario. The respondents indicated by their relevance responses that an individuation construct response (*When making decisions the first criteria is to do no harm to any of the parties*) had some or a lot of relevance to the justice scenario. The respondents also indicated by their relevance ratings that a beneficence construct response (*Principals routinely make decisions that are best for those who depend on them, without regard to personal gain*) had some or a lot of relevance to the scenario.

Normore (2004) pointed out that until midway through the 20th century, traditional value-set infusion was always strongly tied to the value-set of our country's schools and their leadership, but the current decline in values structures is strongly affiliated with our schools' present day performance and lack of leadership effectiveness. Callahan (1962) noted that midway through the past century, educational leaders were trained to manage schools as business enterprises and to adopt the altered value sets that would enable them to do so. As the leader in world industry and commerce at that time, our society and its values were reflective of dominance and power. It follows that those values are implicit in leadership training programs. These findings and positions meld completely with an important portion of Levine's (2005) premise. He stated that the curricula in leadership preparation programs in our country do not

prepare candidates to cope with diffuse ethics and do not evolve at a pace with global educational challenges.

Conclusions

Superintendent Interviews

The stories and instances related through the interviews with the superintendents confirmed the accuracy of the descriptors for educational leaders as the chief architects of teaching and learning cultures by virtue of their decision-making authority (Beck, 1994; Begely, 1998; Begely & Leonard, 1999; Cunningham & Gresso, 1993; Dewey, 1922; Murphy, 2002; Quicke, 2000; Wendel, Hoke, & Jeokel, 1996; Willower, 1994). Just as Trevino (et al., 2000) suggested, resolving situations that uncover high and low extremes of the ethical climate residing within a division requires mature reasoning and the application of well-developed skill sets by the leader. During the interviews, all three superintendents verified the findings of Tymo (1995) by their reflections on their personal, moral/ethical values in stages of problem-defining, problem-solving or decision-making in unfamiliar situations.

Normore (2004) pointed out, and all of the superintendents commented on, a decline in community based value-sets and the ensuing effects on schools. Each of the superintendents shared at least one story that echoed traits of Levine's (2005) study: leadership preparation programs in our country do not evolve at a pace with global educational challenges. The chief educational challenge that they pointed to was decision-making, which mirrored the research of Furman (2003).

As Harris (1987), Hoy and Miskel (1987), and McNamara and Chisholm (1988) wrote about the varying descriptions of decision-making criteria, the superintendents used a variety of terms to explain the ethical dilemmas they shared; however, each one specifically referred to the experience of past decisions as critical to their ability to deal with emerging issues and dilemmas. The research of Glover (1991), Feldman (2002) and Schnebel (2000) was verified as the superintendents confirmed that their own values and past experiences as maturing educators and administrators weighed heavily in their decision-making, particularly where their decisions impacted peers or subordinates.

Each of the superintendents also spoke to the ethical blur that exists for educational administrators because of competing organizational forces. Marshall (1992) and Armstrong

(2004) outlined the most poignant of those forces: organizational politics adopting the shortcomings of local and party politics.. Several of the superintendents' stories mirrored Marshall's (1992) findings that many new administrators find that the safest practice is to observe the environment and to follow the path of least resistance to promotion...often without gaining the necessary skills to administer effectively at the next level.

One of the superintendents served as a school board member in another division. He remarked about a number of instances, as indicated by Husted (2001), in which the culture of the school, division, or environment exerted strong influence, often contrary to personal values, on the decision-making process. Kitchner (1985) emphasized fidelity, integrity, professionalism, trustworthiness, and truthfulness as essential to winning the confidence of the public educational leaders aspire to serve. It is noteworthy that each of the superintendents spoke to these traits as imperatives for ethical and effective leadership practice.

Delimitations and Limitations of the Study

The delimitations of this study are:

- The researcher chose self-report instruments to gather qualitative and quantitative data for this study
- The researcher chose to limit the informants to retired superintendents from Virginia school divisions
- The researcher did not collect the same demographic information from the superintendents and the survey respondents
- The researcher chose to limit the administration of the survey instrument to the months of August through October 2008

The limitations of the study were:

- Informants for the qualitative and the quantitative portions of the study were not chosen at random but limited specifically to individuals available in post-graduate educational cohorts
- The sample size was limited due to the researchers imposed time restraints
- The reliability of the instrument is limited due to the small number of administrations of the survey instrument

- The instrument is a work in progress requiring further development and refinement

It should be said that what began as a desire to gather data by constructing a survey unwittingly became the construction of a psychometric instrument measuring decision-making style. I am fascinated by the possible potential of such intended work.

Recommendations for Practice

The researcher offers the following recommendations for practice based on the findings to this point:

1. When selecting administrators, more value should be considered and given to the applicant's quality and quantity of experience.
2. Candidates for degrees in educational administration should experience curricula that include an infusion of ethical principles and receive degrees contingent on recognition of those ethical principles within educational scenarios.
3. Educational administrators should periodically inventory their personal ethics versus the ethics of the organization to affirm their intention of practice.
4. School boards interviewing superintendent candidates should consider the balance between ethical or legal emphasis in practice when formulating questions.
5. As school administrative teams develop school improvement plans, the goals that drive those plans should be assessed for ethical versus political implications.
6. As fledgling administrators are mentored, their induction should emphasize the blurred reality of ethical interpretation and conflict.
7. Interviews that are constructed for prospective educational leaders should include opportunities for ethical inventory through scenario identification.

Recommendations for Further Research

This study resulted in rich data regarding the reflections of superintendents on career situations and practice. Data regarding leadership decision-making processes was also gathered from the survey instrument administered to post graduate educational administrators. Balanced against studies in the literature, the review of the qualitative and quantitative results gives rise to further questions for further research. Questions for further research are recommended as follows:

1. Increase the number of available informants by soliciting retired superintendents from other states.
2. Interview informants from retired superintendents using random selection.
3. Revise and refine the survey instrument in terms of length.
4. Administer the survey individually and query each respondent as to their reason for each response.
5. Replicate the study using larger random samples.
6. Differentiate levels of professional ethical construct recognition through separate administrations to cohorts of masters and doctoral students.
7. Differentiate levels of professional and ethical construct recognition through separate administrations by geographic areas of career experience.

Personal Reflections

The dissertation marks a completed stage in what began as a journey to reach a personal goal set after completing my master's degree in 1988. I found nothing so eye-opening as the landscape of education from the angle of an administrator... a landscape that, as time passed, grew more depressing.

The beginning of my doctoral degree program and search for a topic was not difficult, but the type of methodology I originally chose as a vehicle to carry me along the journey became more of a dead weight for me. The exploration of values which prospective leaders in education develop into ethical tools evolved from my original passion to understand and help develop positive teacher culture.

During Orientation To Residency in 2003, I started a qualitative study with my second advisor in three years. We had a mutual understanding that the topic was worthy of a very serious effort, as opposed to the suggested neat and quickly-paced solution to degree fulfillment. Still, before I left Blacksburg, I discovered Dr. Donald Willower's work and my passion for the study of culture was irreversibly changed. The next three years combined the most rewarding reading I had ever enjoyed with the beginning of personal trials that nearly destroyed my commitment.

My work had been careful and burdensome. It was careful because my advisor had great interest in the research and where it could take me; it was slow because both of my parents

became dependent upon me due to very sudden declines in their health. The literature review and qualitative methodology were fascinating, but subject to on-again-off-again efforts ruled by responsibilities for family. Then I was told by another member of the cohort that my advisor resigned from Virginia Tech. I was truly ready to resign from the program. At about the same time, Dr. Walter Mallory suggested converting my study to a dual methodology, qualitative leading to quantitative, that would allow me to retain my work to that point and enable me to see an end to an effort that was all but extinguished.

These last three years have been anything but easy. Attempts to solicit informants in 2006 were all but futile. Then a chance reacquainting with a superintendent at a summer conference eventually provided a list of sixteen, newly retired superintendents, but only one of them replied to my letter requesting their participation. Two months later two more superintendents agreed to participate and my energy was renewed. From the qualitative data, the survey instrument I set out to construct for exploring ethical decision-making unwittingly turned into the basic platform for a psychometric instrument. More complicated and sophisticated than I intended, Dr. Mallory again suggested defending this study as a pilot.

Thirty-two years of experiences in the three school divisions where I have been employed taught me that ethical practice in educational administration is not necessarily the rule. Interviewing the superintendents proved there are leaders who believe it should be. My experience urges me to continue the journey seeking to make a difference

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Appendix A

Letter Requesting Superintendent Participation in the Study

Dear _____,

My name is Mark Strickler and I am a Virginia Tech doctoral candidate in the Educational Leadership and Policy Studies program. I am conducting research on values, morals, and ethics as part of the decision making process of educational leaders.

I am investigating whether an instrument can be developed to determine the presence of values, moral, or ethics in the decision making process and I want to begin my research by interviewing leaders, such as yourself, who have risen through the administrative ranks of education to the role of superintendent.

Your name was one of twelve, forwarded to me by Dr. _____, as one of the division superintendents in Virginia who retired during 2007. I would be most appreciative of your participation and the opportunity to interview you for the qualitative portion of my study.

I can be reached by email at: mstrickler@staffordschools.net; or if you prefer to speak with me directly for more detail concerning my study and the interview protocol, my telephone numbers are:

(H) 540-____-_____
(C) 540-____-_____
(W) 540-____-_____

I will happily provide as much detail and explanation as desired to help determine your willingness to participate.

I eagerly look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Mark R. Strickler

Appendix B

Superintendent Interview Protocol

1. Has there ever been a time when as an educational leader you were moved to question a decision, made by someone else, that had ethical implications? Would you tell me about an example or two?
2. In your mind, are there absolute character traits, or values that an educational leader working for you must possess?
3. Can you explain an occasion when you found it necessary to address, motivate, or boost the ethical or moral resolve of your principals?
4. When weighing the possible outcomes of a decision, and the interests of parents, teachers, principals or superiors, what effect does their interest have on your decision making process? Does each interest have a different effect on the process?
5. Tell me about a time when you had to make an uncertain decision, and there was a possibility of an adverse public reaction. How did you manage the situation?
6. Have ever encountered a situation where “doing the right thing” ran opposite to legal or policy strictures?
7. How would you manage a situation where you believed that something was not in compliance with professional ethics? Have you ever faced such situation? If so, tell me more about it.
8. What would you do if you were aware that a board member was behaving in an unethical manner in terms of their board duties?
9. Is ambition in a principal a must? If so, ambitious to what degree? Do you think you were ambitious?
10. Are there any personal goals that come to mind, outside of recognized accomplishments or positions attained, that educational leaders should include on their “to-do list” as effective leaders?
11. Was there a time when you were aware of a serious mistake made by a superior? Did you feel that you could address it and were you able to do so? Can you tell me about a situation(s) where you were aware of a serious mistake made by principal and what you did about it?
12. Can you tell me about a time when you had to be very careful in determining to whom, or how to, communicate sensitive information?

13. Can you remember a time when you had to put a point of ethics across in a meeting, where most of the people were reluctant to hear it?
14. How might you deal with a request where a parent is asking for something, in the best interest of their child, but which is not in the interest of a board agenda, or which would violate a policy/regulation of the system? What value factors would enter into your decision making?
15. Have you ever felt, during course of your career, that the existing systems and solutions were not sufficient to meet the needs of students properly, and/or that they needed to be changed? What factors, ethical or otherwise go into making such a decision?
16. How would you routinely proceed in a situation where you needed to make an immediate decision? Are there ethical “rules-of-thumb” that immediately come into play?
17. Can you tell me how you went about carrying out a directive? Did you ever face a situation when you had to make a decision which only offered alternatives that did not fall within your ethical moral boundaries? Can you talk a little about that? What were your thought processes as you went about resolving the dilemma? What factors were prevalent?
18. Are there any comments you would like to make about our conversation or challenge you see on the horizon for the ethical practitioner?

Appendix C
Ethical Scenarios on the Survey Instrument

1. Jack, principal of school “A”, has had Henry as his very loyal AP for nine years, and the two have become close friends. By chance, Jack becomes aware that the central administration is moving Henry laterally. The rationale is to transfer another AP away from the minority principal of school “B”. If the switch doesn’t take place, a grievance will be filed against that minority principal causing great embarrassment to the superintendent and the division. Jack is stunned, then vaguely remembers that a close friend at central office alluded several months ago that this was an idea being considered by the superintendent. Jack is three years from retirement. Should he voice an objection to the superintendent or advise Henry of the move and accept it?
2. In Kim’s 15 year tenure as principal, she has maintained a rapport with her teachers envied by other principals. An electoral change in the division’s school board now pits administrators against teachers over school staffing and class size. Kim’s teachers have never had 30 students in a class. The week after her faculty learns about class sizes, Kim is directed by HR to utilize an arbitrary formula to determine the final staffing number at 30+ students per section. As a result, Kim must de-staff 19 positions in her school. Combined resignations and retirements reduce the number of de-staff positions to 4. The formula has no effect on the Fine Arts, CTE or Gifted programs which include 6 non-tenured teachers. One teacher in the affected areas is not tenured; none of the remaining 3 have less than 15 years experience. Should Kim give these names to HR or use her prerogative to reassign some teachers to assignments out of their certification areas within and distaff 3 non-tenured teachers?
3. Fred and his 53 year old assistant principal, Joe, have an ongoing conflict that caused Fred to receive a negative performance evaluation. Joe is a good friend of the superintendent, whereas Fred was ‘helped’ into his position by an elected official. Joe flaunts his friendship with the superintendent as the realignment of duties and job expectations are initiated by Fred. Andy, the assistant superintendent learns from another administrator that next year Fred plans to give Joe some labor-intensive assignments that he will probably not be able to complete satisfactorily because of his age. When Andy reviews Fred’s plans for the next year, Fred insists the new AP assignments are equitable, but is clear that he wants Joe reassigned to the classroom. Should Andy report Joe’s impending difficulty to the superintendent or overrule Fred’s AP duty assignments and require age-appropriate assignments for Joe?
4. John is principal of a high school; Jane is his AP, with a PhD, who was passed over for the job. Jane alleges that John sexually harassed her. Harvey, the superintendent, directs them to participate in mediation with Alix, an assistant superintendent. Mediation fails. In a follow-up session with John, Alix discovers that there were very similar issues two years earlier at another school in this division where John was an AP. Alix informs Harvey of this new information. Jane is the only AP that has interviewed with Harvey for the new high school. Harvey must submit his recommendation to the Board in 10 days.

Should Harvey consider the likelihood of a sexual harassment suit in his candidate selection?

Appendix D

Survey Instrument as Administered to Participants

Thank you for agreeing to take this survey as a trial for my dissertation defense.

Please provide the following demographic information on this sheet:

1. Gender - _____Male _____Female
2. Years as an educator - ____1-5 ____6-10 ____11-15 ____16 -20 ____20+
3. Number of Virginia school divisions in which you have worked: _____
4. Number of states in which you have been an educator: _____
5. Highest degree attained - _____BA/BS _____MA _____EdD/PhD
6. Years in administration - ____0-5 ____6-10 ____11-15 ____16+

Part 1 –

The first section requires that you read each of the 4 scenarios and then respond to the 20 relevance statements on the page following. Do this for each of the 4 scenarios. **For the purpose of the trial, please DO NOT return to a scenario and response sheet once you have completed it.**

Part 2 –

The second section requires that you read each of the 4 scenarios and determine which of the definitions/qualities below the scenario most closely defines the issue in the scenario. The definitions that I used to construct the scenarios are listed for your use below each listing of the choices. **For the purpose of the trial, please DO NOT return to a scenario to change your initial definition response once you have completed it.**

The next generation of this survey will be offered in an on-line format that will prohibit returning to a selection or section once it is completed.

Please feel free to email any comments, criticisms, or suggestions to me concerning the entirety of this instrument.

It is my intention to meet with you after your participation to tape record your comments for the completion of my dissertation.

Again, thank you for agreeing to participate in my endeavor.

Mark Strickler

Part 1.

1. Jack, principal of school "A", has had Henry as his very loyal AP for nine years, and the two have become close friends. By chance, Jack becomes aware that the central administration is moving Henry laterally. The rationale is to transfer another AP away from the minority principal of school "B". If the switch doesn't take place, a grievance will be filed against that minority principal causing great embarrassment to the superintendent and the division. Jack is stunned, then vaguely remembers that a close friend at central office alluded several months ago that this was an idea being considered by the superintendent. Jack is three years from retirement. Should he voice an objection to the superintendent or advise Henry of the move and accept it?

Statement/Principle	Relevance to the Scenario			
	None	Slight	Some	A Lot
1. A principal must try to give his/her subordinates as much freedom of choice as possible.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. A principal's decision requires treating all affected parties equally	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Trust is a two-way street.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Preferential hiring (e.g. by ethnicity, gender, skill set, etc.) may be morally beneficial.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. The best decisions result in win-win solutions for all affected parties.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Communication from school administrators to teachers should be clear and unfiltered.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Principals routinely make decisions that are best for those who depend on them, without regard to personal gain	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. When a person or persons have been wronged in the past, principal should consider that fact when making decisions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Teachers determine their degree of loyalty to a principal based on the values evident in his/her decisions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Principals should make decisions impartially.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Principals should hire the most qualified applicants regardless of other factors.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Principals should agree to system directives that may be less beneficial to their schools.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Ensuring student welfare justifies limiting teacher freedom to make decisions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Principals should make decisions based on the benefit to all parties, including themselves.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Principals demonstrate their trustworthiness by the decisions they make.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. Self-actualization is an important characteristic of an effective principal.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. Principals should consider differences in people when making decisions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. When making decisions the first criteria is to do no harm to any of the parties.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. Successful principals place the welfare of the school systems, school, teachers, and students above their own.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. Principals are responsible for the growth of their subordinates.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. In Kim’s 15 year tenure as principal, she has maintained a rapport with her teachers envied by other principals. An electoral change in the division’s school board now pits administrators against teachers over school staffing and class size. Kim’s teachers have never had 30 students in a class. The week after her faculty learns about class sizes, Kim is directed by HR to utilize an arbitrary formula to determine the final staffing number at 30+ students per section. As a result, Kim must de-staff 19 positions in her school. Combined resignations and retirements reduce the number of de-staff positions to 4. The formula has no effect on the Fine Arts, CTE or Gifted programs which include 6 non-tenured teachers. One teacher in the affected areas is not tenured; none of the remaining 3 have less than 15 years experience. Should Kim give these names to HR or use her prerogative to reassign some teachers to assignments out of their certification areas within?

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19. Successful principals place the welfare of the school systems, school, teachers, and students above their own.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. Principals are responsible for the growth of their subordinates.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. John is principal of a high school; Jane is his AP, with a PhD, who was passed over for the job. Jane alleges that John sexually harassed her. Harvey, the superintendent, directs them to participate in mediation with Alix, an assistant superintendent. Mediation fails. In a follow-up session with John, Alix discovers that there were very similar issues two years earlier at another school in this division where John was an AP. Alix informs Harvey of this new information. Jane is the only AP that has interviewed with Harvey for the new high school. Harvey must submit his recommendation to the Board in 10 days. Should Harvey consider the likelihood of a sexual harassment suit in his candidate selection?

Statement/Principle	Relevance to the Scenario			
	None	Slight	Some	A Lot
1. A principal must try to give his/her subordinates as much freedom of choice as possible.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. A principal's decision requires treating all affected parties equally	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Trust is a two-way street.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Preferential hiring (e.g. by ethnicity, gender, skill set, etc.) may be morally beneficial.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. The best decisions result in win-win solutions for all affected parties.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Communication from school administrators to teachers should be clear and unfiltered.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Principals routinely make decisions that are best for those who depend on them, without regard to personal gain	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. When a person or persons have been wronged in the past, principal should consider that fact when making decisions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Teachers determine their degree of loyalty to a principal based on the values evident in his/her decisions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Principals should make decisions impartially.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Principals should hire the most qualified applicants regardless of other factors.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Principals should agree to system directives that may be less beneficial to their schools.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Ensuring student welfare justifies limiting teacher freedom to make decisions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Principals should make decisions based on the benefit to all parties, including themselves.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Principals demonstrate their trustworthiness by the decisions they make.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. Self-actualization is an important characteristic of an effective principal.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. Principals should consider differences in people when making decisions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. When making decisions the first criteria is to do no harm to any of the parties.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. Successful principals place the welfare of the school systems, school teachers, and students above their own.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. Principals are responsible for the growth of their subordinates.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 2.

This portion of the survey requires that you read each of the four (4) scenarios and determine which of the values, **Beneficence Trustworthiness Justice Individuation**, is predominantly exemplified by the dilemma. Color in the appropriate circle that coincides with the value that you select.

Jack, principal of school “A”, has had Henry as his very loyal AP for nine years, and the two have become close friends. By chance, Jack becomes aware that the central administration is moving Henry laterally. The rationale is to transfer another AP away from the minority principal of school “B”. If the switch doesn’t take place, a grievance will be filed against that minority principal causing great embarrassment to the superintendent and the division. Jack is stunned, then vaguely remembers that a close friend at central office alluded several months ago that this was an idea being considered by the superintendent. Jack is three years from retirement. Should he voice an objection to the superintendent or advise Henry of the move and accept it?

- Beneficence**
- Trustworthiness**
- Justice**
- Individuation**

Trustworthiness - Having confidence in or earning the confidence of others connects fidelity trustworthiness and truth

Individuation - Speaks to the prominence of human dignity and growth with respect for individual growth to autonomy

Justice – The product of a process yielding impartiality or equity

Beneficence – The act or quality of valuing community; providing assistance to others; free choice w/responsibility

In Kim's 15 year tenure as principal, she has maintained a rapport with her teachers envied by other principals. An electoral change in the division's school board now pits administrators against teachers over school staffing and class size. Kim's teachers have never had 30 students in a class. The week after her faculty learns about class sizes, Kim is directed by HR to utilize an arbitrary formula to determine the final staffing number at 30+ students per section. As a result, Kim must de-staff 19 positions in her school. Combined resignations and retirements reduce the number of de-staff positions to 4. The formula has no effect on the Fine Arts, CTE or Gifted programs which include 6 non-tenured teachers. One teacher in the affected areas is not tenured; none of the remaining 3 have less than 15 years experience. Should Kim give these names to HR or use her prerogative to reassign some teachers to assignments out of their certification areas within and distaff 3 non-tenured teachers?

- Beneficence**
- Trustworthiness**
- Justice**
- Individuation**

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Individuation - Speaks to the prominence of human dignity and growth with respect for individual growth to autonomy

Justice – The product of a process yielding impartiality or equity

Beneficence – The act or quality of valuing community; providing assistance to others; free choice w/responsibility

Fred and his 53 year old assistant principal, Joe, have an ongoing conflict that caused Fred to receive a negative performance evaluation. Joe is a good friend of the superintendent, whereas Fred was 'helped' into his position by an elected official. Joe flaunts his friendship with the superintendent as the realignment of duties and job expectations are initiated by Fred. Andy, the assistant superintendent learns from another administrator that next year Fred plans to give Joe some labor-intensive assignments that he will probably not be able to complete satisfactorily because of his age. When Andy reviews Fred's plans for the next year, Fred insists the new AP assignments are equitable, but is clear that he wants Joe reassigned to the classroom. Should Andy report Joe's impending difficulty to the superintendent or overrule Fred's AP duty assignments and require age-appropriate assignments for Joe?

- Beneficence**
- Trustworthiness**
- Justice**
- Individuation**

Trustworthiness - Having confidence in or earning the confidence of others connects fidelity trustworthiness and truth

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John is principal of a high school; Jane is his AP, with a PhD, who was passed over for the job. Jane alleges that John sexually harassed her. Harvey, the superintendent, directs them to participate in mediation with Alix, an assistant superintendent. Mediation fails. In a follow-up session with John, Alix discovers that there were very similar issues two years earlier at another school in this division where John was an AP. Alix informs Harvey of this new information. Jane is the only AP that has interviewed with Harvey for the new high school. Harvey must submit his recommendation to the Board in 10 days. Should Harvey consider the likelihood of a sexual harassment suit in his candidate selection?

- Beneficence**
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Trustworthiness - Having confidence in or earning the confidence of others connects fidelity trustworthiness and truth

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Beneficence – The act or quality of valuing community; providing assistance to others; free choice w/responsibility

Appendix E

Permission to Reprint Flow Chart for Ethical Decision-Making

March 19, 2009

Dear Mark Strickler:

We are pleased to grant permission to you for the reprinting of:

Figure 2: Flow Chart for Ethical Decision-Making

from

Humphrey, E. , Janosik, S. M. , Creamer, D. G. (2003). The Role of Principles, Character, and Professional Values in Ethical Decision-Making. *NASPA Journal*, 41(4).

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Director of Publications
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AGREED: ___ Mark R. Strickler _____

DATE: _____ March 20, 2009 _____

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