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THE IMPACT OF PRINCIPAL MENTORING PROGRAMS ON THE MORAL JUDGMENT OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

A Dissertation

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research

in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

Wendi J. Kiley

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

May 2017

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This research addresses moral decision making and the experience of public school principals. It also explores the possible influence mentoring has on principals' abilities to confront complex decisions when clear ethical choices do not exist. This study incorporates a survey methodology, exploring the relationship between principal mentoring programs and schemas of morality in principals' decision making. I used the Defining Issues Test-2 (Bebeau & Thoma, 2003; Rest & Narvaez, 1998) as the quantitative measurement tool to assess moral reasoning in this study. The survey also included questions about mentoring experiences and principal demographics. The DIT-2 uses the following three moral schemas that Rest (1973) identified: Personal Interest Schema, Maintaining Norms Schema, and Postconventional Schema. Rest based the three schemas on Kohlberg's (1958) moral development theory, which provides a framework for understanding various levels of moral judgment. The first part of my research involves determining the moral schemas principals use when making moral judgments. Principals in various studies have not only identified a need to improve moral judgment, but also areas of improvement that would most benefit them (Dempster and Berry, 2003; Drago-Severson, 2012; Henry, 2010). As a result, the second part of my research explores how principal mentoring programs with an ethics component impact moral judgment in principals.

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CHAPTER 1

THE PROBLEM

This research addresses moral decision making and the experience of public school principals. It also explores the possible influence mentoring has on the principals' abilities to confront complex decisions when ethical choices do not exist. The school principal fulfills both a vital and daunting one. Principals make decisions that serve the best interest of students and demonstrate instructional leadership for teachers (Frick & Guiterrez, 2008). Everyday school principals must confront challenging ethical issues related to such concerns as student discipline, teacher evaluations, abuse allegations, allocation of resources, and compliance with standardized testing procedures (Hughes & Jones, 2011). Given the increased pressures placed on school principals to make decisions addressing diverse and at times conflicting demands of stakeholders and the stress caused by meeting conflicting interests due to No Child Left Behind (2001) and other legislation, principals must possess the skills to make the best ethical decisions (Dempster & Berry, 2003). "Moral judgment is a psychological construct that characterizes the process by which people determine that one course of action in a particular situation is morally right and another course of action is wrong" (Rest, Edwards, & Thoma, 1997, p. 5). The use of ethics guides this process, which "is concerned with the kinds of values and morals an individual or society finds desirable and appropriate" (Northouse, 2001, p. 250). Professional ethics consists of a set of standards set by a profession and regulation of its members' behavior (Kfir & Shamai, 2002). Given the increased pressures placed on school principals to make decisions addressing diverse and at times conflicting demands of stakeholders and the stress caused by meeting conflicting interests, principals must possess the skills to make the best ethical decisions (Dempster &

Berry, 2003). Using indepth interviews and questionnaires, Dempster, Freakley, and Parry (2000) found that school principals identified a need to improve in a variety of areas, including the ability to recognize ethical features of a situation and knowledge of ethical principles.

Rest and Thoma (1985) identified formal education with interventions related to moral decision making as the strongest predictor in moral judgment. Feng-I (2011) found that principals who received educational administration ethics training identified a wider range of moral areas. In a longitudinal study using two samples of education majors, moral judgment improved after additional educational experiences (Reiman, 2004). One possibility was the inclusion of deliberate role taking and guided inquiry into educational moral issues that was included. This focus is in accordance with the assertion that commitment to critical reflection improves moral judgment (Rest, Narvaez, Babeau, and Thoma, 1999). Kohlberg (1976) also argued for the importance of recognizing, reflecting on, and discussing moral issues as ways to improve moral judgment through his stage model of moral development. Kohlberg's model continues to serve as a basic framework for understanding moral development.

Researchers also identified formal focused mentoring as a way to improve effectiveness in principals (Arredondo and Rucinkski, 1998; Grissom & Harrington 2010). Grissom and Harrington (2010) found a significant positive correlation between principal participation in a formal mentoring program and principal effectiveness, such as but not limited to providing a supportive and encouraging environment for staff. This study was based on a national sample of nearly 38,000 teachers' ratings of principals (Grissom & Harrington, 2010). In a mentoring relationship, a more experienced principal provides

support and supervision to new principals as they adjust to their new leadership roles (Grissom & Harrington, 2010). Principal mentoring is also associated with increased confidence in professional competence of principals (Daresh, 2004). According to Arredondo and Rucinkski's (1998) study of graduate students enrolled in an educational administration program, both mentors and mentees (those being mentored) demonstrated improvement in moral judgment as a result of their relationship. In another study, teachers' moral judgment improved after participating in a peer coaching relationship (Reiman & DeAngelis, 2002). These studies provide support for exploring the impact of mentoring on the moral judgment of school principals.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this research is to determine the moral schemas principals use when making moral judgments and how principal mentoring programs with an ethics component impact moral judgment in principals.

Research Questions

Given the complex nature of the role of school principals and the importance of ethical decision making, which consists of addressing decisions that raise complex moral concerns, the questions to be asked by this researcher are:

1. Among the decision making schemas listed by Rest (1973), which schemas do principals use when engaged in moral decision making?
2. Do principals who participate in mentoring programs that include an ethics component exhibit greater moral reasoning in their decision making than principals who don't?

Problem Statement

Various forms of federal and state legislation impact both the ways that school principals make decisions and the types of decisions they must make. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), which was enacted to improve student achievement and teacher accountability allowed states to determine how to define Adequate Yearly Progress and to create state standardized tests (U.S. Department of Education, 2010). Although NCLB identified worthy goals, pressure from this legislation led some educational leaders to make unethical decisions. For example, a state investigation found that dozens of public schools in Atlanta, Georgia falsified tests to improve standardized test scores dating back to 2001 (Severson, 2011).

Increasing parental involvement in schools and increasing parental rights also place a higher level of accountability on school administrators. For example, The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1976 strengthened parent rights. FERPA provides parents with access to review the student's education records maintained by the school (U.S. Department of Education, 2010). This Act also provides parents with the right to request that schools correct records if they believe them to be inaccurate or misleading. Many of these changes positively affect student success. Zellman and Waterman (1998) found higher test scores in reading correlate with parent involvement. However, parents who demonstrate over involvement can cause ethical dilemmas for school leaders. For instance, some parents engage in combative methods, including legal action, if they feel that schools fail to meet their children's needs (Howe, 2010). As a result, the negative consequences of dealing with these parents can be very costly.

The implementation of bullying policies also creates moral challenges for school leaders make decisions. Such legislation exists due to the detrimental psychological and physical effects of bullying on students. For instance, the Department of Education requires Pennsylvania schools to adopt or amend their existing policies related to bullying and incorporate them into their school's code of conduct (Limber & Small, 2003). In some districts these policies resulted in the practice of "No Tolerance" of any threats or weapons on school property. Consequently, some principals may feel pressure to suspend a young child for carrying a "weapon" that was not intended to be used as one (Seiden, 2016). In another state, a Florida school suspended an 11-year-old student for cutting a peach with a child's butter knife during lunch (Seiden, 2016).

School leaders must examine the results of their decisions beyond their own interests, the district's interests, and parent interests. According to the National Association of Elementary School Principals' vision statement the focus of the principal role should include the academic and emotional needs of students (NAESP, 2012). When Frick and Guiterrez (2008) conducted a phenomenological study of secondary principals examining morally unique aspects of educational leadership, participants also identified a professional orientation of acting in the students' best interests. The principals not only expressed the importance of protecting the general welfare of students, but also the need to encourage and expect high quality teaching for all students (Frick and Guiterrez, 2008).

Background

Principals' Decision Making Skills

According to Dempster and Berry (2003), principals not only deal with increasing complex ethical issues but often unprepared feel less prepared in handling such situations. A

study of 552 Australian principals showed that 68% did not receive training related to ethical issues in their professional development (Dempster, Freakley, & Parry, 2000). Although this study was conducted in Australia, other western nations demonstrate similar trends. Many mentoring programs focus too narrowly on assisting new principals with tasks, such as budgeting and scheduling rather than teaching skills to become effective leaders for the duration of their careers in educational administration (Daresh, 2007). Mentors often assist their mentees in solving complex problems and provide professional advice. Although mentors should include an ethics component in mentoring discussions, often mentors reserve little time for this area after procedural matters are addressed (Hunink, Leeuwen, Jansen, & Jochemesen, 2009). In some situations, mentors allow the principal being mentored to determine pertinent issues. Although the sessions should be meaningful for the principal, moral issues could be neglected (Hunink et al., 2002).

When principals are not equipped with the necessary skills to handle difficult issues, negative results occur, not only for the principal her or himself but for the school as well. Student discipline involving Fourth Amendment rights of search and seizure is one area where principals may need more guidance in exercising moral judgment (Torres, 2012). In a sample of 230 such cases principals demonstrated a concern for safety and security, but did not consistently demonstrate concern for the right of the student who was being searched or having items seized (Torres, 2012). When an administrator violates a student's rights, it may be difficult for the student to rebuild trust in teachers and administrators. Due to the strong correlation between trust and academic success (Bankole, 2011; Lee, 2007; Toste, 2012) school principals must develop skills to create a trusting environment for students. Reiman

& Theis-Sprinthall (1993) also found that principals with strong moral judgment abilities demonstrate consistent democratic behavior frequently.

School districts across the United States struggle with principal turnover as well (Howley & Pendarvis, 2002). Partlow (2007) found that student achievement scores impacted principal turnover rates. When fourth grade reading and math achievement scores in a group of Ohio schools increased, principal turnover began to decrease (Partlow, 2007). According to Partlow (2007) a principal's ability to create a positive atmosphere with high levels of commitment from all stakeholders positively contributes to student achievement as well. Hughes and Jones (2011) found a significant relation between student achievement and principal moral judgment. Elementary students in grades three through five made higher academic gains in schools where principals received formal and/or in-service ethics training. It seems that school leaders who participate in formal ethics training will be more likely to examine moral issues more critically and be more likely to make ethical decisions. This modeling from school principals sets a high standard for teachers, students and parents. As a result stakeholders are then more likely to demonstrate such behavior themselves (Hughes & Jones, 2011). Modeling high morals also positively impacted academic achievement of South African secondary students when values such as justice, equality, respect and collaboration were emphasized through principal leadership (Vuyisile, 2012).

According to Feng-I (2011), principals who received educational administration ethics training identified a wide range of moral areas when making decisions rather than only considering justice. These administrators also demonstrated care and compassion for students. Feng-I's (2011) study provides evidence that such professional development programs would encourage school leaders to develop a wider breadth and a higher level of

thinking related to moral issues. If school districts better equip principals to deal with difficult decisions, it would both improve their competence in decision making skills and their contentment in their roles. Research indicates that implementing a reflective practice for principals could also reduce burnout and improve moral judgment (Drago-Severson, 2012). According to Drago-Severson's (2012) study of principals, participation in ongoing reflective practice with colleagues would assist them in demonstrating effective leadership and provide them with renewal and support in such a challenging role.

Moral Reasoning Theories

Research on the process of moral judgment is one that can provide insight about how people develop use ethics to guide their decision making. One of the most influential thinkers in Western society, Socrates emphasized the importance of studying morality through virtues (Plato, 380 B.C.E, translated by Anasplapo & Berns, 1998). Socrates argued one virtue encompasses all virtues and is applicable to all humans (Plato, 380, B.C.E, translated by Anaslapo & Berns, 1998). This essential virtue was identified as the concept of justice, which he asserted should be demonstrated in all situations. Both Socrates and Plato also described the importance of moral education, in which of instruction focuses on moral judgment and reasoning regarding justice (Sigad, 1996).

Contemporary research in the study of moral judgment also emphasizes the role of learning experiences. Narvaez (2005) found that improvement in moral judgment most commonly occurs from one engaging in new experiences and a discussion of dilemmas that challenge the individual's beliefs, thoughts, and/or knowledge. Mentoring programs with an ethics component could present such experiences, because the mentor guides the mentee in considering various ways to solve dilemmas and ways to reflect upon those decisions

(Arredondo & Rucinski, 1998). In the absence of mentoring, a principal may identify fewer potential solutions and be less likely to analyze the results of those decisions. Moral development stage models can be helpful in understanding how one progresses through stages and how a principal develops a higher level of moral judgment. Such models provide both guidelines on the morality of the decision and the way a decision was reached (Kohlberg, 1981).

Kohlberg's Stage Model (1958), one of the most recognized moral development theories in psychology provides a framework for understanding various levels of moral judgment. Building on Piaget's Structural Stage Model (1932), Kohlberg asserted that as individuals progress through childhood and into adolescence, cognitive structures develop. These changes are sequential and are also based on one's genetic predispositions and experiences (Thomas, 1997). Kohlberg (1958) demonstrated an interactionist perspective in which heredity and environmental factors equally influenced progression. Kohlberg identified logical reasoning, which is influenced by genetics as the first factor. Kohlberg also asserted that motivation, affected by both genetics and environmental factors, plays an integral role in moral development. Conversely, Kohlberg felt that environmental factors impacted the final two factors. He identified the third factor as opportunities to learn social rules and the final as the form of justice in the social institutions to which the individual is exposed. Kohlberg (1984) also asserted that individuals must engage in diverse experiences and moral dilemmas to reach the Postconventional level. Kohlberg's third and fourth factors could be addressed through a mentoring program. Alsbury and Hackmann (2006) found that principals who participated in a mentoring program identified role socialization into the profession, reflective conversation, and role clarification as beneficial aspects of their

mentoring relationships. These individuals would be provided with more opportunities to understand the social rules and the role of justice in their positions as school principals.

Other theorists, known as neo-Kohlbergians, expanded on Kohlberg's work. Rest (1973) examined adult moral judgment using a range of moral reasoning levels rather than a strict progression of them. For instance, one may demonstrate moral reasoning at the Postconventional level when making a professional decision, but only at the Conventional level when making a personal decision. Another characteristic of neo-Kohlbergian theory is that Postconventional reasoning is not limited to the concept of justice and can include other types of complex moral reasoning (Gibbs, 2003; Rest et al., 1999). As a result of this shift in thinking Rest (1973) identified the following three moral schemas: Personal Interest Schema, Maintaining Norms Schema, and Postconventional Schema. This theory and other moral development theories are explored in greater detail in the following chapter.

Studies of Leadership and Moral Decision Making

In order to better understand how principals make moral decisions, researchers conducted numerous studies to examine how principals demonstrate moral judgment (Klinker and Hackmann, 2003; Kirby, Paradise, & Protti, 1990; Vitton & Wasonga, 2009). Vitton and Wasonga (2009) examined levels or schemas that school principals used when making decisions from a moral perspective. Moral reasoning was assessed based on Kohlberg's Structural Stage Model of moral development and Rest's Schemas (McDonough, 2005). Over 40 percent of the elementary principals in Vitton and Wasonga's (2009) study fell below the Postconventional schema and the majority fell within the Conventional schema. Kirby, Paradise, and Protti (1990) also found that school principals typically employ moral judgment at the conventional schema. When educational professionals

enrolled in educational leadership programs across the state of Texas completed a survey, the majority of the participants demonstrated difficulty identifying moral issues and how to respond to them (Edmonson & Fisher, 2002). Without sufficient moral awareness, principals are unlikely to demonstrate high levels of moral judgment. According to Kohlberg (1981), postconventional decisions are made by correctly identifying the moral issue and analyzing it in a complex way to solve the dilemma.

Effects of mentoring and education on moral reasoning. The positive impact of high levels of moral judgment accentuates the importance of understanding how to increase such levels. Rest and Thoma (1985) identified formal education with interventions related to moral decision making as the strongest predictor in moral reasoning. Reiman (2004) conducted a longitudinal study of two samples of education majors at North Carolina State University and found that moral judgment increased over a four-year period as a result of exposure to moral discussions and training. Reiman (2004) identified the deliberate role-taking and guided inquiry into educational ethical issues as two possible factors contributing to this improvement of moral reasoning. Both areas were included in the curriculum (Reiman, 2004).

Few studies in educational administration have explored the relationship between moral judgment and mentoring. The scarce research on mentoring suggests a positive correlation between principal participation in a formal mentoring program and principal effectiveness, such as but not limited to providing a supportive and encouraging environment for staff (Grissom & Harrington, 2010). Principal Mentoring also correlates with increased confidence in the professional competence of principals (Daresh, 2004). Principal mentoring programs must contain certain components in order for protégées to improve skills.

Hopkins-Thompson (2000) the most effective mentoring programs include clearly defined outcomes, appropriate screening of mentors and mentees, useful mentor training, and continual evaluation. Alsbury and Hackmann (2006) found that principals benefited from mentoring relationships with a focus of role socialization into the profession, reflective conversation, and role clarification.

Edmonson and Fisher (2002) recommend that mentors emphasize ethical issues as part of the mentoring process and model ethical behavior as well. They also recommend implementing a reflective practice in which administrators analyze possible choices and consequences and reflect on them to increase moral judgment. Arredondo and Rucinski (1998) found that using a reflection process, which included journaling, reflective conversation, and mentor feedback led to improvements in mentees' moral judgment. Arredondo and Rucinkski's (1998) participants consisted of graduate students enrolled in an educational administration program. Reflection is an integral component in many professional development programs to improve moral judgment (Reiman & Peace, 2002; Reiman &Thies-Sprinthall, 1993).

Research Design and Rationale

This study used a cross-sectional design, which is appropriate when one is not manipulating variables and collecting data at a single point in time. The data provides information on the schemas that principals activate when making moral decisions and factors that impact those decisions. The study incorporates a survey methodology. The survey design measures observable behaviors and attitudes by providing precision to words and narratives. The survey consisted of the Defining Issues Test 2, which measures moral schemas (DIT-2) (Rest, 1975), additional questions regarding mentoring experiences and

principal demographics (see Appendix A). Although Kohlberg's work informs this study and the DIT-2, the theoretical foundation for the DIT-2 extends beyond Kohlberg's theory by recognizing additional components of morality. The DIT-2 incorporates a schematic framework, which conceptualizes moral reasoning as shifting to various perspectives rather than rigidly progressing through stages (Rest et al. 1999b).

In this research I was primarily looking at the relationship between moral schemas and participation in principal mentoring programs with an ethics component. I predicted that I would find a positive relationship between participation in a principal mentoring program and the presence of the Postconventional Schema. I predicted that principals who received mentoring with an ethics component would exhibit greater moral reasoning than those who did not. In my study, I could not assert that there was an absence of the Postconventional Schema before the mentoring program. Therefore, I only predicted the correlation. The dependent variable consists of the principal's moral reasoning schema. The independent variable is the involvement in formal focused mentoring with an ethics component.

My participants consisted of only Pennsylvania public school principals in the State. I contacted all Pennsylvania public school principals at the elementary, middle, and high school levels (2,745) by email (list obtained from www.principals-emailist.com). Public school principals in Pennsylvania were selected as the population due to having a common set of standards in terms of student testing and special education requirements, both of which have potential to create challenges in terms of moral and ethical decisions. I excluded private school principals from the population because they do not follow the same requirements as public school principals. Additionally I limited the population to Pennsylvania to allow for uniformity of state requirements.

Significance of Study

Given the extent to which principals must confront a range of situations and challenges presented by a complex set of constituencies, they must determine ways to improve moral decision making skills. Although both the conventional and postconventional schemas of moral judgment emphasize rules and standards, individuals at the postconventional schema exercise critical judgment beyond the established rules (Pritchard, 1999). Research indicates that principals with strong moral judgment abilities are more likely to demonstrate consistent democratic behavior (Reiman & Theis-Sprinthall, 1993).

Rest and Thoma (1985) identified formal education with interventions related to moral decision making as the strongest predictor in moral reasoning (Rest & Thoma, 1985). The inclusion of ethics training in both graduate and undergraduate programs appears to improve moral judgment (Cannon, 2008; Geddes and Salvatori, 2008; Johnson, 2008; Reiman, 2004). Researchers in the fields of education, healthcare, business, and counseling identify ethics training as positively impacting the moral judgment of professionals. In terms of educational leadership, research indicates that once school leaders participate in formal ethics training, they are more likely to demonstrate consistent ethical behavior. Therefore, it is vital to develop an understanding of the types of education that positively correlate with moral judgment. Due to the way educators strongly impact students, this concern is especially great in the education field

Assumptions

There are two assumptions guiding this research, these are:

The principals in this study are representative of principals throughout the United States.

The principals who take the survey will respond honestly and openly.

Definition of Terms

Moral reasoning or Moral Judgment

"Moral judgment is a psychological construct that characterizes the process by which people determine that one course of action in a particular situation is morally right and another course of action is wrong. Moral judgment involves defining what the moral issues are, how conflicts among parties are to be settled, and the rationale for deciding on a course of action" (Rest, Edwards, & Thoma, 1997, p. 5).

Justice

Rawls (1971) described justice as when individuals agree on the criteria of a moral society, which equally protects all citizens. Individuals should reach this decision when their futures are hidden by a "veil of ignorance," which means that they do not know what their future will look like. When individuals make a decision under these circumstances, they are protected from unfairness in the event they are assigned one of society's less desirable roles. Additionally, inequalities are only considered fair or just if their existence makes everyone better off (Rawls, 1971, p. 15). Kohlberg (1971) relied on this definition and added that justice was the "the basic moral principle" and one that can be universalized (p. 220).

Kohlberg's Stages of Moral Development and Rest's Moral Schemas

Rest (1973) identified: Personal Interest Schema, Maintaining Norms Schema, and Postconventional Schema. Rest based these schemas on Kohlberg's (1958) moral development theory, which contains six stages within three levels. However, Rest (1973) examined adult moral judgment using a range of moral reasoning levels rather than a strict progression of them.

Kohlberg's Preconventional Level (1 & 2) and Conventional Level (3) and Rest's Personal Interest Schema

Kohlberg (1958) defined the first two stages as the Preconventional level, which falls into the Personal Interest Schema. At this level, rules are external. Kohlberg (1958) defined Stage 1 as Heteronomous Morality. At this stage, individuals typically adhere to moral realism, which assumes that breaking rules does not necessarily require an explanation or justification. Other characteristics of this stage include obeying rules to avoid punishment and viewing authority as superior. Kohlberg (1958) identified Stage 2 as Individualist Instrumental Morality. At this stage, individuals begin to realize that numerous perspectives may exist regarding moral issues. However, individuals place emphasis on meeting personal needs rather than the needs of others. Kohlberg (1958) defined his third and fourth stages as the conventional level of moral development. Kohlberg (1958) identified Stage 3 as Impersonally Normative Morality. At this level, individuals begin to emphasize the importance of developing mutually agreed upon informal norms. The Golden Rule, which instructs members of society to do unto others as you would have others do unto you, represents an evident guiding force in Stage 3.

Rest (1973) asserted that when individuals make decisions from the lowest level schema they adhere to the Personal Interests Schema. According to this schema others' needs may get taken into consideration but only if the decision maker still receives benefits. Individuals exhibiting this thinking also demonstrate concern for those with whom they have affectionate relationships (Rest et al., 1999). This schema stresses the notion of survival and "getting ahead" (Narvaez & Bock, 2002). Rest (1973) based the Personal Interest Schema on Kohlberg's Stages 2 and 3.

Kohlberg's Conventional level (4) and Postconventional level (5) and Rest's Maintaining Norms Schema

During Kohlberg's (1958) Stage 4, known as Social System Morality, individuals begin to examine how behaviors impact society. Kohlberg (1958) asserted that individual needs remain appropriate only if they do not detrimentally affect society. He also stated that legal and religious standards may move to the forefront at this level. However, it isn't until individuals reach the Postconventional level at Stages 5 and 6 that individuals move beyond adhering to existing societal rules and demonstrate concern for justice. Kohlberg (1990) asserted that individuals do not reach the Postconventional level until adulthood. He identified Stage 5 as Human-Rights and Social Welfare Morality. At this stage individuals begin to understand the importance of creating rules and laws that demonstrate equality, equity, and reciprocity, which demonstrate principles of justice. According to Kohlberg (1958) individuals at this stage also commit to such norms even when their beliefs conflict with societal norms.

Rest (1973) described the Maintaining Norms Schema when individuals begin to consider duties towards other members of society. Individuals demonstrate a perceived need for generally accepted and required social norms (Rest et al., 1999). The Maintaining Norms Schema is based on Kohlberg's Stage 4, along with elements of Stage 5.

Kohlberg's Postconventional level (6) and Rest's Postconventional Schema

Kohlberg (1958) defined the final Stage 6 as Morality of Universalizable, Reversible, and Prescriptive General Ethical Principles. At this stage, he described ethical values as more important than laws or policies. Kohlberg (1976) also identified morality as reversible

and the importance of taking everyone's perspectives into consideration. According to Rest (1973) when individuals employ the Post-conventional Schema they demonstrate moral obligations based on shared ideals, reciprocity, and equity for all groups within society (Rest, et al., 1999). Rest (1973) based the Postconventional Schema on Kohlberg's Stages 5 and 6. During these stages individuals move beyond adhering to existing societal rules and demonstrate concern for justice (Johnson, 2004).

Mentoring

In a mentoring relationship a more experienced principal provides support and supervision to new principals as they adjust to their new leadership roles (Grissom & Harrington, 2010).

Limitations

Using a survey instrument limits participants by forcing them to choose one of the provided options. In order to offset this weakness, I chose the DIT-2, an empirically derived questionnaire on moral reasoning, and carefully selected questions on mentoring. I chose a survey format over interviews because it allowed me to reach all of my participants. I also selected a survey format over an interview because it took less time for participants to complete.

Participants' self-reporting on the presence of ethics in their mentoring programs presented another limitation. Principals may have exaggerated or under reported the role that ethics played in their mentoring programs. However, a secondary source would have provided less insight into the variety of the principal's experiences regarding ethics training. The possibility of very few or no principals recollecting an ethics component from their mentoring experiences could have presented an additional limitation. Finally, in all studies,

results reflect the sample and may or may not generalize to the population. I attempted to offset this limitation by attempting to gather a large sample of all Pennsylvania principals.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This research examines moral decision making and the experience of public school principals. It is also explores the possible influence mentoring has on the principal's ability to confront complex decisions when clear ethical choices do not exist. Principals in today's society must make many difficult decisions that require high levels of moral reasoning (Hughes & Jones, 2011). This chapter begins by describing the role and challenges of the school principal. Philosophers including Socrates, Plato, and Kant created arguments regarding moral decision making that later informed research by such scholars as Piaget (1932), Kohlberg (1958), and Rest (1973) whose work provides the backdrop for this study. Kohlberg's Structural Stage Model, one of the most recognized moral development theories, provides a framework to understand various levels of moral judgment (Kohlberg, 1976). According to this model there are three levels of moral judgment and two stages within each level. Other researchers, including Rest (1975) expanded on Kohlberg's work by examining adult moral judgment using a range of moral reasoning levels rather than a strict progression of them. Rest's research led to a new assessment tool, the Defining Issues Test-2 (Rest, 1975), which is used in this study. These moral development theories and the Defining Issues test provide a better understanding of moral reasoning.

Researchers conducted numerous studies examining how principals demonstrate moral judgment (Vitton & Wasonga, 2009; Klinker and Hackmann, 2003; Paradise & Protti, 1990). These studies are described in detail in this chapter. Since this study focuses on moral decision making of principals and the influence of ethics training, this chapter also reviews studies on the impact of moral education training (Cannon, 2008; Feng-I, 2001;

Geddes & Salvatori, 2008; Reiman, 2004) and mentoring on moral reasoning (Arredondo & Rucinkski, 1998; Reiman & DeAngelis Peace, 2002).

This chapter begins with a discussion of research on the role of school principals with a focus on issues they encounter, which has implications for moral decision making. This section is followed by the impact of moral education training and mentoring studies on moral judgment. The next section of the chapter focuses on the background of philosophy on morality, moral development theories, including Piaget, Kohlberg, and Rest's theories. Moral reasoning assessment tools, including the Defining Issues Test-2 (DIT-2) are discussed as well. Additionally, studies using the DIT-2 are described. The chapter concludes with a discussion of studies on principals' moral judgment.

Changing Role of School Principal

The school principal fulfills both a vital and daunting one, which began as a combination of principal and teacher in the early 1800s (Kafka, 2009). Principal teachers usually assumed a range of responsibilities in addition to teaching and were referred to as "principal teachers," who worked included assigning classes, handling discipline issues, maintaining the building, taking attendance, and ensuring that school began and ended on time (Kafka, 2009). By the late 1800s, most principals no longer taught classes and were expected to demonstrate stronger leadership through the supervision of teachers in addition their other responsibilities (Kafka, 2009).

During this time principals continued to gain more authority and prestige due to various factors, including the bureaucratization of school districts, as the population grew (Kafka, 2009). Many school districts experienced such an increase in population that superintendents placed greater responsibilities on the building principals. Over time principals sought a

greater degree of autonomy by rallying to gain greater authority to promote, assign, and examine pupils, hire and fire teachers, and purchase books (Pierce, 1935). Principals also sought to professionalize the position by creating organizations, such as the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) in 1921 and the National Association of School Principals (NASSP) in 1916 (Brown, 2005). Finally, principals began to establish themselves as local leaders by initiating parent led organizations (Parent Teacher Associations), conducting parent seminars, and open house nights, which allows parents and students to visit the school and meet teachers at the beginning of the school year (Pierce, 1935). By the 1920s, the principal role closely resembled the responsibilities that principals demonstrate today (Kafka, 2009).

Principals continue to make decisions that should serve the best interest of students and that demonstrate instructional leadership for teachers (Frick & Guiterrez, 2008). However, principals in today's society often must confront with complex ethical issues related to such concerns as student discipline, teacher evaluations, abuse allegations, allocation of resources in a time when budgets are being cut, and compliance with standardized testing procedures (Hughes & Jones, 2011). Principals also experience greater political pressure than their predecessors (Kafka, 2009). Given the increased pressures placed on school principals to make decisions addressing diverse and a times conflicting demands of stakeholders, principals must possess the skills to make the best ethical decisions (Dempster & Berry, 2003).

These complexities lend themselves for confronting moral issues. A principal may be presented with more than one possible solution all of which contain morally correct components. Other decisions may contain high levels of morality, but could cause negative

reactions from the school board, parents, or even the superintendent. It is increasingly necessary for principals to be equipped with the skills to use complex moral judgment. "Moral judgment is a psychological construct that characterizes the process by which people determine that one course of action in a particular situation is morally right and another course of action is wrong" (Rest, Edwards, & Thoma, 1997, p. 5). The use of ethics guides this process, which "is concerned with the kinds of values and morals an individual or society finds desirable and appropriate" (Northouse, 2001, p. 250). Given the nature and role of school principals associated with important ethical decision making, which consists of addressing decisions that raise complex moral concerns, principals must feel confident in this area. Using in depth interviews and questionnaires, Dempster, Freakley, and Parry (2000) found that school principals identified a need to improve in a variety of areas, including the ability to recognize ethical features of a situation and knowledge of ethical principles. Their research also found that few principals participated in professional development programs with a specific focus on moral decision making. In fact 68% of the participants received no training in this area (Dempster, Freakley, & Parry, 2000). Five hundred fifty-two participants completed questionnaires and twenty-five of those participants also participated in in-depth interviews. Not only do principals recognize moral decision making as a vital skill in their role, but also say that training in this area is needed.

Morally Challenging Issues for Principals

Some of the most challenging issues for principals today are issues related to the political pressures that have been enforced from federal and state legislation. These issues impact both the ways that school principals make decisions and the types of decisions they must make (Kafka, 2009). Various forms of federal and state legislation impact both the

ways that school principals make decisions and the types of decisions they must make. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), which was enacted to improve student achievement and teacher accountability allowed states to determine how to define Adequate Yearly Progress and to create state standardized tests (U.S. Department of Education, 2010). Although NCLB identified worthy goals, pressure from this legislation led some educational leaders to make unethical decisions. For example, a state investigation found that dozens of public schools in Atlanta, Georgia falsified tests to improve standardized test scores dating back to 2001 (Severson, 2011). Another challenging situation related to standardized testing is that school principals must excuse students from the taking standardized tests if parents object due to religious reasons (PDE, 2012). However, some parents admit opting of the assessments because they do not feel as if the tests accurately measure student abilities and unfairly evaluate teachers. Additionally, some parents feel that standardized test preparation time could be used for other curricular areas (Strauss, 2016). NCLB evolved from the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 to provide educational opportunities for all students (U.S. Department of Education, 2017). In 2015 President Obama signed the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) in an attempt to improve certain aspects of NCLB (U.S. Department of Education, 2017).

Increasing parental involvement in schools and increasing parental rights also placed a higher level of accountability on school administrators. This trend began with the implementation of various federal programs, including the Head Start Program that was created as part of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 and Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (U.S. Department of Education, 2010). The initial goals of both programs provided educational opportunities for economically disadvantaged students.

However, educators also realized home environments greatly influence students as well. Therefore, schools that receive Title I funding must spend a portion of the funding on parent participation programs (U.S. Department of Education, 2010). The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1976 also strengthened parent rights. FERPA provides parents with access to review the student's education records maintained by the school (U.S. Department of Education, 2010). Parents may also request that schools correct records if they believe them to be inaccurate or misleading.

Such changes positively affected student success. Zellman and Waterman (1998) found higher test scores in reading associated with parent involvement. However, parents who demonstrate over involvement can cause ethical dilemmas for school leaders. For instance, some parents engage in combative methods, including legal action if they feel schools fail to meet their children's needs (Howe, 2010). As a result, the negative consequences of dealing with these parents can be very costly. In Theoharis' (2008) study of urban principals, over-parental involvement attributed to obstacles in principal moral decision making. Theoharis (2008) used in-depth interviews, document, analysis, and focus groups were used as methods. Principals faced resistance from parents when they tried to change policies, such as eliminating tracking systems in an effort to make learning more equitable for all students. Caucasian parents also complained frequently about the behaviors of the African American and Hispanic students when such behaviors did not appear to impede student learning. School leaders may also feel pressure if the parents belong to the school board or hold influential positions within the community especially in a small district where anonymity is difficult to attain (Garrett-Staib & Maringer, 2012).

Discipline policies, to which principals must adhere, impact moral decision making as well and can be particularly challenging when considering unique circumstances or special populations. For instance, Frick and Faircloth (2007) found that the intersection of discipline and special education is a source of ethical conflict for school leaders. The researchers conducted a qualitative study interviewing secondary principals to determine how policies and laws impact their goal of meeting the best interests of all students and how policies and laws affect this endeavor. Although the principals supported the philosophy of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA), which protects the rights of students with disabilities, they indicated that at times adhering to this law does not meet the best needs of the identified student or others students. It can be much more difficult to suspend or expel a special education student when an infraction occurs that would normally warrant such a consequence (Nashatker, 2010). If an identified emotionally disturbed student threatened to hurt another student, it could be argued that he or she did so as a result of the disability. However, if a weak consequence is given, the identified student may commit infractions more frequently in the future.

It is important for school leaders to examine the results of their decisions beyond their own interests, the district's interests, and parent interests. When Frick and Guiterrez (2008) conducted a phenomenological study of secondary principals examining morally unique aspects of educational leadership, participants also identified a professional orientation of acting in the students' best interests. The principals not only expressed the importance of protecting the general welfare of students, but also the need to encourage and expect high quality teaching for all students (Frick and Guiterrez, 2008). Given the extent to which principals are faced with diverse student needs, parental demands, and legislative pressure, it

becomes critical to address the training they receive to deal with the moral challenges (Dempster and Berry, 2003).

Moral Education Training

When principals are not equipped with the necessary skills to handle difficult issues, negative results may occur, not only for the principal her or himself, but for the school as well. Principals may need more guidance in exercising moral judgment regarding student discipline involving Fourth Amendment rights of search and seizure (Torres, 2012). In a sample of 230 such cases, principals demonstrated a concern for safety and security but did not consistently demonstrate concern for the right of the student who was being searched or having items seized (Torres, 2012). When an administrator violates a student's rights, it may be difficult for the student to rebuild trust in teachers and administrators. Teven (2007) found that college students rated instructors as less competent and trustworthy when they demonstrated uncaring and inappropriate behaviors. Thirty undergraduate students participated in the study by completing questionnaires based on written scenarios describing instructor behaviors (Teven, 2007). Teven (2007) defined uncaring behaviors as not taking an interest in students, not knowing students by names, and not remembering students' names several semesters after having them in class. Teven (2007) identified inappropriate behaviors as canceling class without notice, providing unclear expectations, changing the syllabus, often arriving unprepared for class, and rushing through class materials. Due to the strong correlation between trust and academic success (Bankole, 2011; Lee, 2007; Toste, 2012), school districts must provide administrators with skills to create a trusting environment with students. Research also indicates that principals with strong moral judgment abilities are more likely to demonstrate consistent democratic behavior (Reiman &

Theis-Sprinthall, 1993).

Principals who employ higher levels of moral judgment are better equipped to deal with their increasingly complex role. Due to the positive impact of complex moral reasoning, many researchers identify a need to understand how to improve moral decision making. When Edmonson, Fisher, and Polnick (2003) surveyed master's and doctoral level students enrolled in an educational leadership program they found that demonstrating fairness and demonstrating respect for all individuals were the two most identified desirable behaviors of school administrators. These behaviors are representative of Postconventional reasoning. School leaders should not only identify moral behaviors, but demonstrate them as well. Rest and Thoma (1985) identified formal education, which can include moral reasoning training through professional development as the strongest predictor in moral judgment. Schlaefli, Rest, and Thoma (1985) found in a review of 55 studies that moral judgment improved when moral dilemma discussions were used as interventions with middle school, high school, college, and graduate students. Programs with adults 24 years and older produced the largest effect sizes. These findings are consistent with Bebeau's (1994) findings that discussions of moral dilemmas accompanied with criteria for judging the quality of the arguments improved moral reasoning with participants in a dental professional educational program. However, in a review of 33 studies with approximately 6600 respondents in professional education programs, Bebeau and Thoma (1999) found overall that moral reasoning did not improve. Each professional program was taught without additional interventions and followed the regular curriculum. The Defining Issues Test (Rest, 1975) was used as a pre and post-test to measure changes in moral reasoning. Professional areas included, Medicine, Law, Dentistry, Nursing, and Veterinary Medicine.

Therefore, the types of interventions seem to impact changes in moral judgment rather than an educational setting itself.

According to Feng-I (2011), principals who received educational administration ethics training identified a wider range of moral areas including, justice (emphasis on duties, rights, fairness, and equity), care (i.e., emphasis on empathy as well as the network of relationships), utilitarianism (i.e., emphasis on consequences to determine moral worth), critique (emphasis on recognizing inequities in both schools and society), and virtue (emphasis on one's overall moral character and disposition to act in a certain way) when making decisions than those who did not received training (Feng-I, 2011). Feng-I (2011) provides evidence that such professional development programs should encourage school leaders to develop a wider breadth and a higher level of thinking related to moral issues (Feng-I, 2011). If principals are better equipped to deal with difficult decisions, it will both improve their competence in decision making skills and their contentment in their roles.

In a mixed methods study, new principals identified the development of self-awareness skills as a vital factor in their success as school leaders (Henry, 2010). Self-awareness was defined as one's ability to identify values as they are related to the professional role of educational leader and the principal's sense of self-efficacy (Daresh, 2006). Henry (2010) used an adapted critical skills inventory as the quantitative tool, which was based on Daresh's (2006) original inventory. Participants also identified mentoring as a way to develop these skills (Henry, 2010). Henry's study was conducted in Barbados, which contains no formal preparation program for new principals. Henry (2010) found that self-awareness impacts moral decision making and one that should be integrated into a mentoring program. This study also indicates that such needs not only exist in the United States but

cross-culturally as well. Research indicates that implementing a reflective practice for principals could also reduce burnout and improve moral judgment (Drago-Severson, 2012). According to Drago-Severson's (2012) qualitative study of principals, participation in ongoing reflective practice with colleagues would assist them in demonstrating effective leadership and provide them with renewal and support in such a challenging role. Reflection as a means to improve moral judgment is an integral component in many professional development programs (Arredondo & Rucinski, 1998; Reiman & Peace, 2002; Reiman & Thies-Sprinthall, 1993). This study provides further evidence that ethics can be taught and that such ethics training helps to improve the way school leaders approach moral dilemmas.

When school principals increase levels of moral judgment academic achievement may improve as well. For instance, Hughes and Jones (2011) identified a positive correlation between ethics professional for elementary public school principals and students' academic performance. Msila (2012) conducted a case study on a South African school where the principal used professional development activities to train staff on ways to demonstrate shared leadership, collaboration, and moral judgment. The principal conducted monthly workshops, which emphasized the importance of demonstrating respect and compassion for both staff and students. She also modeled these values herself. By mid-year, the students made slight academic improvement, which the principal attributed to the emphasis on teaching and modeling morals (Msila, 2012). It seems that once individuals participate in formal ethics training, improvements in moral judgment surface. Although Msila (2012) conducted this study with teacher participants, the results provide implications for principals as well. Principals could also benefit from professional development trainings related to moral decision making.

Reiman (2004) conducted a longitudinal study of two samples of education majors at North Carolina State University and found that moral judgment increased over a four-year period as a result of exposure to moral discussions and training. The first cohort consisted of 49 teacher candidates and the second cohort of 44 teacher candidates. Both cohorts were given with scenarios that provided sustained opportunities for ethical consideration of societal and educational dilemmas, with sustained social perspective taking opportunities and sustained reflection. Both cohorts also made significant gains in moral judgment and demonstrated high moral reasoning levels compared to national averages collected by McNeel (1994).

Deliberate role-taking and guided inquiry into educational ethical issues possibly contributed to this improvement of moral reasoning. Students received exposure to both areas as part of the curriculum. Reiman (2004) administered The Defining Issues Test (DIT) to measure changes in moral reasoning. Both cohort groups completed the DIT during their first week of their freshman year and again in April of their senior year. This study supports Kohlberg's (1981) theory of moral development that adults continue to progress in the area of moral judgment and that interventions can be successfully implemented to affect such growth. While Reiman's (2004) study provides evidence that adults continue to progress in the area of moral reasoning as they age, it also demonstrates the importance of providing experiences with opportunities to discuss ethical dilemmas and reflect upon them. These studies (Reiman, 2004; Feng-I, 2011) support other studies' findings that developing skills for critical reflection improves moral judgment (Rest, Narvaez, Babeau, & Thoma, 1999). Principals can participate in social learning experiences through professional development programs, including mentoring. This research also explores the impact of professional

development programs and mentoring programs with an emphasis on discussions and reflections of ethical dilemmas.

Ethics Training in Other Professions

Ethical rules and standards bind professionals, which demonstrate social responsibility to the recipients of their services (Nello, 2010). Often the professional possesses power and knowledge that recipients do not. Therefore, standards are established which help to ensure that the recipient's needs are being met in a fair manner (Nello, 2010). However, even when professionals follow such rules it can be difficult to make decisions that require high levels of moral judgment. The area of healthcare presents professionals with difficult decisions where they must meet the needs of patients. Principals' level of stress related to moral decision-making can be thought of as similar to that of healthcare professionals because both professionals must demonstrate responsibility for vulnerable populations. Unfortunately feelings of moral distress, which occur when professionals feel unprepared to deal with an ethical situation or feel concerned about interventions/treatment or protocols, but take no further action regarding the situation are common in healthcare situations. Such distress results from what one feels should be done and what actually occurs (Grady, Danis, Soeken, O'Donnell, Taylor, Farrar, & Ulrich, 2008).

Research on nurses and social workers and ethical decision making is informative regarding stress and has relevance to the role of principals. Grady, Danis, Soeken, O'Donnell, Taylor, Farrar, and Ulrich (2008) examined how ethics education and training and use of ethics resources increase confidence in ethical decision making and moral action in nurses and social workers. Their research relied on the use of the moral action subscale of the Nursing Ethical Involvement Scale to measure ethical decision making and moral action

(Penticliff & Martin, 1987). Researchers mailed surveys and received 1215 returned surveys from participants. Professionals who participated in ethics education both through their professional training programs and continuing education demonstrated the highest levels of moral action scores (Grady et al., 2008). In fact, participants who participated in continuing education programs in ethics with or without professional education in ethics were associated with the highest confidence in moral decision making and moral action, which may be attributed to the more practical focus and more recent exposure to the training (Grady et al., 2008).

In this study, social workers scored higher on moral action and expressed more confidence in their moral judgments than the nurses (Grady et al., 2008). Social workers also typically possess higher educational levels (e.g., in this study many more social workers had master's degrees), possess more ethics education, use ethics resources more frequently and more frequently find such resources useful. However, nurses have greater access to resources, such as consultative services from colleagues or from an institutional ethics committee, than social workers because the majority of nurses work in hospitals. Alternatively many social workers work independently in a community setting. The disciplines themselves are differently focused as well. Social work is a high process curriculum and nursing is a high science and technical curriculum. Although this study presents an argument for the importance of ethics education, the study would have been strengthened through the use of qualitative methods (Grady et al., 2008). The use of interviews or focus groups would have provided researchers with a better understanding of how moral decision making and moral action were impacted through continuing professional

education. Despite this weakness, this study suggests that principals could improve moral decision making through continuing professional education programs.

Geddes and Salvatori (2008) explored the impact of a pre-licensure of occupational and physical therapy students, which included an ethics component on moral judgment in occupational therapy (OT) and physical therapy (PT) students. All of the participants in this study were bachelor level students who already completed another bachelor degree in a different or related field. Trainers implemented student-centered learning practices in primarily small group settings. OT and PT students participated in this longitudinal study over a six-year period. Geddes and Salvatori (2009) measured moral judgment levels using the DIT. After the two year training program, moral judgment levels of both OT and PT students increased significantly. The DIT has also been used to demonstrate improvements in moral judgments after the use of interventions with undergraduate business students (Fraedrich, Cherry, King, & Guo, 2005) and with master's level counseling students (Cannon, 2008). In his research Cannon (2008) found that moral judgment improved due to supervised sessions with an emphasis on a discussion of moral dilemmas and a weekly journal of reflection. However, in Geddes and Salvatori's (2008) study the ethics component did not clearly contribute to the increase or one of or a combination of the other following components, academic studies, clinical fieldwork, problem based learning style, content stream, or role modeling and mentoring of faculty/senior students (Geddes & Salvatori, 2008).

The business profession began emphasizing the importance of incorporating ethics into the curriculum in 1976 when the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business (i.e., AACSB) identified it as a priority. When Fraedrich et al. (2005) examined the impact

of ethics instruction on business students' ethical decision making and moral development with undergraduate and master's level students from a Midwestern university, they used the Jensen's Moral Content Test (MCT) (1978) in addition to the DIT. These assessments explore not only the structure of moral reasoning but the content of it as well. Unlike the DIT, the MCT did not indicate a significant increase in moral reasoning. However, researchers assessed students in a different manner. Some instructors included a few question regarding ethics and others relied on it for a discussion tool during class (Fraedich et al., 2005). In another business study, Ritter (2006) examined how a business course, which contains a strong emphasis on ethics created a moral schema that can be activated in future business related decisions. Half of the participants were exposed to ethical theories, which they later used to apply to both real-life and fictional cases studies. These students also participated in small group discussions followed by a debriefing period.

Women in the treatment group made greater gains in moral judgment in comparison to the men in the treatment group. Women in the treatment group demonstrated a significant increase in moral reasoning and moral awareness compared to women in the control group. Ritter (2006) proposed that college women may have already have developed an ethical schema that can be activated for decision-making (Ritter, 2006). Women in the treatment group also demonstrated a significant increase in moral reasoning and moral awareness compared to women in the control group. Although male students possess an awareness of ethical principles, they seem to identify with the traditional business paradigm that emphasizes profit over ethics. Since women need to find ways to incorporate their gender roles into the traditional business paradigm, they seem to be more open to learning and utilizing tools that can increase moral reasoning (Ritter, 2006). According to Ritter (2006)

these changes can be made in male students as well, but must be done through a systematic approach where ethics are emphasized in every course.

Welton and Guffey (2009) not only found that moral reasoning increased in accounting students after an ethics component was integrated into a professionalism graduate course, but that this increase persisted over time. The researchers conducted a longitudinal study over a three-year period, which consisted of a pre-test, post-test, and follow-up test. Welton and Guffey (2009) administered the follow up test three years after the completion of the course. The course was divided into the following three parts: the politics and the process of formulating and enforcing accounting standards, an ethics intervention, and legal responsibilities of the profession. The ethics component consisted of Kohlberg's theory of moral development, study of professional codes of ethics (e.g., American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, Institute of Internal Auditors), and the application of ethics concepts to cases.

During the case analyses, researchers prompted students to focus on the possible moral decisions and the impact of those decisions on the stakeholders, which represents Rest's (1973) moral sensitivity component. Cannon's (2008) study of master's level counseling students and Ritter's (2006) study of business students also included a component of moral dilemma discussions. The ethics component in Welton and Guffey's (2009) study lasted five weeks and was taught in a seminar format. The duration of this intervention is consistent with Rest's (1986) findings that a three to twelve-week intervention is effective. Although the change appears to be a result of the intervention, there is a potential non-response bias, since approximately half of the participants failed to respond. However, Welton and Guffy (2009) accounted for this bias by comparing early respondents to late

respondents based on the notion that late respondents demonstrate similarities to non-respondents. They found no statistical significant differences, which decrease the probability of non-response bias. Another potential influence on the increase in moral reasoning on the follow-up test is the influence of intervening variables such as continuing education and heightened awareness of ethical issues due to news stories of corporate corruption (Welton and Guffey, 2009).

In addition to moral judgment Cannon's (2008) study explored the perceived multicultural competence of white master's level counseling students during their internship. The cognitive-developmental program based on a deliberate psychological educational model included structured supervision sessions with an emphasis on a discussion of moral dilemmas and a weekly journal of reflections. During discussions students were encouraged to share personal moral dilemmas that they were facing during their internship experiences. The intervention occurred for two consecutive semesters over a nine-month period. Reiman and Thies-Sprinthall (1993) found intervention periods of at least a semester long as most effective. Rest (1986) recommended a shorter period. This study demonstrates consistency with Reiman and Thies-Sprinthall's findings. Students placed in the intervention groups were enrolled in a suburban university.

The first comparison group consisted of students from an urban university and the second comparison group consisted of students from a rural university. Cannon (2008) used the DIT-2 to measure moral reasoning and the Multicultural Counseling Knowledge and Awareness Scale to measure multicultural competence. Participants who received the psychological educational model intervention demonstrated significantly higher levels of moral reasoning than both of the comparison groups. The knowledge and awareness

components of the multicultural counseling scale provided mixed results. Participants demonstrated a higher increase than the second comparison group. However, neither of the comparison groups demonstrated a higher level of awareness than the other (Cannon, 2008).

Mentoring Programs and Studies

Many educational leadership organizations value maintaining high moral standards (National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP), 2013; Pennsylvania Association of School Administrator, 2013). For instance, one of the goals identified in the vision statement of the NAESP (2012) is for principals to model an atmosphere of professionalism and effectiveness. However, few principal certification programs require courses in ethics. Additionally, leadership organizations such as the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (2013) (i.e., ISLLC) and NAESP do not require or offer courses, programs or curriculum on leadership ethics (Hughes & Jones, 2011). However, NAESP has created a mentoring program with an ethics component (NAESP, 2013).

According to Dempster and Berry (2003), not only must principals deal with increasingly complex ethical issues, but also they often feel unprepared to deal with them. A study of 552 Australian principals showed that 68% did not receive training related to ethical issues in their professional development (Dempster, Freakley, & Parry, 2000 as cited by Dempster & Berry, 2003). Although this study was conducted in Australia, other western nations demonstrate similar trends. Many mentoring programs focus too narrowly on assisting new principals with tasks, such as budgeting and scheduling rather than teaching skills to help them become effective leaders for the duration of their careers in educational administration (Daresh, 2007). In a mentoring relationship, the more experienced principal provides support and supervision to new principals as they adjust to their new leadership

roles (Grissom & Harrington, 2010). Mentors often assist their mentees in solving complex problems and provide professional advice.

Although mentors should include an ethics component in mentoring discussions, often mentors reserve little time for this area after procedural matters are addressed (Hunink, Leeuwen, Jansen, & Jochemesen, 2009). In some situations, mentors allow the principal being mentored to determine pertinent issues. Although the sessions should be meaningful for the principal, moral issues could be neglected (Hunink et al., 2002). The Pennsylvania Principal Mentoring Network (PPMN) is one program that allows mentees to choose the topic. The PPMN program requires principals to meet monthly with mentors and communicate via phone or email weekly, but there is no guarantee that the mentee will receive guidance on moral issues (personal communication, Sherwood, May 7, 2012).

Although few studies have explored the role of mentoring on the principals, studies suggest that a mentoring relationship positively affects the principal. Teachers rate mentored principals more effectively than non-mentored principals (Grissom & Harrington, 2010). Grissom & Harrington (2010) found a significant positive correlation between principal participation in a formal mentoring program and principal effectiveness, such as but not limited to providing a supportive and encouraging environment for staff. This study was based on a nationally representative sample from the Schools and Staffing Survey, which included nearly 38,00 teachers' ratings of principals (Grissom & Harrington, 2010). Principal mentoring also correlates with increased confidence in professional competence of principals (Daresh, 2004).

Alsbury and Hackmann (2006) found that first year principals and superintendents benefited from mentoring relationships, which focused on role socialization into the

profession, reflective conversation, and role clarification. Alsbury and Hackmann (2006) measured perceptions of the mentors and protégés using open-ended surveys. Forty-three participants responded during the first year and eighty-nine participants responded during the second year. The following goals were included in the program: strategic recruitment, selection, and pairing of mentors with novice administrators, a comprehensive training program for mentors, development of training materials and ongoing program assessment (Alsbury & Hackmann, 2006). In Searby's (2006) study of aspiring school principals, participants recognized various benefits of a mentoring relationship, which also included an emphasis on reflection skills. As principals begin the reflection process they develop an awareness of personal assumptions and biases. This awareness evolves from mentors challenging such beliefs. As a result, principals may feel less restricted and be more likely to experience professional growth (Searby, 2006). During an eight-week educational leadership graduate course, students also learned ways to understand their needs in a mentoring relationship and ways to seek mentors. In fact, assignments included choosing a mentor and participating in mentoring sessions. In preparation for mentoring sessions, students explored their strengths and weaknesses.

Other professional areas use mentoring as a tool, such as nursing to assist participants in recognizing moral issues (Hunink et al., 2009). Hunink et al. (2009) conducted qualitative research using document analysis on third and fourth year nursing students from three different Dutch universities who were currently participating in internships, which involved supervision, which were identified as mentoring sessions. All students took ethics courses as part of their nursing curriculum. During each mentoring session, students met in a small group setting with their supervisor. Prior to each session students submitted written

descriptions to their supervisors and other members of the mentoring group of challenging discussions that they had encountered during their internships experience. After each session, students reflected on the group discussion, identified what they had learned and submitted another reflection. The reflections were considered authentic and unsolicited because students did not complete them solely for the study, but rather as part of their internship requirements. If the students only completed them as part of the study, they may have attempted to produce material that they thought was desired by the researchers (Hunink et al., 2009). Since researchers used two groups used in this study, Hunink et al. (2009) adhered to rules for reliability of inter-assessment. Hunink et al. (2009) found that both the third and fourth year students presented a range of issues for mentoring discussions and that the types of issues were similar between groups. However, the third-year students identified more issues related to their own professional conduct than and recognized moral issues more frequently than fourth students. This difference could be attributed to more frequent meetings with mentors.

Although protégés in Alsbury and Hackmann's (2006) study rated the program as beneficial, many participants criticized the lack of face-to-face time with mentors, wide geographical distance between mentors and protégés, and lack of contact initiation by mentors. Proteges also reported that trainings should include more reflections time and unstructured discussion rather than traditional trainings, which primarily included information dissemination (Alsbury and Hackmann, 2006). Participants in Hunink et al.'s (2009) study could have benefited in additional ways as well. Although the nursing students presented a wide range of moral issues for mentoring discussions, few students applied ethical theories from courses to situations. Students also demonstrated difficulty in

connecting moral issues to their mentoring experience. If mentors do not identify such issues, students will not receive supervision in this area, which will ultimately impact their ability to handle ethical situations using high levels of moral reasoning. Alsbury and Hackmann's (2006) study was based on the Iowa Administrator Mentoring and Induction Program (IAMI), which was a two-year pilot program conducted during the academic years between 2002-2004. Participating partners included the School Administrators of Iowa, the state's professional organization for building- and district-level administrators, and the 15 Area Education Agencies, the intermediate school agencies within the state. According to Hopkins-Thompson (2000) the most effective mentoring programs include clearly defined outcomes, appropriate screening of mentors and mentees, useful mentor training, and continual evaluation. Participants identified these elements in Alsbury and Hackmann's (2006) study, but may have been absent in Hunink et al.'s (2009) study. Hunink et al. (2009) argues that mentors should provide more direction in mentoring situations, which will ensure that ethical issues are addressed. These studies provide support for examining the role of mentoring in the moral judgment of school principals.

The use of reflection in mentoring relationships in the educational leadership field effectively improves moral judgment as well. However, principal and principal candidates served as mentors rather than mentees in such studies. According to Arredondo and Rucinkski's (1998) mixed methods study of graduate students enrolled in an educational administration program, both mentors and protégés demonstrated improvement in moral judgment. Eleven pairs of mentors and mentees participated in this study. Graduate students in an educational administration program served as mentors rather for colleagues in various educational roles in this study (Arredondo and Rucinski, 1998). Researchers used the five

conditions identified by Reiman and Thies-Sprinthall (1993), which prompt changes in developmental stages. First, they defined the relationship as a significant helping relationship, such as counseling, tutoring, or mentoring relationship. The second component includes reflection through journaling and dialogue about the helping experience. Third, Reiman and Theis-Sprinthall (1993) determine that reflection should be balanced with helping activities. Fourth, the intervention must occur over a long period of time, usually at least one semester. Finally, Reiman and Theis-Sprinthall (1993) assert that the mentor provides both encouragement and challenges to promote new learning (mentors asking mentees' reasons for choosing actions), which is based on Vygotsky's (1978) zone of proximal growth.

Arredondo and Rucinski (1998) found that using a reflection process, which included observation, reflective conversation containing a supportive/challenge dialogue pattern, mentee structured journal reflection, mentor feedback, professor feedback, and mentor reflective journal entry led to improvements in mentees' and mentors' moral judgment. Reiman and DeAngelis Peace (2002) also found that embedding reflection in a peer coaching program, created improvement in moral judgment. Okseon and Choi (2013) define peer coaching as a process of one peer observing, providing feedback, and forming an analysis of how the new skills were applied for another peer. Participants in Reiman and DeAngelis' (2002) study included experienced teachers with a mean of 16 years of experience. Reiman and DeAngelis' (2002) used the peer coaching method based on a Teaching Learning Framework Model (LTF), which initially Sprinthall and Thies-Sprinthall (1983) initially introduced. LTF adheres to the five conditions necessary for changes in developmental growth mentioned previously by Reiman and Thies-Sprinthall (1993), which was used in

Arredondo and Rucinski's study (1998). However, LTF takes into account the diverse experiences of the learner and his or new or expanded professional role as well.

In Reiman and DeAngelis Peace (2002) study, teachers in the experimental group participated in a peer coaching/collaborative inquiry intervention. This intervention lasted seven months and included ten four hour meetings spread out over that time. Teachers in the control group attended monthly school leader meetings, but did not participate in any formal continuous professional development program. Each peer coaching session contained the following elements; time for collaborative inquiry, reflective discussion, introduction of new models of teaching/learning, and opportunities for peer coaching that included pre-conferences, observations, and post-conferences. Peer coaches presented the following various topics: including building effective communication and diversity and equity of the adult learner. Reiman and DeAngelis Pease (2002) used the DIT to measure improvements in moral judgment. Although results from the DIT did not reveal significant changes in moral judgment in Arredondo and Rucinski's study (1998), final journal entries demonstrated improvement in reflective judgment and moral judgment. Reseachers also assessed changes in beliefs about knowledge and learning using the Schoomer Epistemological Survey (1990), which did not yield significant results either. The Schommer Epistemological Survey (1990) uses a 5 point Likert Scale. Each pair of mentors and mentees completed five cycles of this reflection process over the course of a semester. Reiman and DeAngelis Peace (2002) administered pre- and post-intervention assessments of moral reasoning and epistemological beliefs. The qualitative use of journal entries in this study provides evidence for reflection and discussion of moral issues to improve moral judgment. Additionally, both Reiman and DeAngelis Peace (2002) and Arrendondo & Rucinski's study (1998) provide support for

examining the role of mentoring in the moral judgment of school principals. It is also important to understand how theories about moral decision making developed, which provide a framework for understanding how decisions are reached and ways to improve moral judgment (Kohlberg, 1986).

Background on Philosophy of Morality

Research on the process of moral judgment can provide insight about how people develop ethics to guide their decision making. One of the most influential thinkers in Western society during the 4th century B.C.E., Socrates emphasized the importance of studying morality through virtues (Plato, 380 B.C.E, translated by Grube and revised by Reeve, 1998). Socrates argued one virtue encompasses all virtues and is applicable to all humans (Plato, 380, B.C.E). Socrates identified this essential virtue as the concept of justice, which he asserted should be demonstrated in all situations. Plato, Socrates' student and influential philosopher as well, expressed the belief that being moral serves one's best interest, which he also defined as being primarily just in Book IV of the *Republic* (Plato, 380 B.C.E.). Plato expanded on this notion by describing how acting in an unjust way results in a spiritual cost that does not compensate for any benefits of unjust behaviors. Both Socrates and Plato also described the importance of moral education, with a focus of instruction on moral judgment and reasoning regarding justice (Sigad, 1996).

Aristotle, Plato's student, provided the first systematic framework of ethics in Western philosophy in his famous work "Nicomachean Ethics," known as virtue ethics (Arisotle, 350, B.C.E., translated by Bartlett & Collins, 2011). Rather than maintaining a focus on an essential virtue, Aristotle considered justice, prudence, fortitude, and temperance as the most important virtuous behaviors. Aristotle identified the main tenet of virtue ethics as

individuals demonstrating a strong moral character once they have learned to regulate their emotions and to think rationally (Gerisson & Holmgren, 2000). In order for a virtuous act to be done temperately or justly, the individual must make decisions using a consistent character, possess knowledge, and should consider choices based on their own sakes (Aristotle, 350, B.C. E.). This philosophy of morality remained dominant until the Enlightenment Period during the 17th and 18th centuries. Unlike virtue ethics that also placed emphasis on happiness, many philosophers of this period supported a deontological approach to ethics. This approach asserted that individuals should not be motivated by happiness, but should act purely out of a motive of duty (McDonough, 2005). Kant, an 18th century philosopher demonstrated this belief in his call for a categorical imperative "that one should treat another as an end, and not merely a means" (McDonough, 2005, p. 199). However, Kant's view also showed a parallel to Aristotle's conditions for acting in a virtuous way.

Background on Moral Development Theories

The psychological study of moral judgment began in the late 19th century and was influenced by Dewey, McDougall, and Baldwin (Wendorf, 2001). Dewey asserted that values arose as outcomes of human responses to varying environmental situations and advocated for a method to help people decide which decisions to make in his work "Educational Review" (1893). In "Moral Principles of Education" (1909), Dewey described the role schools should take in shaping moral character. Dewey (1964) also later asserted that knowledge of the stages of psychological development could help students create a free and moral character. Dewey was one of the first psychologists to strongly advocate for moral education. McDougall also emphasized the role of society on moral development and felt that as individuals mature socially, they consider other members of society, but make moral

decisions based on individual expectations of oneself (Wendorf, 2001). Baldwin proposed a step theory of cognitive development in "Mental Development in the Child and the Race: Methods and Processes" (1894). In this work, Baldwin also described the relationship between reason and reality, morality, egoism, and altruism. Baldwin emphasized the impact of social surroundings on development as well. Baldwin's theory strongly influenced other more widely known stage models, including Piaget's (1932) cognitive stage model on moral and logical reasoning in children, Kohlberg's Stage Model (1975) on moral reasoning, which demonstrated how reasoning continues to develop into adulthood, and Rest's (1973) Moral Reasoning Schemas.

Both Piaget's and Kohlberg's models are examples of cognitive structuralist theories of moral development (Thomas, 1997). According to cognitive structuralism, each time an individual faces a moral dilemma he or she assigns meaning to it. As individuals progress through childhood, these cognitive structures develop. These changes are sequential and are also based on one's genetic predispositions and experiences (Thomas, 1997). These models laid the groundwork to examine how mentoring programs with an ethics component can influence moral reasoning in principals. Changes in moral reasoning can be attributed to various experiences, including mentoring (Arredondo & Rucinkski, 1998). Another characteristic of structuralism is that the function (i.e., moral judgment) does not alter at each stage in contrast to functionalist models, such as Erikson's Theory of Development (Erikson, 1994). For instance, according to his Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt Stage, Erikson proposes that if children do not feel confident in accomplishing tasks independently, they may become self-conscious and begin to experience feelings of shame. The tasks in the other

seven stages, which extend into adulthood, Erickson argued have different functions as well (Erikson, 1994).

To understand the process through which people develop awareness and skills about decision making and the use of ethics, one should consider research that has been done on moral reasoning and human development. Piaget, one of the most influential moral development theorists, explained how children develop moral reasoning using a cognitive stage model. His 1932 study, *The Moral Judgment of the Child,* provided the foundation for further psychological moral development research in adults as well (Kurtines & Greif, 1974). Although Piaget asserted that the development of moral reasoning ended during adolescence, other theorists later demonstrated that individuals continue to progress by identifying additional stages (Kohlberg, 1990). Piaget (1932) proposed that children pass through the following three stages: Premoral Period, Heteronomous Morality, and Autonomous Morality. Piaget proposed that during the premoral period the child is unconcerned about rules and makes up his or her own rules (i.e., preschool ages). According to Piaget during the heteronomous period the child views rules as authority driven (i.e., approximately five to eight or nine years of age). The child sees these rules as unalterable, must be obeyed, and violations as punishable. Finally, during the autonomous morality period Piaget describes the child as identifying social rules as arbitrary (i.e., approximately eight or nine to eleven or twelve years of age). Rules can be changed by agreement or violated for a higher purpose. Piaget (1932) identifies justice is the main objective based on reciprocity and equality. Although individuals progress through the various stages at different times, all must progress in the same manner (Piaget, 1932).

In addition to moral reasoning, Piaget also addressed logical reasoning that consists of the following stages: Sensory-Motor Stage (ages birth through two), Preoperational Stage (ages two through seven), Stage of Concrete Operations: (ages seven through eleven), and Stage of Formal Operations (ages eleven through sixteen). Piaget asserted that during the Sensory-Motor Stage the child begins to develop reflexes by reaching for desired objects such as a toy. As children progress through this stage they also begin to repeat behaviors that may have resulted in a positive outcome accidentally. According to Piaget by the end of this stage children begin to understand that objects exist apart from themselves and that even if they cannot see an object it may be hidden. Additionally, he felt that the child develops awareness that when a parent leaves the room, he or she still exists and will return. Piaget described the beginning Preoperational Stage, as the child continuing to develop curiosity and once language develops presents many questions and devises his/her own explanations when they are unsure. He also described children as very egocentric during this period and only understanding things from their perspective. Piaget proposed that during the Stage of Concrete Operations, children begin to understand the concept of numbers. He asserted that although they learned to count in the previous stage, now they begin to understand that the number two represents two different objects. The main accomplishment of this stage is reversibility, which is represented by the ability of not only adding objects, but subtracting them and retracing steps when something is lost. Piaget also stated that by the end of this stage children attain the skill of conservation, which is the ability to understand that quantities remain the same even if placed in a different sized or different shaped container. Finally, Piaget described the Formal Operations Stage as children possessing the ability to

think beyond the present; abstractly and hypothetically. Thus, Piaget (1932) described thought as more analytical and systematic.

Kohlberg (1958) expanded on Piaget's work by incorporating an understanding of moral development into adult life. Kohlberg also included characteristics that demonstrate higher levels of moral reasoning than Piaget identified (1990). Kohlberg asserted that such levels could not be reached until adulthood (1990). These ideas were first introduced in Kohlberg's 1958 dissertation, *The Development Modes of Moral Thinking and Choice in the Years Ten to Sixteen,* where he asserted that children develop their own moral judgments, which is influenced by social relationships. However, Kohlberg did not believe that children developed morals by direct instruction, but rather by thinking about moral problems, which can be promoted through discussions (Kohlberg, 1981). For instance, when individuals engage in a debate and their views are challenged, they may create a new position and perspective. Additionally, role taking allows individuals to gain insight into how others view issues. When differences arise, individuals can work out difference and develop an idea of what is "just." Kohlberg (1975) asserted that all of these experiences contribute to the progression of moral development. Kohlberg also attributed the differences in moral reasoning to varying levels of maturity and one's developmental age. Therefore Kohlberg (1980) claimed that individuals continue to develop morally into adulthood.

This expanded stage on moral development contains six stages within three levels (Kohlberg, 1976). Kohlberg identified the first two stages as the Preconventional level. Kohlbered described rules at this level as external and defined Stage 1 as Heteronomous Morality. At this stage, individuals typically adhere to moral realism, which assumes that no explanation or justification is necessary when rules are broken. He described other

characteristics of this stage as obeying rules to avoid punishment and viewing authority as superior. Kohlberg asserted that during Stage 2, which is known as Individualistic, Instrumental Morality, individuals begin to realize that numerous perspectives may exist regarding moral issues. However, individuals place emphasis on meeting their needs rather than the needs of others. Kohlberg defined the third and fourth stages as the Conventional level. He named Stage 3 as Impersonally Normative Morality. According to Kohlberg at this level individuals begin to emphasize the importance of developing mutually agreed upon informal norms. The Golden Rule, which instructs members of society to do unto others, as you would have others do unto you, is an evident guiding force. During Stage 4, which Kohlberg referred to as Social System Morality individuals begin to examine how their behaviors affect society as a whole. Individual needs are considered appropriate if they do not detrimentally affect society. Legal and religious standards also play a pertinent role at this level. However, Kohlberg claimed that individuals do not reach the Postconventional level at Stages 5 and 6 until they move beyond adhering to existing societal rules and demonstrate concern for justice. Kohlberg (1990) asserted that individuals do not reach the Postconventional level until adulthood. He identified Stage 5 is known as Human-Rights and Social Welfare Morality. At this stage individuals begin to understand the importance of creating rules and laws that demonstrate equality, equity, and reciprocity, which are principles of justice. He felt that Individuals at this stage also commit to such norms even when their beliefs conflict with societal norms. Finally, Kohlberg identified Stage 6, known as Morality of Universalizable, Reversible, and Prescriptive General Ethical Principles. He felt that individuals at this stage consider ethical values more important than laws or policies. Morality is seen as reversible and respect for everyone's perspective is taken into

consideration. Kohlberg's model serves as a basic framework for understanding moral development.

Kohlberg also placed greater emphasis on justice than Piaget and relied on John Rawls' (1971) Theory of Justice. Rawls (1971) described justice as mutually agreed upon rules and laws, which equally protect all citizens. Rawls describes these principles as chosen in a hypothetical way using a "veil of ignorance," which means that individuals do not know what their future will look like. When individuals make a decision under these circumstances, they are protected from unfairness in the event they are assigned one of society's less desirable roles. Additionally, Rawls (1971) described inequalities as fair or just if their existence makes everyone better off. Kohlberg (1971) defined justice as "the basic moral principle" and one that can be universalized (p. 220). Although he asserted that the principle of utility or benevolence could also be universalized, it was less useful because it could not be used solving ethical dilemmas (Kohlberg, 1971).

Kohlberg not only created a model of moral development that extended beyond childhood, but also connected his levels with Piaget's model of logical reasoning. For example, in order for an individual to progress to Kohlberg's Stage 2 (Individualist, Instrumental Morality), he or she must first successfully complete Piaget's concrete-operational stage (Kegan, 1982). Thus, young children typically demonstrate moral reasoning at Stages 1 and 2. In order to proceed to upper level stages, such as Stage 4, Social-System Morality, an older child must accomplish Piaget's full formal-operations thought processes (Kegan, 1982).

Kohlberg's (1975, 1981) work presents the argument that moral judgment is determined by the way one reaches a moral decision rather than simply the choice itself.

Although the type of reasoning used to make moral decisions is different at each level, the task of using moral judgment is consistent through levels. Both Piaget (1932) and Kohlberg (1975, 1981) demonstrated that logical reasoning is vital in order to reach higher levels of moral reasoning. However logical reasoning does not ensure one will demonstrate high levels of moral judgment. Kurtines and Grief (1974) and Blasi (1980) detailed how moral judgment has minimal relationships with various moral functions. More recently, when undergraduate students in a managerial accounting course at private university were assessed on moral reasoning, researchers found significant relationship between moral reasoning to cheating or honesty (West, Pickard Ravenscroft, & Shrader, 2004). Researchers gave students a take-home problem as part of a mid-term exam with instructions to work independently including no web based resources. Although many students (74%) admitted to some form of cheating, moral reasoning assessments did not reflect a propensity towards such behaviors (West, Pickard Ravenscroft, & Shrader, 2004).

This cognitive developmental framework of morality differed from both the psychoanalytic and behaviorist views that were widely used during the first half of the 20th century. According to psychoanalytic theory, the major source of morality is derived from parental influences, including love and firmness (Merlino, 2006). Freud (1901), known as the father of psychoanalysis, also emphasized the role of irrational drives on behaviors and thoughts. John B. Watson, the founder of behaviorism, ascribed changes in moral judgment to external behaviors and reaction rather than internal thoughts in "Psychology as the Behaviorist Views It" (1913). In "Walden II" (1948) B.F. Skinner, another influential behaviorist, described a fictional society that educated its children strictly through the reinforcement of presenting (positive reinforcement) and/or removing (negative

reinforcement) stimuli to create desired moral behavior. Kohlberg (1981) not only believed that individuals possessed control over their thoughts, but that they could also make decisions in a rational way, especially as they matured cognitively.

In addition to Piaget's influence, early philosophers including Socrates, Plato, and Kant helped to shape Kohlberg's theory of moral development. According to Kohlberg (1981), the essential value of justice that Socrates and Plato described better explained moral judgment than Aristotle's "bag of virtures" of justice, prudence, fortitude, and temperance. When a "bag of virtues" is used, individuals often define ideals in different ways. As a result, this approach does not provide a clear understanding of moral behavior. (McDonough, 2005). Socrates and Plato's emphasis on moral education, in which the focus of instruction is on moral judgment and reasoning regarding justice also influenced Kohlberg (Sigad, 1996). The role that society can play in shaping moral judgment, which Dewey and McDougall described, impacted Kohlberg's work as well (Wendorf, 2011). Dewey was one of the first psychologists to strongly advocate for moral education. Baldwin's step theory of cognitive development, which also emphasized the interaction of social surroundings was another influence (Wendorf, 2011). Baldwin (1894) proposed that a child's perceptions of his or her social and physical world evolve in stages and extend into adulthood. Mead's (1934) theory of self-awareness and self-image, which he formulated in *Mind, Self, and Society* (1934) informed Kohlberg's thinking as well (Reed, 2008). Like Kohlberg, Mead envisioned the "self" as developing with social experience. As children mature, they learn to take the role of others and eventually take the role of the generalized others, which refers to universal values (Mead, 1934). Although Kohlberg (1981) identified only one essential value, he found that justice was a universal principle found across cultures.

Kohlberg's Research

Kohlberg's research demonstrated that individuals continue to develop moral judgment into adulthood. As a result, his theoretical framework can be useful in understanding moral reasoning in school principals. In his dissertation research, Kohlberg demonstrated how responses to moral dilemmas could be classified into one of six different stages of moral judgment. Kohlberg's participants consisted of 84 Chicago boys from middle and working class families ranging in ages from 10-16. The boys were instructed to describe a response to each moral dilemma and provide an explanation for each response (Kohlberg, 1982). Although the stages were not age dependent, they were age related (Kohlberg, 1958). Using participants (whose initial ages were 10, 13, and 16) from his dissertation, Kohlberg conducted a 20-year longitudinal study to determine whether these identified levels of moral judgment fit Piaget's cognitive structuralist stage model criteria (Colby, Kohlberg, Gibbs, & Lieberman, 1983). Kohlberg interviewed the participants at three-year intervals. First, Kohlberg (1975) identified stages as "structured wholes," which means that individuals demonstrate reasoning within one level rather than characteristics of several levels. Second, he proposed that stage progression is sequential in an upward movement, with the exception of an extremely traumatic event. He also argued that individuals do not skip stages. Finally, Kohlberg asserted individuals are able to comprehend moral reasoning below and at their stage. Individuals are also able to begin to understand one level above their own. Kohlberg (1975) found that there is a tendency to function or prefer the highest stage available. The results in this longitudinal study were consistent with the requirements of a cognitive structuralist stage model. More than 50% of the participants demonstrated reasoning at one stage rather than characteristics of several stages. During each interval, participants either

remained on the same stage or moved up to a higher stage. The participants also understood moral situations at or below, but failed to understand reasoning more than one level above their own (Kohlberg et al., 1983).

During this longitudinal study, Kohlberg developed the Structural Issue Scoring Moral Judgment Interview (MJI) to determine an individual's level of moral reasoning (Kohlberg, 1976). Previously Kohlberg (1958) used the Sentence Rating and Global Story Rating, which were based on content analysis during his dissertation research. Due to sequence anomalies from the scoring stage, definitions were revised to provide a clearer differentiation of moral judgment that led to the development of the new scale (Kohlberg, 1968). This measurement tool can be used with both adolescents and adults and consists of three different versions. Each version contains 9-12 standardized probe questions designed to elicit justifications and clarifications based on three hypothetical moral dilemmas. Interviewers choose two moral issues that participants described to score each dilemma. First, they classify responses to each dilemma and enter a score for each stage. This interview is individually administered. The MJI led to the development of the Defining Issues Test and Defining Issues Test 2 (Rest, 1975), which provide greater validity and reliability in examining moral reasoning. Both of these tools have been used to examine moral reasoning in a variety of professions, including school principals (Vitton & Wasonga, 2009).

When this tool was validated with participants from Kohlberg's longitudinal study (Colby et al., 1883), females were excluded (Gilligan, 1982). Later, when women were assessed using this measurement, their responses were either not scorable or researchers found female respondents to only reach the conventional level (Gilligan, 1982). Some researchers also questioned Kohlberg's findings due to the lack of standardization using this

assessment tool and high likelihood of rater bias (Kurtines & Grief, 1974). However, Kohlberg (Colby et al., 1983) used interviews because they allow participants to explain their own thinking. Kohlberg (Colby et al., 1983) asserted that the tool achieved validity when used by experience raters, but it did contain a level of subjectivity. He also described the Moral Judgment Interview as difficult to use and unreliable when used by those who had not had extensive training and who had not studied with Kohlberg (Colby, et al., 1983). Despite these criticisms other researchers supported use of the tool because of demonstrated high test-retest, parallel form and inter-rater reliability (Gibbs, Widaman, & Cobly, 1982). Cross-cultural research using Kohlberg's theory of moral judgment also demonstrated support for upward stage movement and the universality of "justice" (Bar-Yam, Kohlberg, & Naame, 1980; Nilsan & Kohlberg, 1982).

Kohlberg was interested in the role that education played in developing moral judgment as well. This interest prompted him to conduct studies in school settings where teachers created a participatory democracy. Kohlberg (1980) found that these environments provided more opportunities for role taking and a higher level of perceived institutional justice than other social arrangements. A process was created that allowed students to participate in moral discussions during school community meetings. Junior high and high school students who participated in guided moral discussions during a semester long study, demonstrated a significant upward change in stage progression. Teachers introduced questions that stimulated arguments one stage above students' levels. This is consistent with Kohlberg's argument about how to improve moral judgment (Kohlberg, 1975). Students maintained this change by continuing to make decisions using complex moral reasoning one year later in a follow up study (Blatt & Kohlberg, 1975).

Other Influential Moral Development Theories

According to Thomas (1997), "Kohlberg's innovations consisted of his definition of moral domain, his specifying six stages that carried individuals from heteronomous to autonomous moral reasoning, his conception of the causes for progress up the hierarchy of stages, and his cross-cultural studies of moral development" (p. 58). However, critics posit that Kohlberg's stage levels are not presented logically and require a more detailed explanation (Beck, 1971). For instance, some critics find the distinction between Stage 5 and Stage 6 ambiguous. Williams and Williams (1970) assert that Stage 3 and Stage 4 do not demonstrate sequence order and could be interjected as substitutions for one another. Another criticism is that evidence of invariant stage progression is incomplete. According to Simpson (1974), this component has only been demonstrated with Stages 2, 3, and 4. As a result, other researchers including Carol Gilligan (1982) and John Rest (1973) expanded on Kohlberg's work to include other aspects of moral reasoning in addition to justice. Rest's (1975) work also provided an alternative to the stage model, which led to the Defining Issues Test 2 (DIT-2). This test assesses moral reasoning more effectively than previous developed tools. The DIT-2 yields more valid and reliable results (Rest, 1999). The DIT-2 is also a much shorter assessment and can be taken by the participant without a highly trained assessor (Rest, 1999). The DIT-2, which is an improved version of the DIT is used in this study to examine moral reasoning in school principals.

Although other theorists studied different aspects of moral reasoning, they asserted that moral reasoning continues to develop into adulthood as well. Carol Gilligan (1982) identified the ethic of care as another area of moral reasoning when examining how women make moral decisions. Gilligan found that women place importance on maintaining human

relationships, the ability to recognize different needs, and the response of care towards others. Her work demonstrated that women implement moral reasoning using a contextual approach (Gilligan, 1982). Gilligan interviewed adult women who experienced various moral dilemmas, such as whether or not to have an abortion. The backgrounds of the participants were diverse in both ethnicity and social class. This aspect of her research presented a stronger basis for assessing decision making in that the situations Gilligan's subjects were addressing were real life scenarios rather than Kohlberg's hypothetical dilemmas (Rich & DeVitis, 1985). Conversely, Gilligan found that men view moral judgment in a more abstract manner. She found that they also place greater emphasis on justice and reciprocity (Yacker & Weinberg, 1990). Bussey and Maughan (1992) propose that women may have scored lower in Kohlberg's studies based on the way dilemmas were presented and whether or not the protagonists were male or female. Because Kohlberg only focused on the issues of fairness and justice and used dilemmas that presented competing rights (Yacker & Weinberg, 1990), Gilligan redefined Kohlberg's scale as a measure of justice-oriented moral reasoning. Kohlberg expressed agreement with this description of his measure (Kohlberg, Levine, & Hewer, 1983 as cited by Yacker & Weinberg, 1990).

Overall Kohlberg saw Gilligan's work as an expansion of his theory (Jorgensen, 2006). In the years following Gilligan's work, Kohlberg (1990) redefined Stage 6, which he called Morality of Universalizable, Reversible, and Prescriptive General Ethical Principles to include both principles of justice and benevolence. Since this debate began researchers provided studies that support both Gilligan's (Busey & Maughan, 1982; Parikh, 1980) and Kohlberg's claims (Thoma, 1986, Rest, 1975). Yet other studies demonstrate that women

score higher than men on moral reasoning assessments (Kracher et al., 2002; Loc & Weeks, 2000).

Gilligan criticized Kohlberg, and other psychologists, such as Piaget and Erikson for gender bias in only using male participants (Jorgensen, 2006). However, Gilligan demonstrated methodological flaws as well by only studying mostly upper-middle-class children and Radcliffe-Harvard students (Murphy & Gilligan, 1980). Other critics claim that such differences in moral judgment are not based on gender but rather variations in expressions of care and responsibility (Prakash, 1984). Kohlberg also proposed that once women hold similar social and occupational roles as men, moral reasoning of genders would become similar. Given that this dissertation research is focused on adult moral decision making, it is valuable to consider how Kohlberg's work was applied to adult moral judgment.

Rest's Moral Development Theory

Rest (1973) examined adult moral judgment using a range of moral reasoning levels rather than a strict progression of them. For instance, one may demonstrate moral reasoning at the Postconventional level when making a professional decision, but only at the Conventional level when making a personal decision. Rest and other neo-Kohlbergians combine stages 5 and 6 since few individuals have been identified at the final stage (Rest et al., 1999). Another characteristic of neo-Kohlbergian theory is that Postconventional reasoning is not limited to the concept of justice and can include other types of complex moral reasoning (Gibbs, 2003; Rest et al., 1999). In order to reach this level, individuals must demonstrate concern that others are treated in an equitable manner (Rest et al., 1999), a quality particularly relevant to today's school principals.

As a result Rest (1973) identified the following schemas: Personal Interest Schema, Maintaining Norms Schema, and Postconventional Schema. Rest based these schemas on Kohlberg's (1958) moral development theory, which contains six stages within three levels. However, Rest (1973) examined adult moral judgment using a range of moral reasoning levels rather than a strict progression of them.

Kohlberg (1958) defined the first two stages as the Preconventional level, which falls into the Personal Interest Schema. At this level, rules are external. Kohlberg (1958) defined Stage 1 as Heteronomous Morality. At this stage, individuals typically adhere to moral realism, which assumes that breaking rules does not necessarily require an explanation or justification. Other characteristics of this stage include obeying rules to avoid punishment and viewing authority as superior. Kohlberg (1958) identified Stage 2 as Individualist Instrumental Morality. At this stage, individuals begin to realize that numerous perspectives may exist regarding moral issues. However, individuals place emphasis on meeting personal needs rather than the needs of others. Kohlberg (1958) defined his third and fourth stages as the conventional level of moral development. Kohlberg (1958) identified Stage 3 as Impersonally Normative Morality. At this level, individuals begin to emphasize the importance of developing mutually agreed upon informal norms. The Golden Rule, which instructs members of society to do unto others as you would have others do unto you, represents an evident guiding force in Stage 3.

Rest (1973) asserted that when individuals make decisions from the lowest level schema they adhere to the Personal Interests Schema. According to this schema others' needs may get taken into consideration, but only if the decision maker still receives benefits. Individuals exhibiting this thinking also demonstrate concern for those with whom they have

affectionate relationships (Rest, et al., 1999). This schema stresses the notion of survival and "getting ahead" (Narvaez & Bock, 2002). Rest (1973) based the Personal Interest Schema on Kohlberg's Stages 2 and 3.

During Kohlberg's (1958) Stage 4, known as Social System Morality, individuals begin to examine how behaviors impact society. Kohlberg (1958) asserted that individual needs remain appropriate only if they do not detrimentally affect society. He also stated that legal and religious standards may move to the forefront at this level. However, it isn't until individuals reach the Postconventional level at Stages 5 and 6 that individuals move beyond adhering to existing societal rules and demonstrate concern for justice. Kohlberg (1990) asserted that individuals do not reach the Postconventional level until adulthood. He identified Stage 5 as Human-Rights and Social Welfare Morality. At this stage individuals begin to understand the importance of creating rules and laws that demonstrate equality, equity, and reciprocity, which demonstrate principles of justice. According to Kohlberg (1958) individuals at this stage also commit to such norms even when their beliefs conflict with societal norms.

Rest (1973) described the Maintaining Norms Schema when individuals begin to consider duties towards other members of society. Individuals demonstrate a perceived need for generally accepted and required social norms (Rest, et al., 1999). The Maintaining Norms Schema is based on Kohlberg's Stage 4, along with elements of Stage 5.

Kohlberg (1958) defined the final Stage 6 as Morality of Universalizable, Reversible, and Prescriptive General Ethical Principles. At this stage, he described ethical values as more important than laws or policies. Kohlberg (1976) also identified morality as reversible and the importance of taking everyone's perspectives into consideration. According to Rest

(1973) when individuals employ the Postconventional Schema they demonstrate moral obligations based on shared ideals, reciprocity, and equity for all groups within society (Rest et al., 1999). Rest (1973) based the Postconventional Schema on Kohlberg's Stages 5 and 6. During these stages individuals move beyond adhering to existing societal rules and demonstrate concern for justice (Johnson, 2004).

Rest also proposed that morality be examined beyond the psychological construct of "moral reasoning." As a result, he created the Four Component Model of Moral Behavior (i.e., FCM) (Rest, 1973). According to Rest's theory, individuals consider the following four components when making decisions requiring moral judgment: sensitivity, judgment, motivation, and courage. Rest defined moral sensitivity as the ability to understand how decisions impact individuals by recognizing and understanding others' feelings. Rest also included demonstrating empathy for individuals in different cultural and socio-economic groups. He included understanding the impact of laws, regulations, and policies in this component as well. Rest defined moral judgment as the ability to determine which action is morally correct. He also included analyzing each option and understanding the rationale for the chosen course of action. Rest asserted that moral motivation occurs when individuals prioritize moral values above other personal values. Professionals must determine effective ways to maintain a balance between their work and family. Creating a balance assists one in prioritizing values. Finally, Rest defined moral courage by the ability to preserve and implement moral decisions despite obstacles. When professionals reflect on their moral decisions, they will gain insight into whether or not their words and beliefs match their actions (Rest, 1973).

The aforementioned moral development theories provide insight into the measurement and process of moral decision making. Gilligan's (1982) work demonstrated that moral reasoning should be examined in a more inclusive way that doesn't discriminate based on gender. Rest's (1975) work on moral development not only provides an alternative to the stage model, but also led to a new assessment tool, the Defining Issues Test 2, a multiple choice test to measure moral reasoning (Rest, 1975). The complexity of understanding the process through which moral reasoning develops in individuals and the effects of moral education, as well as other factors such as age and education, are achieving what Kohlberg saw as a high level of moral reasoning skills. Given the particularly challenging environment of the school principal in today's society, the above work provides a backdrop against which to address implications of moral reasoning for educational leaders. The understanding of the methods of measurement that have been developed and used for assessment provides important background information. The following section describes an overview of assessment approaches for the study of moral reasoning.

Moral Reasoning Assessment Tools

Defining Issues Test 2

As discussed earlier, Rest considered Kohlberg's work in his development of the Defining Issues Test (DIT). Rest developed the Defining Issues Test (DIT), a 72-item multiple choice test to measure moral reasoning, which lead to the development of the DIT-2, an updated more efficient version of the test (Rest, et. al, 1999). Both the DIT and DIT-2 assess moral reasoning through a written survey (Rest, 1975). Researchers use these instruments more often than other measures of moral reasoning (Nucci, 2002). The DIT has been used in over 500 studies (Nucci, 2002) and studies using the DIT account for nearly all

of the research examining the relationships between professional growth and moral development (Rest, 1986; Rest, Narvaez, Bebeau, & Thomas, 1999). Although these tools do not measure stages of moral judgment directly, Rest (1975) reports that DIT scores correlate with Kohlberg's Moral Judgment Interview. The MJI led to the development of the Defining Issues Test and Defining Issues Test 2 (Rest, 1975), which provides greater validity and reliability in examining moral reasoning. The DIT-2 incorporates a schematic framework, which conceptualizes moral reasoning as shifting to various perspectives rather than rigidly progressing through stages (Rest et. al, 1999b). The DIT-2 questions consist of descriptions of moral dilemmas each with its' own range of questions. Participants rate and rank items based on their relevance in helping them make a moral decision.

The DIT-2 was developed in 1999 at the Center for the Study of Ethical Development (Rest et. al, 1999) as a more effective way to measure moral reasoning. The DIT-2 takes approximately 30-40 minutes to complete. This newer shorter version consists of the following five (rather than six), more current moral dilemmas and includes a brief personal information survey.

Participants answer 12 questions about each dilemma, which contain issues that relate to making a decision within the context of the dilemma. Participants also rank the more influential issues that they considered when making a decision. Since the DIT-2 only contains 5 dilemmas, participants answer 60 questions in comparison to 72 questions on the DIT (Rest, Narvaez, Bebeau, & Thoma, 1999). The DIT-2 includes a brief personal information survey as well, which includes age, gender, education, race/ethnicity and political orientation (Rest et al, 1999). The DIT-2 also includes clearer instructions than the

previous test. The DIT-2 provides equally valid results for men and women. Information on scoring and analysis of the DIT-2 will be provided in Chapter 3.

The DIT has been widely used with samples of undergraduate students (King & Mayhew, 2002) to demonstrate how moral judgment has improved after interventions including reflection and guided moral discussion (Cannon, 2008; Geddes and Salvatorie, 2008; Reiman, 2004). The following studies provide evidence for similar changes of moral reasoning in school principals through professional development and mentoring with an emphasis on reflection and discussion of moral issues. Schlaefli, Rest, and Thoma (1985) found in a review of 55 studies using the DIT that moral judgment improved when moral dilemma discussions were used as interventions with middle school, high school, college, and graduate students. In a longitudinal study of undergraduate education majors, Reiman (2004) found improvements in moral reasoning over a four-year period. Participants were provided with sustained opportunities for ethical consideration of societal and educational dilemmas, with sustained social perspective taking opportunities and sustained reflection. The DIT was administered to measure changes in moral reasoning (Reiman, 2004). Geddes and Salvatori (2008) explored the impact of a pre-licensure training, which included an ethics component on moral judgment in occupational therapy (OT) and physical therapy (PT) students. After the two-year training program, moral judgment levels using of both OT and PT students increased significantly according to responses on the DIT. Additionally, Cannon (2008) found that moral judgment improved in counseling students due to supervised sessions with an emphasis on a discussion of moral dilemmas and a weekly journal of reflection. The DIT was also administered to these participants.

Moral reasoning using the DIT and DIT-2 has also been examined in professionals. In Reiman and DeAngelis Peace (2002) study, teachers who participated in a peer coaching/collaborative inquiry intervention demonstrated improvements in moral reasoning according to responses on the DIT. Arredondo and Rucinkski's (1998) mixed methods study of graduate students enrolled in an educational administration program, found both mentors and protégés demonstrated improvement in moral judgment. These changes were demonstrated through journal entries. Responses on the DIT-2 itself, however, did not reflect such changes. Finally, Vitton and Wasonga (2009) examined schemas that school principals used when making decisions from a moral perspective using the DIT-2. The researchers hypothesized that school leaders would make all decisions using the highest level of moral reasoning. Vitton and Wisonga (2009) found that over 40 percent of the elementary principals in this study fell below the highest level. This study is discussed in detail later in the chapter.

Defining issues test schemas. The DIT utilizes a schematic framework, which conceptualizes moral reasoning as shifting to various perspectives rather than rigidly progressing through stages (Rest et al. 1999b). Johnson (2004) developed a matrix, which demonstrates how teachers use these schemas in educational settings. The following three schemas are used in the DIT: Personal Interest Schema, Maintaining Norms Schema, and Postconventional Schema.

As mentioned previously, the lowest level schema is the Personal Interest Schema. In an educational setting, teachers adhering to this schema demonstrate little effort to accommodate individual student needs and instead expect all students to learn in the same way (Johnson, 2008). According to Johnson's (2004) matrix teachers adhering to the

Personal Interest Schema (PIS) define 'on task' behavior as the learner actively working on an assignment given by instructor, sees role as an authority in the classroom/relationship and views rules for the purpose of maintaining order. Johnson also proposes that when rules are being enforced students follow instructions and the classroom in a quiet manner. According to Johnson, these teachers do not demonstrate a commitment to change instruction or discipline, nor do they show a need to change focus from teacher to learner. Instead these individuals view inequity/equity from the teacher's personal perspective only. Johnson proposes no evidence of responsibility for meeting the individual educational needs of each student exists and instead they strive for learning conformity.

Under the Maintaining Norms Schema, Johnson (2004) identified these duties as being preformed in an egalitarian (same for all) but not equitable (based on individual needs) way. Johnson asserted that teachers using this schema consider the purpose of laws, rules, and norms to provide safety and stability. Teachers also provide some consideration for learner perspective or internal motivation. Johnson also identifies these teachers as using practices based on past experiences without reflecting on the effectiveness of it. The Maintaining Norms Schema does not require one to use critical and reflective moral reasoning. Instead teachers are following the norms that have been used in the past.

The matrix of behaviors associated with the Postconventional Schema can be scrutinized and changed if they are not justifiable (Johnson, 2004). Educators employing this schema also consider the ethical effects of their instructional choices and examine curriculum issues from many perspectives. According to Johnson (2004) these teachers also hold a humanistic-democratic view of learner discipline, consider purpose of laws/rules and norms to protect individual rights, view issues from perspectives of marginalized persons and

groups, and consider the moral/ethical implications of instructional choices. Johnson asserts that they emphasize the importance of taking into account a variety of learners' needs when planning instruction and assessments. These teachers plan actions that support equitable access within the classroom, school and/or community as well. Professional decision making using the Postconventional Schema presents many advantages over the Maintaining Norms Schema (Pritchard, 1999). This heightened sense of judgment guides professionals in interpreting existing laws and policies. It also provides direction in determining when such standards are in need of reform. Finally, some decisions must be made in the absence of established standards (Pritchard, 1999). Professionals using the Postconventional Schema will often be able to determine the morally correct decisions in these situations. Due to the complex decisions that principals are confronted with, it is vital that they also demonstrate complex moral decision making ability when standards or procedures are not clear.

As previously described by Rest (1973), adult moral judgment represents a range of moral reasoning levels rather than a strict progression of them. One aspect of this range of behaviors is evident in the consolidation-transition model. According to this model, congruence occurs during consolidation stages and incongruence occurs when individuals transition to the next stage (Rest, 1999). Johnson (2008) examined moral judgment levels based on the three schemas in teacher candidates at a midsize Southeastern university during their senior year internships by implementing a quantitative measure, the DIT-2, and a qualitative measure to identify any patterns in moral judgment levels based on the consolidation-transition model. Another purpose of the study was to determine if there was congruence between quantitative and qualitative measures of moral reasoning.

Participants' professional judgments were measured qualitatively through essays in which they described their moral/ethical responsibilities as educators (Johnson, 2008). Before submitting their essays, students participated in discussions and read articles that exemplified Postconventional schema characteristics. Videos of the participants teaching were also used to gain insight into instructional methods, assessment methods, and classroom management. Both reflective practice and educational leadership were integral components of the co-requisite course for the internship. During the course the teacher candidates discussed ways to meet the needs of diverse student populations, examined issues of equity in teaching, and ways to address social justice. Sixty-six percent of the participants were elementary education majors and the remaining participants were either secondary or special education majors.

Overall, participants scored higher on the qualitative measure than on the DIT-2. This incongruence suggests that many participants were in transitional stages rather than in a consolidation stage (Johnson, 2008). Johnson (2008) also asserts that the discrepancy between measures may be attributed to the meaningful components of the qualitative measures. The teacher candidates may have had difficulty relating to some of the questions in the DIT-2, but could more easily connect with ethical decisions related to teaching.

According to this Consolidation-Transition Model (Rest et al, 1999), participants progress through each stage in incremental steps and times demonstrating characteristics of more than one phase. This model serves as an extension of the three schemas (Rest, 1999). (See Consolidation and Transition Phases on p. 52). Additionally, individuals exhibiting consolidation are better equipped to assert and defend their moral judgments (Derryberry & Thoma, 2005). When individuals demonstrate consolidation, they are able to prioritize the

aspects of the schema to make decisions with speed and efficiency. Since decision making comes from a more self-informed perspective, individuals are also less dependent on environmental cues (Derryberry & Thoma, 2005). During transitional phases individuals often feel distracted with competing schemas and may defer to others more quickly when presented with ethical dilemmas (Rest et al, 1999). If Rest et al., (1999) is correct principals in the transitional phase may have trouble in making ethical choices. Therefore, providing support for principals can increase their confidence and knowledge of ethical issues and decision making.

The following Types represent consolidation and transition phases of the Consolidation-Transition Model. Congruence occurs during consolidation stages and incongruence occurs when individuals transition to the next stage (Rest, 1999). The types provide insight into moral decision making as individuals progress through various schemas.

Type 1: Consolidation in Personal Interest Schema: Consolidation is demonstrated at the Personal Interest schema and suggests low mixture among the three moral judgment schemata. DIT ratings show a significant preference for items pertaining to the Personal Interest Schema relative to items pertaining to the latter two schemata.

Type 2: Transition between Personal Interest and Maintaining Norms favoring Personal Interest Schema: Individuals show a preference for a higher level of mixture among the three schemata, but still prefer DIT items that are representative of the personal interest schema.

Type 3: Transition between Personal Interest and Maintaining Norms Schema favoring Maintaining Norms: Individuals show a high mixture between the two moral judgment schemata, but prefer items that are representative of the Maintaining Norms Schema.

Individuals also show a preference for Personal Interest Schema items of Postconventional Schema ones.

Type 4: Consolidation in Maintaining Norms Schema: Individuals demonstrating characteristics of this schema show consolidation at the Maintaining Norms Schema and a low mixture among the three moral judgment schema is again seen. This is illustrated in DIT item rating profiles showing significant favoritism of the Maintaining Norms related items.

Type 5: Transition between Maintaining Norms and Postconventional Schema favoring Maintaining norms: Similar to Types 3 and 4, those at Type 5 most prefer Maintaining Norms items. However, individuals demonstrate a preference of Postconventional items over personal interest items on DIT.

Type 6: Transition between Maintaining Norms and Postconventional favoring Postconventional Schema: Individuals demonstrate a mixture between the Maintaining Norms and Postconventional Schema though a shift in modal schema is seen in favor of the Postconventional items.

Type 7: Consolidation in Postconventional Schema: Type 7 is a person consolidated at the Postconventional schema. Therefore individuals demonstrate a low degree mixture among the three schemas. DIT item rating profiles reveal that Postconventional items are significantly preferred over other moral judgment schema related items.

Using 182 undergraduate students from a large public university in the Southeastern U.S., Derryberry and Thoma (2005) found that consolidation positively impacted the moral outcome of honesty using the DIT. Reseachers presented participants with a real-life situation where they had to make a decision regarding honesty and stealing money. Researchers also examined altruism and human rights attitudes, but found no differences

between transitional phases and periods of consolidation. Altruism was assessed using Getz's (1985) Attitude Towards Human Rights Inventory (ATHRI), which measures individual views on issues that are related to civil issues as found in the U.S. Constitution's Bill of Rights. Derryberry and Thoma (2005) assessed altruism through the Volunteer Function Inventory (VFI) (Clary, 1998) which measures the motives underlying an individual's volunteer efforts. Honest decision-making was the only moral functional outcome in which differences attributed to consolidated and transitional types. Derryberry and Thoma (2005) attributed this difference to the time constraint within participants needed to make a decision and the situational ambiguity of the situation. Researchers initially told participants they would be paid $5 for participating in the study. Upon completing the study, researchers offered participants $10. As a result, participants had to decide whether or not to correct the mistake.

These findings can be supported by examining several Types in the Consolidation – Transition Model. Individuals using Type 4 (Consolidation in Maintaining Norms Schema) thinking demonstrate consolidated beliefs upon rules and regulation of social institutions. As a result, they can think quickly regarding this area. Type 7 (Consolidation in Postconventional Schema) individuals consolidate the fundamental moral principles, including justice and fairness. They also recognize the injustice of lying about or taking someone's money. Although individuals making decisions from Type 6 (Transition between Maintaining Norms and Postconventional favoring Postconventional Schema) are using a higher-level schema, they are at a period of transition. Therefore, certain decisions cannot be made as quickly. They have demonstrated consolidation on fundamental principles, but have not progressed from the automatic acceptance of social rules.

Other Moral Reasoning Tools

The Sociomoral Reflection Objective Measure (SROM) another tool that based on Kohlberg's theoretical framework uses two dilemmas that have been adapted from the MJI and was developed by Gibbs, Widaman, and Colby (1980). Like the DIT-2, the SROM is a multiple-choice assessment, but similar to the MJI because participants must justify their reasoning. Participants choose reasons that are most in alignment with their beliefs and probable actions and the reason that is the closest. Other items that are not relevant to the dilemma are also included. If the participant chooses too many of these items, the researcher discards the survey. Scores are determined by using a weighted average of choices that are closest to the decision the participant would make and those that are close. Like the DIT, scoring is much faster than the MJI and only takes five to ten minutes (Gibbs, Arnold, Morgan, Schwartz, Gavaghan, & Tappan, 1984). The SROM also demonstrates validity and reliability in assessing moral reasoning in both high school students and adults, but requires a ninth-grade reading level (Gibbs et al., 1984).

Researchers developed a number of measures of decision making specific to various professions such as public administrators, accountants, and dentists, which have found to be reliable in moral reasoning. Stewart and Sprinthall (1991) developed the Stewart-Sprinthall Management Survey (i.e., SSMS) to assess government managers and personnel in the public administration arena, which uses the same moral schemas as the DIT-2. Welton, LaGrone, and Davis (1994) also designed a more specified tool, the Accounting Defining Issues Test (ADIT), to determine the moral reasoning in the accounting profession. Like the DIT, Davis based the instrument on Rest's moral schemas, which also builds on Kohlberg's theory of moral development. The rationale for the ADIT is that a more specific measure would more

accurately assess moral reasoning in this field. The examination of this SSMS and ADIT could inspire researchers in the educational field to develop a tool that was specific to educators. The rationale for this tool would be that it could assess ethical issues in education more accurately.

Chambers (2010) describes another instrument, the Moral Skills Inventory, which measures the morality of dentists in the dental profession. The focus of the Moral Skills Inventory extends beyond the moral reasoning component and includes Rest's other three factors (i.e., Moral Sensitivity, Moral Courage, and Moral Integrity) of the FCM of Moral Behavior. Although moral reasoning plays an integral role and perhaps the most important component of morality, examining Rest's other three aspects can help professionals determine if they are acting in an ethical way. For instance, asking principals to reflect on ethical decisions during an interview would provide additional information than simply administering a quantitative measurement.

Studies on Principals and Moral Judgment

Researchers conducted a range of studies to examine how principals demonstrate moral judgment (Kirby, Paradise, & Protti, 1990; Klinker and Hackmann, 2003; Vitton & Wasonga, 2009). Vitton and Wasonga (2009) examined schemas that school principals used when making decisions from a moral perspective. Sixty (24 male and 36 female) elementary school principals from one Midwest state participated in the study (Vitton & Wasonga, 2009). The Defining Issues Test 2 (DIT-2) was used as the measurement tool. The researchers hypothesized that school leaders would make all decisions from the Postconventional Schema. Researchers found that the number of participants in the Postconventional range was much lower than expected. Over 40 percent of the elementary

principals in this study fell below the Postconventional Schema. Kirby, Paradise, and Protti (1990) also found that school principals typically employ moral reasoning at the conventional level. The researchers used the Van Hoose and Paradise Model (1979) to determine levels of moral reasoning, which draws from Kohlberg's Stages of moral development. The Van Hoose and Pardise Model (1979) contains five stages of moral development. At the first stage decisions are made based on existing rules. Decisions at the second stage are based on the rules and policies of the affiliated institution. When decisions are made at the third stage, concern for the general welfare of society is taken into account. At the fourth stage concern for the individual is considered more important than the legal or societal norms. However, according to the Van Hoose and Paradse Model (1979) individual begin making decisions based on an internalized set of ethics at stage 5. Principals' moral judgment in these studies (Kirby, Paradise, & Protti, 1990; Vitton & Wasonga, 2009) were assessed in a similar way that will be used in this research. Since Vitton and Wasonga (2009) used the DIT-2 and Kirby, Paradise, and Protti (1990) used a model, which draws from Kohlberg's model, comparisons in moral judgment from the sample that will be used in this research can be made.

Kirby, Paradise, and Protti's (1990) study consisted of two phases. In the first phase, twenty three principals in a large suburban public school district described a typical moral dilemma they had experienced as a principal. Participants also answered follow up questions that provided information on all alternatives that were considered, the choice that was made, advice or input that was gathered from others including immediate supervisors and intended and unintended consequences. Participants provided a reflection on the choices they made in such situations as well. The majority of the responses were based on societal norms (Stage 3

of Kohlberg's Model). Thirty one percent of the respondents provided responses based on institutional rules (Stage 2 of Kohlberg's Model) and 6 percent of the responses were based on prevailing rules and standards (Stage 1 of Kohlberg's Model). Only nineteen percent of the participants made decisions based on concern for the individual (Stage 4 of Kohlberg's Model). Since a high percentage of principals in both Vitton and Wasonga's (2009) study and Kirby, Paradise, and Protti's (1990) study made decisions from the Conventional level, it demonstrates the importance of examining how principals are making moral decisions. These studies also provide evidence for exploring ways to improve moral judgment. As a result, this research will examine the impact of professional development and mentoring programs on moral judgment.

During the second phase of the investigation, the researchers explored whether or not a difference existed between participants' moral reasoning and their perception of the moral reasoning of their peers (Kirby, Paradise, & Protti, 1990). The researchers used modified dilemmas based on the principals' responses in phase one. The 20 principals who participated in the second phase of the study provided similar responses to their counterparts in phase one. The majority of the responses reflected societal norms. However, when researchers asked participants to determine how their peers would act in the same situations, answers reflected much lower levels of moral reasoning. In fact, participants rated 50 percent of their peers' actions to be at or below the institutional level (Kirby et. al, 1990). However, less than 18 percent of the principals identified themselves at or below this level and none of the principals rated themselves lower than their peers. The participants attributed their predictions of other principals' behaviors based on institutional norms and adherence to the superintendent's wishes. These findings demonstrate that principals making decisions

from a conventional level may be less skilled in not only making moral decisions, but in understanding how others make decisions as well. As result, principals making decisions from this level may view others as less competent, which can create a challenging work environment.

Krebs and Laird (1998) also examined how individuals view their own behaviors in comparison to others. One-hundred twenty university students took the Moral Judgment Interview and made decisions about three real-life transgressions. Like Kirby, Paradise, and Protti's (1990) study, participants judged others more harshly than themselves (Krebs & Laird, 1998). However, participants who scored at the lower levels of moral reasoning were more likely to externalize their transgressions and make excuses for such behaviors. For instance, if a principal loses his/her temper with a student and says something harsh, he/she may blame the student's behaviors. These findings could provide a disconcerting trend since Vitton and Wasonga's (2009) and Kirby, Paradise, and Protti's (1990) studies indicate a pattern of substantial proportion of principals making decisions at lower moral levels. These findings provide important information given the incredible challenges and responsibilities of the principal. As a result, these principals may likely create an atmosphere where teachers do not feel supported and may be fearful of being blamed.

Klinker and Hackmann's (2003) examined moral judgment and justifications using a mixed methods study of 64 State Principals of the Year through Rest's (1973) Four Component Model of Moral Behavior. The State Principal Award is jointly sponsored through Metlife and National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP). Researchers presented participants with three different ethical narratives based on a specific disposition of Standard 5 of the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (i.e.,

ISLLC) standards. According to this standard, administrators should subordinate one's own interest to the good of the school community. These standards comprise a professional code of ethics, which guides principals' decisions. Participants made action justification choices for each narrative. Only one action choice was morally correct (Klinker and Hackmann, 2003). Rest's (1973) theory suggests that in the decision-making process, individuals make justifications for a decision involving an ethical dilemma through four components: sensitivity, judgment, motivation, and courage. Justifications were constructed in a format consistent with the DIT. Due to the fact that a quantitative study of this nature had not been previously conducted, open-ended questions were also used to gain further insight into ethical decision making and the process of it (Klinker & Hackmann, 2003).

Overall, researchers found the majority of the participants selected the ethical action choice in all three narratives: 65.1%, 73%, and 93.7% (Klinker & Hackmann, 2003). However, over 1/3 of the participants identified incorrect choices for the first narrative and 1/4 selected an incorrect response for the second narrative. In addition to making incorrect choices, participants demonstrated uncertainty about the processes used to reach their decisions based on their responses to the open-ended questions. Fortunately, the qualitative open-ended questions provided information regarding the components of Rest's theory. The following themes emerged from these responses: courage, the common good, gut feelings, and difficulty defining tasks. These themes reflect the qualities respondents identified as factors in reasoning of their responses to scenarios. Researchers defined the four themes based on participant responses. Klinker and Hackmann (2003) identified courage as the fortitude to make decisions with an emphasis on human growth (Klinker & Hackmann, 2003). They defined common good as by determining actions that are equally beneficial for

everyone. They defined gut feelings as being aware and sensitive to other's needs, listening for different perspectives, and examining all angles. Finally, Klinker and Hackman asserted that difficulty in defining tasks meant that participants were more comfortable acting upon their ethical beliefs than trying to define them.

Klinker and Hackmann (2003) identified gender and years of experience as demographic variables. The only significant variable related to respondent level of ethical decision making was years of experience. Participants with greater years of experience selected more correct choices than did participants with less experience. Since principals with less experience selected fewer correct choices in Klinker and Hackmann's (2003), this study also demonstrates a need to provide new principals with additional and more in depth training. Researchers also identified ethics training and building enrollment as possible factors in moral decision making, but neither factor was correlated with moral decision making.

Klinker and Hackmann's study (2003) provided similar results to Vitton and Wasonga (2009) regarding the role of gender. Neither study demonstrated that gender significantly impacted results. In addition to gender, Vitton and Wasonga (2009) examined the role of age, educational level, and political affiliation on moral decisions. Vitton and Wasonga found that age did not significantly impact results. The only factor that appeared to have a significant impact on the moral schema from which principals make decisions was political affiliation. Principals who identified as "liberal" were more likely than those who identified "conservative" to make decisions from a Postconventional Schema. Individuals who described themselves as liberals scored higher on the moral schemas than those who described themselves as conservatives. Although age and gender were not statistically

significant factors, younger participants and female participants demonstrated higher numbers of responses at the Postconventional level.

The literature on training and mentoring does not suggest there is enough information to determine if these factors impact moral judgment (Klinker and Hackmann, 2003; Vitton and Wasonga, 2009). Research in the area of moral judgment and mentoring is also challenging in terms of the almost unwieldy number of variables to consider including political affiliation, years of experience, and gender. Although studies have not provided conclusive results, principals' moral decision making is important.

Summary

Everyday school principals must confront challenging ethical issues related to such concerns as student discipline, teacher evaluations, abuse allegations, allocation of resources, and compliance with standardized testing procedures (Hughes & Jones, 2011). They must make many decisions that require the implementation of high levels of moral judgment, which at times includes meeting the needs of many constituents who may be in conflict with one another (Frick & Guiterrez, 2008). Using Kohlberg's Stage Model (1976) and the Defining Issues Test (Rest, 1975) provides schemas that identify processes from which moral decisions are made. Although both the Conventional and Postconventional Schemas of moral judgment emphasize rules and standards, individuals at the Postconventional Schema exercise critical judgment beyond the established rules (Pritchard, 1999). Research indicates that principals with strong moral judgment abilities are more likely to demonstrate consistent democratic behavior (Reiman & Theis-Sprinthall, 1993). For instance, Hughes and Jones (2011) identified a positive correlation between ethics professional for elementary public school principals and students' academic performance. Ideally, school leaders would make

all decisions from the Postconventional Schema. Unfortunately even effective principals experience difficulty when presented with situations that require high levels of moral reasoning. As noted earlier Klinker and Hackmann (2003) and Vitton and Wisonga (2009) found that the number of participants in the Postconventional range was much lower than expected. Due to the positive impact of demonstrating a high level of moral judgment, it is important to understand how to increase such levels.

Rest and Thoma (1985) identified formal education with interventions related to moral decision as the strongest predictor in moral reasoning. The inclusion of ethics training in both graduate and undergraduate programs seems to improve moral judgment (Cannon, 2008; Geddes and Salvatori, 2008; Johnson, 2008; Reiman, 2004). The impact of ethics training has been researched in the fields of education, healthcare, business, and counseling. It seems that once school leaders have experienced formal ethics training, they are more likely to demonstrate consistent ethical decision making. Therefore, it is vital to develop an understanding of the types of education that demonstrate a positive correlation with moral judgment. This concern is especially great in the education field due to the impact the educators have on students. Grissom & Harrington (2010) found a significant positive correlation between principal participation in a formal mentoring program and principal effectiveness, such as but not limited to providing a supportive and encouraging environment for staff. Principal mentoring is also associated with increased confidence in professional competence of principals (Daresh, 2004). Various studies within the education field have indicated that mentoring programs with a focus on reflection positively impact moral judgment (Alsbury and Hackmann, 2006; Arredondo and Rucinkski's; 1998, Reiman & DeAngelis Peace, 2002). These studies provide support for examining the role of mentoring

in the moral judgment of school principals. Once principals are able to examine moral issues more critically, they will be more likely to make ethical decisions (Reiman & Theis-Sprinthall, 1993).

In the next chapter I explain my methods. This study uses a cross-sectional design, which is appropriate when one is not manipulating variables and collecting data at a single point in time. The data provides information on the schemas that principals activate when making moral decisions and factors that impact those decisions. The study incorporates a survey methodology. The survey design measures observable behaviors and attitudes by providing precision to words and narratives. The survey consisted of the Defining Issues Test 2, which measures moral schemas (DIT-2) (Rest, 1975), additional questions regarding mentoring experiences and principal demographics (see Appendix A). Although Kohlberg's work informs this study and the DIT-2, the theoretical foundation for the DIT-2 extends beyond Kohlberg's theory by recognizing additional components of morality. The DIT-2 incorporates a schematic framework, which conceptualizes moral reasoning as shifting to various perspectives rather than rigidly progressing through stages (Rest et al. 1999b).

In this research I am primarily looking at the relationship between moral schemas and participation in principal mentoring programs with an ethics component. I predicted that I would find a positive relationship between participation in a principal mentoring program and the presence of the Postconventional Schema. I also predicted that principals who received mentoring with an ethics component would exhibit greater moral reasoning than those who do not. In my study I could not assert that there was an absence of the Postconventional Schema before the mentoring program. Therefore, I could only predict the correlation. The dependent variable consists of the principal's moral reasoning schema. The

independent variable is the involvement in formal focused mentoring with an ethics component.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

This research addresses moral decision making and the experience of public school principals. It also explores the possible influence mentoring has on the principal's ability to confront complex decisions when clear ethical choices do not exist. The school principal fulfills both a vital and daunting role. As discussed in previous chapters, given the increased pressures placed on school principals to make decisions addressing diverse and at times conflicting demands of stakeholders, principals must possess the skills to make the best ethical decisions (Dempster & Berry, 2003). Given the nature and role of school principals associated with important ethical decision making, which consists of addressing decisions that raise complex moral concerns, this research addresses two goals. The first goal of my research attempts to determine the moral schemas principals use when making moral judgments. Principals in various studies have not only identified a need to improve moral judgment, but also areas of improvement that would most benefit them (Dempster and Berry, 2003; Drago-Severson, 2012; Henry, 2010). As a result, the second goal of my research explores how principal mentoring programs with an ethics component impact moral judgment in principals.

In this chapter, I review the following three moral schemas that Rest (1973) identified: Personal Interest Schema, Maintaining Norms Schema, and Postconventional Schema. Rest based these schemas on Kohlberg's (1958) moral development theory, which contains six stages within three levels. However, Rest (1973) examined adult moral judgment using a range of moral reasoning levels rather than a strict progression of them.

Kohlberg (1958) defined the first two stages as the Preconventional level, which falls

into the Personal Interest Schema. At this level, rules are external. Kohlberg (1958) defined Stage 1 as Heteronomous Morality. At this stage, individuals typically adhere to moral realism, which assumes that breaking rules does not necessarily require an explanation or justification. Other characteristics of this stage include obeying rules to avoid punishment and viewing authority as superior. Kohlberg (1958) identified Stage 2 as Individualist Instrumental Morality. At this stage, individuals begin to realize that numerous perspectives may exist regarding moral issues. However, individuals place emphasis on meeting personal needs rather than the needs of others. Kohlberg (1958) defined his third and fourth stages as the conventional level of moral development. Kohlberg (1958) identified Stage 3 as Impersonally Normative Morality. At this level, individuals begin to emphasize the importance of developing mutually agreed upon informal norms. The Golden Rule, which instructs members of society to do unto others as you would have others do unto you, represents an evident guiding force in Stage 3.

Rest (1973) asserted that when individuals make decisions from the lowest level schema they adhere to the Personal Interests Schema. According to this schema others' needs may get taken into consideration but only if the decision maker still receives benefits. Individuals exhibiting this thinking also demonstrate concern for those with whom they have affectionate relationships (Rest et al., 1999). This schema stresses the notion of survival and "getting ahead" (Narvaez & Bock, 2002). Rest (1973) based the Personal Interest Schema on Kohlberg's Stages 2 and 3.

During Kohlberg's (1958) Stage 4, known as Social System Morality, individuals begin to examine how behaviors impact society. Kohlberg (1958) asserted that individual needs remain appropriate only if they do not detrimentally affect society. He also stated that legal

and religious standards may move to the forefront at this level. However, it is not until individuals reach the Postconventional level at Stages 5 and 6 that individuals move beyond adhering to existing societal rules and demonstrate concern for justice. Kohlberg (1990) asserted that individuals do not reach the Postconventional level until adulthood. He identified Stage 5 as Human-Rights and Social Welfare Morality. At this stage individuals begin to understand the importance of creating rules and laws that demonstrate equality, equity, and reciprocity, which demonstrate principles of justice. According to Kohlberg (1958) individuals at this stage also commit to such norms even when their beliefs conflict with societal norms.

Rest (1973) described the Maintaining Norms Schema when individuals begin to consider duties towards other members of society. Individuals demonstrate a perceived need for generally accepted and required social norms (Rest et al., 1999). The Maintaining Norms Schema is based on Kohlberg's Stage 4, along with elements of Stage 5.

Kohlberg (1958) defined the final Stage 6 as Morality of Universalizable, Reversible, and Prescriptive General Ethical Principles. At this stage, he described ethical values as more important than laws or policies. Kohlberg (1976) also identified morality as reversible and the importance of taking everyone's perspectives into consideration. According to Rest (1973) when individuals employ the Post-conventional Schema they demonstrate moral obligations based on shared ideals, reciprocity, and equity for all groups within society (Rest et al., 1999). Rest (1973) based the Postconventional Schema on Kohlberg's Stages 5 and 6. During these stages individuals move beyond adhering to existing societal rules and demonstrate concern for justice (Johnson, 2004).

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Given the complex nature of the role of school principals and the importance of ethical decision making, which consists of addressing decisions that raise complex moral concerns, this research asks the following questions:

1. Among the decision making schemas listed by Rest (1973), which schemas do principals use when engaged in moral decision making?

2. Do principals who participate in mentoring programs that include an ethics component exhibit greater moral reasoning in their decision making than principals who don't?

Research indicates that principals with strong moral judgment abilities are more likely to demonstrate consistent democratic behavior (Reiman & Theis-Sprinthall, 1993). For instance, Hughes and Jones (2011) identified a positive correlation between ethics professional for elementary public school principals and students' academic performance. Ideally, school leaders would make all decisions from the post-conventional level. Unfortunately even effective principals experience difficulty when presented with situations that require high levels of moral reasoning. As noted earlier Klinker and Hackmann (2003) and Vitton and Wisonga (2009) found that the number of participants in the Postconventional range was much lower than expected. Due to the positive impact of demonstrating a high level of moral judgment, it is important to understand how to increase such levels.

Rest and Thoma (1985) identified formal education with interventions related to moral decision making as the strongest predictor in moral reasoning. It seems that once school leaders participate in formal ethics training, they are more likely to demonstrate consistent ethical decision making. Therefore, it is vital to develop an understanding of the

types of training that demonstrate a positive correlation with moral judgment. Grissom & Harrington (2010) found a significant positive correlation between principal participation in a formal mentoring program and principal effectiveness, such as but not limited to providing a supportive and encouraging environment for staff. Principal mentoring is also associated with increased confidence in professional competence of principals (Daresh, 2004). Various studies within the education field have indicated that mentoring programs with a focus on reflection positively impact moral judgment (Alsbury and Hackmann, 2006; Arredondo & Rucinkski, 1998; Reiman & DeAngelis Peace, 2002). These studies provide support for examining the role of mentoring in the moral judgment of school principals. Once principals develop the ability to examine moral issues more critically, they will be more likely to make ethical decisions.

Given the stated research questions, in addition to the information highlighted above and in the literature review, I developed the following hypothesis:

H1: Principals who have received mentoring with an emphasis on moral reasoning are more likely to make decisions using Postconventional moral judgment.

Sample

My population consisted of Pennsylvania public school principals. I contacted all Pennsylvania public school principals at the elementary, middle, and high school levels (2,745) by email (www.principals-emaillist.com). Public school principals in Pennsylvania were selected as the population due to having a common set of standards in terms of student testing and special education requirements, both of which have potential to create challenges in terms of moral and ethical decisions. I excluded private school principals from the population because they do not follow the same requirements as public school principals.

Additionally I limited the population to Pennsylvania to allow for uniformity of state requirements. For instance, the Department of Education requires Pennsylvania schools to adopt or amend their existing policies related to bullying and incorporate them in to their school's code of conduct (Limber & Small, 2003). Other states may also hold different standards.

Research Design and Rationale

This study used a cross-sectional design, which is appropriate when one is not manipulating variables and collecting data at a single point in time. The data provided information on the schemas that principals activate when making moral decisions and factors that impact those decisions. The study incorporated a survey methodology. The survey design measures observable behaviors and attitudes by providing precision to words and narratives. The survey consisted of the Defining Issues Test 2 (DIT-2) (Rest, 1975), additional questions regarding mentoring experiences and principal demographics (see Appendix A).

In this research I was primarily looking at the relationship between moral schemas and participation in principal mentoring programs with an ethics component. I predicted that I would find a positive relationship between participation in a principal mentoring program and the presence of the Postconventional Schema. I also predicted that principals who received mentoring with an ethics component would exhibit greater moral reasoning than those who did not. In my study I could not assert that there was an absence of the Postconventional Schema before the mentoring program. Therefore, I could only predict the correlation. However, I controlled for the following demographic variables noted below. I

also explored the impact of professional development activities with an ethics component and principal certification classes with an ethics component.

Variable Definition and Measures

This section explains how I defined and measured the moral reasoning schemas (dependent variable) and mentoring (independent variable). In addition to mentoring, I explored the following intervening variables: professional development activities with an ethics component and principal certification classes with an ethics component. I controlled for the following demographic variables: participant's age, participant's gender, mentor's gender, length of time as a school principal.

Dependent Variable

The dependent variable consists of the principal's moral reasoning schema. The N2 index indicated if principals made decisions from the Postconventional Schema as defined by the Defining Issues Test 2 (DIT-2). As described in Chapter 2 the DIT-2 assesses moral decisions quantitatively and comprehensively (Rest, 1975) (See Appendix A). The DIT-2 maintains an emphasis on the varying levels of moral development using schemas (Rest, 1973). As also described in Chapter 2 The DIT-2 has been used to examine moral judgment in a variety of professional areas, including school leadership. As a result, I was able to assess the likelihood of whether the participants make decisions from the Postconventional schema or one of the lower level schemas using the DIT-2.

Defining Issues Test

Rest (1975) developed the Defining Issues Test (DIT), a 72-item multiple choice test to measure moral reasoning, which lead to the development of the DIT-2, an updated more efficient version of the test (Rest, et. al, 1999). As previously mentioned in Chapter 2, both

the DIT and DIT-2 assess moral reasoning through a written survey (Rest, 1975). Researchers use these instruments more often than other measures of moral reasoning (Nucci, 2002). Although these tools do not measure stages of moral judgment directly, Rest (1975) reports that DIT scores correlate with Kohlberg's Moral Judgment Interview. The MJI led to the development of the Defining Issues Test and Defining Issues Test 2 (Rest, 1975), which provides greater validity and reliability in examining moral reasoning. The DIT-2 incorporates a schematic framework, which conceptualizes moral reasoning as shifting to various perspectives rather than rigidly progressing through stages (Rest et al. 1999b). The DIT-2 questions consist of descriptions of moral dilemmas each with its' own range of questions. Participants rate and rank items based on their relevance in helping them make a moral decision.

The DIT-2 was developed in 1999 at the Center for the Study of Ethical Development (Rest et. al, 1999) as a more effective way to measure moral reasoning. The DIT-2 takes approximately 30-40 minutes to complete. This newer shorter version consists of the following five (rather than six) more current moral dilemmas: (1) a father considers stealing food for his starving family from the warehouse of a wealthy man; (2) a reporter decides whether to report a negative story about a candidate for Lieutenant Governor; (3) a school board chairman must decide whether to hold a conflict-laden meeting after receiving threats; (4) a doctor must decide whether to give a high dose of pain-killer to a terminal cancer patient; (5) college students demonstrate on campus in response to the United States' involvement in a South American country by taking over an administration building (Rest & Narvaez, 1998)

Participants answer 12 questions about each dilemma, which contain issues that relate to making a decision within the context of the dilemma. Participants also rank the most influential issues that they considered when for making a decision. Since the DIT-2 contains only 5 dilemmas, participants answer 60 questions in comparison to 72 questions on the DIT (Rest, Narvaez, Bebeau, & Thoma, 1999). The DIT-2 includes a brief personal information survey as well, which includes age, gender, education, race/ethnicity and political orientation (Rest et al, 1999). Due to the similarity in education among PA principals, I used only age, gender, and race/ethnicity. The DIT-2 also includes clearer instructions than the previous test. The DIT-2 provides equally valid results for men and women (Rest et al, 1999).

The DIT-2 measures recognition knowledge, which is a type of tacit knowledge (Narvaez & Bock, 2002). Tacit knowledge is domain-specific "procedural knowledge that guides behavior readily for introspection" (Sternberg & Horvath, 1999, p. 231). Therefore participants are not required to articulate a verbal response explaining their decision regarding various moral dilemmas. Instead participants indicate their most ethical choice and ethical reasoning, even though they may not be able to explain it in their own words. Narvaez and Bock (2002) assert that the DIT-2 activates moral schemas, which are knowledge foundations developed from social interactions. Therefore, a question on the DIT-2 may activate a moral schema, which allows the participant to select the correct choice. This task is often easier than articulating a detailed response.

The Moral Judgment Interview (MJI) an assessment tool employed by Kohlberg (Colby et al., 1983) uses standardized probe questions designed to elicit justifications and clarifications based on three hypothetical moral dilemmas. Interviewers choose two moral issues that participants described to score each dilemma. First, they classify responses to

each dilemma and enter a score for each stage. The interview is individually administered.

Some researchers have questioned Kohlberg's findings due to the lack of standardization and high likelihood or rater bias involved with this assessment tool (Kurtines & Grief, 1974). However, Kohlberg (Colby et al., 1983) used interviews because they allowed participants to explain their own thinking. Kohlberg (Colby et al., 1983) asserted that the tool achieved validity when used by experienced raters, but it did contain a level of subjectivity. He also described the MJI as difficult to use and unreliable when used by those who had not had extensive training and who had not studied with Kohlberg (Colby et al., 1983).

Although Kohlberg's work informs this study and the DIT-2, the theoretical foundation for the DIT-2 extends beyond Kohlberg's theory by recognizing additional components of morality. Kohlberg (1971) defined justice as "the basic moral principle" and one that can be universalized (p. 220). However, Rest et al. (1999) asserts that justice doesn't include the entire range of moral issues. Unlike Gilligan (1982), Rest et al (1999) did not propose that the elements of "justice" and "care" acted as alternatives for resolving ethical conflicts. However, both the MJI and the DIT-2 emphasize cognition and the cooperation of society. These instruments identify the following goals of a moral society; reciprocity, rights, duty, justice, and social order. When principals employ these values, they are more likely make decisions that will serve the best interest of students. Although the MJI has been used in other studies as discussed in Chapter 2, the DIT-2 better suits this study because it offers a more standardized assessment amenable to survey data collection. Furthermore researchers can determine scores more quickly on the DIT-2 than on the MJI (Rest, Narvaez, Bebeau, Thoma, 1999). The MJI takes four hours to score in comparison to

twenty minutes using the DIT-2.

Originally, researchers used the P scores on the DIT to measure Postconventional moral reasoning based on the ratings of participants. The P score represents the proportion of items selected that represent considerations from Kohlberg's Stage 5 and Stage 6. Participants also receive a Personal Interest schema score and Maintaining Norms schema score. The first score represents the proportion of items selected that appeal to Stage 2 and Stage 3. The second score represents the proportion of items selected that appeal to Stage 4.

Due to its superior performance on construct validity, the N2 index replaced the P score (Rest, Narvaez, Thoma, & Bebeau, 1999). The N2 index represents the degree to which Postconventional items are prioritized in addition to the degree to which Personal Interest items receive lower ratings than Postconventional items. The P score and N2 index are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4. Researchers adjust the scores to have the same mean and standard deviation as the P score to allow for comparisons. In order to compare this study with previous studies, I used both the P score and N2 index.

Validity of the defining issues test. I am providing more detail on the DIT-1 because more research is available on the DIT-1. However, the DIT-2 reportedly does not sacrifice validity and seems to improve validity (Bebeau & Thoma, 2003). Validity for the DIT1 has been assessed in terms of the following 7 criteria (Rest, et. al, 1999).

1. *Differentiation of various ages and education groups*: Studies show that 30% to 50% of the variance of DIT scores is attributable to the level of education in heterogenous samples.
2. *Longitudinal gains*: A 10-year longitudinal study showed significant gains of men and women and of college attenders and noncollege participants from diverse

backgrounds. A review of a dozen studies of freshman to senior college students (n=755) showed effect sizes of .80 (large gains). Of all the variables, DIT gains have been one of the most dramatic longitudinal gains in college (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991).

3. DIT scores *significantly relate to cognitive capacity of measures of moral comprehension* (r = .60s), recall and reconstruction of postconventional moral arguments (Narvaez, 1998), to Kohlberg's moral judgment interview measure, and (to a lesser degree) to other cognitive measures.
4. DIT scores are *sensitive to moral education interventions.* One review of over 50 intervention studies reported an effect size for dilemma discussion interventions to be .41 (moderate gains), whereas the effect size for comparison groups was only .09 (small gains).
5. DIT scores significantly *link to many prosocial beahviors and to desired professional decision making.* One review reported that 32 of 47 measures were statistically significant.
6. DIT scores are *significantly link to political attitudes and political choices.* In a review of several dozen correlates with political attitude, DIT scores typically correlated in the range, r = .40 to .60.
7. *Reliability*: The Cronbach's alpha for test-restest reliability of the DIT ranges from 0.7 to 0.8 and the same measure for internal consistency ranges from 0.76 to 0.83 (Rest et al., 1999b pp. 92-93). The correlation of the DIT with the DIT-2 is .79, nearly the test-retest reliability of the DIT with itself.

   The DIT-2 provides an advantage over the DIT-2 by addressing the problems of

random responding, missing data, alien test-taking data, and nondiscrimination by providing new participant reliability checks (Rest, Narvaez, Thoma, & Bebeau, 1999). Inconsistent ratings and ranks result in random responding. Researchers weigh participants' ranks for analysis purposes (Rest, Narvaez, Thoma, & Bebeau, 1999). Researchers also check and weight inconsistencies at other levels. The weighted inconsistencies for each story and across stories are summed. The summed weighted rank-rate inconsistencies across the five stories can range from 0-600. Researchers purge scores higher than 200 from the sample and consider scores near 200 innocent confusion.

Missing data consists of an omission of a certain number of responses. Participants receive a score for this omission unless a participant fails to provide 3 ratings of any two stories or more than 6 ranks. Missing items (M-items) detect responses chosen for style rather than meaning: defined as alien test-taking data, which contains complex verbiage but meaningless information. Participants attempting to fake a high score choose these items. Tests with weighted ranks of more than 10 M-items invalidate scores. To address the issue of nondiscrimination, scores are also invalidated when participants rate 11 items the same or if the participant fails to discriminate on two stories or more (Rest, Narvaez, Thoma, & Bebeau, 1999).

The untimed DIT-2 assessments allow participants time to contemplate answers but they must finish the entire test in order to receive a score (Bebeau & Thoma, 2003). Researchers must provide participants explanations of directions and emphasize that participants provide their own answers. Researchers should emphasize the importance of participants concentrating on the entire assessment, which helps to ensure more accurate

responses (Bebeau & Thoma, 2003). I included these directions when I email the survey to each principal (Appendix B).

Independent Variables

The independent variable is the involvement in formal focused mentoring with an ethics component. I defined this variable as participation in a formalized program consisting of specific guidelines governing the mentoring process (duration, frequency, type of meeting and content). I measured this variable using specific survey items derived from this definition. The survey items provided data concerning the following: (a) duration - the length of the time the mentoring lasted (i.e., number of years or months): (b) frequency - how often mentoring sessions occurred (i.e., once a year, once a quarter, once a month, 2-3 times a month, or once a week) and (c) primary type of meeting - face-to-face, phone, or email. The mentor's position was also defined (i.e., principal, superintendent, retired principal, retired superintendent other school administrator, retired other school administrator). In addition, survey items addressed the content of discussions: defined in terms of the discussion of moral issues and the reflection of moral decisions.

As stated in Chapter 2, Reiman and Thies-Sprinthall (1993) identified the following five conditions, which prompt changes moral judgment in developmental stages. First, they defined the relationship as a significant helping relationship, such as counseling, tutoring, or mentoring relationship. The second component includes reflection through journaling and dialogue about the helping experience. Third, Reiman and Theis-Sprinthall (1993) determine that reflection should be balanced with helping activities. Fourth, the intervention must occur over a long period of time, usually at least one semester. Finally, Reiman and Theis-Sprinthall (1993) assert that the mentor provides both encouragement and challenges to

promote new learning (mentors asking mentees' reasons for choosing actions), based on Vygotsky's (1978) zone of proximal growth. I created the following survey questions (Appendix A), which represent Reiman and Thies-Sprinthall's (1993) conditions:

1. How often were moral issues discussed during mentoring sessions?
2. How often did you reflect on moral decisions through writing or discussion during mentoring sessions?
3. Did your mentor inquire why you made certain decisions?

Two intervening variables were also explored: professional development activities with an ethics component and principal certification classes with an ethics component. The two intervening variables and the other independent variables are highlighted in the Tables 2 and 3 below. They came directly from the survey. In addition to mentoring, I used these variables in the analysis.

Table 1

Variables from DIT-2 Portion of the Survey

Antisocial Score	Represents considerations that reflect an anti-establishment attitude
Meaningless Item Check Score	Items included in each story that are lofty sounding, using complex style or verbiage but are essentially meaningless statements. The purpose of these items is to detect participants who are trying to fake a high score.
Utilizer Score ("U" Score)	Represents the degree of match between items endorsed as most important and the action choice on that story.
New Checks total score	This score helps you see whether participants' responses represent moral thinking or are bogus data. These reliability checks address random responding, missing data, alien test taking, and nondiscrimination. These checks were also described in the methods chapter.
Number of "Can't decide choices" (NUMCD)	This variable was created to represent the decisiveness with which an individual selects action choices.
Humanitarian/Liberalism (HUMLIB)	Proxy for a humanitarian/liberalism perspective on moral issues.
Religious Orthodoxy (CANCER10)	Represents sum of the rates and ranks for item 9 in the doctor's dilemma.

Table 2

Variables from the Mentoring Portion of the Survey

Principal Experience	Length of time as principal
Mentor Experience	Experience as mentor for other principals
Professional Development	Professional Development activities principals participated in with an ethics component in addition to mentoring
Principal Certification Classes	Principal Certification classes taken with an ethics component
Other Professional Support	Participants identified other individuals they rely on for professional support if not mentored.
Frequency of meetings for professional support	Participants describe how often the above support occurred.
Frequency of moral discussions in meetings for professional support	Participants describe how often moral discussions occurred with other sources of professional support.
Frequency of reflection in meetings for professional support.	Participants describe how often reflections of moral discussions occurred during these meetings.

The following four variables were also controlled for: participant's age, participant's gender, mentor's gender, length of time as a school principal. As described in Chapter 2, these variables impacted moral reasoning in earlier studies and as a result, I included them in this study.

According to Thoma (1986) gender accounts for less than one half of a percent of variance in the DIT. Despite this small percentage, some researchers have found that women demonstrate significantly higher schemas of moral reasoning than men following interventions (Ritter, 2006). Klinker & Hackmann (2003) also found that individuals with greater years of experience as school principals demonstrated higher schemas of moral reasoning as well. Finally, both coursework (Grady et al., 2008; Reiman, 2004) and

professional activities with an ethics component have been found to improve moral reasoning (Feng-I, 2011; Geddes & Salvatori, 2008; Msila, 2009).

Data Sources and Collection Methods

I used the DIT-2, mentoring experiences and principal demographics as my quantitative measurement tool (Appendix A). I used Qualtrics, an electronic data collection program, to administer my measures via email. I then downloaded the results from Qualtrics.

Mode of Data Collection

I sent pre-notification emails to the principals informing them of the purpose of the study. I accessed the list of principals from emaillistus.com. Sending pre-notification emails to potential respondents that describes the study can substantially increase response rates (Fox, Crask, & Kim, 1988; Kaplowitz, Hadlock, & Levine, 2004; Yu & Cooper, 1983). Next, I sent emails to each principal including a link to the survey and informed consent (Appendix A). I also sent two follow up emails to non-responders. Schaefer and Dillman (1998) identified the multiple follow up email method as a way to improve response rates. They found that surveys with a single contact had a response rate of 28.5%. This increased to 41% with two contacts and 57% with three or more contacts.

Analysis

I sent the completed surveys to the Center for the Study of Ethical Development at the University of Alabama to be scored. All DIT-2 data must be submitted and scored through the Center for the Study of Ethical Development. Researchers must also pay a fee for this data analysis. As a result, researchers may choose to try another scoring instrument that doesn't require a fee. Scores on the DIT-2 are analyzed based on participant responses and on how dilemmas activate one of the three schemas (Bebeau & Thoma, 2003). An

individual receives a high score on each item they rank as important in influencing the decision for the dilemma and representing the Postconventional Schema for the N2 index (Bebeau & Thoma, 2003). I used an OLS multiple regression model.

To address my research questions, I regressed moral reasoning on the following variables; mentoring with an ethics component, age, gender of participant, gender of mentor, number of years as a school principal, participation in principal certification class with an ethics component, and participation in professional development activities with an ethics component. As I derived the correct model, I conducted regression criticism by exploring distributional shape, residuals, influential cases, and testing for multicollinearity. I also used the four reliability checks mentioned previously for the DIT-2. Additionally, I used checks for missing data and random responses in the remainder of the survey. I investigated missing responses among the remaining questions and considered imputation or the removal of the respondent from the data set.

Ethical Considerations

I submitted the proposal for this study to the Institutional Review Board for approval (Appendix C). Next, I gained informed consent from each principal to participate in the study (Appendix B). Informed consent includes explaining the purpose of collecting the information, how I will use the information, how I will handle responses, and explaining any risks or benefits that may impact the participant (Patton, 2002). When I contacted the principals, I informed them of the purpose and benefits of the study. I also informed them that this study could lead to future research on a wider scale exploring the impact of mentoring programs on the moral judgment of principals. I provided participants a URL to the library listing at Indiana University of Pennsylvania via email that they can access if

interested in the results (Appendices A & B). I explained that principals may volunteer if interested and that they may withdraw from the study at any point in the survey. I also provided contact information regarding participant rights as well (Monette, 2005).

Sometimes individuals hesitate to participate in studies due to issues surrounding privacy. According to Monette et al. (2005, p. 56) "privacy refers to the ability to control when and under what conditions others will have access to your beliefs, values, or behavior." In order to ensure the confidentiality of research participants, I kept information provided in the study anonymous. I did not publish names of school districts or principals in my findings. Additionally I ensured confidentiality by using participants from numerous districts rather than only one school district. I created a sample using a range of school districts to the extent there was a distribution of districts with principals willing to participate. I provided principals with the opportunity to ask any questions about the study either before and/or after completing the survey.

Limitations

Using a survey instrument limits participants by forcing them to choose one of the provided options. In order to offset this weakness, I chose the DIT-2, an empirically derived questionnaire on moral reasoning and carefully selected questions on mentoring. I chose a survey format over interviews because it allowed me to reach all of my participants. I also selected a survey format over an interview because it took less time for participants to complete.

Participants' self-reporting on the presence of ethics in their mentoring programs presented another limitation. Principals may have exaggerated or under reported the role that ethics played in their mentoring programs. However, a secondary source would have

provided less insight into the variety of the principal's experiences regarding ethics training. The possibility of very few or no principals recollecting an ethics component from their mentoring experiences could have presented an additional limitation. Finally, in all studies, results reflect the sample and may or may not generalize to the population. I attempted to offset this limitation by attempting to gather a large sample of all Pennsylvania principals.

Summary

This research addresses moral decision making and the experience of public school principals. It also explores the possible influence mentoring has on the principal's ability to confront complex decisions when clear ethical choices do not exist. The first goal of my research attempts to determine which moral schemas principals use when making moral judgments. Principals in various studies not only identified a need to improve moral judgment, but also areas of improvement that would most benefit them (Drago-Severson, 2012; Dempster and Berry, 2003; Henry, 2010). As a result, the second goal of my research explores how principal mentoring programs with an ethics component impact moral judgment in principals. This study uses the following schemas: Postconventional, Maintaining Norms, and Personal Interest (Rest, 1975), which are based on Kohlberg's stage model (Kohlberg, 1971). This study uses a cross-sectional design. I used a survey that includes the DIT-2, additional questions regarding mentoring experiences and principal demographics as my quantitative measurement tool. All public Pennsylvania school principals were contacted to complete the survey.

The dependent variable consisted of the principal's schema. The independent variable was formal focused mentoring with an ethics component. The additional two intervening variables were also explored: professional development activities with an ethics

component and principal certification classes with an ethics component. The following four variables were controlled for: participant's age, participant's gender, mentor's gender, length of time as a school principal, As described in Chapter 2, these variables impacted moral reasoning in earlier studies and as a result, I included them in this study.

Scores on the DIT-2 are analyzed based on participant responses and on how dilemmas activate one of the three schemas (Bebeau & Thoma, 2003). An individual receives a high score on each item they rank as important in influencing the decision for the dilemma, which represents the Postconventional Schema (Bebeau & Thoma, 2003). The N2 index represents the degree to which Postconventional items are prioritized in addition to the degree to which Personal Interest items receive lower ratings than Postconventional items. The N2 index acts as the primary dependent variable in this study.

In the next chapter I explain the results of my study. The DIT-2 indicates whether principals make decisions from the Postconventional schema, Maintaining Norms schema, or Personal Interest schema (Rest et al., 1999). The mentoring questions from the survey indicate if mentoring impacts the moral decision making of principals.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This research addresses moral decision making and the experience of public school principals. It also explores the possible influence mentoring has on the principal's ability to confront complex decisions when clear ethical choices do not exist. The school principal fulfills both a vital and daunting role. As discussed in previous chapters, given the increased pressures placed on school principals to make decisions addressing diverse and at times conflicting demands of stakeholders, principals must possess the skills to make the best ethical decisions (Dempster & Berry, 2003). Given the nature and role of school principals associated with important ethical decision making, which consists of addressing decisions that raise complex moral concerns, this research addresses two goals. The first part of my research involved determining which moral schemas principals use when making moral judgments. Various studies have indicated that principals not only identified a need to improve moral judgment, but also areas of improvement that would most benefit them (Dempster and Berry, 2003; Drago-Severson, 2012; Henry, 2010). The second portion of my research then explored how principal mentoring programs with an ethics component impact moral judgment in principals, which I explore in this chapter. This chapter describes the sample and the results of the statistical analysis of the data.

I used the following schemas in this study: Postconventional, Maintaining Norms, and Personal Interest (Rest, 1975), which are based on Kohlberg's stage model (Kohlberg, 1971). Rest (1973) asserted that when individuals make decisions from the lowest level schema they adhere to the Personal Interests schema. According to this schema others' needs may get taken into consideration but only if the decision maker still receives benefits (Rest et

al., 1999). Rest (1973) described the Maintaining Norms Schema when individuals begin to consider duties towards other members of society. Individuals demonstrate a perceived need for generally accepted and required social norms (Rest et al., 1999). Rest (1973) based the Postconventional Schema on Kohlberg's highest level stages. During these stages individuals move beyond adhering to existing societal rules and demonstrate concern for justice (Johnson, 2004).

Although both the Conventional and Postconventional schemas of moral judgment emphasize rules and standards, individuals at the Postconventional schema exercise critical judgment beyond the established rules (Pritchard, 1999). Research indicates that principals with strong moral judgment abilities are more likely to demonstrate consistent democratic behavior (Reiman & Theis-Sprinthall, 1993). Principals in today's society often must confront with complex ethical issues related to such concerns as student discipline, teacher evaluations, abuse allegations, allocation of resources in a time when budgets are being cut, and compliance with standardized testing procedures (Hughes & Jones, 2011). Principals also experience greater political pressure than their predecessors (Kafka, 2009). Given the increased pressures placed on school principals to make decisions addressing diverse and a times conflicting demands of stakeholders, principals must possess the skills to make the best ethical decisions (Dempster & Berry, 2003). Ideally, school leaders would make all decisions from the Postconventional schema.

Description of Sample

I used a cross-sectional design to conduct this study, which is appropriate when not manipulating variables and collecting data at a single point in time across a relatively large sample. I conducted a quantitative study using survey responses from public school

principals in Pennsylvania. The survey consisted of the DIT-2, additional questions regarding mentoring experiences and principal demographics. I contacted all Pennsylvania public school principals at the elementary, middle, and high school levels (2,745) by email (www.principals-emaillist.com). Public school principals in Pennsylvania were selected as the population because they have a common set of standards in terms of student testing and special education requirements, both of which can potentially create challenges in terms of moral and ethical decisions. I excluded private school principals from the population because they do not follow the same requirements as public school principals. Additionally I limited the population to Pennsylvania to allow for uniformity of state requirements. For instance, the Department of Education requires Pennsylvania schools to adopt or amend their existing policies related to bullying and incorporate them into their school's code of conduct (Limber & Small, 2003). Other states may hold different standards.

I sent pre-notification emails to the principals informing them of the purpose of the study. Next, I sent emails to each principal including a link to the survey and informed consent (Appendix A). I sent two follow up emails to non-responders. A total of 249 surveys were returned resulting in a 9.1% return rate. From the 249 returned surveys, 161 were purged due to the four reliability checks for the DIT-2 mentioned previously in the methods chapter (Rest, Narvaez, Thoma, & Bebeau, 1999). These reliability checks address the problems of random responding, missing data, alien test-taking data, and nondiscrimination. As a result, 93 completed surveys (37% of the returned surveys) were analyzed. However, only 80 participants completed entire survey including the mentoring questions.

I was primarily looking at the relationship between moral schemas and participation in principal mentoring programs with an ethics component. I predicted that I would find a positive relationship between participation in a principal mentoring program and the presence of the Postconventional Schema. Principals who received mentoring with an ethics component would expectedly exhibit greater moral reasoning than those who did not. In my study I cannot assert that there was an absence of the Postconventional Schema before the mentoring program. Therefore, I can only predict the correlation sans controlling for previous integration of a Postconventional Schema into decision making, which potentially builds some noise into the findings. Judd and Kenny (1981) describe the following obstacles using a cross-sectional or post-only control design: identification of treatment effects due to reliance on descriptions of participants, different treatments among participants, and less effective control of variables in comparison to pre-treatment designs. Due to such issues small treatment effects can be difficulty to identify. According to Rossi and Freeman (2004) statistical significance testing helps to identify if treatment effects are large enough to be distinguished from background noise. At times it may be beneficial to use a lower threshold in an attempt to determine even small effects (Rossi and Freeman, 2004). To address this matter and reduce the probability of a Type-II error, I set the alpha level for statistical significance to the 90% confidence level ($a = .10$).

Variable Definition and Measures

This section explains how I defined and measured the moral reasoning schemas (dependent variable) and mentoring (independent variable). In addition to mentoring, I explored the following intervening variables: professional development activities with an ethics component and principal certification classes with an ethics component. I also

controlled for the following demographic variables: participant's age, participant's gender, mentor's gender, length of time as a school principal.

Dependent Variable

The dependent variable consists of the principal's moral reasoning schema. The N2 index indicates the degree to which principals are making decisions from the Postconventional Schema as defined by the Defining Issues Test 2 (DIT-2). As described in Chapter 2 the DIT-2 assesses moral decisions quantitatively and comprehensively (Rest, 1975) (See Appendix A). The DIT-2 maintains an emphasis on the varying levels of moral development using schemas (Rest, 1973). As a result, I was able to assess the likelihood of whether the participants make decisions from the Postconventional Schema or one of the lower level schemas using the DIT-2.

Defining Issues Test

As described in Chapters 2 and 3, Rest (1975) developed the Defining Issues Test (DIT), which lead to the development of the DIT-2, an updated more efficient version of the test (Rest et. al, 1999). Both the DIT and DIT-2 assess moral reasoning through a written survey (Rest, 1975). The DIT-2 incorporates a schematic framework, which conceptualizes moral reasoning as shifting to various perspectives rather than rigidly progressing through stages (Rest et al. 1999b). The DIT-2 survey questions consist of descriptions of moral dilemmas each with its' own range of questions. Participants answer 12 questions about each dilemma, which contain issues that relate to making a decision within the context of the dilemma. Participants also rank the most influential issues that they considered when for making a decision. The DIT-2 was developed in 1999 at the Center for the Study of Ethical Development (Rest et. al, 1999) as a more effective way to measure moral reasoning. The

DIT-2 takes approximately 30-40 minutes to complete. This newer shorter version consists 60 questions of five (rather than six) more current moral dilemmas.

Originally, researchers used the P score on the DIT to measure Postconventional moral reasoning based on the ratings of participants. The P score represents the proportion of items selected that represent considerations from Kohlberg's Stages 5 and 6. The sum of scores from these stages is converted to a percent. The P% can range from 0-95. Participants also receive a Personal Interest Schema score and Maintaining Norms Schema score. The first score represents the proportion of items selected that appeal to Stages 2 and Stages 3. The second score represents the proportion of items selected that appeal to Stage 4.

Due to its superior performance on construct validity, the N2 index replaced the P score (Rest, Narvaez, Thoma, & Bebeau, 1999). The N2 index represents the degree to which Postconventional items are prioritized in addition to the degree to which Personal Interest items receive lower ratings than Postconventional items. Researchers adjust the scores to have the same mean and standard deviation as the P score to allow for comparisons. The upper limits for the scale scores consist of the following: Personal Interest: 0-100, Maintaining Norms: 0-92, Post conventional: 0-95. The N2 follows the P score range but can go slightly negative if P is very low and there is a greater preference for Personal interest over Postconventional Items. Similarly the N2 can approach 100 if P is very high and the participant makes clear distinctions between P and Personal Interest items. In order to compare this study with previous studies, I used both the P score and N2 index.

Research Question 1

The first research question asked, among the decision making schemas listed by Rest (1973), which schemas do principals use when engaged in moral decision making? The

participants in this study demonstrated the highest mean for the Maintaining Norms schema. However, the P scores and N2 scores were not far behind. The participants demonstrated the lowest mean for the Personal Interest schema.

Table 3

Moral Reasoning Schemas

	Personal Interest	Maintaining Norms	Post Conventional (P score)	N2 score (N2 score)
Mean	24.20	37.61	33.02	31.72
Standard Deviation	13.09	15.39	15.33	15.04
n	88	88	88	88

The N2 score distribution (see Figure 1) is very symmetrical because the mean and the median are approximately the same. The distribution, however, is slightly light tailed because the standard deviation (15.04) is smaller than the pseudo standard deviation (16.05). As a result, the N2 scores represent a normal curve and can be compared to N2 scores in other populations.

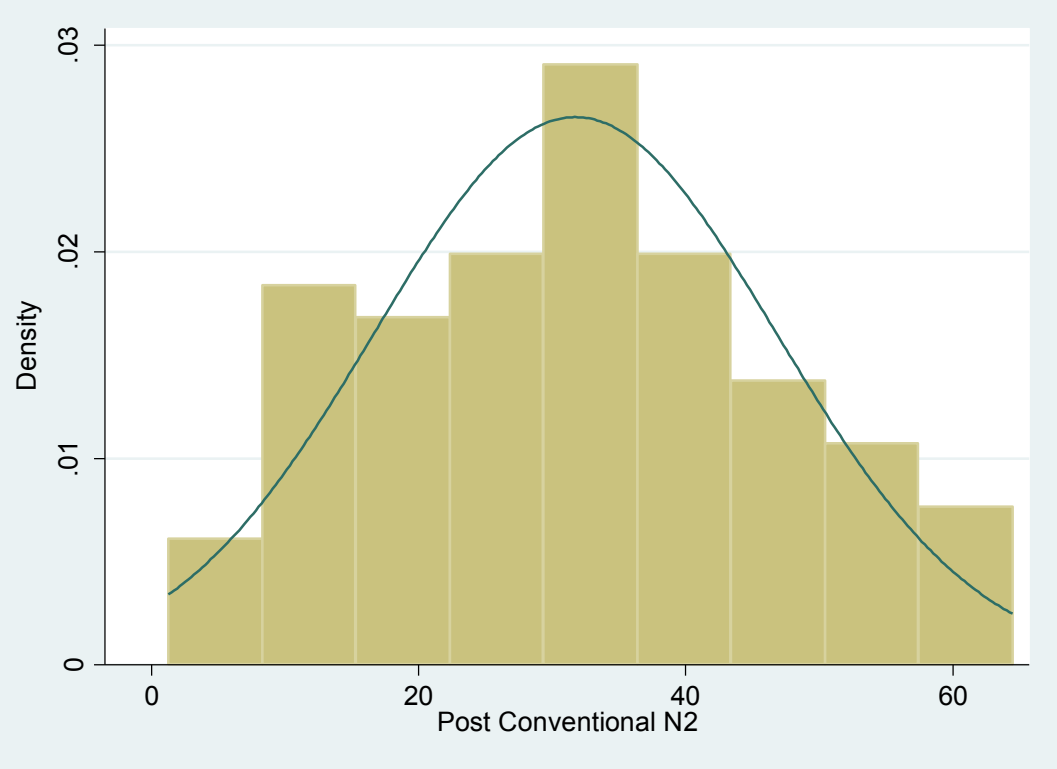

Figure 1. Moral reasoning schema distribution.

Independent Variables

The independent variable is the involvement in formal focused mentoring with an ethics component. I define this variable as participation in a formalized program consisting of specific guidelines governing the mentoring process (duration, frequency, type of meeting and content). I measured this variable using specific survey items derived from this definition. As stated in Chapter 3, I created these questions based on Reiman and Thies-Sprinthall's (1993) five conditions, which prompt changes in moral judgment at developmental stages. The survey items provided data concerning the following: (a) duration - the length of time the mentoring lasted (i.e., number of years or months); (b) frequency - how often mentoring sessions occurred (i.e., once a year, once a quarter, once a month, 2-3 times a month, or once a week) and (c) primary type of meeting - face-to-face, phone, or

email. The mentor's position was also defined (i.e., principal, superintendent, retired principal, retired superintendent other school administrator, retired other school administrator). In addition, survey items also addressed the content of discussions: defined in terms of the discussion of moral issues and the reflection of moral decisions.

Two intervening variables were also explored: professional development activities with an ethics component and principal certification classes with an ethics component. The two intervening variables and other independent variables are highlighted in the Tables 2 and 3 (pp. 97-98). The following four variables were controlled for: participant's age, participant's gender, mentor's gender, length of time as a school principal. The principal demographical information is listed below in Table 4. As described in Chapter 2, these variables impacted moral reasoning in earlier studies. As a result, I included them in this study.

Table 4

Principal Demographics

	Age	Years of Experience	Gender
	Mean =46 SD = 8.4	1st year=3% 2-3 = 10% 4-5 = 12% 6-10= 33% <10 = 37%	Male = 54% Female = 46%
n	80	80	80

Research Question 2

My second research questions asks, do principals who participate in mentoring programs that include an ethics component exhibit greater moral reasoning in their decision making than principals who don't? This leads to the following hypothesis and associated null hypothesis:

- H1: Principals who have received mentoring with an emphasis on moral reasoning are more likely to make decisions using Postconventional moral judgment.
- H0: There is no difference in Postconventional moral judgment in principals who have received mentoring with an emphasis on moral reasoning and principals who have not received such mentoring.

Variable Generation

To address the above research question and related hypotheses, I first created a summative multi-item scale to measure mentorship using the following six survey questions: 1. How often were moral issues discussed during mentoring sessions? 2. How often did you reflect on moral decisions through writing or discussion during mentoring sessions? 3. Did your mentor inquire why you made certain decisions? 4. On the average, how often did you meet with your mentor? 5. How did you typically meet with your mentor? 6. How often was your mentor available when you needed support? Prior to summing these survey questions by each participant, I ran an exploratory factor analysis to determine dimensionality of the construct and found mentorship was unidemensional (the associated Eigenvalue was 4.13 and the next highest Eigenvalue was 0.16). I then calculated Cronbach's alpha, which resulted in a 0.91 alpha coefficient indicating good internal consistency. Figures #2 and #3 show a histogram of the mentoring variable with a normal curve overlay. Figure #2 provides a depiction of the total variable, which includes participants that did not have a mentor. Figure #3 highlights the variation for "mentor only" participants.

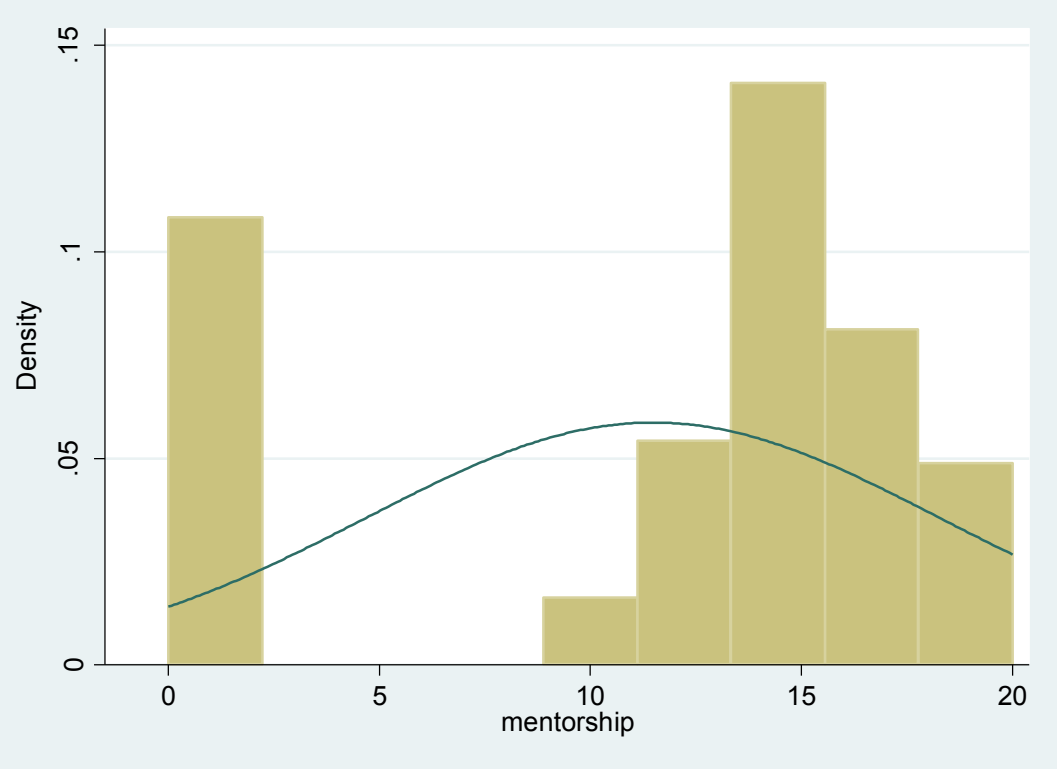

Figure 2. Mentored and non-mentored participants.

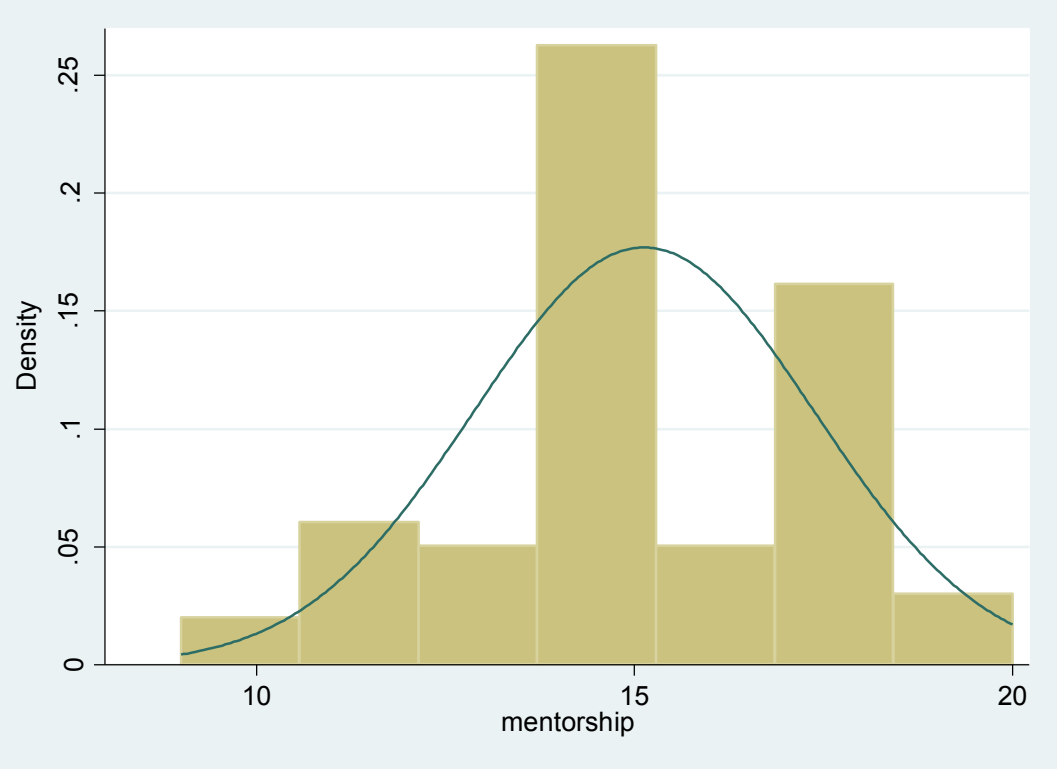

Figure 3. Variation for "mentor only" participants.

Once participants answered the question of whether or not they had participated in mentoring, they were asked to identify the type of mentor (principal, retired principal, superintendent, retired superintendent, or other administrator). The Support Network Breadth variable was generated by using principal as mentor for all participants that answered principal or retired principal. The same method was used for participants that provided the mentor as superintendent. If a participant answered other administrator the answer was also treated as superintendent. Other administrator was changed to superintendent because the majority of "other administrators" in a school district are typically central office administrators. Such administrators typically hold higher level leadership positions that principals and would be most closely related to the superintendent role.

Data Analysis

I sent the completed surveys to the Center for the Study of Ethical Development at the University of Alabama for scoring. Scores on the DIT-2 are analyzed based on participant responses and on how dilemmas activate one of the three schemas (Bebeau & Thoma, 2003). An individual receives a high score on each item they rank as important in influencing the decision for the dilemma and representing the Postconventional Schema for the N2 index (Bebeau & Thoma, 2003). The Center provided the Personal Interest score, Maintaining Norms score, P score and N2 score for each participant. Table 1 shows these scores.

Regression Analysis

I then used an Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) to analyze principals' moral reasoning by regressing moral reasoning (N2 scores) on the following independent variables; frequency of moral development discussions, reflection on moral decisions, mentor inquiry of moral decisions, mentor frequency, meeting style (e.g., face to face, phone, email), and mentor availability. I found no difference between persons mentored and not mentored irrespective of the other independent variables and I further tested the mentored only and got similar results. However, OLS is more efficient in comparison to other unbiased estimators when the errors are normally, independently, and identically distributed (normal i.i.d.) (Hamilton, 2009, p. 253). I therefore investigated the error assumptions and also checked for multicollinearity to ensure that none of the independent variables were highly correlated. I fount tolerance values ran from 0.60 to 0.98 indicating a reasonable range and no multicollinearity. However, I also found deviations relative to normal i.i.d. errors.

I also investigated missing responses among the survey questions and considered imputation or the removal of the respondent from the data set. I found five missing values for the utilizer score and imputed the missing values using the median. Further, when participants were asked to identify race, only 2 participants identified as non-white. As a result the variable of race was removed from the data analysis.

Figure 4 presents the residuals versus the fitted values for the regression. This plot shows that the assumptions of normal i.i.d. errors does not exist. I also investigated the existence of influential cases and Figure 5 shows that while one case has high leverage, it does not influence the regression.

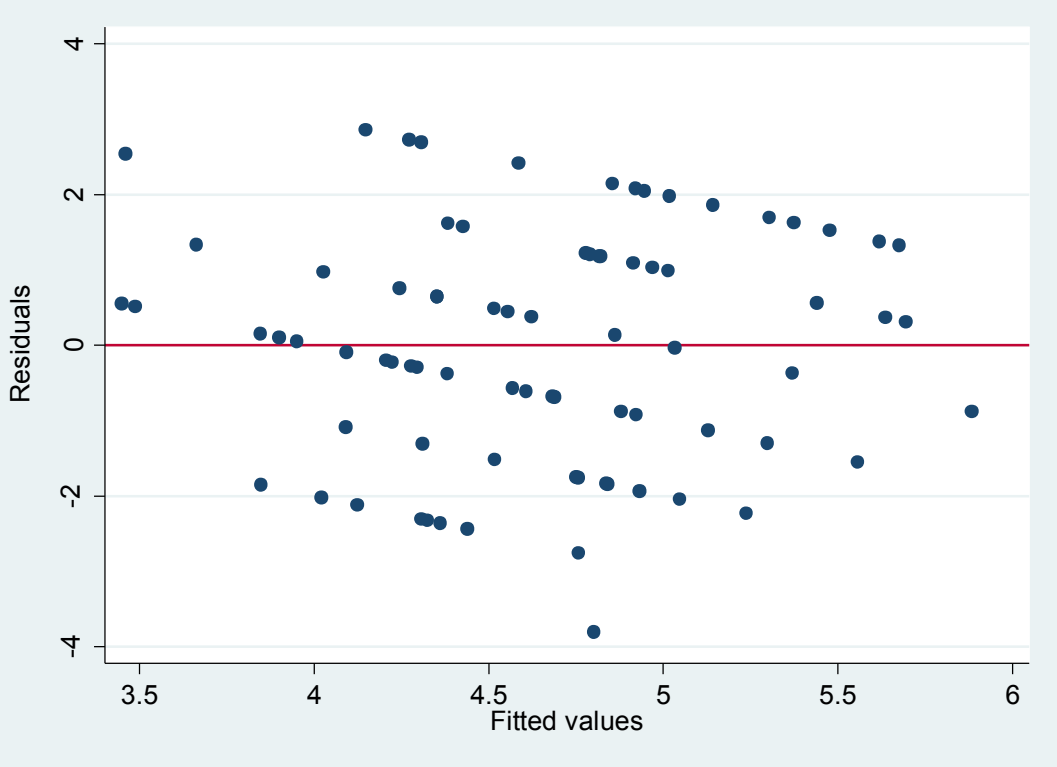

Figure 4. Residuals versus fitted values.

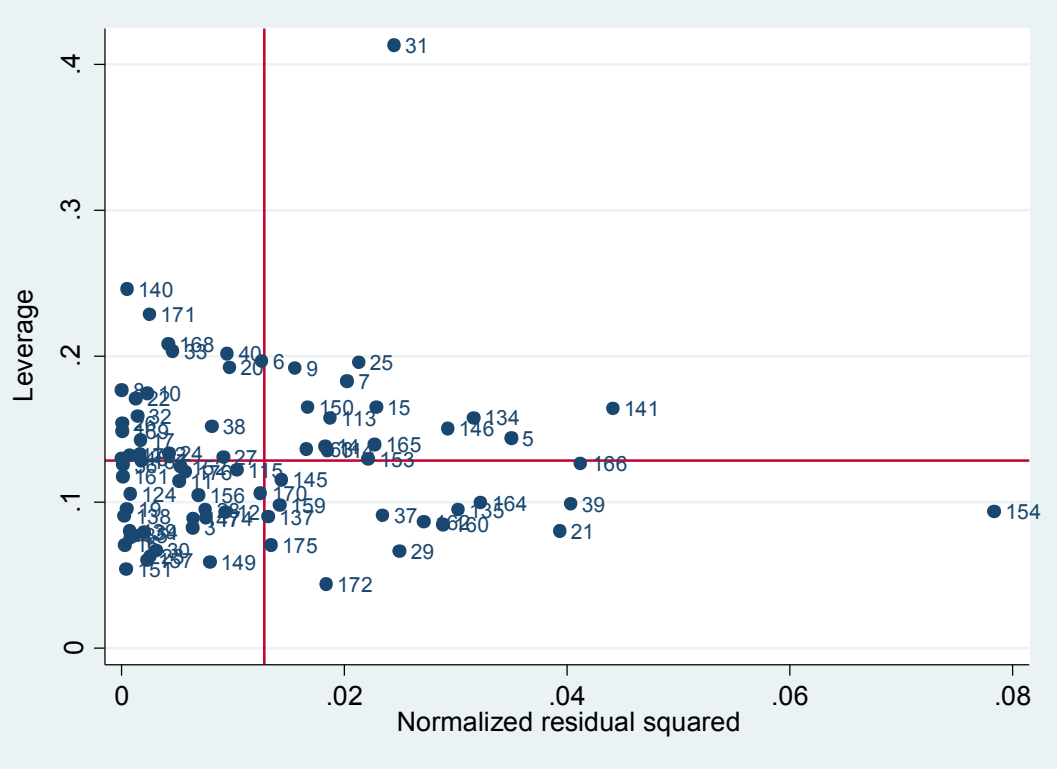

Figure 5. High leveraging case.

Based on the model criticisms, I ran regressions with robust standard errors using the Hubert-White Standard Error Estimator. The method relaxes the normal i.i.d. error assumptions (Hamilton, 2009). The results still showed no significant coefficients. Finally, I ran a robust regression to validate that no outliers were affecting the findings. Robust regression methods are less impacted by outliers compared to other regression methods (Hamilton, 1992, p. 189). The robust regression also produced no significant relationships between the Independent and Dependent Variables.

None of the independent variables, including mentoring, impacted moral reasoning. These findings were surprising because both coursework (Grady et al., 2008; Reiman, 2004) and professional activities with an ethics component have been found to improve moral reasoning (Feng-I, 2011; Geddes & Salvatori, 2008; Msila, 2009). Neither gender nor length

of time as principal impacted the participants' moral reasoning either. This factor was examined because Klinker & Hackmann (2003) found that individuals with greater years of experience as school principals demonstrated higher schemas of moral reasoning as well. According to Thoma (1986) gender accounts for less than one half of a percent of variance in the DIT. Despite this small percentage, some researchers have found that women demonstrate significantly higher schemas of moral reasoning than men following interventions (Ritter, 2006). The same results were found when looking at a mentor sub-sample as well.

Meta Analysis

Due to the educational levels of the participants in this study, I expected higher P scores and N2 scores. According to Rest (1979) the mean P score for the general adult population is 40. The mean P score for individuals who have attained educational levels beyond a Bachelor's degree is 53 (Rest, 1979). In an attempt to better understand the scores of my participants, I decided to conduct a meta-analysis. To compare the P scores and N2 scores of the participants in this study with the average P scores and N2 scores of other populations, I used studies with populations similar to my study population in terms of education level and professionalism. Seven of the studies reported N2 scores while six only reported the P scores. I conducted three separate one-sample Two-tailed t-tests based on three separate aggregated means.

Table 5 shows the N2 scores of the following groups: MSW Social Workers (Kaplan, 2006), Occupational Therapy students (Geddes, Salvatori, & Eva, 2009), Physiotherapy students Geddes, Salvatori, & Eva, 2009), Counseling students (Cannon, 2008), Second degree students (Geddes, Larin, & Eva, 2009), Physical Therapy students (Larin, Benson,

Wessel, Martin, & Ploeg, 2014), and Physical Therapy students (Larin, Benson, Wessel, Martin, & Ploeg, 2014). All of the participants in this aggregated group have completed at least one Bachelor's degree. The majority of the participants in this aggregated group were noted as in the process of completing a Master's degree. The members of MSW Social Work group already work as Master's level professionals. Although many of these aggregate group participants demonstrated lower educational levels than the participants in my study, they did have advanced degrees and worked in professional capacities. Table 8 shows the N2 Score mean (45.73) is statistically significantly higher ($p \leq 0.0001$) than the participants (31.72) in this study.

Table 5

Master's Level Students and Professionals

Sample	N2 score Mean	n	t -score	p-value
MSW Social Workers	44.7	265	-8.32	≤ 0.0001
Occupational Therapy Students	46.4	217	-9.41	≤ 0.0001
Physiotherapy Students	49.1	215	-11.14	≤ 0.0001
Counseling Students	44.5	40	-8.19	≤ 0.0001
Second Degree Students	44.8	35	-8.39	≤ 0.0001
Physical Therapy Students	47.1	21	-9.86	≤ 0.0001
Physical Therapy Students	43.5	36	-7.55	≤ 0.0001

Table 6 shows the mean for the P scores of the following groups: Divinity students (Bunch 2005), Public Administration students (Rizzo and Swisher, 2004) and Accounting students (Ho, 2009). The first two groups of participants were enrolled in a Master's program at the time of the study. The Accounting students were Bachelor level students. Table 8 shows that although all of the participants held lower levels of education than the participants in this study, the P score mean (39.94) is statistically significantly higher ($p \leq 0.0001$) than the participants (33.02) in the study.

Table 6

Master's and Bachelor's Level Students

Sample	P score	n	t-score	p-value
Divinity Students	37.10	195	-2.57	$\leq$ 0.0119
Public Administration Students	46.69	134	-8.60	$\leq$ 0.0001
Accounting Students	36.03	427	-1.89	$\leq$ 0.0616

Table 7 shows the mean of the P scores for the following groups: Elementary School Principals (Vitton, 2008), School Principals (Stewart, 1998), and Pennsylvania Superintendents (Winters, 2003). This group exhibits very similar educational levels and job responsibilities to the participants in this study. However, the group of superintendents may contain more participants with Doctoral level degrees than the group of principals in this study. Table 8 shows that despite the similarities between this group and the principals in this study, the aggregated P score mean (37.71) is statistically significantly higher ($p \leq 0.004$) than the participants (33.02) in this study.

Table 7

Master's and Doctoral Level School Principals and Superintendents

Sample	Mean	n	t Score	p value
Elementary School Principals	36.81	60	-2.38	$\leq$ 0.0192
School Principals	37.45	24	-2.79	$\leq$ 0.0065
Pennsylvania Superintendents	38.87	135	-3.68	$\leq$ 0.0004

Table 8 shows how P score and N2 score means compare with the three previous aggregated groups described above. Although Rest and Thoma (1985) identified formal education with interventions related to moral decision making as the strongest predictor in moral reasoning, the participants in this study demonstrated the lowest levels of Postconventional moral reasoning.

Table 8

Total Aggregated Group

Sample	Aggregated Groups	Mean		
Master's Level Professionals, Master's Level Students, and Second Degree Students	MSW Social Workers, Occupational Therapy Students, Physiotherapy Students, Counseling Students, and Physical Therapy Students	N2 score = 45.73	t-score -8.98	p-value ≤.0001
Master's and Bachelor Level Students	Divinity Students, Public Administration Students, and Accounting Students	p score = 39.94	-4.35	≤.0001
Master's and Doctoral Level Professionals	Principals and Superintendents	P score = 37.71	-2.95	≤.0040
Master's and Doctoral Level Professionals	Current Study of PA Principals	P score = 33.02 N2 score = 31.72	.0009 .0001	≤. 9992 ≤. 9999

Summary

This chapter provided the results of the statistical analysis of the data. I used quantitative survey responses from public school principals across Pennsylvania. The first section provided a description of the sample in this study, reasons participants were chosen and the methods used to contact participants.

The next section of this chapter presented information on the Dependent Variable, which included the DIT-2 and the three Moral Reasoning Schemas. It also provided information on the P score and N2 score. This chapter described the Independent Variables as well, which included various aspects of mentoring. The following aspects were explored: frequency of discussion of moral issues, frequency of reflection on moral decisions through writing or discussion during mentoring sessions, mentor inquiry of reasons certain decisions were made, frequency of mentor meetings, meeting style with mentor, and frequency of availability of mentor when support was needed. The Mentorship variable was created from these questions. The additional Independent Variables included: the position of the mentor, length of time as a principal, and whether or not the participant served as a mentor. The impact of professional development activities/graduate classes with an ethics component was explored as well. Finally participants who did not experience formal mentoring answered questions about informal professional support.

The final section of this chapter provided the results of the data related to the two research questions. Information on the participants' preferred schemas in comparison to similar groups was shared. The statistical methods that were used to determine the impact of mentoring on moral reasoning were provided as well.

The next chapter presents discussions of the results and conclusions that can

be made from these findings. The chapter also reviews the implications for future studies regarding public school principals and moral decision making.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This research addressed moral decision making and the experience of public school principals. It also explored the possible influence mentoring has on the principal's ability to confront complex decisions when clear ethical choices do not exist. The first goal of my research was to determine the moral schemas principals use when making moral judgments. Principals in various studies have not only identified a need to improve moral judgment, but also areas of improvement that would most benefit them (Dempster and Berry, 2003; Drago-Severson, 2012; Henry, 2010). As a result, the second goal of my research involved exploring how principal mentoring programs with an ethics component impact moral judgment in principals. The study incorporated a survey methodology. The survey design measures observable behaviors and attitudes by providing precision to words and narratives. To gather this information, participants completed the Defining Issues Test 2 (Rest, 1975), which measures the moral schemas individuals use when making decisions. Questions regarding mentoring and principal demographics were included in the survey as well (see Appendix A). This chapter contains a discussion of the research results, conclusions and recommendations for future studies.

Reworked this section and removed redundant parts-The Defining Issues Test 2 is based on James Rest's (1973) work. Rest (1973) identified the following three schemas: Personal Interest Schema, Maintaining Norms Schema, and Postconventional Schema. Rest based these schemas on Kohlberg's (1958) moral development theory, which contains six stages within three levels. However, Rest (1973) examined adult moral judgment using a range of moral reasoning levels rather than a strict progression of them. Rest (1973) defined

moral judgment as the ability to determine which action is morally correct. He also included analyzing each option and understanding the rationale for the chosen course of action.

Rest (1973) asserted that when individuals make decisions from the lowest level schema they adhere to the Personal Interests Schema. Rest (1973) based the Personal Interest Schema on Kohlberg's (1958) Stages 2 and 3. Kohlberg identified Stage 2 as Individualist Instrumental Morality, which is the later element of the Preconventional level. At this stage, individuals begin to realize that numerous perspectives may exist regarding moral issues. However, individuals place emphasis on meeting personal needs rather than the needs of others. Kohlberg defined his third and fourth stages as the Conventional level of moral development. Kohlberg (1958) identified Stage 3 as Impersonally Normative Morality. At this level, individuals begin to emphasize the importance of developing mutually agreed upon informal norms. According to Rest's (1973) Personal Interest Schema others' needs may get taken into consideration but only if the decision maker still receives benefits. Individuals exhibiting this thinking also demonstrate concern for those with whom they have affectionate relationships (Rest et al., 1999). This schema stresses the notion of survival and "getting ahead" (Narvaez & Bock, 2002).

Rest further described the Maintaining Norms Schema when individuals begin to consider duties towards other members of society. Individuals demonstrate a perceived need for generally accepted and required social norms (Rest et al., 1999). The Maintaining Norms Schema is based on Kohlberg's Stage 4, along with elements of Stage 5. During Kohlberg's Stage 4, known as Social System Morality, individuals begin to examine how behaviors impact society. At this stage Kohlberg, asserted that individual needs remain appropriate

only if they do not detrimentally affect society. He also stated that legal and religious standards may move to the forefront at this level.

However, it is not until individuals reach the Postconventional level at Stages 5 and 6 that individuals move beyond adhering to existing societal rules and demonstrate concern for justice. Kohlberg (1990) asserted that individuals do not reach the Postconventional level until adulthood. He identified Stage 5 as Human-Rights and Social Welfare Morality. At this stage individuals begin to understand the importance of creating rules and laws that demonstrate equality, equity, and reciprocity, which demonstrate principles of justice. According to Kohlberg (1958) individuals at this stage also commit to such norms even when their beliefs conflict with societal norms.

Kohlberg (1958) defined the final Stage 6 as Morality of Universalizable, Reversible, and Prescriptive General Ethical Principles. At this stage, he described ethical values as more important than laws or policies. Kohlberg (1976) also identified morality as reversible and the importance of taking everyone's perspectives into consideration. According to Rest (1973) when individuals employ the Postconventional Schema they demonstrate moral obligations based on shared ideals, reciprocity, and equity for all groups within society (Rest et al., 1999). Rest (1973) based the Postconventional Schema on Kohlberg's Stages 5 and 6. During these stages individuals move beyond adhering to existing societal rules and demonstrate concern for justice (Johnson, 2004).

Review of Variables and Instrumentation

Dependent Variable

The dependent variable in this study consists of the principal's moral reasoning schema. The N2 index indicates the degree to which principals make decisions from the

Postconventional Schema as defined by the Defining Issues Test 2 (DIT-2). As described in Chapter 2, the DIT-2 assesses moral decisions quantitatively and comprehensively (Rest, 1975) (See Appendix A). The DIT-2 maintains an emphasis on the varying levels of moral development using schemas (Rest, 1973). As a result, I was able to assess the likelihood of whether the participants make decisions from the Postconventional Schema or one of the lower level schemas.

As described in Chapters 2 and 3, Rest (1975) developed the Defining Issues Test (DIT), which lead to the development of the DIT-2, an updated more efficient version of the test (Rest et. al, 1999). Both the DIT and DIT-2 assess moral reasoning through a written survey (Rest, 1975). The DIT-2 incorporates a schematic framework, which conceptualizes moral reasoning as shifting to various perspectives rather than rigidly progressing through stages (Rest et al. 1999b). The DIT-2 survey questions consist of descriptions of moral dilemmas each with its' own range of questions. Participants answer 12 questions about each dilemma, which contain issues that relate to making a decision within the context of the dilemma. Participants also rank the most influential issues that they considered when for making a decision. The DIT-2 was developed in 1999 at the Center for the Study of Ethical Development (Rest et. al, 1999) as a more effective way to measure moral reasoning. The DIT-2 takes approximately 30-40 minutes to complete. This newer shorter version consists 60 questions of five (rather than six) more current moral dilemmas. The DIT-2 includes a brief personal information survey as well, which includes age, gender, education, race/ethnicity and political orientation (Rest et al, 1999). Due to the similarity in education among PA principals, I used only age, gender, race/ethnicity, and political orientation.

Originally, researchers used the P scores on the DIT to measure Postconventional moral reasoning based on the ratings of participants. The P score represents the proportion of items selected that represent considerations from Kohlberg's Stage 5 and Stage 6. Participants also receive a Personal Interest schema score and Maintaining Norms schema score. The first score represents the proportion of items selected that appeal to Stage 2 and Stage 3. The second score represents the proportion of items selected that appeal to Stage 4.

Due to its superior performance on construct validity, the N2 index replaced the P score (Rest, Narvaez, Thoma, & Bebeau, 1999). The N2 index represents the degree to which Postconventional items are prioritized in addition to the degree to which Personal Interest items receive lower ratings than Postconventional items. The P score and N2 index are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4. Researchers adjust the scores to have the same mean and standard deviation as the P score to allow for comparisons. In order to compare this study with previous studies, I used both the P score and N2 index.

Independent Variable

To examine the impact of formal focused mentoring with an ethics component, I defined this variable as participation in a formalized program consisting of specific guidelines governing the mentoring process (duration, frequency, type of meeting and content). As stated in Chapter 3, I created these questions based on Reiman and Thies-Sprinthall's (1993) five conditions, which prompt changes in moral judgment at developmental stages. I measured this variable using specific survey items derived from this definition. The survey items provided data concerning the following: (a) duration - the length of the time the mentoring lasted (i.e., number of years or months): (b) frequency - how often mentoring sessions occurred (i.e., once a year, once a quarter, once a month, 2-3 times

a month, or once a week) and (c) primary type of meeting - face-to-face, phone, or email. The mentor's position was also defined (i.e., principal, superintendent, retired principal, retired superintendent other school administrator, retired other school administrator). In addition, survey items also addressed the content of discussions: defined in terms of the discussion of moral issues and the reflection of moral decisions.

Two intervening variables were also explored: professional development activities with an ethics component and principal certification classes with an ethics component. The two intervening variables and other independent variables are highlighted in the Tables 2 and 3 (pp. 97-98). The following four variables were controlled for: participant's age, participant's gender, mentor's gender, length of time as a school principal. As described in Chapter 2, these variables impacted moral reasoning in earlier studies. As a result, I included them in this study.

Discussion

Due to a lower than expected response rate, the conclusions are limited to the participants in this study. I contacted all Pennsylvania public school principals at the elementary, middle, and high school levels (2,745) by email (www.principals-emaillist.com). Public school principals in Pennsylvania were selected as the population due to having a common set of standards in terms of student testing and special education requirements, both of which have potential to create challenges in terms of moral and ethical decisions. I sent pre-notification emails to the principals informing them of the purpose of the study. Next, I sent emails to each principal including a link to the survey and informed consent (Appendix A). I sent two follow up emails to non-responders. A total of 249 surveys were returned resulting in a 9.07% return rate. From the 249 returned surveys, 161 were purged due to the

four reliability checks previously mentioned for the DIT-2 (Rest, Narvaez, Thoma, & Bebeau, 1999). These reliability checks address the problems of random responding, missing data, alien test-taking data, and nondiscrimination. As a result, 88 completed surveys (37% of the returned surveys) were analyzed. However, only 80 participants completed entire survey including the mentoring questions.

Research Question 1

The initial research question investigated what schemas principals used when engaged in moral decision making. The participants in this study demonstrated the highest mean for the Maintaining Norms Schema (37.61). However, the P scores mean (33.02) and N2 scores mean (31.72) were not far behind. The participants demonstrated the lowest mean for the Personal Interest Schema (24.20). The N2 score distribution was very symmetrical closely resembling a normal curve, which made it suitable for comparing to N2 scores from other studies. The principals' N2 scores were surprisingly low. Higher educational levels are typically attributed to higher P scores and N2 scores (Rest and Thoma, 1985). According to Rest (1979) the mean P score for the general adult population is 40. The mean P score for individuals who have attained educational levels beyond a Bachelor's degree is 53 (Rest, 1979). All of the principals in this study possessed at least a Master's degree.

The majority of the participants that Rest (1986) examined represented the following fields: law, medicine, business, political science, and moral philosophy. Individuals working in these fields, while adhering to established boundaries, may not feel pressured to create or exist in an environment with such externally strict norms. Since participants in this study demonstrated moral reasoning schemas significantly below studies of other professionals, further investigation is required. In fact, the participants in this study demonstrated

significantly lower levels of other public school principals and Pennsylvania superintendents as well.

Pennsylvania Principals in this study primarily used the Maintaining Norms Schema when addressing decisions requiring moral reasoning. It seems feasible that public school principals make decisions using the Maintaining Norms Schema because of the need for established rules and an adherence to a bureaucratic structure. This schema places emphasis on the establishment and enforcement of rules (Rest, 1973). For instance, Frick and Faircloth (2007) found that the intersection of discipline and special education is source of ethical conflict for school leaders. Although the principals supported the philosophy of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA), which protects the rights of students with disabilities, they indicated that at times adhering to this law does not meet the best needs of the identified student or others students. It can be much more difficult to suspend or expel a special education student when an infraction occurs that would normally warrant such a consequence (Nashatker, 2010). If an identified emotionally disturbed student threatened to hurt another student, it could be argued that he or she did so as a result of the disability. However, if a weak consequence is given, the identified student may commit infractions more frequently in the future.

Principals may feel pressure from parents to maintain certain policies as well. Theoharis (2008) found that principals faced resistance from parents when they tried to change policies, such as eliminating tracking systems in an effort to make learning more equitable for all students. If parents belong to the school board or hold influential positions within the community especially in a small district where anonymity is difficult to attain, principals may experience even greater challenges (Garrett-Staib & Maringer, 2012).

Public school principals must also follow the requirements of ESSA (2015), which includes many of the same accountability aspects of NCLB (U.S Department of Education, 2010). This task requires much of a principal's time, which could prevent effort spent on other important issues. Although NCLB identified worthy goals, pressure from this legislation led some educational leaders to make unethical decisions (U.S. Department of Education, 2010). For example, a state investigation found that dozens of public schools in Atlanta, Georgia falsified tests to improve standardized test scores dating back to 2001 (Severson, 2011). These findings demonstrate the harsh impact of certain aspects of this legislation. It seems that most principals want to make decisions that serve the best interest of students and provide teachers with support and instructional leadership. When Frick and Guiterrez (2008) conducted a phenomenological study of secondary principals examining morally unique aspects of educational leadership, participants also identified a professional orientation of acting in the students' best interests. The principals not only expressed the importance of protecting the general welfare of students, but also the need to encourage and expect high quality teaching for all students (Frick and Guiterrez, 2008). Therefore, when certain professionals from this group are willing to jeopardize their positions and face legal consequences, one can appreciate how pressured they feel to attain one set of established rules. Perhaps, these principals were also trying to protect their schools and students in an effort to maintain funds, which may have been withdrawn as a result of lower test scores. Therefore, it seems that these individuals were trying to achieve a goal derived from legislation that in some very low performing school districts was impossible to achieve.

Research Question 2

The second research question addressed if principals who participate in mentoring programs including an ethics component exhibited greater moral reasoning in their decision making than principals who didn't

I regressed moral reasoning (N2 scores) on the following independent variables: frequency of moral development discussions, reflection on moral decisions, mentor inquiry of moral decisions, mentor frequency, meeting style (e.g., face to face, phone, email), and mentor availability to find the best overall model. I found no significant relationships. Due to some deviation from the normal i.i.d. error assumptions, I reran the model with the Hubert-White Standard Error Estimator and again using robust regression. These regressions also did not uncover significant relationships between the independent and dependent variables either.

Overall, my analysis indicated that I created a reasonably good multi-item scale to measure mentorship. However, none of the mentoring independent variables affected moral reasoning. These findings were surprising because both coursework (Grady et al., 2008; Reiman, 2004,) and professional activities with an ethics component have been found to improve moral reasoning (Feng-I, 2011; Geddes & Salvatori, 2008; Msila, 2009). Perhaps the absence of an effect on moral reasoning as a function of mentoring is due to the external influences and structures placed on principals. They may not devote as much time to professional development as they would prefer. Rather they must spend time ensuring that their schools are meeting mandated requirements (Nashatker, 2010; U.S. Department of Education, 2001). As mentioned earlier in this chapter, principals must also follow and enforce district procedures and policies. Some of the most challenging issues for principals

today are also issues related to the political pressures that have been enforced from federal and state legislation (Nashatker, 2010; U.S. Department of Education, 2001). These issues impact both the ways that school principals make decisions and the types of decisions they must make (Kafka, 2009). Future research might focus on the overarching environmental structures and social controls externally placed on educators. Conducting further research, including qualitative inquiry, on the principals and professional development would also provide insight into these findings.

Rest and Thoma (1985) identified formal education with interventions related to moral decision making as the strongest predictor in moral reasoning. Grissom and Harrington (2010) found a significant positive correlation between principal participation in a formal mentoring program and principal effectiveness, such as but not limited to providing a supportive and encouraging environment for staff. Principal mentoring is associated with increased confidence in professional competence of principals (Daresh, 2004). Various studies within the education field have indicated that mentoring programs with a focus on reflection positively impact moral judgment (Alsbury and Hackmann, 2006; Arredondo and Rucinkski, 1998; Reiman & DeAngelis Peace, 2002). These studies provide support for examining the role of mentoring in the moral judgment of school principals.

One other possible reason for the findings in this study could be attributed to the use of a cross-sectional design. As a result, no interventions were created or monitored for the study and the types of mentoring programs were only known based on participant reporting. Once principals develop the ability to examine moral issues more critically, they may be more likely to make better ethical decisions. Research indicates that principals with strong moral judgment abilities are more likely to demonstrate consistent democratic behavior

(Reiman & Theis-Sprinthall, 1993). Therefore, it is vital to develop an understanding of the types of training that demonstrate a positive correlation with moral judgment.

Neither gender nor length of time as principal impacted the participants' moral reasoning either. This factor was examined because Klinker & Hackmann (2003) found that individuals with greater years of experience as school principals demonstrated higher schemas of moral reasoning as well. This finding was surprising since 70% of the participants in this study had at least six years of experience as principals. In fact, only 3% of the participants in this study were first year principals (Table 4). According to Thoma (1986) gender accounts for less than one half of a percent of variance in the DIT. Despite this small percentage, some researchers have found that women demonstrate significantly higher schemas of moral reasoning than men following interventions (Ritter, 2006). The majority of the participants in this study were male (53%) (Table 4). If the number of female participants had been higher, perhaps the Postconventional scores would have been slightly higher as well. The same results were found when looking at a mentor sub-sample as well.

Meta Analysis

Due to the educational levels of the participants in this study, I expected higher P scores and N2 scores. In an attempt to better understand the scores of my participants, I decided to conduct a meta-analysis to compare my population with other populations of similar educational levels. I compared the N2 scores of my participants with a group of MSW Social Workers (Kaplan, 2006), Occupational Therapy students (Geddes, Salvatori, & Eva, 2009), Physiotherapy students (Geddes, Salvatori, & Eva, 2009), Counseling students (Cannon, 2008), Second degree students (Geddes, Larin, & Eva, 2009), Physical Therapy students (Larin, Benson, Wessel, Martin, & Ploeg, 2014), and Physical Therapy students

(Larin, Benson, Wessel, Martin, & Ploeg, 2014). All of the participants in this group had completed at least one Bachelor's degree. The majority of the participants in this group were in the process of completing a Master's degree. Finally, the members of MSW Social Work group were already working as Master's level professionals. Although many of these participants demonstrated lower educational levels than the participants in my study, the N2 score mean (45.73) was statistically significantly higher ($p \leq 0.0001$) than the participants in this study.

A meta-analysis was also conducted using the P Scores of the following students: Divinity students (Bunch 2005), Public Administration students (Rizzo & Swisher, 2004), and Accounting students (Ho, 2009). The first two groups of participants were enrolled in a Master's program at the time of the study. The Accounting students were Bachelor level students. Although all of the participants held lower levels of education than the participants in this study, the P score mean (39.94) is statistically significantly higher ($p \leq .05= 0.0000$) than the participants in the study.

Perhaps the disparity in scores between the participants in this study and other studies is due in part to a principal's role and working environment (public school setting). Principals in today's society often must confront with complex ethical issues related to such concerns as student discipline, teacher evaluations, abuse allegations, allocation of resources in a time when budgets are being cut, and compliance with standardized testing procedures (Hughes & Jones, 2011). As mentioned earlier in this chapter, public school principals may make decisions using the Maintaining Norms Schema because of the need for established rules and an adherence to a bureaucratic structure. Individuals working in other professional fields may not feel pressured to create or exist in an environment with such strict norms.

However, after conducting a third meta-analysis that examined moral judgment in other school principals and superintendents, the participants in this current study consistently scored lower. Despite the similarities between this group and the principals in the current study, the P score mean (37.71) for the comparison group was statistically significantly higher ($p \leq .05 = 0.0040$) than the participants in this study. It is important to note that the group of superintendents (Winters, 2003) may contain more participants with Doctoral level degrees than the group of principals. Additionally one of the studies examining moral judgment in principals only examined elementary principals (Vitton, 2008). Perhaps elementary principals feel less constrained by certain rules or policies. For example, the rates of discipline may be lower at the elementary level. Student discipline involving Fourth Amendment rights of search and seizure is another area that is more common at the secondary level. In a sample of 230 such cases principals demonstrated a concern for safety and security, but did not consistently demonstrate concern for the right of the student who was being searched or having items seized (Torres, 2012). Therefore, principals may need more guidance in exercising moral judgment in this area (Torres, 2012). The principals in the other studies were from different states. It is also possible that other states require less strict guidelines for principals and schools. Although the superintendent study was conducted in Pennsylvania, it was completed only three years (2003) after the NCLB legislation was enacted (2001). As a result, participants may have responded before the full effects of NCLB were implemented. The superintendents in this study may have felt less constricted by legislation and could more readily make decisions based on student and teacher needs. For instance, Pennsylvania school districts must administer a greater number of tests than in previous years (Chute, 2015). Before 2015, Writing assessments were only

given in grades 5 and 8. Now students in grades 3-8 must take a Writing assessment as part of the English Language Arts assessment (Chute, 2015). Additionally, fewer PSSA standards existed in the past (Messacappa, 2012). Up until 2012, only the building principal was required to certify that the testing procedures had been followed. Currently signatures are required from the district coordinator, school coordinator (which in many cases is the building principal), and test proctor stating that no one interfered with testing procedures (Messacappa, 2012). Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) also began recommending in 2012 that teachers not test their own students and even required certain school districts, such as Philadelphia School District to assign students with other teachers. (Mezzacappa, 2012).

Conclusions

The school principal fulfills both a vital and daunting role. Everyday school principals must confront challenging ethical issues related to such concerns as student discipline, teacher evaluations, abuse allegations, allocation of resources, and compliance with standardized testing procedures (Hughes & Jones, 2011). These findings show that the majority of the principals made decisions from the Maintaining Norms Schema suggesting that they emphasize the importance of developing mutually agreed upon informal norms (Rest, 1973). The Golden Rule, which instructs members of society to do unto others as you would have others do unto you, is also a guiding force in this schema (Kohlberg, 1958). Individuals who make decisions using this schema also begin to examine how behaviors impact society and place emphasis on legal standards Kohlberg, 1958). However, it is not until individuals reach the Postconventional Schema that individuals move beyond adhering to existing societal rules and demonstrate concern for justice (Rest, 1973). Although it is not

the lowest level schema, principals should be making decisions from the Postconventional Schema to best fulfill their professional roles. Principals should make decisions that serve the best interest of students and demonstrate instructional leadership for teachers (Frick & Guiterrez, 2008). Given the increased pressures placed on school principals to make decisions addressing diverse and at times conflicting demands of stakeholders and the stress caused by meeting conflicting interests due to No Child Left Behind (2001) and other legislation, principals must possess the skills to make the best ethical decisions (Dempster & Berry, 2003). According to Rest (1973) when individuals employ the Postconventional Schema they demonstrate moral obligations based on shared ideals, reciprocity, and equity for all groups within society (Rest et al., 1999). Rest (1973) based the Postconventional Schema on Kohlberg's Stages 5 and 6. During these stages individuals move beyond adhering to existing societal rules and demonstrate concern for justice (Johnson, 2004).

Although many of the participants in this study described receiving mentoring services with an ethics component, those experiences didn't impact their moral judgment. These findings contradict previous studies. Rest and Thoma (1985) identified formal education with interventions related to moral decision making as the strongest predictor in moral judgment. Feng-I (2011) found that principals who received educational administration ethics training identified a wider range of moral areas. In a longitudinal study using two samples of education majors, moral judgment improved after additional educational experiences (Reiman, 2004). One possibility was the inclusion of deliberate role taking and guided inquiry into educational moral issues that was included. This focus is in accordance with the assertion that commitment to critical reflection improves moral judgment (Rest, Narvaez, Babeau, and Thoma, 1999). Kohlberg (1976) also argued for the importance of

recognizing, reflecting on, and discussing moral issues as ways to improve moral judgment through his stage model of moral development. One possible reason for the findings in this study could be attributed to the use of a cross-sectional design and therefore lack of manipulated interventions, in particular, the lack of a controlled and definitive moral reasoning component within the experienced mentoring experience. It also seems that majority of principals want to make decisions representing the best interests of students and teachers, which is representative of the Postconventional Schema. However, due to the various forms of legislation and policies to which they must adhere, many principals seem to feel conflicted in their roles. If certain policies and legislation do not change, it may become more difficult for school districts to find committed qualified principals. In fact, Howley and Pendarvis (2002) found that many school districts struggle with high principal turnover rates.

Recommendations

The results of this study demonstrate the need to find effective interventions to improve moral judgment in public school principals. To address this issue, researchers should develop mentoring programs for public school principals. Such programs should include the five conditions as described earlier in Chapter 3, which prompt changes in moral judgment identified by Reiman and Thies-Sprinthall (1993). Pre and Post-tests should also be used to assess the impact of these interventions on the moral judgment of principals. Additionally, researchers should take into consideration that superintendents volunteering to participate in such mentoring programs may manage their school districts in a different manner than those superintendents who refuse to participate. For instance, the first group of superintendents may already facilitate other professional development activities on the area

of moral reasoning. Conducting research at the national level would also help to ensure a higher response rate than was achieved in this study.

This study raised many questions regarding the types of mentoring needed for school principals and the external factors that affect their decision making. Therefore, a qualitative study addressing these areas would prove beneficial. A qualitative study would allow the researcher to explore principals' experiences. The researcher could use a phenomenological approach for the qualitative methods component of the study, which focuses on the descriptions of the social phenomenon that people have directly experienced (Patton, 2001). Principals could be asked to describe their mentoring programs to determine if there was an emphasis on ethics. The researcher could also gather information on principals' feelings regarding state requirements, district, policies, and other external factors. Conducting interviews is a common phenomenological approach, which allows the researcher to experience such descriptions through the thoughts of the participants (Patton, 2001). The researcher could conduct structured open-ended interviews with the principals to explore various factors impacting moral judgment.

As researchers develop interventions to improve moral judgment in principals, it may be useful to understand which types of interventions have been used for other types of groups (e.g., political science, social work, occupational therapy) since they typically produce higher P scores and N2 scores. Researchers could also examine measures of decision making specific to various professions such as public administrators, accountants, and dentists, which have found to be reliable in moral reasoning. Stewart and Sprinthall (1991) developed the Stewart-Sprinthall Management Survey (i.e., SSMS) to assess government managers and personnel in the public administration arena, which uses the same moral schemas as the

DIT-2. Welton, LaGrone, and Davis (1994) also designed a more specified tool, the Accounting Defining Issues Test (ADIT), to determine the moral reasoning in the accounting profession. Like the DIT, Davis based the instrument on Rest's moral schemas, which also builds on Kohlberg's theory of moral development. The rationale for the ADIT is that a more specific measure would more accurately assess moral reasoning in this field. The examination of this SSMS and ADIT could inspire researchers in the educational field to develop a tool that was specific to educators. The rationale for this tool would be that it could assess ethical issues in education more accurately.

Finally, future studies could incorporate other areas of morality in addition to judgment using Rest's (1973) Four Component Model of Moral Behavior (i.e., FCM). As described in Chapter 2, according to Rest's theory, individuals consider the following four components when making decisions requiring moral judgment: sensitivity, judgment, motivation, and courage. Rest's definition of moral judgment was described earlier in this chapter. Rest (1973) defined Moral sensitivity as the ability to understand how individuals' decisions impact others by recognizing and understanding others' feelings. Rest (1973) also included demonstrating empathy for individuals in different cultural and socio-economic groups. He included understanding the impact of laws, regulations, and policies in this component as well. Rest asserted that moral motivation occurs when individuals prioritize moral values above other personal values. Finally, Rest (1973) defined moral courage by the ability to preserve and implement moral decisions despite obstacles. Including these additional areas of morality would provide a better understanding of moral decision making and ways to improve it.

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Appendix A

Principal Mentoring and Moral Reasoning Survey

Q1.1 Welcome to the Principal Leadership Survey! You are invited to take a survey about leadership among public school principals. This survey is part of my doctoral dissertation research project in Administration and Leadership Studies. The following information is provided to help you make an informed decision about whether or not to participate. The purpose of this survey is to better understand influences on principal leadership and moral judgment. The survey is provided through this website and should take approximately 30 minutes to complete. The first part of the questionnaire is concerned with how you solve issues in a social problem. Several stories about social problems will be described. After each story, there will be a list of questions that represent different issues that might be raised by the problem. You will be asked to rank the issues in terms of how important each one seems to you. The second part of the questionnaire asks some basic information about you and briefly about your mentoring experiences as a principal. All information you provide is anonymous. None of your responses can be connected to you, personally. Your responses will be combined with the information provided by other study participants and analyzed together. Your participation is voluntary. There are no risks to participating in this study, and no direct benefits either. If you choose to participate, you can stop and withdraw your participation at any time by simply closing your internet browser window. It is hoped that, through your participation, we can learn more about how principals lead their schools. If you are willing to participate in this study, please indicate this by clicking the button below the "I Agree" statement at the bottom of the page. If you have any questions about the survey, you can contact me and/or the faculty sponsor using the contact information below.

Thank you for your consideration,
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This project has been approved by the Indiana University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (Phone: 724-357-7730, irb-research@iup.edu).

Q1.2 I give my consent to participate.

❍ Agree (1)

Q1.3 EXAMPLE of the task. Imagine are about to vote for a candidate for the Presidency of the United States. Before you vote, you are asked to rate the importance of five issues you could consider in deciding who to vote for. Rate the importance of each item (issue) by checking the appropriate box.

Q1.4 *1. Rate the following issues in terms of importance.

	Great (1)	Much (2)	Some (3)	Little (4)	No (5)
1. Financially are you personally better off now than you were four years ago? (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
2. Does one candidate have a superior moral character? (2)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
3. Which candidate stands the tallest? (3)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
4. Which candidate would make the best world leader? (4)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
5. Which candidate has the best ideas for our country's internal problems, like crime and health care. (5)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q1.5 Note. Some items may seem irrelevant or not make sense (as in item #3). In that case, rate the item as "NO". After you rate all of the items you will be asked to RANK the top four items in terms of importance. Note that it makes sense that the items you RATE as most important should be RANKED as well. So if you only rated item 1 as having great importance you should rank it as most important.

Q1.6 *2. Consider the 5 issues above and rank which issues are the most important.

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)
Most important item (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Second most important item (2)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Third most important item (3)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Fourth most important item (4)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q1.7 Again, please consider all of the items before you rank the four most important items and be sure that you only rank items that you found important. Note also that, in the items that follow, before you begin to rate and rank items you will be asked to state your preference for what action to take in story. Thank you. Please begin the questionnaire!

Q1.8 Famine-The small village in northern India has experienced shortages of food before, but this year's famine is worse than ever. Some families are even trying to feed themselves by making soup from tree bark. Mustaq Singh's family is near starvation. He has heard that a rich man in his village has supplies of food stored away and is hoarding food while its price goes higher so that he can sell the food later at a huge profit. Mustaq is desperate and thinks about stealing some food from the rich man's warehouse. The small amount of food that he needs for his family probably wouldn't even be missed.

Q1.9 *3. What should Mustaq Singh do? Do you favor the action of taking food?

- ❍ Should take the food (1)
- ❍ Can't decide (2)
- ❍ Should not take the food (3)

Q1.10 *4. Rate the following issues in terms of importance.

	Great (1)	Much (2)	Some (3)	Little (4)	No (5)
1. Is Mustaq Singh courageous enough to risk getting caught for stealing? (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
2. Isn't it only natural for a loving father to care so much for his family that he would steal? (2)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
3. Shouldn't the community's laws be upheld? (3)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
4. Does Mustaq Singh know a good recipe for preparing soup from tree bark? (4)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
5. Does the rich man have any legal right to store food when other people are starving? (5)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
6. Is the motive of Mustaq Singh to steal for himself or to steal for his family? (6)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
7. What values are going to be the basis for	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

social cooperation? (7)					
8. Is the epitome of eating reconcilable with the culpability of stealing? (8)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
9. Does the rich man deserve to be robbed for being so greedy? (9)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
10. Isn't private property an institution to enable the rich to exploit the poor? (10)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
11. Would stealing bring about more total good for everybody concerned or wouldn't it? (11)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
12. Are laws getting in the way of the most basic claim of any member of a society? (12)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q1.11 *5. Consider the 12 issues above and rank which issues are the most important.

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)	8 (8)	9 (9)	10 (10)	11 (11)	12 (12)
Most important item (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Second most important item (2)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Third most important item (3)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Fourth most important item (4)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q1.12 Reporter Molly Dayton has been a news reporter for the Gazette newspaper for over a decade. Almost by accident, she learned that one of the candidates for Lieutenant Governor for her state, Grover Thompson, had been arrested for shop-lifting 20 years earlier. Reporter Dayton found out that early in his life, Candidate Thompson had undergone a confused period and done things he later regretted, actions which would be very out-of-character now. His shoplifting had been a minor offense and charges had been dropped by the department store. Thompson has not only straightened himself out since then, but built a distinguished record in helping many people and in leading constructive community projects. Now, Reporter Dayton regards Thompson as the best candidate in the field and likely to go on to important leadership positions in the state. Reporter Dayton wonders whether or not she should write the story about Thompson's earlier troubles because in the upcoming close and heated election, she fears that such a news story could wreck Thompson's chance to win.

Q1.13 *6. Do you favor the action of reporting the story?

- ❍ Should report the story (1)
- ❍ Can't decide (2)
- ❍ Should not report the story (3)

Q1.14 *7. Rate the following issues in terms of importance.

	Great (1)	Much (2)	Some (3)	Little (4)	No (5)
1. Doesn't the public have a right to know all the facts about all the candidates for office? (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
2. Would publishing the story help Reporter Dayton's reputation for investigative reporting? (2)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
3. If Dayton doesn't publish the story wouldn't another reporter get the story anyway and get the credit for investigative reporting? (3)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
4. Since voting is such a joke anyway, does it make any difference what reporter Dayton does? (4)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
5. Hasn't Thompson shown in the past 20 years that he is a better person than his earlier days as a shop-lifter? (5)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
6. What would	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

best service society? (6)					
7. If the story is true, how can it be wrong to report it? (7)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
8. How could reporter Dayton be so cruel and heartless as to report the damaging story about candidate Thompson? (8)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
9. Does the right of "habeas corpus" apply in this case? (9)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
10. Would the election process be more fair with or without reporting the story? (10)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
11. Should reporter Dayton treat all candidates for office in the same way by reporting everything she learns about them, good and bad? (11)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
12. Isn't it a reporter's duty to report all the news regardless of the	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

circumstances? (12)					

Q1.15 *8. Consider the 12 issues you rated above and rank which issues are the most important.

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)	8 (8)	9 (9)	10 (10)	11 (11)	12 (12)
Most important item (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Second most important item (2)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Third most important item (3)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Fourth most important item (4)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q1.16 School Board-Mr. Grant has been elected to the School Board District 190 and was chosen to be Chairman. The district is bitterly divided over the closing of one of the high schools. One of the high schools has to be closed for financial reasons, but there is no agreement over which school to close. During his election to the School Board, Mr. Grant had proposed a series of "Open Meetings" in which members of the community could voice their opinions. He hoped that dialogue would make the community realize the necessity of closing one high school. Also he hoped that through open discussions, the difficulty of the decision would be appreciated, and that the community would ultimately support the school board decision. The first Open Meeting was a disaster. Passionate speeches dominated the microphones and threatened violence. The meeting barely closed without fist-fights. Later in the week, school board members received threatening phone calls. Mr. Grant wonders if he ought to call off the next Open Meeting.

Q1.17 *9. Do you favor calling off the next Open Meeting?

❍ Should call off the next open meeting (1)

❍ Can't decide (2)

❍ Should not call off the next open meeting (3)

Q1.18 *10. Rate the following issues in terms of importance.

	Great (1)	Much (2)	Some (3)	Little (4)	No (5)
1. Is Mr. Grant required by law to have Open Meetings on major school board decisions? (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
2. Would Mr. Grant be breaking his election campaign promises to the community by discontinuing the Open Meetings? (2)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
3. Would the community be even angrier with Mr. Grant if he stopped the Open Meetings? (3)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
4. Would the change in plans prevent scientific assessment? (4)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
5. If the school board is threatened, does the chairman have the legal authority to protect the Board by making decisions in closed meetings? (5)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

6. Would the community regard Mr. Grant as a coward if he stopped the open meetings? (6)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
7. Does Mr. Grant have another procedure in mind for ensuring that divergent views are heard? (7)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
8. Does Mr. Grant have the authority to expel troublemakers from the meetings or prevent them (8)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
9. Are some people deliberately undermining the school board process by playing some sort of power game? (9)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
10. What effect would stopping the discussion have on the community's ability to handle controversial issues in the future? (10)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
11. Is the	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

trouble coming from only a few hotheads, and is the community in general really fair-minded and democratic? (11)					
12. What is the likelihood that a good decision could be made without open discussion from the community? (12)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q1.19 *11. Consider the 12 issues you rated above and rank which issues are the most important.

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)	8 (8)	9 (9)	10 (10)	11 (11)	12 (12)
Most important item (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Second most important item (2)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Third most important item (3)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Fourth most important item (4)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q1.20 Cancer-Mrs. Bennett is 62 years old, and in the last phases of colon cancer. She is in terrible pain and asks the doctor to give her more pain-killer medicine. The doctor has given her the maximum safe dose already and is reluctant to increase the dosage because it would probably hasten her death. In a clear and rational mental state, Mrs. Bennett says that she realizes this; but she wants to end her suffering even if it means ending her life. Should the doctor giver her an increased dosage?

Q1.21 *12. Do you favor the action of giving more medicine?

- ❍ Should give Mrs. Bennett an increased dosage to make her die (1)
- ❍ Can't decide (2)
- ❍ Should not give her an increased dosage (3)

Q1.22 *13. Rate the following issues in terms of importance.

	Great (1)	Much (2)	Some (3)	Little (4)	No (5)
1. Isn't the doctor obligated by the same laws as everybody else if giving an overdose would be the same as killing her? (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
2. Wouldn't society be better off without so many laws about what doctors can and cannot do? (2)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
3. If Mrs. Bennett dies, would the doctor be legally responsible for malpractice? (3)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
4. Does the family of Mrs. Bennett agree that she should get more painkiller medicine? (4)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
5. Is the painkiller medicine an active heliotropic drug? (5)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
6. Does the state have the	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

right to force continued existence of those who don't want to live? (6)					
7. Is helping to end another's life ever a responsible act of cooperation? (7)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
8. Would the doctor show more sympathy for Mrs. Bennett by giving the medicine or not? (8)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
9. Wouldn't the doctor feel guilty from giving Mrs. Bennett so much drug that she died? (9)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
10. Should only God decide when a person's life should end? (10)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
11. Shouldn't society protect everyone against being killed? (11)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
12. Where should society draw the line between protecting life	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

and allowing someone to die if the person wants to? (12)					

Q1.23 *14. Consider the 12 issues you rated above and rank which issues are the most important.

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)	8 (8)	9 (9)	10 (10)	11 (11)	12 (12)
Most important item (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Second most important item (2)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Third most important item (3)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Fourth most important item (4)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q1.24 Demonstration-Political and economic instability in a South American country prompted the President of the United States to send troops to "police" the area. Students at many campuses in the U.S.A. have protested that the United States is using its military might for economic advantage. There is widespread suspicion that big oil multinational companies are pressuring the President to safeguard a cheap oil supply even if it means loss of life. Students at one campus took to the streets in demonstrations, tying up traffic and stopping regular business in the town. The president of the university demanded that the students stop their illegal demonstrations. Students then took over the college's administration building, completely paralyzing the college. Are the students right to demonstrate in these ways?

Q1.25 *15. Do you favor the action of demonstrating in this way?

- ❍ Should continue demonstrating in these ways (1)
- ❍ Can't decide (2)
- ❍ Should not continue demonstrating in these ways (3)

Q1.26 *16. Rate the following issues in terms of importance.

	Great (1)	Much (2)	Some (3)	Little (4)	No (5)
1. Do the students have any right to take over property that doesn't belong to them? (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
2. Do the students realize that they might be arrested and fined, and even expelled from school? (2)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
3. Are the students serious about their cause or are they doing it just for fun? (3)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
4. If the university president is soft on students this time, will it lead to more disorder? (4)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
5. Will the public blame all students for the actions of a few student demonstrators? (5)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
6. Are the authorities to blame by giving in to the greed of the multinational oil companies? (6)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

7. Why should a few people like Presidents and business leaders have more power than ordinary people? (7)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
8. Does this student demonstration bring about more or less good in the long run to all people? (8)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
9. Can the students justify their civil disobedience? (9)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
10. Shouldn't the authorities be respected by students? (10)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
11. Is taking over a building consistent with principles of justice? (11)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
12. Isn't it everyone's duty to obey the law, whether one likes it or not? (12)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q1.27 *17. Consider the 12 issues you rated above and rank which issues are the most important.

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)	8 (8)	9 (9)	10 (10)	11 (11)	12 (12)
Most important item (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Second most important item (2)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Third most important item (3)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Fourth most important item (4)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q2.1 The following questions are based on your mentoring experiences as a school principal. Are you currently or have you been mentored as a school principal?

❍ Yes (1)

❍ No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Who do you turn to for professional h...

Q2.2 Describe the position of your mentor during the time of your mentoring sessions.

❍ Principal (1)

❍ Retired Principal (2)

❍ Superintendent (3)

❍ Retired Superintendent (4)

❍ Other School Administrator (5)

❍ Retired Other School Administrator (6)

❍ Other (7)

Q2.3 Approximately how long did your mentoring relationship last?

Years (1)

Months (2)

Q2.4 On the average, how often did you meet with your mentor?
- ❍ Once a year (1)
- ❍ Once a quarter (2)
- ❍ Once a Month (3)
- ❍ 2-3 Times a Month (4)
- ❍ Once a Week (5)

Q2.5 How did you typically meet with your mentor?
- ❍ Face to Face (1)
- ❍ Phone (2)
- ❍ Email (3)

Q2.6 How often was your mentor available when you needed support?
- ❍ Almost Always (1)
- ❍ Often (2)
- ❍ Sometimes (3)
- ❍ Seldom (4)
- ❍ Never (5)

Q2.7 How often were moral issues discussed during mentoring sessions?
- ❍ Almost Always (1)
- ❍ Often (2)
- ❍ Sometimes (3)
- ❍ Seldom (4)
- ❍ Never (5)

Q2.8 How often did you reflect on moral decisions through writing or discussion during mentoring sessions?
- ❍ Almost Always (1)
- ❍ Often (2)
- ❍ Sometimes (3)
- ❍ Seldom (4)
- ❍ Never (5)

Q65 Did your mentor inquire why you made certain decisions?
- ❍ Almost Always (1)
- ❍ Often (2)
- ❍ Sometimes (3)
- ❍ Seldom (4)
- ❍ Never (5)

Q2.9 Please describe the gender of your mentor.
- ❍ Male (1)
- ❍ Female (2)

Q2.10 Who do you turn to for professional support?
- ❑ Colleague (1)
- ❑ Supervisor (2)
- ❑ Friend (3)
- ❑ Family Member (4)
- ❑ Religious Leader (5)
- ❑ Counselor/Therapist (6)

Q3.1 How often do you turn to each individual for professional support?
- ❍ Never (1)
- ❍ Less than Once a Month (2)
- ❍ Once a Month (3)
- ❍ 2-3 Times a Month (4)
- ❍ Once a Week (5)
- ❍ 2-3 Times a Week (6)
- ❍ Daily (7)

Q3.2 How often were moral issues discussed during these conversations?
- ❍ Always (1)
- ❍ Often (2)
- ❍ Sometimes (3)
- ❍ Seldom (4)
- ❍ Never (5)
- ❍ 2-3 Times a Week (6)

Q3.3 How often did you reflect on moral decisions through writing or discussion during these conversations?
- ❍ Always (1)
- ❍ Often (2)
- ❍ Sometimes (3)
- ❍ Seldom (4)
- ❍ Never (5)
- ❍ 2-3 Times a Week (6)

Q3.4 Have you served as a mentor for other school principals?
- ❍ Yes (1)
- ❍ No (2)

Q4.1 Please provide the following information about yourself:

Q4.2 1. How old are you?

Q4.3 2. What is your gender?
- ❍ Male (1)
- ❍ Female (2)

Q4.4 Which best describes your race/ethnicity? [Check all that apply]
- ❍ African American or Black (1)
- ❍ Asian or Pacific Islander (2)
- ❍ Hispanic (3)
- ❍ American Indian/ Other Native American (4)
- ❍ Caucasian (other than Hispanic) (5)
- ❍ Other (please specify) (6)

Q4.5 If you selected other please describe:

Q4.6 How long have you been working as a school principal?
- ❍ Year 1 (1)
- ❍ 2-3 years (2)
- ❍ 4-5 years (3)
- ❍ 6-10 years (4)
- ❍ More than 10 years (5)

Q4.7 Did any of your principal certification classes contain an ethics component?
- ❍ Yes (1)
- ❍ No (2)

Q4.8 Have you participated in any professional development activities with an ethics component (other than mentoring) as a principal?
- ❍ Yes (1)
- ❍ No (2)

Appendix B

Recruiting Email

Dear Principal,

I am writing to ask for your help with a research study of moral judgement among public school principals. As pivotal leaders in education, understanding factors that influence principal leadership is crucial to efforts to improve schools and professional development in education.

Your role would be to complete an anonymous 30 minute survey. It is part of my doctoral dissertation research project in Administration and Leadership Studies. The purpose of this survey is to better understand influences on principal leadership and decision making. The first goal of my research attempts to determine the moral schemas principals use when making moral judgments. The second goal of my research explores how principal mentoring programs with an ethics component impact moral judgment in principals.

This study incorporates a survey methodology, exploring the relationship between principal mentoring programs and schemas of morality in principals' decision making. The quantitative measurement tool I will use in this study to assess moral reasoning is the Defining Issues Test-2 (Rest, 1975). The survey will also include questions about mentoring experiences and principal demographics. The DIT-2 using the following three moral schemas that Rest (1973) identified: Personal Interest Schema, Maintaining Norms Schema, and Postconventional Schema. Rest based these schemas on Kohlberg's (1958) moral development theory, which provides a framework for understanding various levels of moral judgment.

The following link takes you to the survey and information to help you make an informed decision about whether or not to participate.

[Survey Link]

Please feel free to contact me or the faculty sponsor, listed below, if you have any questions about this study. The study has been approved by the Indiana University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects.

You may receive a reminder email in about a week if you have not responded by then. To opt out of reminders, please click on the "opt out" link at the end of this email.

Your participation would be greatly appreciated!

Sincerely,

Wendi J. Kiley, Ph.D. Candidate
Administration and Leadership Studies, Nonprofit & Public Sectors
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
w.j.welby@iup.edu

John A. Anderson, Ph.D., Professor
Department of Sociology
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
jaa@iup.edu

[survey link again] [opt out link]

Appendix C

IRB Form

Log Number _____
(board use only)

Indiana University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board
for the Protection of Human Subjects

Human Subjects Review Protocol

Investigators

Principal Investigator

Wendi J. Kiley Name	Leadership and Administration Studies-Sociology Department
Ph.D. Student Position/Rank	w.j.welby@iup.edu **IUP** Email address
717-265-3773 Daytime phone	

Co-Investigator(s) (e.g. thesis/dissertation committee chair; faculty sponsor, use a second sheet for any additional names)

John Anderson Name	Leadership and Administration Studies-Sociology Department
Assistant Professor & ALS Doctoral Coordinator Position/Rank	heasley@iup.edu **IUP** Email address
Daytime phone	

address

Project Information

Date of Submission _____

Project Title The Impact of Mentoring Programs on the Moral Judgment of School Principals

Project Type (check one) Thesis ___ Dissertation _x_ Faculty Research ___ Student Research ___ Staff Research ___

The project will be conducted from _____ **until** _____
Start date Ending date

Project Funding Sources (s). Indicate all that apply:

____ **External Grant Agency Name:** _____

____ **IUP Grant Type:** _____

____ **Other (describe)** _____

____ **Non-funded research**

If grant funded, application deadline or date of transmittal
(Note: Submit one copy of grant proposal as soon as it is available) _____

Project Description

PURPOSE, RESEARCH VARIABLES, AND POPULATION

Purpose of the study

The first goal of my research attempts to determine the moral schemas principals use when making moral judgments. The second goal of my research explores how principal mentoring programs with an ethics component impact moral judgment in principals.

Background of the study

This research addresses moral decision making and the experience of public school principals. It also explores the possible influence mentoring has on the principals' abilities to confront complex decisions when ethical choices do not exist. The school principal fulfills both a vital and daunting one. Principals make decisions that serve the best interest of students and demonstrate instructional leadership for teachers (Frick & Guiterrez, 2008). Everyday school principals must confront challenging ethical issues related to such concerns as student discipline, teacher evaluations, abuse allegations, allocation of resources, and compliance with standardized testing procedures (Hughes & Jones, 2011). Given the increased pressures placed on school principals to make decisions addressing diverse and at times conflicting demands of stakeholders and the stress caused by meeting conflicting interests due to No Child Left Behind (2001) and other legislation, principals must possess the skills to make the best ethical decisions (Dempster & Berry, 2003). "Moral judgment is a psychological construct that characterizes the process by which people determine that one course of action in a particular situation is morally right and another course of action is wrong" (Rest, Edwards & Thoma, 1997, p. 5). The use of ethics guides this process, which "is concerned with the kinds of values and morals an individual or society finds desirable and appropriate" (Northouse, 2001, p.250). Professional ethics consists of a set of standards set

by a profession and regulation of its members' behavior (Kfir & Shamai, 2002). Given the increased pressures placed on school principals to make decisions addressing diverse and at times conflicting demands of stakeholders and the stress caused by meeting conflicting interests, principals must possess the skills to make the best ethical decisions (Dempster & Berry, 2003). Using indepth interviews and questionnaires, Dempster, Freakley, and Parry (2000) found that school principals identified a need to improve in a variety of areas, including the ability to recognize ethical features of a situation and knowledge of ethical principles.

Rest and Thoma (1985) identified formal education with interventions related to include moral decision making as the strongest predictor in moral reasoning. Feng-I (2011) found that principals who received educational administration ethics training identified a wider range of moral areas. In a longitudinal study using two samples of education majors, moral judgment improved after additional educational experiences (Reiman, 2004). Reiman (2004) identified the deliberate role-taking and guided inquiry into educational ethical issues as two possible factors contributing to this improvement of moral reasoning. Both areas were included in the curriculum (Reiman, 2004). This focus is in accordance with the assertion that commitment to criticalreflection improves moral judgment (Rest, Narvaez, Babeau, and Thoma, 1999).Kohlberg (1976) also argued for the importance of recognizing, reflecting on, anddiscussing moral issues as ways to improve moral judgment through his stage model of moral development. Kohlberg's model (1958) serves as a basic framework for understanding moral development. This study uses the following three moral schemas that Rest (1973) identified: Personal Interest Schema, Maintaining Norms Schema, and Postconventional Schema. Rest based these schemas on Kohlberg's modal development theory.

Researchers identify mentoring as another way to improve moral judgment in principals (Arredondo & Rucinkski, 1998, Reiman & DeAngelis Peace, 2002. The scarce research on mentoring suggests a positive correlation between principal participation in a formal mentoring program and principal effectiveness, such as but not limited to providing a supportive and encouraging environment for staff (Grissom & Harrington, 2010). In a mentoring relationship a more experienced principal provides support and supervision to new principals as they adjust to their new leadership roles (Grissom & Harrington, 2010). Principal mentoring is also associated with increased confidence in professional competence of principals (Daresh, 2004). According to Arredondo and Rucinkski's (1998) study of graduate students enrolled in an educational administration program, both mentors and mentees (those being mentored) demonstrated improvement in moral judgment as a result of their relationship. These studies provide support for examining the role of mentoring in the moral judgment of school principals.

Characteristics of the Subject Population

Age Range : In order to become a principal in a Pennsylvania public school district, one must hold a graduate degree with a focus on supervision and administration of educational activities within a school. Principals must also pass the principal certification exam and complete at least three years working as an educational professional (PDE, 2014). Although I will not be looking for participants who fit into a specific age range, each participant will at least be in his or her late twenties.

Gender : Both male and female participants will be included in the study.

Inclusion Criteria: Participants will consist of Pennsylvania public school principals throughout the State. High school, middle school, and elementary principals will be used in the study.

Exclusion Criteria : Public school principals at each level must adhere to standardized testing and special education requirements. Private school principals are not required to handle these areas. Educational requirements between states vary as well. As a result, only Pennsylvania public school principals will be included in this study.

Vulnerable Subjects : Principals are not considered vulnerable, because they have the ability to consent to participate in the study.

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Method of Subject Selection I will contact all Pennsylvania public school principals at the elementary, middle, and high school levels (2745). I will begin by sending emails to principals explaining the purpose of the study and the link to the study.

Study Site : Participants will complete the online assessment independently and submit their assessments from their computers.

Methods and Procedures Applied to Human Subjects : This study incorporates a quantitative methods study design. The study incorporates a survey methodology. I will use the DIT-2, mentoring experiences and principal demographics as my quantitative tool (Appendix A). The DIT-2 assesses moral decisions quantitatively and comprehensively (Rest, 1975). I will use Qualtrics, as an electronic data collection program, to administer my measures via email. I will then download the results from Qualtrics. Principals will receive a link to the assessment. When principals are finished with the assessment, they will electronically submit their responses.

RISKS/BENEFITS

Potential Risks : There are no foreseeable risks.

Protection Against Risks : In order to ensure the confidentiality of research participants, information provided in the study will not be made public nor could one identify the specific participant with the information. Neither names of school districts nor principals will be published in my findings. An additional way to ensure confidentiality is to use participants from numerous districts rather than only one school district. My intent is to create a sample including a range of school districts to the extent there is a distribution of districts with principals willing to participate.

Potential Benefits : There are no direct benefits to participants. Results of this study could lead to future research on a wider scale exploring the impact of mentoring programs on the moral judgment of principals.

Compensation for Participation : Compensation is not being provided for participation.

Alternatives to Participation : Participants can opt out of taking the assessment with no penalty. There are no alternatives to participation.

Information Withheld : No information will be withheld from participants.

Debriefing : After participants have completed the survey, I will answer any additional questions they may have. I will also provide participants with the results once the study is completed.

PRIVACY/CONFIDENTIALITY

In order to ensure the confidentiality of research participants, information provided in the study will not be made public nor could one identify the specific participant with the information. Neither names of school districts nor principals will be published in my findings. An additional way to ensure confidentiality is to use participants from numerous districts rather than only one school district. My intent is to create a sample including a range of school districts to the extent there is a distribution of districts with principals willing to participate.

THE CONSENT PROCESS

Participants will consent by accessing and completing the survey. This letter can be found in below in Appendix B.

Protected Populations and Sensitive Subjects: Indicate if any Human Subjects from the following list would be involved in the proposed activity:

☐ minors	☐ fetuses	☐ pregnant women
☐ test subjects for new drugs or clinical devices	☐ abortuses	☐ persons committing illegal behavior
☐ educationally or economically disadvantaged persons	☐ incarcerated	☐ mentally disabled

Nature of Risk.

In your judgment, does your research involve more than minimal risk? Indicate your response with an 'X' in the appropriate box

☐ yes ☒ no

Exemption Qualification

In your judgment, does your research fall under one of the six exempt categories? If you believe it does, indicate the number of the category under which you are claiming an exemption by typing an 'X' next to the relevant category.

	1. Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings involving normal educational practices
	2. Research involving the use of educational tests or surveys in a non-identifiable manner
	3. Research involving the use of educational tests or surveys with elected officials or defined by statute.
	4. Research involving the collection or study of existing data,
	5. Research and demonstration projects
	6. Taste and food quality evaluation and consumer acceptance studies

Expedited Review Qualification

In your judgment, does your project fall under one of the categories eligible for expedited review (listed below)? If you believe it does, type an 'X' next to the category under which you are claiming expedited review.

	1. Minor modifications or additions to existing approved studies
	2. Research on individual or group behavior or characteristics of individuals, such as studies of perception, cognition, game theory, or test development, where the investigator does not manipulate subjects' behavior and the research will not involve stress to subjects
	3. The study of existing data, documents, records, pathological specimens, or diagnostic specimens
	4. Voice recordings made for research purposes such as investigations of speech defects
	5. Moderate exercise by healthy volunteers
	6. Collection of blood samples by venipuncture, in amounts not exceeding 450 milliliters in an eight-week period and no more often than two times per week, from subjects 18 years of age or older who are in good health and not pregnant
	7. Collection (in a non-disfiguring manner) of hair, nail clippings, and deciduous teeth; and permanent teeth if patient care indicates a need for extraction
	8. Collection for analysis of excreta and external secretions including sweat, uncannulated saliva, placenta removed at delivery, and amniotic fluid at the time of rupture of the membrane prior to or during labor
	9. Recording of data from subjects 18 years of age or older using noninvasive procedures routinely employed in clinical practice. This includes the use of physical sensors that are applied either to the surface of the body or at a distance and do not involve input of matter or significant amounts of energy into the subject or an invasion of the subject's privacy. (These procedures include weighing, testing sensory acuity, electrocardiogram, electroencephalogram, thermography, detection of naturally occurring radioactivity, diagnostic echography, and electroretinography. It does not include exposure to electromagnetic radiation outside the visible range, i.e., x-rays, microwaves.)
	10. Collection of both supra- and subgingival dental plaque and calculus, provided the procedure is not more invasive than routine prophylactic scaling of the teeth and the process is accomplished in accordance with accepted prophylactic techniques
	11. Research on drugs or devices for which an investigational new drug exemption or an investigational device exemption is not required.

ENCLOSURES

Document name/description	Number of pages
Appendix A- Survey	25
Appendix B-Recruiting email	2

Certification

Primary Investigator

I am aware that additions to or changes in procedures involving human subjects as well as any problems connected with the use of human subjects once the project has begun must be brought to the attention of the IRB.

I agree to provide whatever surveillance is necessary to ensure that the rights and welfare of the human subjects are properly protected. I understand that I cannot initiate any contact with human subjects before I have received approval/or complied with all contingencies made in connection with the approval. I understand that as the principal investigator I am ultimately responsible for the welfare and protection of human subjects and will carry out the project as approved.

_____ _____

Signature, Principal Investigator/Program Director date

Approval by Faculty Sponsor (required for all students):

I affirm the accuracy of this application, and I accept the responsibility for the conduct of this research and supervision of human subjects as required by law. THE PROPOSED PROJECT HAS BEEN APPROVED BY THE THESIS/DISSERTATION COMMITTEE.

_____ _____

Signature, Faculty Sponsor date

FOR COMMITTEE USE ONLY

DEPARTMENT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

This project:

poses minimal risk	☐
Poses greater than minimal risk	☐
Is exempt from Continuing Review	☐
Requires Expedited review	☐
Requires full IRBPHS Review	☐

Department Committee Chairperson Signature _____ Date _____

IRBPHS decision:

☐ **Approved** ☐ **Not Approved** **to proceed**

Signature _____ Date _____