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A Study of Relationships Between Ethical Decision Making, Leadership Styles, and Demographics in Pennsylvania Superintendents

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A STUDY OF RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN ETHICAL DECISION MAKING,

LEADERSHIP STYLES, AND DEMOGRAPHICS IN PENNSYLVANIA

SUPERINTENDENTS

A Dissertation

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research

In Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

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Title: A Study of Relationships Between Ethical Decision Making, Leadership Styles,
and Demographics in Pennsylvania Superintendents

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Education is a moral undertaking and superintendents are confronted with ethical dilemmas on a daily basis. Historical issues such as conflict of interest still linger but current issues aligned with school reform and precipitated by cultural diversity have also arisen.

What variables are linked to the making of sound ethical decisions? Do more experienced superintendents make better decisions than less experienced superintendents? Do transformational leaders make better decisions than transactional leaders? This study focused on the personal demographics and leadership styles of superintendents in an attempt to answer these and other questions.

A three part survey was mailed in February of 2008 to all public school superintendents in Pennsylvania. The first part of the survey consisted of 12 ethical dilemmas aligned to the Code of Ethics of the American Association of School Administrators. The second part consisted of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire which identified the leadership style of each superintendent as either laissez faire, transformational, or transactional. The third part of the survey consisted of five questions about personal characteristics: age, gender, highest degree earned, amount of ethical training, and years of experience.

Descriptive statistics were used to study the population. The participating superintendents were predominantly older males with doctorate degrees, with few years of experience, and with little ethical training.

Inferential statistics were used to study the relationships between personal characteristics, leadership styles, and ethical decision making. Chi square tests were conducted to measure the significance levels between all the demographic, leadership, and ethical questions.

Three statistical relationships were found: superintendents who experienced the dilemma made better ethical decisions than those who did not experience the dilemmas; women were more transformational than their male counterparts; and transactional leaders had more ethical training than did transformational leaders.

Conclusions drawn from this study were that superintendents respond ethically about half of the time, variability exists in superintendents' responses due to different ethical frameworks and different levels of ethical judgment, superintendent preparation programs need to emphasize the various dimensions of ethics, and future research both quantitative and qualitative needs to be done to identify valid predictors of ethical decision making.

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

Introduction

Ethical lapses are undermining public trust in schools and in their leaders, institutions and people long held to a higher standard of behavior than their peers in the corporate world and political arenas. Incidents such as financial kickbacks, nepotism, conflict of interest, and reform scandals are frequently reported in the media. Yet potentially even more problematic are the seemingly routine decisions school leaders make every day that can have a negative, long term impact on a school district's moral compass (Pardini, 2004).

Statement of the Problem

The superintendent is the highest ranking administrator of the school district. The position is one of power, prestige, trust, and, above all, responsibility, lending itself to both public scrutiny and self-examination. The superintendent makes many decisions on a daily basis, and at the heart of every one of them of them is the resolution of a moral dilemma because every decision carries with it the potential to restructure human life (Foster, 1986).

The relationship between ethical decision making, demographics, and leadership styles among Pennsylvania superintendents is worthy of study. The superintendent is the recognized leader of the school district and the work of the school district is essentially a moral activity.

The ethical behavior of the leader of the organization has considerable impact on the ethical behavior on others in the organization. The leader is responsible for the norms

that govern the behavior of people in the organization. Leaders set the moral tone

(Bennis & Nanus, 1997).

Hitt (1990) concurs that ethics and leadership go hand-in-hand. An ethical

environment is conducive to effective leadership, and effective leadership is conducive to

an ethical environment. Ethics and leadership function as both cause and effect.

Sergiovanni (1992) asserts that administrators have conflicting roles. He

concludes that the challenge of leadership is to make peace with two competitive

imperatives, the managerial and the moral.

Superintendents confront ethical issues which are highly complex. Hosmer

(1987) identifies five conclusions concerning the complexity of managerial ethics:

extended consequences, multiple alternatives, mixed outcomes, uncertain ramifications,

and personal implications.

The work of educational leaders should be work that is at the same time

intellectual and moral; an activity that is characterized by a blend of human, professional,

and civic concerns. The moral challenges that confront schools are enormous and clearly

there is a call for more moral leadership of schools as educational leaders are now being

challenged as never before (Starrat, 2004).

Helsep (1997) indicates that the superintendent is responsible for the oversight of

all phases of the district's operation and the superintendent assumes the leadership in

defining and actualizing the mission statement. Carter & Cunningham (1997) affirm that

ethics heavily impinge upon the mission statement because it expresses the district's

philosophy, goals, and expectations: it defines the desired product of that educational

institution. Additionally, the superintendent serves as the professional advisor to the board, communicator to the public, manager of resources, and leader of reforms.

The relationship between ethical decision making and leadership styles of superintendents is not only worthy of study but is also needed. Only four significant studies have been done in an attempt to evaluate the ethical decision-making practices of public school superintendents (Burns, 2001).

The study of the relationship between leadership styles, demographics, and ethical decision making of superintendents may help school boards in the selection of a new superintendent, may provide guidance for the training of aspiring superintendents by providing a link between theory and practice, may assist superintendents themselves in the decision-making process, and may galvanize more study in regard to superintendents in Pennsylvania.

<div align="center">Purpose of the Study</div>

The purpose of this study was to determine the characteristics of Pennsylvania public school superintendents' ethical decision making and to examine the relationships that exist between ethical decision making, the styles of leadership, and the personal demographics.

To gather data, public school superintendents in Pennsylvania were asked to complete a three part survey. Part one of the survey collected information on the superintendents' choices in regard to making ethical decisions based upon borderline situations whether actual or hypothetical. Part two of the survey collected information which indicates how superintendents perceive their leadership behaviors. Thirty-six descriptors relate to transactional, transformational, and laissez faire leadership styles.

<div align="center">3</div>

Transformational leadership is generally regarded as the leadership of ethics. Part three of the survey collected information about the superintendents themselves. Questions asked were age, gender, highest degree earned, years of experience as superintendent, and formal training in ethics.

The findings from this study provided a link between theory and practice which can be used in training programs for future superintendents and may help school boards select the most ethical leader applying for the position of superintendent.

Research Questions

Research questions for this study are as follows:

1. What are the characteristics of superintendents' personal demographics?

2. What are the characteristics of superintendents' ethical decision making?

3. What are the characteristics of superintendents' leadership styles?

4. What is the relationship between superintendents' personal demographics and superintendents' leadership styles?

5. What is the relationship between superintendents' personal demographics and superintendents' ethical decision making?

6. What is the relationship between superintendents' leadership styles and superintendents' ethical decision making?

Hypotheses

This study is based upon several hypotheses:

1. Superintendents who are transformational leaders make better ethical decisions than superintendents who are transactional or laissez faire leaders.

2. Superintendents who have more ethical training make better ethical decisions than superintendents who have less ethical training.

3. Superintendents who have more experience make better ethical decisions than superintendets who have less experience.

4. Superintendents who have earned a doctorate make better ethical decisions than superintendents who have not earned a doctorate.

<div align="center">Significance of the Problem</div>

The findings of this study revealed the characteristics of Pennsylvania school superintendents' demographics, leadership styles, and ethical decision making, the relationship between ethical decision making and leadership styles, and the relationship between demographic factors and ethical decision making and leadership styles.

This study was significant for the following reasons:

1. A review of literature for this study indicated that transformational leadership style and ethical decision making are related. Ethics is at the core of transformational leadership. Transformational leaders see themselves as moral agents which can change organizational members and, therefore, organizations themselves by modeling the ethical behaviors, beliefs, and decisions which they expect to see. The credibility of leadership depends on moral purpose, trust, and hope. Transformational leaders are seen by others and see themselves as obligated and responsible for the moral environment of their group, organization, or society (Greenleaf, 1977).

2. Information gained from this study may be helpful to school boards in the recruitment and selection of a new superintendent or may aid in the evaluation of an incumbent superintendent. In a recent study of Pennsylvania public school leaders

conducted by Mayo and McCartney (2003), school board presidents and superintendents both indicated that superintendents are still hired and evaluated on personality traits and previous relationships with the board members.

Public school superintendents operate today, however, in a world of change and challenge: educational reform, cultural diversity, and media scrutiny are just several reasons why today's superintendents deal with forces and situations that are far more complex and far more threatening than ever before. The average tenure of a superintendent is 2.5 years and the reasons most commonly given for removal or non-renewal are philosophical differences and leadership style (Carter & Cunningham, 1997).

3. Results from this study may assist graduate level programs in the training of prospective superintendents. Educational programs which train superintendents are vitally important. Most programs incorporate the formal study of leadership but few make an ethics course mandatory. Gonzales (1999) in her naturalistic inquiry of Texas superintendents concluded that morals and values were acquired through a personal and arduous journey and not derived from a training program incorporating the study of leadership and ethics.

This study was important to the understanding of leadership. It provided a link between theory and practice. Theorists contend that transformational leadership is the leadership of ethics. Practitioners' responses from this study did not support this theory.

4. This study is important in regard to school reform. If schools are to change in order to meet the needs of an ever-changing and diverse society, theory purports that transformational leaders are the persons to lead this change process. This study helped identify characteristics of superintendents who will be leading the school reform effort.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, the following terms and concepts are integral and will be defined as follows:

Demographic factors—personal characteristics of the participants in this study such as age and gender

Ethical Code—formalized beliefs and standards related to right and wrong developed by a group

Ethical Decision Making—the ability to respond with the most ethical answer as aligned with the AASA Code of Ethics when confronted with a moral dilemma

Leadership Style—the manner in which a leader influences others in the organization

Transformational Leadership—leadership behaviors and leadership process which elevate the moral level of the individual followers and, therefore, the organization.

Assumptions

This study was conducted with the following assumptions:

1. The superintendents' responses to the borderline ethical dilemmas were honest and valid since the paper and pencil survey was self-administered. It is also assumed that the superintendents' responses were congruent with the decisions in actual situations.

2. The superintendents' levels of ethical responses were accurately measured by the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) questionnaire. Though the 1962 AASA Code of Ethics has been revised, the original Code continues to be the instrument used by educational researchers. The 1962 Code is still used because the borderline ethnical dilemmas were constructed based upon specific policies contained in the Code and reviewed by the AASA Ethics Panel. The superintendents' responses about

their own leadership styles were honest and accurately measured by Bass and Avolio's Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) Form 5x. The MLQ 5x is an abbreviated version of the MLQ, the most widely used instrument to measure transformational leadership.

3. The topic for this study was suitable for correlational research. Correlational research attempts to show what relationship exists between multiple variables and a complex topic. It is assumed by the researcher that these variables can be obtained from a single population.

Delimitations

This study was conducted using subjects in the state of Pennsylvania who were serving as superintendents of public school districts during February of 2008. Each subject was mailed a survey instrument which consisted of three parts. The first part consisted of 12 ethical dilemmas. Each superintendent was to select the best multiple choice answer. The second part consisted of 36 questions related to leadership behaviors. Each superintendent was to select an answer on a Likert scale. The third part consisted of five personal characteristic questions such as age or gender. The three part survey was to be returned by February 15, 2008. Incomplete surveys were not used.

Limitations

The following limitations were considered:

1. Ethics and leadership are topics of a subjective nature. Responding to anecdotal ethical dilemmas in the questionnaire and measuring them against a Code of Ethics from 1962 can be challenged. Ethical standards, however, have not changed and newer codes are essentially outgrowths of previous ones. The 1962 AASA Code of Ethics has been

used in research for over 40 years. Asking superintendents to rate their own leadership

behaviors in the questionnaire is subjective as well and presumes that the responders will

answer honestly.

2. The use of a survey instrument to gather information has inherent limitations as

does any information gathering process. The survey method is limited to those who

respond. Those who do not respond are not represented. The rate of response places

limits on the information collected in the study since the number of responses has a

statistical effect. A paper and pencil survey also does not allow for much interaction

between the researcher and the participant. Much rich information behind the numbers is

not gathered and, therefore, not analyzed.

3. The conduction of a study of superintendents only in Pennsylvania was

restrictive. The information collected may not be true for other geographical areas and

the results of the study may not be representative elsewhere.

Summary

The superintendent is the chief executive officer of a school district. How a

superintendent thinks and how a superintendent acts affects others not only in the

organization but also outside the organization. The superintendent must make decisions

and must model behaviors which are ethical in nature.   This study provided a link

between leadership theory, demographics, and ethical decision making by collecting and

analyzing information from practitioners. This research can be utilized in the training of

prospective superintendents or in the selection of a new superintendent which is often

described as the most important responsibility of a school board.

Chapter II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

The following section will first review literature related to ethical decision

making and leadership styles. This section will then discuss the relationship of personal

characteristics and ethical decision making.

Review of Literature Related to Ethical Decision Making

Definition of Ethics

Ethics is generally defined as the study of right and wrong. Ethics is concerned

with the general nature of morals and of specific choices or the rules or standards

governing the conduct of a person or member of a profession (Pickett, 2000).

The word *ethics* derives from the Greek word *ethos.* The concepts of *logos,*

(logic), *pathos* (feeling), and *ethos* (character) guided Greek culture. Ethos can be more

specifically translated as the distinguishing character, sentiment, moral nature, or guiding

beliefs of a person, group, or institution (Mish, 1997).

Ancient Greek ethics revolved around two constructs: *eudemonia* and *arête.*

Eudemonia is usually translated as happiness and arete is traditionally rendered as virtue

(Rowe, 1993).

Ethics is also said to be the philosophical study of morality. The 1999 edition of

the Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy notes that ethics, along with logic, metaphysics,

and epistemology, is one of the main branches of philosophy and can be divided into the

general study of goodness, the general study of right action, applied ethics, metaethics,

moral psychology, and the metaphysics of moral responsibility.

Ethics is undoubtedly concerned with what is good and what good conduct is but also in defining the province of ethics; that province may indeed be defined as the whole truth about that which is at the same time common to all such judgments and peculiar to them (Moore, 1903).

In summary, ethics is the science or systematic study of moral choices and the process and values which undergird them. For the purpose of this study, ethics is defined as making the appropriate decision according to the 1962 American Association of School Administrators (AASA) Code of Ethics when confronted with a moral dilemma.

Philosophical Approaches to Ethics

There are two general philosophical approaches to ethics: deontological and teleological. Deontological comes from the Greek word *deon* which means duty while teleological comes from the Greek word *telos* which means goal. For deontologists, there are certain acts or practices which are morally unacceptable in themselves because of one's duty, authority, or responsibility. For teleologists, the rightness or wrongness of acts or practices is determined by a comparative assessment of their consequences (Singer, 1993).

Deontology has its identifiable roots in the formalism of Immanuel Kant, a philosopher who lived in the 1700's. Kant sought the relationship between ethics and knowledge, a debate which raged during The Enlightenment. Kant's solution was the development of a universal ethical attitude which was proposed in *The Critique of Practical Reason* (Foucault, 1994). The most famous and most fundamental element of Kant's thinking was the concept of the categorical imperative. With the categorical imperative, Kant rejected a means-to-an-end theory as inadequate for moral law and

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proposed an ultimate criterion for judging both personal morality and morality as a whole. As an imperative, Kant's rule demands that we act in a certain way, without qualification, unconditionally, as rational, finite beings; morality is an obligation first and a disposition of character second (Hoffe, 1994). Kant's categorical imperative appeals to complex ideas and unfamiliar jargon. Kant argues theories of act and rule. Deontological theory of act suggests that the actor's intent makes a subsequent action morally right or morally wrong (Brady, 1988). Deontological theory of rule, likewise, contends that certain rules are universal. Codes of conduct, legal mandates, and religious commandments are deontological in nature.

Deontological ethics is sometimes referred to as natural law or normative ethics. Natural law is the view that there is an unchanging normal order that is part of the natural world and that laws governing human conduct are grounded in nature (Buckle, 1993). Normative ethics can be traced to the syllogistic thinking of Aristotle and refers to the study of proper thought and conduct, and when a particular action is taken, it must be based upon a general principle (Frankena, 1973).

In summary, deontological ethics is *a priori*; that is to say, the rightness of an action is concluded beforehand or is rational in nature. A deontological approach to ethics is not hypothetical; it emphasizes intent over results. Deontological ethics is rule or code oriented and includes legal mandates and professional policy.

Teleological ethics, on the other hand, is *a posteriori* since the morality of a belief or a practice is based on the results. Teleological ethics is also referred to as practical ethics or consequentalism. Consequentalism is the view that whatever values an individual or an institution adopts, the proper response is to promote them (Singer, 1993).

Though having its roots in the Epicurean philosophy of ancient Greece, the ethics of teleology experienced a rebirth with the nineteenth century British empiricism of David Hume. Hume rejected natural law models of morality and attempted to show that a virtue-centered theory could best account for our moral convictions. Morality, he contended, must be rooted in emotion not rationality since emotion moves us to action and reason alone can never do so. Approval and disapproval are moral feelings. Approval is given to those acts which are generally beneficial to others (Schneewind, 1993).

Teleological ethics was popularized, however, by the utilitarianism of political philosophers Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill. Bentham, while trying to seek legal and penal humanitarian reform, applied the Epicurean philosophy of psychological hedonism where every human being seeks to attain pleasure and avoid pain. This ultimate moral principle was called the principle of utility or the principle of greatest happiness. In general, Mill agreed with Bentham in regard to the democratic notion of the greatest happiness principle but differentiated between quantity and quality of pleasures and placed more consideration on the individual than on the state (Copleston, 1994). In addition, to gain the greatest happiness, Mill, as political philosophy, emphasized that to achieve the highest abstract standard of social and distributive justice the efforts of both institutions and all virtuous citizens should be made in the utmost degree in order to converge (Burtt, 1994).

John Rawls viewed ethics as a social contract where moral law, justice, and fairness are congruent and each person takes into account the needs of others as free and equal beings and the notion that people are ends in themselves (Kymlicka, 1993).

Interesting, however, is that Rawl's social justice theory is often construed as deontological because of its insistence on the twin principles of desirability and feasibility independent of whether it produces good (Kukathas & Pettit, 1990).

In summary, teleological ethics is emotional in nature and emphasizes results rather than rules. Included in teleological ethical frameworks are constructs such as fairness, justice, care, diversity, and democracy. A teleological approach to ethics produces, in the words of English pragmatist Charles Sanders Pierce, the *summum bonum*, or the most good.

Ethics and Public Administration

School districts are political subdivisions, and, as the Chief Executive Officer, the superintendent is a public administrator. Public administration in America was framed with the Constitution as a reaction against the divine-right-of-rulers approach accepted for centuries in Europe. This approach held that monarchs could do no wrong since they were the representatives of God and their actions were sanctified by God. With the Founding Fathers and the Constitution, a form of government was postulated where each individual was endowed with divine rights and the governing structures were to be based upon the ethical character of the leader. Individual ethical character, however, was grounded in specific religious movements and the Founding Fathers sought *via* the Constitution to avoid ethical bias by establishing separation of church and state and a religious atmosphere which stimulated in government a general religious commitment (Wright & McConkie, 1988).

This religious fervor resonated in the ethics of public administration for nearly one hundred years. In the late 1800's, the civil service reform movement, the ideal-type

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bureaucracy concept, and the scientific management theory changed the nature of public administration. Lead by Woodrow Wilson, then political science professor and later President, good public administration was less about ethics and more about credentials, expertise, and the learning of standardized practices (Rohr, 1998).

As a developing discipline, public administration became a subject of serious academic study with an intellectual tone moving away from the ethical constructs of the Founding Fathers. Public administration was being designed to free administrators from the responsibility of making moral determinations. This secular spirit prevailed until after World War II when political scientists realized that the values so eloquently expressed by the Fathers had been battered almost beyond repair by the blows of the scientific method and cultural relativism (Cooper, 1990).

Efforts to rediscover ethical guidance for administrators took on many forms. Fundamental bases such as John Rawl's Theory of Justice, adoption of organizational codes of ethics, and case-study based university courses were included. None, however, satisfactorily address the central questions of "Must we be ethical as individuals in order to have an ethical society" or "Do good systems produce good people" or "Do good people produce good systems" and "Are there absolute ethical standards to which we as individuals adhere"? (Wright & McKonkie, 1988).

Ethical decisions and ethical behavior and what that means for public administration are far from reaching a consensus. In fact, a theoretical framework which would help guide administrators both in theory and in practice is absent from the field (Dehnardt, 1988).

Public administration is a role played by those who are appointed or elected to public service. The concept of role is a convenient way to package obligations and expectations of public administrators. The key concept within that role is the notion of responsibility. Responsibility is how actions of administrators are evaluated and how administrators themselves are held accountable (Cooper, 1990).

The key ethical problem of the public administrator is the responsible exercise of administrative discretion built into every American institution through the democratic approach and the Constitution itself. Public administrators may validate a moral lapse or institutionalize an ethical action through policy or practice. In the role of a public administrator, a person even may be exempt from a universal moral principle to which every citizen is expected to observe. It is little wonder then that with this moral latitude and moral autonomy, public administrators are often under suspicion or attack (Rohr, 1998).

In summary, superintendents are public administrators. As public administrators, they are responsible to think and act in a manner which is ethically consistent with the constitution, law, and policy. Superintendents not only represent the general public but also are held accountable by the general public.

Organizational Ethics

Organizations are groups of people who interact to share the same mission, goals, objectives, and activities. Organizations are governed by formal written policies and accepted procedures.

A recurring topic in the discussion of organizations and ethics is that ethical problems and dilemmas faced by public administrators occur not only within their

organizations but at least in part because of their organizations. One example would be the lack of consideration of value implications of instrumentally rational decisions because making value judgments is usually not an organizationally sanctioned activity. Another example is the structure and authority patterns in organizations that can make it difficult for the individual to act in an ethical manner. The policies and procedures within the organization might have the unintended, but very real, consequences of encouraging unethical behavior among organizational members (Denhardt, 1988).

Questions of organizational ethics present fundamental paradoxes which must be managed. These fundamental paradoxes include things such as bounded rationality, limited information, imperfect communication systems, functional specialization, multiple and conflicting goals and rewards, informal group norms, and environmental pressures—all put ethical choices in a matrix of conflicting assumptions and criteria. All of these conditions mean that people in a variety of positions make decisions that affect others without those making the decisions or without those being impacted, having a chance to evaluate the effect on them. We simply do not have enough information to account completely for the effects of our decisions (Ritchie, 1998).

Ethical conduct cannot be shaped or maintained in isolation. Internal individual controls must be generally consistent with external controls such as organizational structure, organizational culture, and societal expectations.

Cooper (1990) contends that maintaining ethically responsible conduct within public organizations is done by two general approaches: internal controls and external controls. Internal controls focus on the personal and professional values and beliefs of the individual administrator. These individual values and beliefs are not completely

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reliable especially in a pluralistic society whose hallmark is conflicting beliefs and

competing values. External controls focus on legislation, codes of conduct, legal

sanctions, and the owner of the organization itself, the public. Integrating internal ethical

controls and external ethical controls into the organizational norms and structure to

produce responsive conduct yields the following components:

Individual Attributes	Organizational Culture
Ethical decision-making skill	Exemplars
Mental attitude	Norms for Conduct
Virtues	Symbols
Professional Values _____	

**Responsible
Conduct**

_____

Organizational Structure	Societal Expectations
Clear Accountability	Public Participation
Collaborative Arrangements	Laws and Policies
Dissent Channels	
Participation Procedures	

Ethics and Professional Codes

Five characteristics distinguish a profession: systematic theory, authority,

community sanction, a culture, and a code of ethics (Greenwood, 1957). Professions

such as business, law, military, and medicine require these five characteristics. Of these

characteristics, a code of ethics is of particular interest.

One way in which professional associations operate as agencies of self regulation

is in the existence of a code of conduct. These codes are private systems of law which

highlight proper relations more so than procedural rules and are understood to be not self-

enforcing (Moore, 1970).

Members of a profession protect themselves and their professional realm by

assuring the public that all of the members live up to the profession's ideals. While a

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personal commitment to the profession's ideals is necessary to have an ethical individual, a code of ethics stands as a warrant to the public and to other professionals that the ideals and standards are taken seriously in a formal way (Macmillan, 1993).

One function of a code of ethics is to collect the wisdom of the profession and to develop a sense of spirit and pride among the members. Codes contain the essential building blocks of ideals, principles, rules, standards, procedures, and objectives. Ethical codes are based upon obligatory statements (Rich, 1984).

Ethics and professional codes of ethics are the cornerstone of any profession, a system of standards to which we conform and internalize. A code of ethics is an invisible force that can be more potent than traditional power and controls (Goens, 1996). Professional codes of ethics provide an image for the individual about what a professional will look like. They also provide a picture of the highest moral ground for the profession. Professional codes do provide a needed function when one considers these elements. It can even be seen that one of the problems of code implementation into day-to-day activities does not lie within the codes themselves, but in the fact that we expect too much from these codes (Nash, 1996).

Codes of professional ethics are surprisingly controversial in the world of education. Some hail them as useful, some call them significant, and some say they are meaningless. Critics claim relying on a code confuses ethics with law; others, however, say adopting a code is significant because it represents an obligation to society that transcends mere self interest. A code whether it is a framed document on an office wall or a type of conscience-compass which is internalized serves as a guide or a reminder in

specific situations and can indicate to others that the profession is seriously concerned with responsible, professional conduct (Pardini, 2004).

Educators in schools need active and well-established codes in order for them to live up to their own standards and goals. Codes of ethics guide educators in the act of service and help them rise above disruptive circumstances to persist in their chosen acts of investment in the growth of others. Professional ethics represent an explicable set of rules that justifies and guides conduct (Noddings, 1992).

Teachers and administrators have the authority to make assumptions about children on a daily basis. Such authority is reflected daily in the tone, quality, and content of school language. The relationship of such language to an established code of ethics is promising though complex. The ethic of descriptive language in schools is reflected in the NEA code and continues to be presented in the ongoing discussion of applied ethics in education (Fennimore, 2000).

The American Association of School Administrators developed a code of ethics in 1962 in order to govern the ethical professional behavior of school administrators. The AASA's Code of Ethics consists of a preamble, an overview of the profession, ten policies, and examples that illustrate these policies. In 1981, AASA adopted a Statement of Ethics for School Administrators which replaced the original Code. The Statement of Ethics does not include specific policies and examples to follow (Walker, 1999).

The Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) also has a code of conduct consisting of six standards. The fifth standard recognizes that a school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner (Council of Chief State Officers, 1996).

Although superintendents in Pennsylvania are bound by the School Code and are sworn in by taking an oath to uphold the United States Constitution, they do not have their own Code of Conduct. Commonwealth superintendents are, however, under the aegis of The Pennsylvania Code of Professional Practice and Conduct of Educators which makes explicit the values of the education profession. These values include the worth and dignity of every person, pursuit of truth, devotion to excellence, acquisition of knowledge, democratic principles, and the development and application of sound policy. The Code emphasizes that when individuals become educators in the Commonwealth, they make a moral commitment to uphold these values (Pennsylvania Code, 1991).

In summary, codes of ethics distinguish a profession. Codes provide an image of what the profession looks like and helps self-regulate individuals in professional organizations. Superintendents in this study responded to ethical dilemmas and these responses were evaluated using the AASA Code of Ethics. Findings from this study helped to identify leadership styles and demographic characteristics that influence the ethical decision making of Pennsylvania superintendents.

Ethics and Education

By their inherent nature, educational decisions and practices are moral acts. Values, rights, and virtues are utilized by educational practitioners and in particular educational leaders. Educators, especially superintendents, are expected to exhibit an understanding of goals, the actions necessary to achieve those goals, and the predictable consequences of the actions that they select. The integration of an ethical framework into their decision-making process directs the superintendent to ask the right question in the

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quest for the correct responses and in the development of practical reason (Willower & Licata, 1997).

Education becomes a noble endeavor when superintendents embark upon a continual evaluation of values and a commitment to those values. The real function of ethics in education becomes a transformative one—to shape perceptions and understandings to allow people to view individuals and situations in ways that promote, good, right, and or just decisions. One would expect that moral commitments would have a profound effect on leaders who practice these standards. These individuals would exhibit ethical behavior in all areas of their lives, and their decisions would reflect their deepest values and beliefs (Hodgkinson, 1991; Giroux, 1988).

Education relates to debates about social justice and equality. We must deal with how people expect to be treated and how they are actually treated. Many issues such as instruction, curriculum, and testing actually involve questions of fairness and justice. Many of the ways which we think about fairness and justice were formulated by Aristotle in his treatise on ethics (Stevens & Wood, 1987).

One value is not as good as any other value in schools. People in democratic societies have a right to expect their schools to be guided by moral principles such as justice, respect, fairness, liberty, honesty, equality, and integrity. As educators, daily decisions are made which carry tremendous moral implications for the students in our care. It is only through study, reflection, and inquiry that educators can come to understand the impact of those decisions (Senge, 2000).

Ethical Dilemmas

Two types of situations face superintendents and other educational leaders in daily situations. Situations with clear right and wrong answers are called problems and those situations with two right answers are called dilemmas. The difficulty encountered with dilemmas is that social and political connections and entanglements overwhelm us and produce a feeling of helplessness which cannot be overcome by logical means (Cuban, 1994).

Ethical dilemmas are problems, usually minor and routine in nature, which have competing sets of obligations and responsibilities, each with some moral relevance. When dealing with ethical dilemmas, there are two major frames of reference for thinking about moral issues, the deontological framework and the teleological framework. The resolution of a moral dilemma should encompass both frames of reference through a process called ethical deliberation. The chosen course of action may be the same if only one philosophical approach were considered but the justification of that resolution could be radically different (Denhardt, 1988).

Defining moments or dilemmas demand that managers reserve an urgent issue of personal identity. Two rights present themselves, each one representing a plausible and attractive choice. To help resolve the conflict one must utilize self-inquiry, one must think which choice is most deeply rooted in my life and my values (Badaracco, 1998).

Ethical dilemmas can be viewed as *swampy problems*. How a leader interprets and responds to these swampy problems is situational and subjective contingent upon the leader's existing skills and knowledge, acquired experiences, values, and relevant support (Leithwood, Begley, & Cousins, 1992).

Superintendents are constantly making decisions in their every work day. Different models of decision making exist. Cognitive psychology identifies several decision-making models. These models portend that decisions are made on the basis of rationality or the maximizing of a preferred value over all others. Another model of decision making is bounded rationality or satisficing; in this model a decision is made based upon a minimum number of possibilities, settling for what is good enough. Sometimes instead of manipulating all attributes of all available options, an elimination of aspects model is utilized. This approach to decision making involves the creation of criteria and eliminating all options that do not meet that criteria. Heuristics is a decision-making model that utilizes shortcuts by lightening the cognitive load. Common heuristic models are availability and representativeness (Sternberg & Mio, 2005).

In addressing a moral issue, movement must occur from the problem to the course of action which will resolve it. This movement toward remedy involves both description and prescription. Problem solvers describe to themselves and to others an objective state of affairs and then attempt to prescribe what specific steps need to be taken. Between these two steps deliberation is involved. This deliberation almost always involves ethical analysis or moral reasoning. Public administrators seem to have trouble with the articulation of which values and principles are at stake. The tendency is to define the problem in practical rather than ethical terms (Cooper, 1990).

Ethics and Superintendent's Decision Making

Little is known about how school superintendents make decisions. Judgment analysis (JAN) was utilized to suggest that superintendents relied on only partial

information available to them and their subsequent decisions had little positive effect on school climate (Lasher, 1992).

Some research indicates that decision making in schools is rational and goal-directed. This method is one that is based on the collection and processing of knowledge in a bureaucratic setting (Rapport & Wallsten, 1972; Tyack 1980).

Recent research on Canadian superintendents indicates that judgment is the key ingredient in the decision-making process. Judgment is a human function that involves discernment, choice, values, intelligence, and articulation (Langlois, 2003).

Other research suggests that superintendents make decisions in a political fashion. This process involves hammering out a consensus, doing the tugging and pushing that is required of the political process and of the superintendent in order to retain long tenure (Cuban, 1985).

More recent study of the decision-making process of superintendents indicates that ethics is playing a more substantial role. Ethics is heavily impinging upon the core mission and central values of the school district because they directly impact the end product of the institution (Carter and Cunningham, 1997).

Moral purpose always has been part of the teaching profession but now the superintendent is in a position to make moral purpose a system quality. This means having a commitment throughout the district to closing the gap in student learning, treating people with respect within a framework of high expectations, and changing the social environment to one of improvement through awareness (Fullan, 2005).

Summary of Literature Related to Ethics and Decision Making

Ethics is the study of right and wrong and of good and fair, the philosophical approach to ethical beliefs, and the rules or standards which govern moral actions and choices. A review of literature indicates that professional codes of conduct, legal mandates, and school policies influence the ethical choices made by school superintendents. Demographic factors from previous studies which have been linked to ethical decision making by superintendents include age, salary, gender, highest degree earned, and number of years as superintendent (Dexheimer 1969; Fenstermaker, 1994). Some research has been conducted on the making of ethical decisions and leadership styles. When confronted with an ethical dilemma, moral reasoning is used. Moral reasoning is logical and objective and involves consideration of all possibilities and legitimate criticisms (Daniel, 2005). Leaders who had lower levels of moral reasoning exhibited fewer transformational behaviors (Turner, Barling, Epitropaki, & Milner, 2002).

Leadership Styles

Leadership is a word on everyone's lips. The young attack it, and the old grow wistful for it. Parents have lost it and police seek it. Experts claim it and artists spurn it, while scholars want it. Philosophers reconcile it with liberty and theologians demonstrate its compatibility with conscience. If bureaucrats pretend they have it, politicians wish they did. Everybody agrees that there is less of it than there used to be (Bennis & Nanus, 1985, p.1).

Superintendents are the appointed or elected leaders of the educational organization known as the school district. As the chief executive officer, superintendents

have both the responsibility to manage and the opportunity to lead their respective organizations.

Definition of Leadership

Leadership has many definitions. Leadership is much like other abstracts such as love, democracy, freedom, and peace. Although each of us knows individually and intuitively what these words mean, the attempt to define them leads us in many different directions.

A general but working definition of leadership is the process of influencing people to achieve a common goal. As a process, leaders influence followers and followers influence leaders (Northouse, 2001).

Theories of Leadership

Numerous theories of leadership exist. Each theory has its strengths and weaknesses. Leadership theories covered in this section were those measured by the evaluation instrument. Those leadership theories are laissez faire, transactional, and transformational.

Laissez Faire Leadership

Laissez faire was initially identified as a leadership style wherein the leader refused to help the group choose its policy. Laissez faire leaders did not volunteer information on the stages and methods necessary to attain the group's goals. Democratic leadership and authoritarian leadership both outpaced and outperformed laissez faire leadership. Laissez faire leadership was only appropriate when the task was simple (Lewin, Lippit, & White, 1939).

Laissez faire is a French term that means hands off; it is a theory of economics that encourages the market to be driven by self-interest and governed by self-control. Laissez faire leadership therefore is an absence of formal leadership; it is leadership that is informal and emergent. No one attempts to influence anyone else. Few policies and procedures are established by management; almost all are derived by the organizational stakeholders. Freedom is a hallmark. Members of the group often can do what they want to; members even determine the organization's direction and goals though management does provide the resources to achieve them. Laissez faire leadership can be effective if members are highly skilled, experienced, dedicated, and have pride in their work. Laissez faire leadership is not effective if members are insecure, untrained, unmotivated. If included at all, laissez faire leadership is placed beyond democratic leadership on a continuum of leadership styles (Hersey, 1996).

Leaders who utilize a *laissez faire* style take a let-it-ride approach. The leader chooses to have little or no interaction with the followers. The leader abdicates responsibility, delays decision, gives no feedback, and makes little effort to satisfy followers needs (Northouse, 2001).

Laissez-faire leadership is one that does not transfer values of the leader to the values of the followers. While followers in laissez faire settings sometimes manifest positive values such as more ingenuity and more autonomy, there was consistent revelation of negative values such as more aggression, more dissatisfaction, more selfishness, and more dishonesty (Berrien, 1961).

Transactional Leadership

Transactional leadership is a leadership style based upon an exchange between the leader and the followers. The essence of transactional leadership is based on the assumption that people are motivated by reward and punishment. A formal structure is created with a clear chain of command and subordinates know and accept it. External motivators such as increased pay or a day off are used. The military is often associated with transactional leadership. The transactional leader provides little or no inspiration. If inspiration exists in the organization, it is usually supplied by the subordinates (Yuki, 1981).

Transactional leaders and followers are mutually dependent on each other in regard to acknowledging and rewarding each others' contributions. Transactional leaders are influential if they are doing what the followers want or what the followers expect. Effective transactional leadership is contingent upon the leaders' abilities to meet and respond to the reactions and changing expectations of their subordinates (Kellerman, 1984).

James McGroeger Burns identified transactional leadership in a political context and Bernard Bass applied Burn's theory to organizational ones. Missing from both authors work, however, is an explanation of the internal processes which generate the actions of transactional or transformational leaders. That is, neither author provided a framework for understanding the motivational states or personality differences that give rise to these two types of leadership (Kuhnert & Lewis, 1987).

Transactional leadership is quite distinct from transformational leadership when it comes to organizational and perceptual structures. Constructive personality theories hold

that people vary when they construct or organize experiences about themselves and their

social and interpersonal environments. According to this view, events and situations do

not exist psychologically until they are experienced and composed privately. This

process helps explain how transactional leaders understand, experience, and approach the

enterprise of leading. A constructive developmental theory is then a subjective concept of

the world or the organization, as opposed to an objective one which a transformational

leader may have. Key personality traits that distinguish a transformational leader from a

transactional leader are confidence and charisma. In fact, the display of transactional

leadership characteristics may reflect a preliminary personality development stage on the

way to a higher personality stage of transformational leadership (Kegan, 1982).

Transactional leadership by definition involves exchanges between the leader and

the followers. All exchanges are not equivalent, however. Two levels of transactions can

be distinguished: low-level and high-level. Low-quality transactions are based on the

exchange of goods or rights or other tangibles such as hours of work or rate of pay.

High-quality transactions are based on interpersonal relationships and include trust and

respect and on moral values such as truth, care, and justice. When a transactional leader

exchanges at a high-order level, transformational leadership is approximated (Graen,

Liden, & Hoel, 1962).

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership is the style of leadership most closely linked with

ethics. Individuals who exhibit transformational leadership characteristics often have a

strong set of internal values and beliefs, and they are effective at motivating followers to

act in ways that support the greater good rather than their own self interests (Kuhnert, 1996).

Transformational leadership was first coined by Downton in 1973 but was recognized as an important approach to leadership with the work of James McGroeger Burns. Burns distinguished between transactional leadership and transformational leadership, both of which have strong philosophical underpinnings and ethical components. Transactional leadership focuses on the exchanges that occur between leaders and followers while transformational leadership centers on the connection that raises the level of motivation and morality in both the leader and the follower (Northouse, 2001).

Transformational leadership is defined as that leadership which empowers others in the organization to reach higher levels of moral development (Burns, 1978). At the core of leadership and at the very core of life rests morality. The moral life is built upon foundations of individual virtue and that the individually virtuous person transforms others as well as the social environment (Schwartz, 1985; Lin, Rosemount & Ames, 1995). Individual virtue in transformational leadership terminology is known as idealized influence.

Idealized influence is the characteristic given to transformational leaders because they exhibit very high standards of moral and ethical conduct. Idealized influence describes leaders who act as strong role models for followers (Northouse, 2001). Bass and Steidlmeier (1998) noted:

The ethics of leadership rests upon three pillars: (1) the moral character of the
leader, (2) the ethical values embedded in the leader's vision, articulation, and

program which followers either embrace or reject, and (3) the morality of the processes of social ethical choice and action that leaders and followers engage in and collectively pursue (p. 2).

In a democracy the good life of a leader is one which is continually developing actions which are appropriate and effective in helping others to attain the good life of continual development through life-long learning. As leaders, the moral imperative is to help others pursue the good life. Leaders have the moral and ethical obligation to guide others toward self-realization and fulfillment. Such leadership ensures that both the individual and the organization benefit (Taylor, 1991).

Kouzes and Posner (1987) identified ten characteristics of transformational leadership. Two of the ten characteristics explicitly use the word values. One characteristic encourages leaders to enlist others in a common vision by appealing to their values, hopes, interests, and dreams. The other characteristic encourages leaders to set an example for others by behaving in ways that are consistent with your stated values.

Sergiovanni (1992) noted that values play an important part in constructing the leader's mindscape and in determining leadership style. Values derive from the heart which in turn create mental pictures which result in leadership practices. Sergiovanni calls this the heart, the mind, and the hand of leadership.

In summary transformational leadership is a broad-based perspective that encompasses many facets and dimensions of the leadership process. Transformational leaders empower followers, raise moral consciousness, provide support, act as role models, and initiate change.

Authentic Leadership

Authentic leadership is a new term for a leadership style that is similar to transformational leadership. Authentic leadership is rooted in hedonism and eudaemonia; that is to say, authentic leadership focuses on human happiness and the worthiness of human life. Authentic leadership involves self awareness, unbiased processing, transparent behavior, and true relationships (Begley, 2003).

Authentic leadership is also viewed as the relationship between personal values and leadership behaviors. A values approach to leadership is essential in times of change and uncertainty because followers need to regain confidence through the reaffirmation of values when the environment becomes ambiguous, turbulent, and even chaotic (Cameron, 2003).

Leadership is a moral activity built upon virtues. These foundational virtues are presence, responsibility, and authenticity. Presence refers to relations with people; how leaders are present in that it can help or harm. Responsibility refers to the general sense of expectations that in a given role, one will perform as a morally responsible agent. Responsibility means that decisions will not be arbitrary but will involve due deliberation on the circumstances and the values that apply to the situation as well as the caring for the persons involved. Authenticity is always relational with people, a cause, or a career. Finally, authenticity is the freedom of an individual to choose and shape one's own life. Authenticity demands that we be true to ourselves and to be true to others (Starrat, 2004).

Authentic leadership then involves self-knowledge because authentic leaders are resistant to social or situational pressures by being true to themselves and to their core values (Shamir, House, & Arthur, 1993).

Branson (2005) in a study of Australian leaders notes that self concept is at the root of self-awareness. The integration of motives, values, and beliefs influence how an individual thinks, believes, and responds to his or her world.

Begley (2003) contends that the authentic leader knows oneself by developing reflective practices of mind. Begley contends that reflective practice is built upon John Dewey's theory of critical inquiry and Dewey's notion that reflective thought is the active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in light of the grounds that support it and the future conclusions to which it tends.

Leadership is the process of influencing people. Many theories of leadership exist. Each theory of leadership has a definition, descriptors, beliefs, and behaviors. Transformational leadership theory purports to be the leadership of vision, of change, of individual follower support, of idealized influence, and, above all, of fairness, of justice, of values, and of ethics. Statistically significant research, however, has yet to indicate that better ethical decisions making is related to leadership style. It is assumed and taught that transformational leaders are more ethical but this has yet to be supported through quantitative study.

Review of Literature on Ethics and Educational Leadership

The work of educational leadership should be work that is simultaneously intellectual and moral; an activity characterized by a blend of human, professional, and civic concerns; a work of cultivating an environment for learning that is humanly fulfilling and socially responsible. In cultivating that environment, moral educational leaders enact the foundational virtues of responsibility, authenticity, and presence—the same virtues that should characterize students' learning (Starrat, 2004).

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Sergiovanni (1992) notes as well that school leadership needs to be reinvented. The talk of leadership needs to be about attitudes and values and this needs to guide our vision for leadership practice. Research on leadership style or on levels of decision making needs to move to the periphery and the moral dimension of leadership needs to be the center of inquiry.

Arguments as to the purpose of schooling and to the assertion that educational leaders make ethical decisions daily have imbued scientific reasoning with a conscience. The myth of value-free leadership is breaking down. It is incumbent on the school leader to guide schools through a process of change while maintaining values that are necessary for cultural stability and purpose (Rolston, 1999).

One of the ironies of school administration is that due to the plethora of laws, policies, rules, and regulations, the capacity of discretionary decision-making in regard to a complex problem is diminishing. Complex problems such as ethical decision making take on a different hue. These problems often challenge one's own professional or personal values or come in conflict with those values of the organization. The capacity for judgment in complex problem or dilemma solving requires discernment, intelligence, value priority, ethical relevance; in short, a conscience (Arendt, 1992).

Eight phases of superintendent complex problem solving exist based on Starrat's 1991 theoretical model of justice, care, and critique:

1. Responding To and Acting Upon a Given Situation—the superintendent takes the initiative to transform a situation. This is assuming moral responsibility.

2. Checking Rules, Laws, Standards, and Policies—Though a procedure is often not established, this provides the superintendent with elements to guide a decision.

3. Becoming Ethically Aware of the Dilemma—A difference of values often erupt in this phase. An internal debate occurs between the moral element of the decision-maker and the values of the situation or the organization.

4. Ethical Analysis Stage—A group reflection of the situation and actions taken are done. Participants justify actions and a new perspective and a new morality is forged. What is non-negotiable is often decided.

5. Validation and Support From Political Authorities—Though the basic validation is done through the superintendent, the final validation is done through the decision-making body. Honesty and transparency are critical in this discussion of values.

6. Assertivity--Preserving Dignity and Maintaining Respect—The position in regard to the complex problem is announced. The problem is restated and the decision is explained. A respectful attitude is maintained.

7. Concluding the Decision-Making Process—The superintendent brings closure to the situation by drafting a report. Rules, policies, principles, perspectives, values, and objections are included in the report.

8. Assessing the Effects on the Organization—The consequences of a complex decision are monitored and the re-emergence of the situation is watched. Incurred risks are studied.

These phases are not sequential but dynamic and characterize a process known as normative ethics. Normative ethics incorporate the reflection of personal and professional values, diverse perspectives, rules and policies, and the culture of the work place. It is a process which is time-consuming but is authentic and morally defensible (Langlois, 2004).

Predictors as to the moral development of a leader abound. According to Rest (1986) age, education, and autonomy were three important variables in moral development. Rest's studies were based on the work of Lawrence Kohlberg, Rest's teacher. Kohlberg, a professor, developmental psychologist, and director of the Center for Moral Education at Harvard University, pioneered the study of moral development in the 1950's. Kohlberg espoused a theory of moral development based on the work of Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget and American philosopher-educator John Dewey.

Kohlberg's theory presents three levels of moral development: pre-conventional, conventional, and post-conventional. Within each level, there are two stages of moral reasoning through which people move sequentially. Stage 1 is punishment and obedience while Stage 6, the highest level of moral development and where leaders and especially educational leaders should posit, is universal ethical principal orientation. Stage 6 is fairness and justice oriented (Klinker & Hackman, 2003).

Kohlberg maintained that the individual determines right and wrong. In order to reach the post-conventional level, the highest of moral development, autonomy and choice functioned as necessary constructs (McNeel, 1994).

Kohlberg developed this theory of cognitive moral development to explain how people think and interact within their environment. This theory, however, involves thinking and not action. People may think or talk at a higher moral level but not always behave that way. Kohlberg, however, believed that there was a positive relationship between higher levels of moral reasoning and moral behavior (Crain, 1985).

Slaten (1999) in his doctoral study of Texas public school superintendents sought a casual comparative relationship between stages of moral development and leadership style. Slaten hypothesized and concluded that a superintendent's moral reasoning in regard to an ethical dilemma will be largely determined by the superintendent's stage of moral development.

Moral reasoning is useful to those who need to determine the best answer to a concrete moral problem. Understanding moral reasoning is important for educational administrators since they are faced with ethical dilemmas on a daily basis. Research indicates that such individuals can understand not only their reasoning used when dealing with moral dilemmas but also the reasoning of the stage(s) in which they operate (Gardiner, 2003).

A recurring theme throughout moral development literature is that ethical leaders need to know themselves. Ethical decision-making is grounded in both personal and professional values, beliefs, and experiences which affect one's ability to morally reason through ethical dilemmas (Klinker & Hackman, 2003).

Turner, Bartling, Epitropaki, and Milner (2002) studied the relationship between moral reasoning and transformational leadership of organizational leaders. Their results indicated that leaders who had lower levels of moral reasoning exhibited fewer transformational behaviors.

In summary leaders who have a higher stage of cognitive moral development, who have strong personal values, and practice normative ethics are believed to make better ethical decisions.

Personal Demographics and Ethical Decision Making

Previous research on ethical decision making and personal demographics has been conducted and the findings have been inconsistent. One of the first studies was conducted at a national scale (Dexheimer, 1969). Dexheimer found that better ethical decision making was done by superintendents who were in larger school districts, had fewer years of service, and made higher salaries. A similar study was conducted with Mississippi superintendents (Segars, 1987). Seagers concluded that there was no significant difference in ethical responses when related to the variables of district size, gender, number of years of service, or salary. Millerborg (1990) conducted a national study. While Millerborg found a significant difference in choice patterns between levels of administrators, there was no significant difference between age, sex, school population, size of district, highest degree earned, or ethical preparation. Fenstermaker (1994) replicated Dexheimer's original study. While Dexheimer's was a national study, Fenstermaker examined only Pennsylvania superintendents. Fenstermaker's conclusions were nearly identical to Dexheimer's. Fenstermaker, however, added the variable of gender and found that women made better ethical decisions than their male peers.

 Another study was conducted with California superintendents (Walker, 1999). Walker's findings do not support Dexheimer's or Fenstermaker's. Walker concluded that there were no significant differences in ethical decision making and school district size, gender, salary, or years of service. Thompson-Bandy (2002) examined Texas superintendents' perceptions of ethical violations. While there were statistical differences in the specific individual violations by gender, district size, and the length of superintendent tenure, Thompson-Bandy concluded that there no significant differences overall. Wenger (2004)

surveyed Virginia superintendents. Wenger found statistically significant positive

relationships between ethical decision making and more years of experience in education

and an earned doctorate, but no correlation between ethical decision making and age,

gender, or salary. Winter's (2003) study focused on the stages of moral development of

Pennsylvania superintendents. Winters studied the relationship between occupationally

relevant moral dilemmas and selected independent demographic variables. Winters

found statistically significant differences for years of experience and levels of moral

development: superintendents in the middle of their careers did not score as well as

superintendents at the beginning or at the end of their careers. Winters, however, did not

find significant differences between moral development and gender, insider and outside

status, or level of self assessment.

In summary studies of the relationships between demographics and ethical

decision making done by superintendents have been conducted. The findings of these

studies have been inconsistent.

<div style="text-align:center">Chapter Summary</div>

Ethics is the study of right and wrong. There are two general philosophical

approaches to ethics: deontological and teleological. Deontological ethics is rule ethics

while teleological is results ethics. Today, ethics has become a critical component in all

walks of public administration. School district superintendents especially face unique

challenges not only because of public scrutiny but also because of a pluralistic society.

How a superintendent approaches and resolves ethical dilemmas is critical to the school

district.

Leadership is the process of influencing others. Transformational leadership is a style of leadership which most directly relates to elevating organizational values and norms by motivating followers to support the greater good. As leaders of their respective school districts, superintendents make daily decisions which affect the lives of others. These decisions are ethical in nature.

Quantitative studies about superintendents' ethical decision making, leadership styles, and demographics have been done at both the national and state levels. The results are mixed. A review of literature suggests a link between transformational leadership style and better ethical decision making; however, no studies have found a statistically meaningful relationship (Daniel, 2005). Other related literature indicate that superintendents with more years of service, are employed in a larger school district, and have higher salaries make better ethical decisions. It is not statistically known whether superintendents who are female, who have higher levels of education, or have had ethical training are better at ethical decision making. Few studies have been conducted about leadership styles and ethical decision making. This study will add to the body of knowledge in regard to ethical decision making, personal characteristics, and leadership styles.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURES

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine relationships between leadership styles, personal demographics, and ethical decision making. This chapter explains the survey design, the reliability and validity of the instrument, the data collection strategies, and the data analysis procedures used in this study.

Survey Design

A survey was chosen by the researcher because the study was conducted at a large scale. The use of a survey permits the following: (1) efficiency of time for the researcher and the participants in the study; (2) cost effectiveness; (3) collection of data from a large sample; and (4) ease of tabulating data (Gay, 1992).

Each public school superintendent in Pennsylvania was sent a cover letter (Appendix A) and a three-part survey in order to gather information. The first part consisted of ethical dilemmas (Appendix D). These were similar to those first developed by Dexheimer (1969), revised by Fenstermaker (1994), Walker (1999), Wenger (2004), and the researcher. Email permission was received by the last researcher in order to revise the questionnaire (Appendix C). Revisions were done to reflect current school policy, school law, school reform efforts, or society in general. The dilemmas were borderline ethical situations with only one being the most ethically right answer. The superintendents were asked to select the response to the dilemma which most closely approximates their own answers. Responses were evaluated utilizing specific policies

from the 1962 American Association of School Administrators (AASA) Code of Ethics (Appendix G).

The second part of this survey consisted of Bass and Avolio's MLQ 5x (Appendix E). The MLQ 5x was copyrighted in 1995 and contains 36 descriptive statements about leadership and 9 about satisfaction and effectiveness. Superintendents assessed themselves on questions which measured transformational, transactional, and laissez faire leadership styles. Transformational leadership factors related to ethical decision making are Idealized Influence, Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation, and Individualized Consideration.

The third part of the survey collected demographic information such as age, gender, level of education, number of years as superintendent, and formal ethical training (Appendix F). Optional questions related to the awareness of the AASA Code of Ethics and to general comments about the study.

Measurement of Ethical Decision Making

In 1969 C. Roy Dexheimer conducted a national study. Dexheimer's survey was designed to examine the ethical decision making of public school superintendents. The survey consisted of fifteen moral dilemmas or borderline ethical situations which required superintendents to select a particular response or choice of action. Write-in responses were permitted and these were evaluated by the researcher in respect to the 1962 AASA Code of Ethics. The study recorded 1,725 ethical responses out of a possible 3,630 (47.3%) percent and concluded that superintendents responded in an ethical manner less than half the time (Dexheimer, 1969).

In 1994, William C. Fenstermaker replicated Dexheimer's survey (1969) using a revised form and surveying only Pennsylvania superintendents. Several questions were eliminated and the choices for one question revised. In the original survey, according to Dexheimer, two of the questions were considered invalid and therefore eliminated because their responses were so heavily skewed toward one answer. Two more questions were replaced because they were considered dated. One involved school prayer and the other the hiring of the superintendent's wife (Fenstermaker, 1994). The survey was revised by the researcher as well to reflect several dilemmas superintendents currently encounter; these dilemmas are related to cultural diversity and standardized testing.

The ethical situations or moral dilemmas described in the survey were formulated to approximate situations which most administrators are likely to encounter and are deliberately designed to fall within a grey area of borderline ethics. Each scenario requires a response which at first may not appear to have any ethical implications. However, each situation is clearly spelled out and aligned with the 1962 AASA Code of Ethics.

All superintendents received the same survey and cover letter. They were asked to respond to the questionnaire by selecting a course of action which best describes what he or she would do in that particular situation. Additionally, each respondent was asked to indicate whether the response was hypothetical or based on actual experience.

The ethical decision making instrument is composed of twelve ethical educational situations which superintendents have likely experienced in their professional lives. The superintendent indicated whether the scenario was hypothetical or actual. Usually four multiple choice responses were provided.

Scenario One required the superintendent to respond to unfavorable annual standardized test scores though the district has invested much time and money to improve them. The correct answer (B) is making the report known to the board, staff, and community. Policy Four Subsection B of the AASA Code of Ethics notes that the school administrator has an obligation to inform the board and the community of deficiencies in educational services or opportunities.

Scenario Two asked superintendents to respond to an invitation at a major convention for a free meal by a sales representative. The correct answer (D) is to accept the invitation but pay for the meal. Policy Eight Subsection A of the AASA Code of Ethics notes that a school administrator refuses to permit his relationship with vendors primarily interested in selling goods and services to influence his administration of the system he serves.

Scenario Three requested the superintendent to respond to a complaint by a well-known and influential parent of a good student in regard to the teacher's style of teaching. The correct answer (D) is to advise the parent that no direct action will be taken until both sides of the story are heard. Policy One Subsection B of the AASA Code of Ethics indicates that the professional school administrator recognizes and respects fully the worth and dignity of each individual in all administrative and leadership actions.

Scenario Four asked the retiring superintendent to help in his or her replacement rather than seek outside consultants. The board seeks the retiring superintendent's opinion on the final five candidates, some who are in the system. The correct answer (A) is to advise and permit the school board to make its own decisions. Policy Five Subsection E notes that a school administrator should refrain from making disparaging

comments about candidates competing for a position. The AASA Code is specific in regard to ethical issues dealing with the individual's colleagues.

Scenario Five focused on the superintendent purchasing sports equipment through the school account at a reduced price such as the athletic director recently did with his golf clubs. The correct answer (B) is to make your sports deal elsewhere and not through the school. Policy 8 Subsections E and I of the AASA Code of Ethics notes that during the time of employment, the school administrator shall have no personal interest in, nor receive any personal gain or profit from school supplies, equipment, books, or other educational materials or facilities procured, dispensed, or sold to or in the system he serves.

Scenario Six revolved around a new teacher to be hired. The top candidate represents a racial group which is not congruent with the rest of the school staff, the student population, or the school board. The choice of the new employee is completely up to the superintendent. Who will be hired? The correct answer (B) is to hire the minority candidate on the basis of merit. Policy Four Subsection D of the AASA Code of Ethics indicates that a school administrator resists all attempts to exclude from consideration as teaching personnel members of any particular race or creed. He also resists pressures to employ a teacher on the basis of the political, marital, or economic status of the applicant.

Scenario Seven detailed a request to the superintendent from a local service organization--of which the superintendent is a member—to use the school at a reduced rate for their charity event. The correct answer (B) is to deny any reduced rates noting the importance of applying school policy in a consistent and uniform manner. Policy One Subsection A of the AASA Code of Ethics notes that the professional school

administrator is impartial in the execution of school policies and the enforcement of rules and regulations. It is a breach of ethics to give preferential consideration to any individual or group because of their special status or position in the school system or the community.

Scenario Eight related a school board policy restricting teachers from running for public office, a policy you personally do not like. As superintendent you learn that one of your history teachers is planning to run for town councilman. What should you do? The correct answer (A) is to talk to the teacher, make him aware of the school policy, try to discourage the campaign, and warn the teacher of the consequences. Policy Six Subsection A of the AASA Code of Ethics says that adoption of policies not in conformity with the administrator's recommendations or beliefs is not just cause for refusal by the administrator to support and execute them.

Scenario Nine asked the superintendent to accept free book covers from a soft-drink company. The correct answer (C) is to send them back to the donor with a note of thanks. Policy Four Subsection C of the AASA Code of Ethics states that a school administrator resists all attempts by vested interests to infringe upon the school program as a means of promoting their commercial or selfish purposes.

Scenario Ten requested that the superintendent exceed the district salary schedule in order to hire the best teacher candidate. The correct answer (A) is to try to find other ways to make the job attractive to the candidate and yet stay within the legal and professional parameters. Policy One Subsection A charges the administrator with impartial enforcement of rules, policies, and regulations. Policy Seven Subsection A

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adds that the school administrator resist any approaches to improve or strengthen school that would be ethically undesirable or unbecoming to a professional person.

Scenario Eleven asked the superintendent to take a course of action in regard to non-English speaking students who live in the school district but are not enrolled. The correct answer (B) is getting the students to enroll and providing them with the necessary personnel and resources. Policy Four Subsection E indicates that the school leader recognizes the provisions of equal educational opportunities for all pupils may require greater or different resources for some than for others.

Scenario Twelve confronted the superintendent with low test scores at the elementary school and therefore puts the school district in academic warning under No Child Left Behind. The correct answer (C) is providing local funds for additional instructional time as opposed to eliminating other school activities or programs as stated in Policy Four Subsection E.

Each of the scenarios in the survey instrument contains a borderline ethical dilemma. Of the choices provided, only one is considered appropriate according to the 1962 AASA Code of Ethics. Ethical dilemmas are grey areas which may not at first appear to have any ethical implications. However, each indeed entails a specific ethical principle explicitly stated in the AASA Code of Ethics.

<center>Reliability and Validity of Ethical Decision Making Survey</center>

The ethical decision making survey has been widely used for research by doctoral students for over twenty years. The instrument has been slightly revised to align with laws and policies. The validity and reliability of a test is important to any research study.

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The validity of a test is the degree to which a test measures what it is supposed to measure. A concern of a study of this type is the candor of the responses on the survey.

Lawyer and sociologist Jerome Carlin found that almost total candor was exhibited in responding to borderline ethical situations, whereas extreme cases produced evasive answers. In 1969, Dexheimer concluded that from a variety and limited number of ethical responses, the personal nature of the questionnaire did not inhibit candor in the responses (Walker, 1999).

In an effort to address reliability or validity, a pilot study was conducted in two phases over six weeks with central Pennsylvania superintendents and the results correlated. For the purpose of comparing scores to measure reliability, overall or total scores were used in the pilot study. A correlation was performed on the two sets of scores, from first submission to second, using the Pearson *r* correlation coefficient. Application of the z-score formula produced an r value of .876. The significance of the Pearson *r* value is explained by indicating that .50 or more is typical of important relationships (Witte, 2007). A value of .876 would suggest a strong correlation and a better than minimal degree of reliability for the survey instrument (Fenstermaker, 1994).

A reliability analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS). The reliability analysis shows Alpha = .7619. The analysis indicates minimal variance in Alpha if any items are deleted from the questionnaire. The analysis found the questionnaire reliable (Walker, 1999).

Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire 5x Instrument

The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire Form (MLQ) was originally developed by Bernard Bass in 1985. Bass constructed the instrument based upon a series of

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interviews that he and his associates conducted with top executives in South Africa. These executives were asked to recall the behaviors of influential leaders and what actions these leaders took to encourage change. From these descriptions, Bass constructed the full-scale MLQ which is comprised of questions that measure followers' perceptions in regard to transformational and transactional leadership styles. The MLQ Form 5x is a shortened form of the MLQ copyrighted in 1995. The MLQ Form 5x is designed specifically for research.

The questionnaire consists of 36 statements that describe leadership behaviors: 20 of the questions were related to transformational leadership, 8 were related to transactional leadership, and 8 were related to laissez faire leadership. Respondents are asked to judge how frequently each statement fits them using a five point Likert scale. The ratings range from 0 to 4, with 0 meaning Not at All and 4 meaning Frequently, If Not Always. Each statement is associated with either transformational or transactional leadership style. Twenty of the forty-five items are associated with transformational leadership (Bass & Avolio, 2000).

Average scores were obtained for each leadership attribute by summing the items and dividing the number of items that make up the scale. These scores were then reported as subscale scores. Subscale transformational leadership behaviors are idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration.

Validity and Reliability of Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire 5x

Several validation studies were done pertaining to the MLQ 5x. Fourteen samples were used to validate and cross-evaluate the shortened forms. A series of factor analyses

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were completed to select items that exhibited the best convergent and discriminate

validities. A Goodness of Fit (GFI) index of .9 was established (Bass & Avolio, 2000).

Reliabilities for total items and for each leadership subscale on the MLQ 5x range

from .74 to .94. All of the scales reliabilities exceed standard cut offs for internal

consistency recommended in the literature (Bass & Avolio, 2000) The available research

provides evidence that the MLQ 5x consistently measures the constructs in keeping with

theories of transformational and transactional leadership (Pittenger, 2003).

Data Collection Strategies

The target population of this study was comprised of all other public school

superintendents in the state of Pennsylvania. Each public school superintendent was

mailed a packet. In the packet was a three part survey for the participant to complete.

The first part consisted of borderline ethical situations with only one most ethically right

answer. Superintendents were asked to select the response to the dilemma which most

closely approximates their own.

The second part of the survey consisted of 36 descriptive statements about

different styles of leadership.   These questions measure transformational, transactional,

and laissez-faire leadership styles.

The third part of the survey collected demographic information about the

superintendents. Personal characteristics such as age, gender, training in ethics, level of

education, and the number of years in the position were sought.

The packet also included a cover letter explaining the purpose of the research and

identifying the researcher and his advisor. This letter assured the superintendents of both

their personal and district confidentiality and anonymity. A self-addressed and stamped

envelope eased the respondent's survey return. Return envelopes were coded to track each superintendent's survey. Phone calls, emails, and post cards from the researcher to superintendents were also made to encourage the return of the survey. The researcher worked with the Directors of Intermediate Units, the Pennsylvania Association of Rural and Small Schools (PAARS), and superintendent colleagues throughout the state in order to obtain a high level of response. Surveys were mailed to all other superintendents in Pennsylvania, a total of 500. A follow-up postcard was sent after one week. One hundred and ninety two surveys were returned. Several emails and phone calls were necessary so that the surveys were completed. One hundred and eighty seven surveys were actually used in the study...

Data Analysis Procedures

A quantitative approach was used by the researcher. A quantitative approach is utilized to describe current conditions, investigate relationships, and study cause-effect phenomena (Gay & Airasian, 2000). The researcher utilized SPSS software to analyze the data collected through the self-administered questionnaire.

Public school superintendents' survey responses were opened and checked for accuracy and completeness. Superintendents' physical responses were stored in the researcher's office. Superintendents' responses were recorded in a SPSS statistical computer data base. After their recording, the superintendents' responses were checked for accuracy.

Once the data was collected and recorded, it was analyzed using SPSS software in these areas: demographics, ethical decision making, and leadership styles. Data analysis was conducted in two areas. First, descriptive statistics were used to summarize and

describe the characteristics of Pennsylvania superintendents' ethical decision making, leadership styles, and personal demographics. Second, chi square tests were used to examine the relationship between demographics, leadership styles, and ethical decision making.

Summary

A survey instrument was designed to examine superintendents' ethical decision making, styles of leadership, and personal characteristics. The three stage survey instrument was mailed to all other Pennsylvania public school superintendents. In stage one, superintendents made an ethical response to twelve ethical dilemmas. In stage two, superintendents indicated leadership behaviors. In stage three, superintendents disclosed demographic information. Returned survey data was checked and recorded by the researcher. Data was analyzed using SPSS software. Detailed results are presented in the following chapters.

CHAPTER IV

DATA AND ANALYSIS

Introduction

This quantitative study was conducted to examine the ethical decision making, the demographics, and the leadership styles of Pennsylvania superintendents. To collect the information in these three areas, a superintendent survey was mailed in February of 2008 to all public school superintendents, excluding the researcher. Results from the survey will be presented in six areas:

1. the characteristics of superintendents' personal demographics.

2. the characteristics of superintendents' ethical decision making.

3. the characteristics of superintendents' leadership styles.

4. the relationship between superintendents' personal demographics and superintendents' leadership styles.

5. the relationship between superintendents' personal demographics and superintendents' ethical decision making.

6. the relationship between superintendents' leadership styles and superintendents' ethical decision making.

Survey Response Rates

The researcher mailed the superintendent's survey to all other public school superintendents in Pennsylvania, a total of 500. The number of completed surveys which were returned to the researcher was 187. This represents a return rate of 37.4%. A survey's response rate was once viewed as an important indicator of survey quality.

Many observers presumed that higher response rates assured more accurate survey results. This assumption, however, has been challenged. Surveys with lower response rates of about 20 % yielded more accurate measurements than did surveys with higher response rates of about 70 % (Visser, Krosnick, Marquette, and Curtin, 1996). In another study, Keeter, Kennedy, Dimock, Best, & Craighill (2006) compared results of a five day survey using the Pew Research Center's methodology with a 25.5 % response rate with results from a more rigorous survey conducted over a longer period of time and having a response rate of 50 %. Keeter, et. al, concluded that the results of the two surveys were statistically indistinguishable. After studying 81 national surveys, Holbrook, Krosnick, & Pfent (2007) concurred that lower response rates do not guarantee lower survey accuracy and urged that response rates do not differentiate reliably between accurate and inaccurate data.

The response rate of this survey was 37.4 %. This was significantly higher than the 20-25 % rate referenced previously. The researcher feels comfortable that the results from this study will yield accurate information and reliable data.

<div align="center">Characteristics of Superintendents' Personal Demographics</div>

The researcher mailed a three part survey to all other school superintendents in Pennsylvania. One part of the survey contained questions about superintendent's personal demographics. The personal demographic questions asked in the survey were age, gender, highest degree earned, number of years as superintendent, and amount of formal ethics training.

Age

The researcher hypothesized and found to be true that the participants in this study would be older. Twenty-three superintendents were 61 and older (12.29%), and 122 superintendents were between the ages of 51-60 (65.24%). Only 42 superintendents were 50 and under (22.45%). The youngest superintendent responding to the study was 40 years old. The oldest superintendent was 66.

Previous research indicated that superintendents were people who had many years of experience in education, and, therefore, more likely to be older. Dexheimer (1969) noted that 45.04 % of the superintendents in his national study were over the age of 45. Fenstermaker (1994) replicated Dexheimer's study but limited it to Pennsylvania and found that 84.44 % of the superintendents were over the age of 45. Wenger (2004) stated that 69.26 % of the Virginia superintendents were between the ages of 51-60.

Gender

The researcher expected that most superintendent positions would be held by males as this has been the tradition in education. Although men still occupy the majority of public school superintendent positions, the gap between males and females appears to be closing. One hundred and thirty-six superintendents who responded were male (72.72 %). Surprisingly, 50 of the respondents were female (26.73 %). This percentage is slightly higher than the percentage in Wenger's Virginia superintendent study (2004) which yielded 21.14 % and vastly eclipsed the .037 % in Fenstermaker's study 25 years ago.

A review of related literature indicated that women tend to do better in ethical decision making than men. Daniel (2005) summarized several studies (Eagly, Karau, &

Johnson, 1992; Garfinkel, 1998; Helgeson, 1990) and concluded that men and women have different expectations when it comes to trust and competence. Daniel noted that male superintendents believed that subordinates should not discuss matters relating to the job unless they were directed to do so or they would be viewed as disloyal. Female superintendents, on the other hand, believed that subordinates should talk openly about job-related issues especially those involving a moral dilemma. Grogan and Smith (1998) studied female superintendents in regard to moral dilemmas and concluded that a woman's duty to provide services and to provide care was a characteristic that distinguished women from men when it came to making moral decisions about students and staff. This sense of care and duty trumped politics or finances, common impeders to male superintendents, when it came to making ethical decisions. Fenstermaker, as well, in his study of Pennsylvania superintendents (1994), found a significant difference in the selection of the correct ethical choice when making a decision as measured by the AASA Code of Ethics between men (47.72 %) and women (58.00 %).

Other researchers, however, found no statistical differences in the making of ethical decisions. Wenger, in his Virginia study (2004), Walker in her California study (1999), Segars in her Mississippi study (1987), and Winters in her Pennsylvania study (2003) reported little change between female superintendents and their male counterparts

Highest Degree Earned

To become a superintendent in Pennsylvania, a Letter of Eligibility is generally required. A Letter of Eligibility is a certification based upon a set number of graduate credits beyond the Masters Degree. An earned doctorate is preferred by most school districts but is not required. Previous studies such as Dexheimer's seminal work (1969)

and Fenstermaker's replication (1994) did not include the level of education or highest degree earned. Wenger (2004), however, did include level of education in his study and found that nearly 80 % of the superintendents who had earned a doctorate responded ethically less than 50 % of the time. Among the 187 participants in this study, 114 superintendents had earned a doctorate (60.96 %), 69 reported having earned a masters (36.89 %), and 4 reported their level of education as other (2.13 %).

Years Worked

Across the nation, the average tenure of a superintendent in a school district is between three and seven years. Superintendents depart mainly because of retirement, conflict with the school board, or going to a school with better pay (Glass, Bjork, & Brunner, 2000). Superintendents in Pennsylvania are offered either a three, four, or five year contract. In this study 113 superintendents had worked between 1-5 years in the superintendents' position (60.42 %), 41 had 6-10 years (21.92 %), and 33 had 11 or more years (17.64%).

Previous research about years of experience and ethical decision-making is mixed. Winters (2003) found a curvilinear relationship for experience. Experienced superintendents exhibited higher levels of moral reasoning than superintendents with less experience. Wenger (2004) found the opposite noting a -.321 Pearson Correlation rating and suggesting that this negative rating indicates that superintendents with fewer years of experience made better ethical decisions than those superintendents with more years of experience. Walker (1999) found no significant difference between more experienced and less experienced superintendents when it came to the making of ethical decisions.

Ethical Training

Education is a moral undertaking. Superintendents should have an understanding of philosophical approaches to ethics and have established a keen sense of moral judgment as their job requires the making of ethical decisions on a daily basis. A review of related literature indicated that superintendents have little or no ethical training but instead rely on defining moments and religious faith (Badaracco, 1998), politics (Cuban, 1998), or the morals and personal values acquired through an arduous life (Gonzales, 1999). Only 13 superintendents in this study indicated that they had a lot of ethics training (6.95 %), 87 reported some training in ethics (46.52 %), 47 had a little (25.13 %), and 40 had none (21.39 %).

Several previous researchers included ethical training in their studies. Winters (2003) found no difference in Pennsylvania superintendents who had ethical training and those superintendents who did not and Millerborg (1990) found no difference in his national study. Growe (1999), however, concluded that administrative ethical training does indeed make a difference and that more emphasis needs to be placed upon the importance of moral reasoning and moral choices and less on the technical aspects of educational programs.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were used to present the information in the demographic table. Descriptive statistics are used to describe or to summarize data, particularly data received from surveys. Major types of descriptive statistics are measures of central tendency, measures of variability, measures of relative position, and measures of

relationship. The use of frequencies was the descriptive statistic appropriate for this

study. Table 1 presents a summary of superintendents' demographic information.

Table 1

Summary of Superintendents' Demographic Information
_____

Characteristic	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
Under 50	42	22.45 %
51-60	122	65.24 %
61 and Over	23	12.29 %
Gender		
Female	21	27.73 %
Male	136	72.72 %
Highest Degree Earned		
Masters	69	36.89 %
Doctorate	114	61.96 %
Other	4	2.13 %
Years as Superintendent		
1-5	113	60.42 %
6-10	41	21.92 %
11 and Over	33	17.64 %
Amount of Ethical Training		
A Lot	13	6.95 %
Some	87	46.52 %
A Little	47	25.13 %
None	40	21.39 %

_____

N = 187

When it came to personal characteristics, superintendents were mainly older males with few years of experience in the position. They generally had doctorate degrees but little ethical training. Females accounted for a higher percentage in this study than in other studies.

<div align="center">Characteristics of Superintendents' Ethical Decision Making</div>

One part of the superintendents' survey consisted of twelve ethical situations related to the job of the superintendent. These situations are gray areas and have no right or wrong answer; however, only one answer for each question is aligned to the AASA Code of Ethics and, therefore, considered morally right in this study.

Other researchers used different instruments such as the Defining Issues Test (DIT). The DIT uses five ethical dilemmas related to Kohlberg's theory of moral development which consisted of pre-conventional, conventional, and post-conventional stages. The dilemmas were not education specific; for example, one moral dilemma dealt with how to obtain a new cancer drug in order to save a dying spouse. The researcher chose to use the AASA Ethical Dilemma Survey because it is specific to issues in education, actual experiences could be utilized, and results of this study could be compared to previous research.

A review of similar studies using the AASA instrument found that school superintendents did not choose ethically correct answers most of the time. Dexheimer's study of national superintendents (1969) found an overall mean score of 7.1 ethically correct out of a possible 15 dilemmas. Overall ethical answers numbered 1725 out of 3,630 which yielded a 47.52 % ethical response rate. Fenstermaker's study (1994) reported an ethically correct response rate of 48.06%, 1,341 ethically correct choices out

of a total of 2,790. Wenger's study of seventy-one Virginia superintendents (2004)

produced an ethical response rate of 49.51 %. Dexheimer used a 15 question instrument.

Fenstermaker and Wenger used the identical ten question instrument dropping five of

Dexheimer's moral scenarios that were no longer relevant largely because these

dilemmas were subsequently covered by law.

In this study, the researcher used a 12 question ethical dilemma questionnaire

which included 10 questions from the original Dexheimer study and were identical to the

Fenstermaker and to the Wenger studies. Two questions were added by the researcher in

order to reflect current school reform. These questions focused on standardized test

scores and English as Second Language (ESL) learners, two key areas of No Child Left

Behind.

Results from 187 participating Pennsylvania school superintendents revealed a

frequency of 1124 ethically correct responses out of a total of 2243 responses for an

overall ethically response rate of 50.11%. Interestingly, superintendents scored ethically

high on the two questions which were added to include current school reform issues. On

Question 11, in regard to the ethical dilemma of an appropriate education of an ESL

learner, there were 116 correct ethical responses out of a total of 187 for a 62.03 %

ethically correct response rate.   On Question 12, the ethical dilemma about the correct

path of action to improve sagging elementary math scores, there were 161 correct ethical

responses out of a total of 187 for an 86.09 % correct ethical response rate.

Superintendents scored the lowest on questions 4, 9, and 10. Question 4 involved

the superintendent participating in the selection of a successor. There were 29 correct

ethical responses out of a total of 186 for a 15.50 % ethically correct response rate.

Question 9 involved accepting free book covers from a company which advertised on the covers. There were 25 correct ethical responses out of a total of 187 for a 13.36 % ethically correct response rate. Question 10 involved going outside the parameters of the teachers' contract to attract a highly desirable teacher. There were 19 correct ethical responses out of a total of 187 for a 10.16 % ethically correct rate.

Table 2 presents a summary of ethical responses for each ethical dilemma.

Table 2

Summary of Ethical Responses by Question

_____

Question Number and Scenario	Aligned to AASA Code of Ethics	
	YES Frequency/Percentage	NO Frequency/Percentage
1. Report low test scores	103 / 55.08 %	84 / 44.91 %
2. Free dinner from vendor	48 / 25. 66 %	139 / 74.33 %
3. Influential parent complaint	141 / 75.40 %	46 / 24.59 %
4. Choosing your successor	29 / 15.50 %	157 / 83.95 %
5. Personal order through school	170 / 90.90 %	17/ 9.09 %
6. Hire a minority candidate	171 / 91.44 %	16 / 8.56 %
7. Organization charge for school use	72 / 38. 50%	115 / 61.49 %
8. Board policy about political office	69 / 36.89 %	118 / 63.10 %
9. Free book covers with sponsors	25 / 13. 36 %	162 / 86.63 %
10. Teacher hire incentive	19 / 10.16 %	168 / 89.83 %
11. Follow ESL law	116 / 62.03 %	71 / 37.96 %
12. NCLB requirements	161 / 86.09 %	26 / 13.90 %

N = 187

Generally, superintendents responded ethically to the current issues in educational reform such as ESL education and standardized test scores. Superintendents did not fare as well with ethical issues that were political in nature such as being involved with the choosing of one's successor, accepting a free dinner from a vendor, or giving a reduced rate for the superintendent's organization to use the school.

Characteristics of Superintendents' Leadership Styles

Three types of leadership styles were targeted for this study: laissez faire, transactional, and transformational. Laissez faire leadership is passive or avoidant; it does not influence or transfer values from the leader to the followers and only is effective when tasks are simple. Transactional leadership involves the leader and followers setting up and defining agreements in order to achieve the goals and the objectives of the organization. Transactional leaders often utilize reward and punishment as motivators. Transformational leadership is a fairly new paradigm of leadership. Transformational leadership involves a higher order moral responsibility and moral change than do other leadership styles. This higher order change involves attitudes, beliefs, values, and needs.

The MLQ 5x developed by Bass and Avolio (1995) is used by researchers to assess these three leadership styles. The MLQ 5x contains 45 questions. Nine of the questions relate to satisfaction, extra effort, and effectiveness. The other 36 questions focus on laissez faire, transactional, and transformational leadership styles.

The MLQ 5x has been used extensively for more than 20 years and in over 300 diverse research programs including banking institutions, health entities, military units, correctional facilities, and educational organizations. The MLQ 5x has proven to be both valid and reliable. Studies conducted by Mind Garden, Inc., an independent publisher of

the MLQ 5x and other psychological assessments, examined the reliability and the structural validity of the MLQ 5x. The MLQ 5x has gone through an extensive four phase review process since 1985. First, MLQ 5x items were pooled from several sources. A series of factor analyses with the earlier version MLQ 5 R was conducted to provide a base for selecting items for the MLQ 5x. These items exhibited the best convergent and discriminant validities. Second, Howell and Avolio's (1993) preliminary results with an earlier version of the MLQ 5x using Partial Least Squares analyses to select items for the revised MLQ 5x. Third, new items were developed from recent literature on leadership styles. Fourth, six leadership scholars made recommendations for modifying and for eliminating items based on the conceptual model of the full range of leadership.

As a result of this four phase review process, reliabilities for all total items and for each leadership factor scale ranged from .74 to .94. All of the scales reliabilities were generally high exceeding standard cutoffs for internal consistency recommended in the literature (Bass & Avolio, 2004). Likewise, the construct validity of the MLQ 5x has been improved and substantiated since 1985. Confirmation Factor Analysis (CFA) was performed with Linear Structural Relations (LISREL) using the maximum likelihood estimation method. The Goodness of Fit (GFI) was .73 and Root Mean Squared Residual (RMSR) was .10 respectively. The chi square with 2,889 degrees of freedom was 13, 378 (p. <.0001) indicting a suboptimal fit (Bass & Avolio, 2004).

Gerhardt (2006) used the MLQ 5x to study customer service and customer retention in a Fortune 500 company because the instrument was user friendly and has proven to be valid and reliable. Lowe and Kroeck (1996) noted the effectiveness of the MLQ 5x for evaluating the types of leadership.

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One hundred and eighty seven Pennsylvania superintendents participated in this study. One hundred and fifty nine (85.02 %) were identified as transformational leaders and twenty-two (11.76 %) were identified as transactional leaders. No laissez faire leadership styles were identified. Six respondents (3.20 %) did not exhibit a leadership style. Table 3 presents a summary of leadership styles.

Table 3

Summary of Leadership Styles

Leadership Style	Frequency	Percentage
Transformational	159	85.02 %
Transactional	22	11.76 %
Laissez Faire	0	0.00 %
Not identified	6	3. 20 %

N = 187

An even split in transformational and transactional leadership style was expected by the researcher. However, most superintendents identified themselves as transformational leaders. This was surprising since most superintendents were over 50 and conventional wisdom is that older leaders might be more resistant to transformational beliefs such as change and individual consideration.

<center>Inferential Statistics</center>

Inferential statistics, simply put, deal with inferences and allow researchers to make generalizations about populations from a sample. Inferences concerning populations provide only probability statements; the researcher is never perfectly certain when an inference is made. There are a number of different tests of significance in

inferential statistics. The *t* test, Simple Analysis of Variance, and Multiple Regression

are some. Each test has an appropriate use. To answer research questions four, five, and

six in this study, the researcher used the statistical measure called Pearson's chi square.

Pearson's Chi-Square

Pearson's chi square is a non-parametric test. Non-parametric tests are used when

data represent an ordinal or nominal scale and when the nature of the parameters are

flexible and not fixed in advance. Non-parametric methods are simpler than parametric,

easier to use, make fewer assumptions, have less room for improper use and

misunderstanding, and are often regarded to be more robust. Chi square is an appropriate

measure when two or more mutually exclusive categories are required (Gay & Airasian,

2000).

There are two different types of chi square tests. The chi square for Goodness of

Fit explores the proportion of cases that fall into various categories of a single variable.

The chi square for independence was used in this study since two categorical variables

were involved. For the test of independence, a chi square probability of less than or equal

to 0.05 is commonly interpreted as variables showing a significant or statistical

relationship. Otherwise, the variables are independent, not statistically related. This

statistical relationship is represented by the either the Asymp. Sig. or the Exact Sig.

columns in the tables. In cases where there are less than five frequencies in a cell,

Fischer's Exact Significance Test was used.

Relationships Between Demographics and Leadership Styles

Demographics and leadership styles have not been extensively researched.   For

this study, three kinds of leadership style were examined utilizing the MLQ 5x. They are

transformational, transactional, and laissez faire. Laissez faire leadership is not a formal leadership style; it is emergent and used only when tasks are simple or the leader does not want to get involved. No superintendents in the study were identified as laissez faire leaders; therefore, no study of relationships between demographics and laissez faire leaders was possible.

Transactional Leadership

Transactional leadership is a process in which the leader works toward recognizing the roles and tasks required for associates in order to reach the organization's desired outcomes. Transactional leaders negotiate with members of the organization satisfying their personal needs in exchange for achieving the goals of the organization. These exchanges are reciprocal; they influence both the leader and the organizational member. Transactional leaders engage their followers in a relationship of mutual dependence in which the contributions of both sides are acknowledged and rewarded. Transactional leadership can be very effective since it responds to the needs and expectations of the followers; however, it seldom produces a first order change, that is, a change in beliefs or values. Twenty-two superintendents in the study were identified as transactional leaders as indicated by the MLQ 5x. Transactional behaviors represented in the MLQ 5x include contingent reward, management-by-exception (active), and management-by-exception (passive).

Table 4 presents information summarizing the relationships between transactional leadership style and personal demographics of superintendents.

Table 4

Transactional Leadership Style and Demographics

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Demographic Characteristic	Transactional Leadership Per Cent/Count	Value	Exact Sig. (2 sided)	Exact Sig. (1 sided)	Point Prob- ability
Years Worked (within years)		2.674	.279	.128	.049
1-5	8.81 % / 10				
6-10	17.1 4% / 7				
11 and Over	15.23 % / 5				
Age (within age)		1.311	.523	___	___
50 and Under	7.11 % / 3				
51-60	13.94 % / 17				
61 and Over	8.72 % / 2				
Gender (within sex)		.260	.610	___	____
Male	12.51% / 17				
Female	9.82 % /5				
Degree Earned (within earned)		1.725	.371	___	____
Masters	15.94 % / 11				
Doctorate	9.63 % / 11				
Other	0.00% / 0				
Ethics Training (within training)		6.052	.091*	___	___
A Lot	30.81 % / 4				
Some	13.83 % / 12				
Little	6.42 % / 3				
None	7.52% / 3				

_____

* p < .10   N = 187

Transactional leadership style and all of the demographic characteristics are reported in this table as independent variables. However, there is a very strong, but not significant, relationship (.091) between transactional leadership and training in ethics. This is surprising since transactional leaders did not have a high percentage of doctorate degrees and the variables of more graduate level education and more graduate level ethical training would seem to go hand-in-hand.

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership is a process which promotes change in the organization by changing the individuals within it and thereby improving performance. The transformational leader focuses on strong forces within individuals, forces such as motivation, inspiration, or intellect to produce the desired transformation over time. Quantum leaps in performance can result when a group is roused from apathy or despair by leaders who can articulate innovative ideas about what accomplishments are possible. Transformational leadership is more qualitative than quantitative, more focused on the process than the product. Thus, transformational leadership is a change of degree, a first-order change, a higher order change. One hundred and fifty nine superintendents in this survey identified *via* the MLQ 5x as transformational leaders. Twenty of the 36 leadership questions relate to transformational behaviors. These include intellectual stimulation, idealized influence, inspirational motivation, and individual consideration. Each of these four behaviors is represented throughout the MLQ 5x five times.

Table 5 presents information which summarizes the relationships between demographics and leadership style.

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Table 5

Transformational Leadership Style and Demographics

Demographic Characteristic	Transformational Leadership Per Cent/Count	Value	Asymp. Sig. (2 sided)	Fischers Exact (1 sided)
Years worked (within years)		.296	.863	___
1-5	84.11 % / 95			
6-10	85.42 % / 35			
More than 10	87.93 % / 29			
Age (within years)		.166	.920	___
50 and Under	83.34 % / 35			
51-60	85.24 % / 104			
61 and Over	87.02 % / 20			
Gender (within sex)		4.528	.033*	___
Male	81.61 % / 111			
Female	94.14 % / 48			
Degree Earned (within earned)		.983		.623
Masters	84.12% / 58			
Doctorate	86.03 % / 98			
Other	75.02 % / 3			
Ethics Training (within training)		2.295	.513	___
A Lot	92.33 % / 12			
Some	86.24 % / 75			
Little	78.73 %/ 37			
None	87.54 % / 35			

* p < .05   N = 187

Transformational leadership and demographics were statistically related in only one way: women were more likely than men to identify themselves as transformational leaders. This relationship has been evident in other doctoral studies and has been substantiated by Bass (1999) in his 20 years of research related to transformational and transactional leadership. Transformational leaders had a much higher percentage of doctoral degrees than transactional leaders and yet had a lower percentage of ethical training.

Relationships Between Demographics and Ethical Decision Making

Previous studies have been inconsistent in relating demographic factors to the making of ethical decisions. Dexheimer (1969), Fenstermaker (1994), and Wenger (2004) found that better ethical decision making was made by superintendents with fewer years of experience while Segars in her Mississippi study (1987) and Walker in her California study (1999) found no relationship. Fenstermaker found that females made statistically better ethical decisions than males, Walker found only a tendency for females to make better ethical decisions, but Wenger and Segars found no difference in ethical decision making when it comes to gender. Little previous literature exists on the relationship between highest degree earned and ethical decision making. Wenger, however, found that superintendents with doctorate degrees made statistically better ethical decisions that those who did not. Scant literature also exists in regard to the amount of ethical training and how it relates to ethical decision making. Growe (1999) notes that assumptions are generally made about administrators and their ability to apply moral reasoning or to make ethical decisions and these assumptions are flawed. More emphasis needs to be placed upon the importance of moral choices and not just the technical aspects of the profession.

For this study, the making of ethical decisions most of the time was defined as

selecting the answer properly aligned to the AASA Code of Ethics in seven or more of the twelve ethical scenarios. Table 6 presents a summary of demographics and ethical decision making.

Table 6

Summary of Demographics and Ethical Decision Making

Characteristic	Aligned to AASA Code of Ethics	
	YES	NO
	Frequency/Percentage	Frequency/Percentage
Age Group (within)		
50 and Under	15 / 35.70 %	27 / 64.33 %
51-60	40 / 33.14 %	81 / 66.91 %
61 and Over	8 / 34.82 %	15 / 65.24 %
Gender (within)		
Female	19 / 38.01 %	31 / 62.04 %
Male	44 / 32.43 %	92 / 67.66 %
Highest Degree Earned (within)		
Doctorate	42 / 36.81 %	72 / 63.24 %
Masters	20 / 29.41 %	48 / 70.69 %
Other	1 / 25.03 %	3 / 75.01 %
Years as Superintendent (within)		
1-5	33 / 29.52 %	79 / 70.56 %
6-10	16 / 39.03 %	25 / 61.05 %
11 and Over	14/ 42.43 %	14 / 42.43 %
Amount of Ethical Training (within)		
A Lot	7 / 53.82 %	6 / 46.23 %
Some	25 / 29.15 %	61 / 70.95 %
A Little	19 / 40.43 %	28 / 59.64 %
None	12 / 30.04 %	28/ 70.04 %

N = 187

Generally speaking, but not at a statistical level, those superintendents who had more

ethical training responded more ethically to the AASA Code than those superintendents

who had less ethical training. Those superintendents with doctorate degrees did not

respond more ethically to the AASA dilemmas than those who did not have a doctorate.

As reported after Table 5, transactional leaders reported higher levels of ethical training

than transformational leaders reported.

Table 7 presents information about the relationship between demographic

characteristics and ethical decision making.

Table 7

Relationships Between Demographics and Ethical Decision Making

Characteristic	Value	Asymp. Sig. (2 sided)	Fishers Exact
Years Worked	2.535	.282	___
Age	.108	.947	___
Gender	.521	.471	___
Earned Degree	1.181	___	.591
Training	4.370	.224	___

N = 187

The information in Table 7 indicates that there is no statistical relationship between any

of the demographic characteristics of superintendents and their correct decision making

as aligned to the AASA Code of Ethics. This includes gender, which was statistically

related to transformational leadership (.033), and ethical training, which was strongly related to transactional leadership (.091).

Relationships Between Ethical Decision Making and Leadership Styles

Transformational leadership is often thought to be the leadership style of ethics. By definition, transformational leadership has an ethical dimension with four measurable attributes: inspirational motivation, individual consideration, intellectual stimulation and idealized influence. While all of these attributes affect the leadership of an organization, it is idealized influence or charisma which separates transformational leadership from transactional leadership and other leadership styles. Table 8 presents frequencies of leadership style and responses aligned to the AASA Code of Ethics.

Table 8

Summary of Ethical Decision Making and Leadership Styles

Leadership Style	Aligned to AASA Code of Ethics	
	YES	NO
	Frequency/Percentage	Frequency/Percentage
Transactional (within)	9/42.976%	12/57.122%
Transformational (within)	52/32.974%	106/67.123%

N = 187

In general, those leaders who identified themselves as transformational did not respond ethically most of the time. Unexpectedly, transactional leaders responded ethically at a higher frequency than did transformational leaders but there was no statistically different relationship.

Table 9 presents information about the relationship between ethical decision making and leadership style.

Table 9

Relationships Between Ethical Decision Making and Leadership Style

Leadership Style	Aligned to the AASA Code of Ethics	
	Value	Asymp. Sig. (2 sided)
Transactional	.853	.356
Transformational	.431	.511

N = 187

Transactional leadership did show a higher correlation than did transformational leadership in regard to the choosing of the answer aligned to the AASA Code of Ethics. Neither style of leadership, however, proved to be statistically significant. Interestingly, transformational leaders in addition to selecting a multiple choice answer to the dilemma often wrote their own dilemma response. This may indicate that more deliberation and reflection took place with transformational leaders as compared to transactional leaders.

Relationships Between Actual and Hypothetical Responses

Each superintendent was asked in the survey to indicate whether or not the ethical dilemma was hypothetical or one that had been experienced. Previous research has been inconsistent in regard to the relationships between superintendents who actually experienced the ethical dilemma and answered appropriately to the AASA Code of Ethics. Dexheimer (1969) indicated a positive relationship between actual experience

and AASA correctness, Fenstermaker (2004) found that a majority of non-ethical

responses derived from actual experience, and Wenger (2004) found no relationship.

For this study, histograms were constructed for superintendents who had

experienced the dilemmas and for superintendents who had not experienced the ethical

dilemmas. Then paired group *t* tests were run to compare the two groups. A non-

parametric test was also run to confirm the results of the *t* test. These results were

consistent. Figure 1 presents information in regard to the number of cases where the

superintendents responded ethically and had experienced the dilemma.
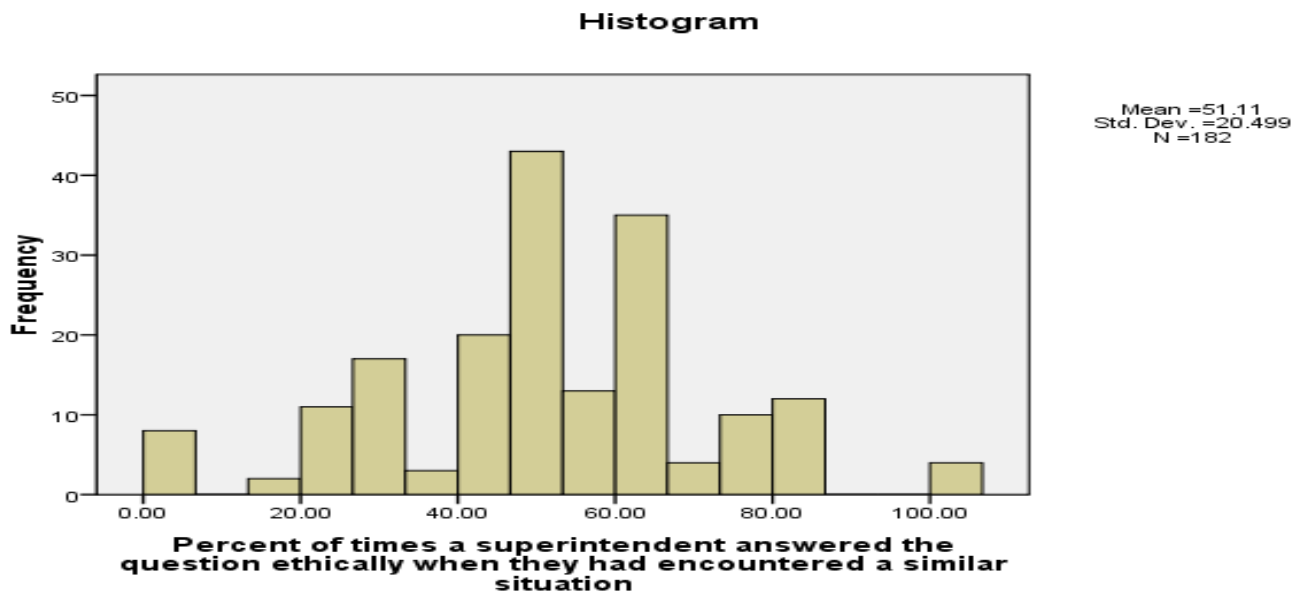
Figure 1. Summary of correct ethical responses when actually experienced.

For the group that experienced the dilemma, normality was checked. There appeared to

be a normal distribution. Figure 2 presents information in regard to the number of cases

where the superintendents responded ethically and had not experienced the dilemma.

Histogram

Mean =44.67
Std. Dev. =22.517
N =182
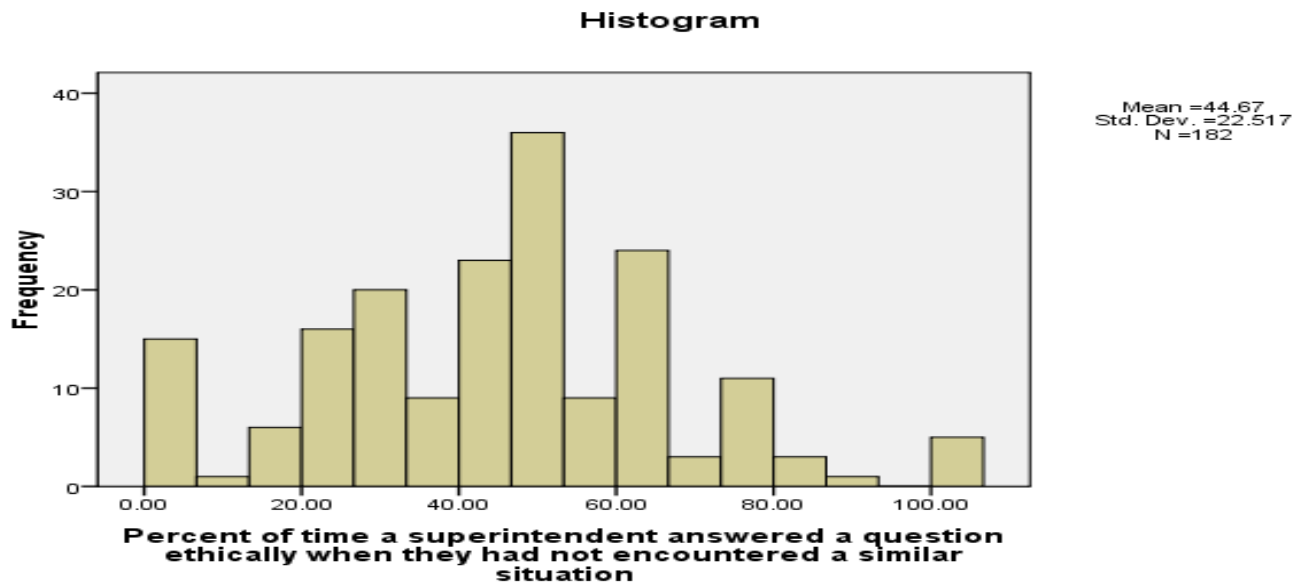
Figure 2. Summary of correct ethical responses when not experienced.

For the group that did not experience the dilemma, normality was checked. There

appeared to be a normal distribution. Using the calculated percentages, the two groups

were then compared. Table 10 displays the following results from the paired samples.

Table 10

Correct Ethical Decisions When Experienced and Not Experienced

Ethical Dilemma	Mean	Std. Deviation Mean	Std. Error
Experienced	51.110	20.49925	1.51951
Not Experienced	44.685	22.51719	1.66900

N = 187

Table 10 reflects the frequencies of responses when dilemmas have been experienced:

there is a higher mean score, a lower standard deviation, and a lower margin of error

compared to when dilemmas are not experienced. When superintendents actually

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experience a dilemma, their answers as a group are more consistent than the group who had not experienced the dilemma. The superintendents who indicated that the dilemmas were actual manifested less variability in their responses that those who indicated that their responses were hypothetical.

Table 11 reflects the statistical difference between the group having experienced the dilemma and the group not having experienced the dilemma.

Table 11

Relationships Between Ethical Decisions When Experienced and Not Experienced

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2 tailed)
Experienced- Not Experienced	6.44247	32.67989	2.42239	2.660	1.810	.009*

* p < .01   N = 187

The effect size for this analysis was computed using Fields (2005) formula for comparing two means. The effect size computed was .19 which falls into the small range according to Cohen's accepted cutoffs of .1 (small), .3 (medium), and .5 (large). The relationship between ethical decision making and actual experiencing the dilemma is significant (.009). This is a relationship that has shown to be statistical in previous research (Dexheimer, 1969; Fenstermaker, 1994).

Summary of Data Analysis

The information contained in this chapter has been gathered as a result of the study of the demographic characteristics, leadership styles, and ethical decision making of Pennsylvania public school superintendents. Surveys were mailed to all other 500

hundred superintendents and 187 responses were utilized. The data was analyzed using chi square testing. In situations where there were not enough cases for chi square to be used, Fishers Exact Test was performed. Two statistically significant relationships and one strong indication were found in this study. These will be explained in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER V

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This quantitative study was designed to gather information, analyze data, and draw conclusions about Pennsylvania public school superintendents' leadership styles, demographics, and ethical decision making.   A three-part survey was mailed to all other public school superintendents in the state of Pennsylvania. The first section of this chapter will review the study and report the major findings. The second section will present conclusions predicated on the findings and previous research. The third and final section will make recommendations for future research.

Superintendents of public school districts encounter moral dilemmas on a daily basis. Long-standing issues such as conflict of interest or personal gain certainly still exist but now more complex moral issues such as cultural diversity and academic accountability have arisen in this era of school reform. Public watch dog groups, open records law, spheres of interest, taxpayers, and the media all keep a vigilant watch to ensure that ethical decisions are continually made.

Many factors go into the making of an ethical decision. Laws, personal values, professional codes, local culture, and school board policies are some. Others such as demographics and leadership style are the focus of this study. This research will add to the body of knowledge in regard to the making of ethical decisions by public school superintendents.

The AASA Code of Ethics was used in this study for several reasons. First, a code distinguishes a profession and each profession—military, business, or medicine—usually

has one. Codes are explicit and provide for clear expectations of conduct. An

organizational member's conduct is based upon sound written principles for that

organization. In this study, twelve real-life dilemmas were aligned to the policies of the

AASA Code of Ethics. Second, a code was used because it can provide categorical data

which is data that can be grouped. In this study responses were grouped as correct if they

aligned to the AASA Code or incorrect if they did not align to the AASA Code. Only

one multiple choice answer was considered to be the correct answer. Third, the AASA

Code of Ethics has been the main instrument used for the past forty years to gather

research information in regard to ethical decision making and superintendents. By using

the ethical dilemma survey based upon the AASA Code of Ethics, it was possible to

compare the results of this study with results of previous research.

There were 187 public school superintendents out of 500 who responded to the

twelve ethical scenarios thereby generating a total of 2243 responses. Correct responses

had a frequency of 1124 (50.11%). This correct response rate slightly exceeded

Dexheimer's 1969 national study (47.3%), Fenstermaker's 1994 Pennsylvania study

(48.1%), and Wenger's 2004 Virginia study (49.5 %).

<div align="center">Findings</div>

The data presented in Chapter Four support the major findings of this study:

1. Superintendents responded ethically most of the time to moral dilemmas as
   aligned to the AASA Code of Ethics.

2. There is no significant difference in the age of the superintendent and ethical
   decision making.

3. There is no significant difference in the years of experience of the superintendent
   and ethical decision making.

4. There is no significant difference in degree earned by the superintendent and ethical decision making.

5. There is no significant difference in the amount of ethical training of the superintendent and ethical decision making.

6. There is no significant difference in gender of the superintendent and ethical decision making.

7. There is no significant difference between leadership style of the superintendent and ethical decision making.

8. There is no significant difference in age of the superintendent and leadership style.

9. There is no significant difference in years of experience of a superintendent and leadership style.

10. There is no significant difference in degree earned by a superintendent and leadership style.

11. There is no significant difference in amount of ethical training of the superintendent and transformational leadership style.

12. There is no significant difference in the gender of the superintendent and transactional leadership style.

13. There is a significant difference in the gender of the superintendent and transformational leadership style.

14. There is a significant difference in ethical training at the graduate level and transactional leadership style.

15. There is a significant difference in ethical decision making when dilemmas have been experienced and when they have not been experienced.

Several observations are to be made in regard to the findings of this study: first, there is no demographic data that statistically supports better ethical decision making; and second, there is no leadership style data that supports better ethical decision making.

Conclusions

This study was conducted to examine the relationships between demographic characteristics, leadership styles, and ethical decision making among public school superintendents in Pennsylvania. Conclusions based upon the findings and previous research were made in each of these three areas.

Ethical Decision Making

This study suggests that superintendents make the correct ethical decision a little more than half the time. The responses by all 187 participating superintendents to all twelve ethical dilemmas were examined. Of the total of 2243 responses, 1124 were correct. Superintendents therefore responded in an ethically aligned manner at a rate of 50.11 %. Other studies (Dexheimer, 1969; Fenstermaker, 1994; & Wenger, 2004) found a correct ethical response rate of between 47-49 %. In nearly forty years of research, very little has changed in the superintendents' overall correct ethical response rate as aligned to the AASA Code of Ethics.

One conclusion about using the AASA Code of Ethics and the aligned dilemmas in a quantitative study is that the overall ethical results will nearly be the same. This is corroborated by the statistics from five major research studies conducted over forty years. There will always be about one half of the respondents scoring ethically correct and one half scoring ethically incorrect. This is because the scoring is categorical—correct or incorrect-- but the dilemmas themselves are not. Dilemmas are borderline situations, grey areas, sometimes even right versus right issues, all of which encourage deliberation and create uncertainty. Inherent in the use of dilemmas to determine an ethical level is a near guarantee of an even split in terms of correct and incorrect percentages. Some

dilemmas will score high, some dilemmas will score low, and others will be in the middle. In the final analysis, there will be an ethical norm.

Not only has very little changed in the overall ethical response rate, very little has changed in the pattern of individual ethical dilemma responses. Four major studies were compared. Other studies were conducted and similar results were found, but these studies did not use the identical questions so they were not included. The four studies referenced utilized the same ten ethical dilemmas and, therefore, were able to be compared. These studies were conducted in different states such as Virginia, and Pennsylvania, and one even at the national level. These studies obviously involved different superintendents, different laws, and different ethical climates. Nonetheless, certain dilemmas are consistently answered ethically high, certain dilemmas are consistently answered ethically low, and certain dilemmas are answered consistently in the ethical middle.   A free dinner from a vendor, free school supplies with corporate sponsors, and giving incentives for teachers not permitted by the teacher's contract, for example, are usually answered ethically low. Hiring a less qualified minority candidate, resolving a parent complaint in regard to a teacher, or ordering a personal item through the school are normally answered ethically high. Participating in the selection of one's successor or charging less for the superintendent's organization to use the school facility is in the ethical middle.

Figure 3 presents the results from four research studies for the individual dilemmas as reported by each researcher.
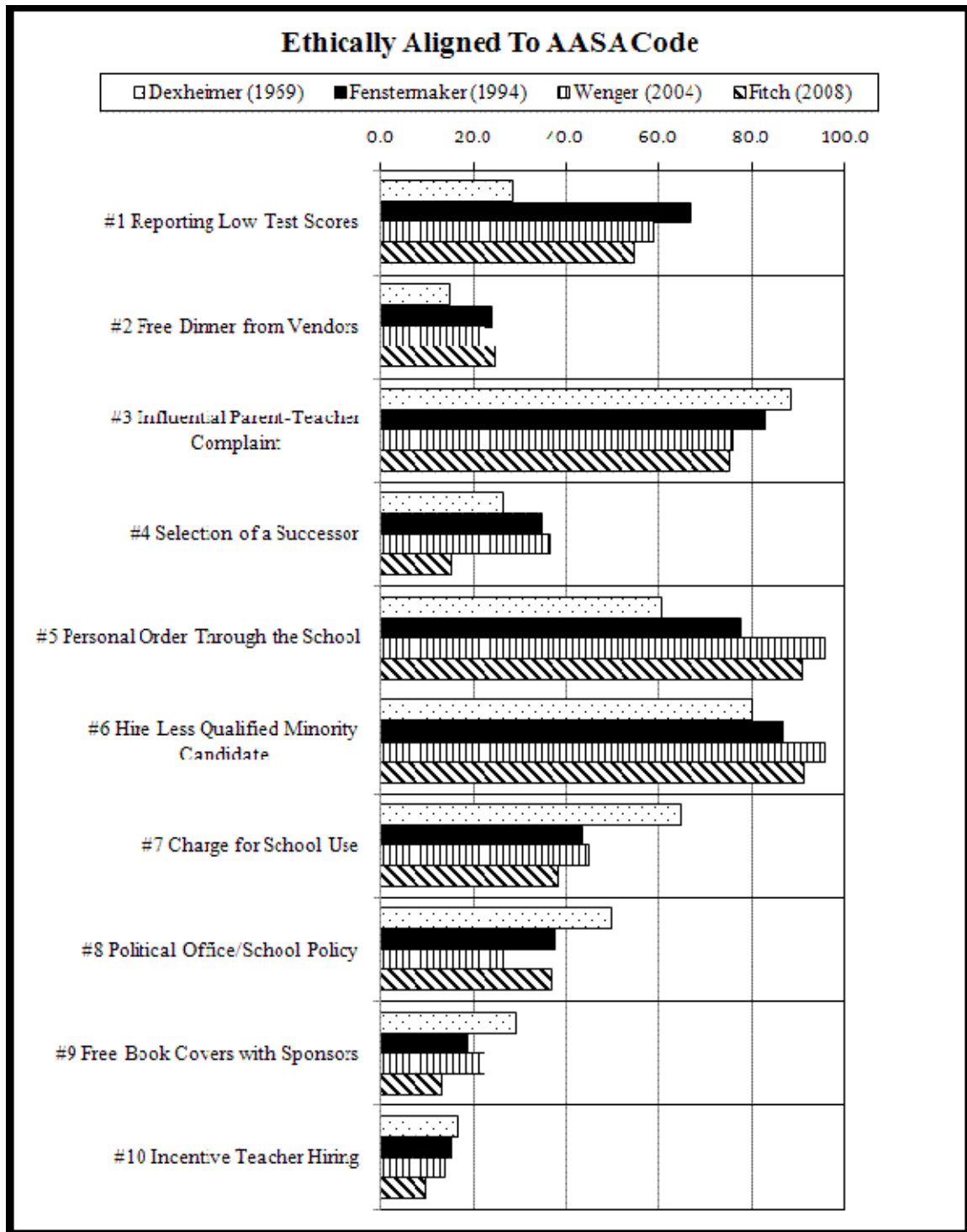
Figure 3. Dilemma results from four studies.

The percentages of ethically aligned responses are not the same but the general response patterns are strikingly similar. Why are so many superintendents responding in the same way? One possible conclusion is that for certain questions such as a personal order made through the school, there seems to be a clear cut answer. For other questions such as participating in the selection of a successor, there appears to be uncertainty.

Fenstermaker (1994) noticed this as well and concluded that survey response rates showed perhaps a severe confusion about ethical standards, a disturbing disregard for them, or both. He felt that superintendents were clearly guided by forces and by considerations other than ethical ones.

The researcher agrees with Fenstermaker in regard to confusion about ethical standards but not to a disturbing disregard for them. For example, in scenario two of the ethical dilemma survey, a business representative at an educational convention invites a group of superintendents to dinner with all expenses paid for by the company. Superintendents were asked to select the most ethical answer: (A) Accept with thanks; (B) Try to get the salesman aside, indicating that you would enjoy having dinner with him privately sometime; (C) Decline the invitation, claiming you have another commitment, even though this is not the case; (D) Accept the invitation, but only if you are allowed to pay for your own meal; (E) None of the above. The ethically aligned answer is (D). This answer is honest and keeps relationships harmonious. The AASA Code of Ethics, Policy 8, Subsection A explains that an administrator must refuse to permit his or her relationship with vendors primarily interested in selling goods or services to influence the administration of the system he or she serves.

How did superintendents respond and why did they respond that way? Only

26.5 % of the superintendents choose the correct answer (D) which was to accept but pay one's expenses. Answer C was to decline and to pretend to have another commitment; this is not correct because the ethical transgression involves deceit or dishonesty. Nonetheless, 28.8 % of the superintendents chose answer C. Over one fourth of the superintendents recognized that they should not accept a free meal but saw nothing wrong with not telling the truth about the reason why they would not attend. Ethics involves honesty as much as it involves right and wrong. Answers B (1%) and E (2%) were infrequently chosen. Answer A which was to accept with thanks was chosen by superintendents 47.1 % of the time. Even though this choice runs counter with the AASA Code of Ethics, it was selected by nearly one half of the superintendents. Most of these superintendents apparently saw nothing wrong whatsoever—no conflicts or no influence. Some may have sensed a conflict of interest by accepting the free night out but tried to justify or qualify their answers with write-ins such as "If I were already buying from them, it would be OK" or "I would tell them ahead of time that there is no guarantee of future business" or "There are no strings attached" or "I can't be bought with a dinner!" Others said it would be permissible and referenced the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania State Ethics Commission Guidelines that *diminis* exceptions cover public administrators and gifts only over $250.00 per year need to be reported on the Financial Interest Form.

Several superintendents noted that conflict of interest issues or misuse of public office issues must entail personal pecuniary benefit and that these conditions did not exist. There is clearly variability in the superintendents' responses to the ethical dilemmas. This means that superintendents, though they are responding to the same

scenario with the same set of answers available, are not only responding ethically half of the time but also responding unethically in various ways. This suggests that superintendents are using a different approach, a different framework, or different criteria when dealing with moral dilemmas. This ethical average is even somewhat skewed because two of the questions had over a 90 % correct response rate and another item a near 90 % response rate. Looking at all twelve of the questions, only three (25 %) were answered correctly by 80 % of the superintendents.

This variability may be explained because of a lack of ethical judgment. Langlois (2004) conducted a nine year study of Quebec superintendents and their making of ethical decisions. The theoretical framework used for the study was a non-linear, iterative process based upon several research studies (Starrat, 1991, 2004; Strike, Haller, and Soltis, 1998; Kimbrough, 1985; Sergiovanni, 1992; Shapiro and Stefkovich, 2001). Two means of analysis were selected to study complex ethical decision making. One consisted of semi-structured interviews with an ethical questionnaire in the form of a grid. The interview protocol was based on a complex problem case study design. The other involved transcribing the interviews, returning them to the participants for validation and discussion Complex ethical decision making is both a process that is holistic--and not behavioristic--and a competency acquired over time that involves knowledge, skills, and judgment. The role of judgment seems to be of central importance in the conversation about ethical decision making in educational administration. It focuses more on the person and not a code or a policy or a task. Langlois contends that one of the ironies of school administration is that despite rules, regulations, laws, policies, and codes, ethical decision making has not improved. Codifying everything has

in fact resulted in one's faculty of judgment diminishing and conceivably disappearing. The making of individual judgments is an important ethical activity because it allows individuals to act in accordance with their values. Individuals occupy administrative positions in organizations. He or she is committed to respecting and acting in accordance with the rules of that organization. Most of the time that is not a problem. However, in the case of complex problems, things can take on a different perspective. It can be difficult to justify one's actions according to organizational standards when they conflict with personal and professional values. Unprecedented dilemmas, likewise, require new ways of thinking and new ways of acting in order to achieve fairness or equity. Webs of laws and regulations and procedures minimize the discretionary power that characterize educational professionals. Complex decision making needs to be developed in the workplace through action training. Action training is a holistic approach that focuses on the person and the process. Sound ethical habits such as deliberation and reflection are emphasized. Deliberation occurs before the decision is made and reflection happens after the decision is made.

Because of the complexity and diversity of life, Langlois noted that ethical practice and ethical decision making among educational administrators has new axiological dimensions beyond the traditional theoretical underpinnings such as laws and codes. The post-modern context sheds new light on ethics and implies an approach to research to uncover the veiled psychological world of mental processes. Langlois contends that ethical decisions often transcend totemic professional codes which are closer to the culture of law than they are to ethical deliberation and ethical reflection. Both deliberation and reflection allow one to exercise free will, find personal

authenticity, and establish professional responsibility in the school community.

Developing this sense of *innermostness* is critical to acquiring sound moral judgment.

This can avoid certain syndromes which characterize our organizations as using one-sided thinking or reductionist logic. So often in complex situations there are no established rules as to what is to be done. Therefore, it is necessary to train administrators in moral judgment and ethics to render them capable of managing according to a renewed and responsible form of leadership. As a result of her research, Langlois developed an ethical decision making process and presented it in a matrix (Appendix I).

This matrix is a refinement of Starrat's (1991) theoretical model of justice, care, and critique. The matrix illustrates the problem solving approach actually used by Quebec superintendents. The process is dynamic and not sequential. It characterizes the stages administrators go through when confronted with a dilemma. This may explain why superintendents vary in their responses to a code of ethics because they are not only reacting to laws and policies but continually struggling to reach an ethical judgment by integrating notions of caring and justice, responsibility and authenticity, personal and professional values.

Demographics

The findings of this study do not show a statistical relationship between any demographic factors and ethical decision making. Female superintendents did not make better ethical decisions than male superintendents, more experienced superintendents did not decide more ethically than less experienced superintendents, more educated superintendents did not score higher than less educated superintendents, and more

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ethically trained superintendents did not perform more ethically than less ethically trained. Even superintendents who were aware of the Code of Ethics did not do better than those superintendents who were not aware.

One ancillary finding that was significant was that superintendents who had experienced the dilemma made statistically better ethical decisions than those who had not experienced the dilemma (.009). This finding is consistent with the findings of other research (Dexheimer, 1969; Fenstermaker, 1994; Wenger, 2004). This question was not part of the demographic survey. Superintendents were to indicate when answering a dilemma if they had experienced that dilemma or one similar to it or if their answer was hypothetical. One reason for the statistical correlation may be that a superintendent's ethical judgment improves after actual experience. Judgment is reflective as well as deliberative and plays an important role in refining ethical decisions. After actually experiencing an ethical dilemma and making a decision, right or wrong, a superintendent appears to have a better moral compass as a guide in the future.

Leadership Style

Leadership style was statistically linked to personal characteristics in two ways: gender and ethical training. Females in this study showed a significant relationship (.033) with transformational leadership behaviors. This finding did concur with other research. Bass, Avolio, & Atwater (1996), who designed the MLQ 5x instrument used in this research, concluded that women tend to be somewhat more transformational than their male counterparts because they are regarded to be more caring and more trustworthy. Ross and Offerman (1997) demonstrated as well that personality attributes which correlate to transformational leaders are qualities that are traditionally associated

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with females and female roles in our society. Moss and Ngu (2006) concluded that openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness are highly associated with transformational leaders and that these qualities are more often found in women. Proponents of feminist moral theory (Beck, 1994; Noddings, 1993; Walker, 2003; Gilligan, 1993) espouse that women are more transformational because they are grounded in the perspective of human relationships and the ethic of care. Men, on the other hand, tend to concentrate on identifying or justifying certain ethical principles and rules and think that it will lead them to sound ethical decisions (Beck and Murphy, 1997). Bass (1999) himself summarized two decades of transformational leadership and concluded that females have an edge over males in transformational attributes and encouraged more promotions of females to leadership positions. Bass also recommends that more controlled studies are needed in the area of gender.

Ethical training had a strong relationship with transactional leaders (.091) but a weak connection with transformational leaders. Burns (1978) distinguishes between the two styles. Transactional leadership, based upon rewards or punishments in exchange for performance, is more about motives while transformational leadership, predicated upon vision and goals, is more about values and causes. This is not a dichotomy for certainly both styles include characteristics of both. Based upon Burns' leadership theory, however, one would expect to see transformational leaders score higher than transactional leaders when it came to ethical decision making. In this study, the opposite occurred in several areas. Though not significant, transactional leaders also demonstrated a higher frequency of correct responses than did transformational leaders when it came to the making of ethical decisions.

Recommendations

Ethical decision making will play an increasing important role in the daily decision making of public school superintendents as they lead their school districts in an age of unprecedented diversity, school reform, and public accountability. Keeping in mind that education is a moral undertaking, the following recommendations are made.

Professional Organizations

The AASA Code of Ethics was the foundation for the research conducted in this study. The ten page document was developed by the AASA Ethics Panel in 1962 and subsequently redesigned to a one-page format in 1981. The AASA Ethics Panel itself no longer functions. In 1994, AASA developed the Professional Standards for the Superintendency in an effort to improve superintendents' performance. A total of eight standards were devised with Standard Eight being Values and Ethics of Leadership. This Standard focuses on value systems, ethics, and moral leadership. These standards were meant for adoption and implementation for colleges and universities throughout the country. Few universities bought into the Professional Standards (Hoyle, 2000). In 2007 the AASA developed its Statement of Ethics for Educational Leaders. This Statement avers that professional conduct must conform to an ethical code of behavior. The statement then lists twelve standards, five of which include wording relating to laws, policies, or contracts.

This is a trend that all professional organizations, not just AASA, should seek to emulate. Ethics may be the single most important area for present and future superintendents. Other professional organizations should work with AASA to develop a code of ethics much like the medical field or the legal profession. This code would be

relevant, practicable, and recognizable. Updates of the code would be done regularly to reflect the changing dilemmas in education. Superintendents would play a key role in this regard by providing input. This could easily be implemented by professional organizations eliciting superintendents' thoughts through email and electronic surveys. By heightening the awareness of ethics, by making superintendents more conscious of the importance of their decisions, and by improving the involvement of superintendents, ethical decision making should improve.

Pennsylvania Department of Education

Act 45 of 2007 amended the School Code to establish nine leadership standards for school leaders and directs the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) to establish programs to address these nine standards. PDE subsequently developed the Pennsylvania Inspired Leadership Initiative (PILS) to meet these nine standards. This Initiative requires that all current principals and superintendents and all aspiring principals and superintendents enroll in the program in order to earn their professional development hours. This PDE mandate in regard to Act 45 hours was effective January 1, 2008.

A review of the program shows that Unit 10 deals with ethics. Topics include ethical dilemmas and ethical decisions. Video scenarios are viewed and guiding principles are applied. These principles deal with creating a just, fair, and caring school and community. Ethical decisions are based on the best interest of the students over a long period of time.

The PILS program seems that it would be very helpful for principals. However, there appear to be no lessons about the kind of ethical dilemmas that confront

superintendents. Dilemmas such as politics vs. ethics or budget vs. ethics or board

beliefs vs. ethics should be incorporated if superintendents are to be required to take these

courses in order to get their certification or to keep it active.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education also developed a framework for

colleges and universities in regard to superintendent preparation. The framework has

three core standards and six corollary standards. The core standards address strategic

planning, academic standards, and data driven decision making. Corollary Four

addresses professional and personal ethics, codes of conduct, thoughtful judgment, and

fairness and equity—all dimensions of ethical decision making. It is recommended that

PDE place more emphasis on ethics. Perhaps make it the fourth core standard and not

just a subsection under a corollary.

<p style="text-align:center">*Local School Boards*</p>

There are several recommendations for local school boards. First, board members

need to be cognizant of codes of ethics and codes of conduct. These would relate to

professional organizations such as AASA, the Department of Education, and the School

Code.   Superintendents and district solicitors likely do a respectable job in this regard but

more needs to be done. Board members should attend trainings and conferences offered

by the Pennsylvania School Boards Association (PSBA) and these conferences should

address ethical behavior and codes of ethics as well as financial management and legal

issues.

Second, local board members need to be versed on professional values. Members

of local boards are often lay people infused with strong personal values but possess little

or no knowledge or training in regard to professional values. It is not uncommon in a

small rural school district, for example, for a board member to express support for the hometown candidate for a teaching position although the out-of-town person is clearly the better candidate for the job. The superintendent, however, may likely apply professional values and recommend the more qualified out-of-town candidate.

Third, local school boards should include ethical dilemmas as part of the interview and hiring process. Ethical dilemmas help to illustrate a candidate's way of thinking and reveals values, personality, and leadership style. Does the superintendent adhere to the Kantian imperative and go strictly by the rules? Is the superintendent consequential in thinking and weigh decisions by their results? What alternatives are considered? Who does the superintendent involve in the decision making process? What prejudices or biases exist? What role does preserving relationships play in ethical decision making? What are the consequences for the school district?

Fourth, local school boards need to enforce codes of ethics for the profession. The school board is responsible for evaluating the superintendent, the chief executive officer of the school district. Local school board members are well aware of the ethical violation if the superintendent uses the school plow to clear his driveway or uses the school credit card for personal expenses. Most are not aware, however, of the moral ramifications if a superintendent changes a schedule, cancels an order, or transfers a teacher.

Colleges and Universities

Colleges and universities initially train prospective administrators. Most administrators take courses in a broad area called Educational Administration. Courses generally focus on finance, construction, curriculum and instruction, public relations, and

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leadership styles. Few administrative programs have courses on ethics. The Professional Standards for the Superintendency developed by AASA had eight researched-based standards and included Standard 8: Values and Ethics of Leadership. These professional standards went largely unnoticed by university training programs (Hoyle, 1993). In this study, 61.2 % of the superintendents had an earned doctorate and yet nearly half (46.5 %) of the participants reported that they had little or no training in ethics and only 7.1 % indicated that they had a lot of ethical training. A course in ethics would include teleological, deontological, and normative approaches, the importance of character and virtue, harmony of personal and professional values, conflicts between administrative ethics and organizational ethics, bases of ethical support, and internal and external controls.

Superintendents

The superintendent is the top-ranking administrative official in the school district. For the superintendent to be successful in the making of ethical decisions, there must be a base of ethical support. One suggestion for superintendents is to be aware of their school and community culture and their related base of ethical support. Superintendents from large or urban school districts often face different ethical challenges than do superintendents from small or rural school districts. In large or urban districts, the superintendent may be an almost unknown person seen only at public meetings or on the news when there is an emergency situation. An urban superintendent likely faces more challenges when it comes to transportation logistics, multi-community taxes, or student diversity than does his or her small school counterpart. Often an urban superintendent does not even live in the district where he or she works.

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The small and especially the rural school superintendent faces ethical challenges that a large or urban school superintendent does not. The urban school superintendent more likely articulates his personal and professional values through policies, meetings, media, or other communiqués. The rural school is often the largest employer and the superintendent is often the most recognized and the most influential citizen. The superintendent is often the sole-decision maker and must take ownership of any problem that arises (Jenkins, 2007). Being so visible and well-known, a small or rural superintendent's personal values often come into play before professional values do. What the superintendent is wearing, what the superintendent says, what the superintendent eats, what church the superintendent attends, and what the superintendent drives may be extrapolated to professional values in a small or rural community. In a rural setting, the values of the superintendent are exposed on a daily basis.

All ethical decisions affect relationships. Most happen in connection to the workplace. If the superintendent does not support the raise that a subordinate requests, it will likely affect their relationship at work. If the superintendent does not agree with a board's request to add another sports team, it will probably reflect in ill will. Sometimes ethical decisions affect personal or family relationships. This is especially true for small and rural superintendents. Small and rural communities are very closely knit. Not recommending the neighbor's son to be hired as a custodian or not advising that your sister's daughter be hired for a teaching position will likely affect and perhaps even sever close relationships.

A second suggestion is for superintendents to periodically attend conferences in regard to leadership and ethics. The researcher attended the 10th Annual 2005 Leadership

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& Ethics Conference sponsored by The Rock Ethics Institute, Department of Education

and Policy Studies at Penn State University. The conference had many ethical themes

such as ethics and authentic leadership, ethical discernment and decision making, the four

dimensions of ethical theory, using scenarios to enhance ethical decision making, the

turbulence theory and ethics, and letter of the law and spirit of the law. At the Penn State

conference, renowned educational ethicists such as Robert Jerry Starrat (Boston College),

Lyse Langlois (Laval University), Paul Begley (Penn State University), Susan Shapiro

(Temple University), and Jacqueline Stefkovich (Penn State University) not only

presented their research but networked with individuals and groups about specific ethical

dilemmas in their school districts.

Researchers

Several recommendations will be made to guide future research. These

recommendations will be based upon the findings of this study. First, the relationship

between ethical training and leadership style needs to be explored. There was a strong

relationship between amount of ethical training and transactional leadership (.091) but

there was virtually no relationship (.513) between ethical training and transformational

leadership. Prevailing educational thought and leadership theory is that ethical training

and transformational leadership would have a higher correlation.

Second, the female gender and transformational leadership were statistically

linked (.033). Why is it that women generally have the skills and qualities that are

required of transformational leaders and men do not? The cultural expectation of

motherhood and caring, a more social and extroverted personality, a higher emotional

intelligence quotient, or a keener sense of duty and conscientiousness may hold answers.

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If females do indeed exhibit more transformational behaviors, why do they not score consistently higher than men when it comes to the making of ethical decisions?

Third, superintendents who experienced the dilemma made statistically better ethical decisions than those who did not experience the dilemma yet there was no relationship between years of experience and better ethical decision making. Why are the two characteristics not more closely related?

Fourth, no leadership style was found to be statistically related to ethical decision making. This was a key area of this study. More research is needed in this area. What leads to better ethical decision making: the idealized influence of transformational leadership or the premium placed on relationships *via* transactional leadership? Do superintendents in small or rural school districts behave in a more transactional style than superintendents in larger school districts?

Fifth, there is much variability in superintendent ethical responses when a code is the final arbiter. Superintendents are expected to honor the code of their profession but not all ethical issues are code-based. Beck and Murphy (1997) distinguish between principle-based ethics and narrative-based ethics. Principle-based ethics focuses on a specific problem answerable by policy or law while narrative-based ethics deals with values and orientation toward life. Ethical dilemmas are often narrative-based and this is what results in seeming variability when codes are utilized. More quantitative research should be conducted using the AASA Code of Ethics but the dilemmas used in the study would be rule-based. It would be interesting then to compare the results of this study with the results of previous studies where not all the ethical dilemmas were rule based.

Would the overall ethical results still be about fifty percent? Would the variability of responses be reduced?

More qualitative research should also be done in regard to ethics and codes. Superintendents answering the questionnaire in this study included many write-in answers to the individual dilemmas. This indicates that they had things to say about ethical decisions that were not available as multiple choice answers. Forty of the superintendents made optional general comments about the study itself (Appendix H). Sixteen (40.0%) said that the study was "worthwhile, important, interesting." Thirteen (32.5%) said that the choices were "unrealistic, frustrating, or limited." Eight (20.0%) said that the questions were "realistic, relevant, or appropriate." Interviews could help to explain the psychological process superintendents experience when making a complex decision. For research purposes, how a decision is made is just as important as what decision is made.

Summary

This quantitative study was conducted to seek the relationships of demographics, leadership style, and ethical decision making among Pennsylvania superintendents. More research needs to be conducted to substantiate the findings of this study and to find valid predictors for ethical decision making. School reform and cultural diversity has placed the superintendent in a position of conflicting values and public cynicism has locked the superintendent in ethical crosshairs. Every decision the superintendent makes has ethical consequences. The making of sound ethical decisions is paramount for the superintendent.

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Appendix A

Cover Letter for Superintendent Survey

Dear Superintendent:

I am a doctoral student at Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP). As part of my dissertation, I am conducting a study of ethical decision making, demographics, and leadership styles regarding Pennsylvania school superintendents.   I am requesting that you make a contribution to my study by completing the enclosed survey.

The survey takes about twenty minutes to complete and consists of three parts:

1. The first part asks you to respond to twelve situations which may be typical of those encountered by superintendents...
2. The second part of the survey asks you to respond to thirty six descriptive statements about leadership.
3. The third part asks superintendents to disclose demographic information.

Please be honest and thoughtful when completing the survey. Your survey will not be shared with anyone. It will be treated with complete anonymity. Patterns are being sought, not individual responses. Results of the survey will be made available upon your request.

Do not place your name on the survey. In order to keep track of responses received, the enclosed return envelope is coded with a number. If your reply is not received within two weeks, a note of reminder will be sent. Survey responses are to be returned in the pre-addressed, pre-posted envelope. If you would like to contact me, please do so at (814) 965-5211 or you can email me at waltf@jasd.k12.pa.us.

In closing, thank you in advance for contributing to the body of knowledge in regard to our profession.

Please return by February 15, 2008

Sincerely,

Walter Fitch, Principal Investigator   Wenfan Yan, Faculty Sponsor
Indiana University of Pennsylvania   Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Graduate Student   Department of Professional Studies
Indiana, Pa.   15705   113 Davis Hall
(724) 357-5690   Indiana, Pa. 15705
                                              (724) 357-7931

The project has been approved by the Indiana University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (724) 357-7730

Appendix B

Follow Up Post Card

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME
AND YOUR SUPPORT

I recently distributed a survey about leadership styles, demographic information, and ethical decision making in regard to superintendents in Pennsylvania. I would like to thank those superintendents who have returned this survey. If you have not returned the survey, please do so. This information is necessary for the completion of the study.

If you need another copy of the survey, please contact me at Johnsonburg Area School District:
       Office Phone: (814) 965-2536
       Office Email: waltf@jasd.k12.pa.us

Thank you once again!

Walter Fitch
IUP Doctoral Student

From: Walt Fitch
To: dwenger@rockingham.k12.va.us
Date: Saturday, October 20,
2007 8:24:31 AM Subject:

Hi David,

I am a doctoral student at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. My topic deals with ethical decision making of Pa. superintendents. I want to add two questions to the Superintendent Survey. These two questions would deal with diversity and student testing. Since you were the last person to use the survey, my advisor says that I need a short email from you giving me to permission to add these two questions. Please send soon as I am preparing for my IRB. Thank you.

Walt

Walter Fitch, Superintendent
Johnsonburg
Area School
District 315
High School
Road
Johnsonburg, PA 15845

Phone (814) 965 2536
Fax (814) 965 5809

waltf@jasd.k12.pa.us

Re: Page 1 of 1

From: David Wenger
To: Walt Fitch
Date: Monday, October 22,
2007 7:57:39 AM Subject: Re:
Yes you may add what you need. Good Luck.

David Wenger
Fulks Run Elementary School

IMPORTANT: This email is confidential, intended for the named
recipient(s) and may contain information that is privileged or exempt
from disclosure under applicable law. If you are not the intended
recipient, you are notified that the dissemination, distribution or
copying of this message is strictly prohibited.

If you receive this message in *error*, or are not the
named recipient, please notify the sender at the email
address above and delete this email from your computer.
Thank you

Superintendent Survey Part I

Please read each situation carefully and mark the responses in the spaces to the right that best represent the actions that you would implement.

1. Your district has instituted a yearly program of standardized testing for grade levels and subjects other than those tested by the state program. Results for this year have. just arrived and they show your district trailing the established goals in several areas - particularly in reading, This is especially distressing because there have been many board-sponsored workshops and subsidies for teachers to attend conferences on the teaching of reading. What do you do with the report?

   A. File it. Make some adjustments in planning privately and without a formal presentation to the Board or the total staff.
   B. Make the contents of the report known to the Board, the staff, and community at large.
   C. Review the contents of the report with the total staff and ask for guidelines.
   D. Make a presentation to the Board, in executive session, pointing out the more positive aspects of the report.
   E. Meet privately with key staff members, such as reading specialists or supervisors, and plan new approaches.

Check one:

____I have encountered a situation very similar to this in my career, so my response below is from actual experience.

____I have not encountered a situation very similar to this in my career, so my response is hypothetical.

The following best describes what I have done, or would do, in this situation: (check one)
   ____A
   ____B
   ____C
   ____D
   ____E

2. You are attending, at district expense, a major national conference of school administrators (such as the AASA convention). While there, you meet a group of friends in the hotel lobby. After a few moments your group is approached by the sales representative of a product used by all of your schools. He mingles with the group and, before long, insists that all of you accompany him to dinner at one of the city's better restaurants at his expense. How do you respond to the invitation?

   A. Accept with thanks.
   B. Try to get the salesman aside, indicating that you would enjoy having dinner with him privately sometime.
   C. Decline the invitation, claiming you have another commitment, even though this is not really the ease.
   D. Accept the invitation, but only if you are allowed to pay for your o n meal.

Check one:

_____ I have encountered a situation very similar to this in my career, so my response below is from actual experience.

_____ I have not encountered a situation very similar to this in my career, so my response is hypothetical.

The following best describes what I have done, or would do, in this situation. (check one)
   ____ A
   ____ B
   ____ C
   ____ D

3. The parents of a good student and generally responsible youngster have come to you with complaints about the teaching style of a social studies teacher. They claim he is using biased materials and slanted opinions in his classes. Further, they claim that when their son tried to question these approaches, he was greeted with sarcasm and thinly veiled threats to have his grates lowered. Father is well-known for his involvement in civic and community affairs, and he demands evidence of your immediate action. What is your response?

   A. Agree with the pesetas that the teacher is in the wrong, and indicate that censure will be applied in some form.
   B. Have the boy transferred to another classroom with a teacher whose techniques and methods are well known to you, and which you will placate these irate parents.
   C. Call the most immediate supervisor of the teacher and ask for some corroboration of the incidents; then proceed with action.
   D. Indicate to the parents that you will take the mallet tip with the teacher and his supervisors, but that no direct action will be taken until both sides of the controversy have been aired.

4. You are leaving the district at the end of this school year. The Board, not wishing to involve itself with outside consultants, has decided to handle the recruitment of your successor itself, using you as the main resource of advice and help. After going through the normal procedures, a final group of five candidates remains. These candidates have visited the district, have met with the Board, and have chatted with you and other staff members. Now the final selection process has begun, and the board is asking for some than opinions from you on these candidates. What is your response?

   A. You excuse yourself and leave the Board entirely to its own devices in these final stages.
   B. Since some of the candidates have exhibited personal characteristics which you believe would not fit is well for this particular district, you miter these opinions freely.
   C. Any advice you give is restricted to comments upon the professional qualifications of the candidates, as revealed in the placement folders and letters of recommendation.
   D. Knowing that the Board would probably want this advice, you have done additional follow-up work with each candidate (such as telephone rills}, have arrived at what you believe would be the best choice for the district at this time, and you now offer that opinion to the Board.

5. Spring has arrived, and it's time for that new tennis racket and perhaps even the new set of golf clubs that you have been promising yourself for some time. The athletic director in the district has just purchased a lovely personal set of Irons, and you suspect he did so through the district's contractor for athletic supplies, at a reduced price. How do you obtain your new set?
    A. You call the supplier, without identifying yourself, and ask for the price of the clubs.
    B. You stay away entirely from the school supplier, preferring to make your own deal elsewhere.
    C. The athletic director offers to negotiate the new clubs at a good price, especially since he does all the ordering for the district. You allow him to proceed.
    D. You call the supplier, identify yourself and your position, and ask him what he can do.

Check one:

_____ I have encountered a situation very similar to this in my career, so my response below is from actual experience.

_____ I have not encountered a situation very similar to this in my career, so my response is hypothetical.

The following best describes what I have done, or would do, in this situation: (check one)

_____ A
_____ B
_____ C
_____ D

6. Your district is a rural one, and quiet homogeneous in its population, the teaching staff reflects this homogeneity; that is, they are mostly white, middle-class, and Protestant. In your search for new staff members, an excellent candidate with extremely promising credentials appears. The i n t e r v i e w turns up the additional fact that this candidate belongs to a racial or ethnic group not generally found in your area (imagine any you wish). The Board has made it clear in the past that all hiring is entirely in your hands; they'll ratify any recommendation you make to them. How will you proceed?

    A. You turn to other candidates, not out of prejudice, but as a form of protection for this applicant, who would clearly be in a lonely and vulnerable position if hired.
    B. Hire the minority candidate on your own authority or allow the board to hear the facts and decide for itself.
    C. Although other candidates are clearly inferior, you hire one of them as the best course of action for this particular community at this particular time.
    D. You do not hire the candidate yourself, but you do make efforts to seek placement for him in the form of contacts you have in other districts.

Check one:

_____ I have encountered a situation very similar to this in my career, so my response below is from actual experience.

_____ I have not encountered a situation very similar to this in my career, so my response is hypothetical.

The following best describes what l have done, or would do, in this situation: (check one)

_____ A
_____ B
_____ C
_____ D

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7. A local service organization, of which you are a member, puts on an impressive talent show annually to raise funds. This year they have designated the proceeds to help the AFS Exchange Student Program in your school. All rehearsals and the final show will be in the high school auditorium. The chairman of the talent show has come to you to ask for a reduction in the normal rates charged by the school for the use of the facilities, so that a maximums profit may be realized. As superintendent, and a member of the organization, how do you respond?

   A. You recommend to the Board that the request be granted.
   B. Refuse the request, point out the policy as it stands, and note that other equally deserving groups use the auditorium daring the year.
   C. Since the request will mean more benefits to the district's AFS program, you grant it as an administrative action.
   D. You give no definite answer, but urge the chairman to state his case before the Board, with your support guaranteed.

Check one:

_____ I have encountered a situation very similar to this in my career, so my response below is from actual experience,

_____ I have not encountered a situation very similar to this in my career, so my response is hypothetical.

The following best describes what I have done, or would do, in this situation: (check one)

_____ A
_____ B
_____ C
_____ D

8. The Board has lately taken to adopting a number of "protective" policies for the district. Examples include: a policy requiring teachers to wear ties and jackets; a limitation on facial hair and requirement that all hair be neatly trimmed; mailboxes may not be used for teacher association literature; and a statement which discourages teachers from taking an active role in local politics. You have not been pleased with these policies, and now you learn that one young history teacher plans to campaign as a candidate for town councilman. What action do you take?

   A. Call in the teacher, try to discourage his candidacy, and warn him of the policy in effect.
   B, Say nothing to anyone, hoping that the Board will feel that the policy is not enforceable in this case.
   C. Go immediately to the Board, inform them of the actions, and point out that the teacher is non-tenured and therefore relatively easy to release.
   D. While taking an ostensibly neutral position, you openly support the candidacy in a staff meeting, feeling that this might be an excellent way to get at what is, in truth, a dubious Board policy.

Check one:

_____ I have encountered a situation very similar to this in my career, so my response below is from actual experience.

_____ I have not encountered a situation very similar to this in my career, so my response is hypothetical.

The following best describes what l have done, or would do, in this situation: (cheek one)

_____ A
_____ B
_____ C
_____ D

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9. Each year the American Legion, in cooperation with the Coca-Cola distributors, offers - free of charge- book covers for the children in your district. Aside from the Coke symbol and a few patriotic quotations, they are unmarked and in school colors. The book covers have been delivered. What do you do with them?

   A. Offer them to students on a first-come, first-serve basis.
   B. Pass them out to all children in the district, using a rationing technique.
   C. Send them back to the donor, with a note of thanks for the gesture.
   D. Keep the book covers, but accidentally "file" them in a place which guarantees they will not get distributed.

10. The competition for teachers, especially the critical subject matter areas of math and science, is always keen. Because of economic conditions in your district - as in neighboring districts -- salary schedules are generally below state averages. This, in turn, means you sometimes have to bargain with individual candidates in these critical subject areas, and the resulting salary offers often exceed what is called for by the local salary schedule. This puts the new teachers some dollars ahead of the already employed teachers of similar training and/or experience. This situation has come up again: your chemistry teacher has left and the best candidate you have unearthed will come, but not at the salary the schedule calls for. How do you proceed to fill this position?

   A. Try to find some other way to make the job attractive, such as rearrange class load, unique fringe benefits, etc.
   B. Offer whatever salary is necessary, on the assumption that superior teaching will overcome possible staff grumbling at the extra pay differential.
   C. Continue the search, hoping that an adequate teacher will be attracted by the salary your schedule calls for.
   D. Look at the current staff to see if someone can be retrained for the chemistry job, and thus make it possible for you to recruit in a less critical and less competitive market.
   E. Continue to offer the job at the proper step, but indicate that rather substantial "merit" increases will be forthcoming after some time on the job.

Check one:

_____ I have encountered a situation very similar to this in my career, so my response below is from actual experience.

_____ I have not encountered a situation very similar to this filmy career, so my response is hypothetical.

The fallowing best describes what I have done, or would do, in this situation: (check one)
   _____ A
   _____ B
   _____ C
   _____ D

Check one:

_____ I have encountered a situation very similar to this in my career, so my response below is from actual experience.

_____ I have not encountered a situation very similar to this in my career, so my response is hypothetical.

The following best describes what I have done, or would do, in this situation: (check one)
   _____ A
   _____ B
   _____ C
   _____ D
   _____ E

11. Two new school-age children were reported working at the local Vietnamese restaurant. By law. the district must provide these students with English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction during the school day. The district has only one teacher with ESL certification and her schedule is full. Your district is getting smaller and the school board has indicated that the number of faculty must align with the number of students. As superintendent what is your path of action?

A. Have a non-certified teacher with available time instruct the students.
B. Approach the school board about hiring a certified teacher.
C. Cancel a popular but not required class of the ESL certified teacher so she is available to instruct the two non-English speaking students
D. Do not identify the students as non-English speaking. History has shown that these students will likely move to a new restaurant within the year

12. The state math test scores are low in the elementary school and the school has been reprimanded by the state and the school board is concerned about not meeting the expectations of No Child Left Behind. The teachers are working hard and feel that they could get the job done with a little bit more time. As superintendent, how do you proceed?

A. Ask the teachers to volunteer their time after school in order to work with low-achieving students.
B. Eliminate recess time and use it for math tutoring.
C. Approach the board about providing local funds for after school instruction to help low-achieving math students.
D. Replace non-required art and music classes with more math instruction.

Check me:

_____ I have encountered a situation very similar to this in my carne, so my response below is front actual experience.

_____ I have not encountered a situation very similar to this in my career, so my response is hypothetical.

The following best describes what I have done, or would do, in this situation: (check one)
_____A
_____B
_____C
_____E

Check one:

_____ I have encountered a situation very similar to this in my cored, so my response below is from actual experience.

_____ I have not encountered a situation very similar to this in my career. so my response is hypothetical.

The following best describes what I have done, or would do, in this situation: (check one)
_____A
_____B

_____C
_____D

Appendix E

MLQ Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire
Scoring Key (5x) Short

My Name: _____ Date: _____

Organization ID #: _____ Leader ID #: _____

Scoring: The MLQ scale scores are average scores for the items on the scale. The score can be derived by summing the items and dividing by the number of items that make up the scale. **If an item is left blank, divide the total for that scale by the number of items answered.** All of the leadership style scales have four items, Extra Effort has three items, Effectiveness has four items, and Satisfaction has two items.

Not at all	Once in a while	Sometimes	Fairly often	Frequently, if not always
0	1	2	3	4

Idealized Influence (Attributed) total/4 =   Management-by-Exception (Active) total/4 =

Idealized Influence (Behavior) total/4 =   Management-by-Exception (Passive) total/4 =

Inspirational Motivation total/4 =   Laissez-faire Leadership total/4 =

Intellectual Stimulation total/4 =   Extra Effort total/3 =

Individualized Consideration total/4 =   Effectiveness total/4 =

Contingent Reward total/4 =   Satisfaction total/2 =

1.	Contingent Reward	0	1	2	3	4
2.	Intellectual Stimulation	0	1	2	3	4
3.	Management-by-Exception (Passive)	0	1	2	3	4
4.	Management-by-Exception (Active)	0	1	2	3	4
5.	Laissez-faire	0	1	2	3	4
6.	Idealized Influence (Behavior)	0	1	2	3	4
7.	Laissez-faire	0	1	2	3	4
8.	Intellectual Stimulation	0	1	2	3	4
9.	Inspirational Motivation	0	1	2	3	4
10.	Idealized Influence (Attributed)	0	1	2	3	4
11.	Contingent Reward	0	1	2	3	4
12.	Management-by-Exception (Passive)	0	1	2	3	4
13.	Inspirational Motivation	0	1	2	3	4
14.	Idealized Influence (Behavior)	0	1	2	3	4
15.	Individualized Consideration	0	1	2	3	4

Not at all	Once in a while	Sometimes	Fairly often	Frequently, if not always
0	1	2	3	4

16. Contingent Reward 0 1 2 3 4
17. Management-by-Exception (Passive) 0 1 2 3 4
18. Idealized Influence (Attributed) 0 1 2 3 4
19. Individualized Consideration.............................0 1 2 3 4
20. Management-by-Exception (Passive) 0 1 2 3 4
21. Idealized Influence (Attributed) 0 1 2 3 4
22. Management-by-Exception (Active) 0 1 2 3 4
23. Idealized Influence (Behavior) 0 1 2 3 4
24. Management-by-Exception (Active) 0 1 2 3 4
25. Idealized Influence (Attributed) 0 1 2 3 4
26. Inspirational Motivation...0 1 2 3 4
27. Management-by-Exception (Active) 0 1 2 3 4
28. Laissez-faire...0 1 2 3 4
29. Individualized Consideration..0 1 2 3 4
30. Intellectual Stimulation 0 1 2 3 4
31. Individualized Consideration..0 1 2 3 4
32. Intellectual Stimulation 0 1 2 3 4
33. Laissez-faire...0 1 2 3 4
34. Idealized Influence (Behavior) 0 1 2 3 4
35. Contingent Reward...0 1 2 3 4
36. Inspirational Motivation...0 1 2 3 4
37. Effectiveness...................0 1 2 3 4
38. Satisfaction............0 1 2 3 4
39. Extra Effort.................................0 1 2 3 4
40. Effectiveness...................0 1 2 3 4
41. Satisfaction............0 1 2 3 4
42. Extra Effort.................................0 1 2 3 4
43. Effectiveness...................0 1 2 3 4
44. Extra Effort.................................0 1 2 3 4
45. Effectiveness...................0 1 2 3 4

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Appendix F

Part III

Superintendent's Demographic Survey

Please answer the following questions.

1. Age_____

2. Gender_____

3. Highest Degree Earned (circle one) M.Ed Ed.D Ph.D   Other

4. Number of years as superintendent _____

5. Amount of formal training in ethics at the graduate level (circle one)

          A lot   Some   Little   None

6. Is your school classified as rural? (Circle one)   Yes   No

Optional

7. Were you aware of the AASA Code of Ethics prior to this study? (Circle one)

          Yes   No

8. Comments about the study _____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you for your assistance.

Appendix G

AASA Code of Ethics

Preamble

Public Education in America rests on firm commitments to the dignity and worth of each individual; to the preeminence of enlightenment and reason over force and coercion; and to government by the consent of the governed. Public schools prosper to the extent they merit the confidence of the people. In judging its schools, society is influenced to a considerable degree by the character and quality of their administration. To meet these challenges school administrators have an obligation to exercise professional leadership.

Society demands that any group that claims the rights, privileges, and status of a profession prove itself worthy through the establishment and maintenance of ethical policies governing the activities of its members. A professional society must demonstrate the capacity and willingness to regulate itself and to set appropriate guides for the ethical conduct of its members. Such obligations are met largely by practitioners through action in a professional society such as the American Association of School Administrators.

Every member of a profession carries a responsibility to act in a manner becoming a **professional** person. This implies that each school administrator has an inescapable obligation to abide by the ethical standards of his profession. The behavior of each is the concern of all. The conduct of any administrator influences the *attitude of the* public toward the profession and education in general.

These policies of ethical *behavior are* designed to inspire a quality of behavior that reflects honor and dignity on the profession of school administration. They are not intended as inflexible rules nor unchangeable laws. They serve to measure the propriety of an administrator's behavior in his working relationships. They encourage and emphasize those positive attributes of professional conduct which characterize strong and effective administrative leadership.

Policy 1

The Professional School Administrator Constantly Upholds the Honor and Dignity of His Profession in All His Actions and Relations with Pupils, Colleagues, School Board Members and the public.

The following examples illustrate but do not limit applications of this policy:

The professional school administrator:

A. is impartial in the execution of school policies and the enforcement of rules and regulations. It is a breach of ethics to give preferential consideration to any individual or group because of their special status or position in the school system or community.

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B.   recognizes and respects fully the worth and dignity of each individual in all administrative procedures and leadership actions.

C.   demonstrates professional courtesy and ethical behavior by informing a colleague in another system of his intention to consider for employment personnel from that system.

D.   never submits official and confidential letters of appraisal for teachers or others which knowingly contain erroneous information or which knowingly fail to include pertinent data.

E.   never fails to recommend those worthy of recommendation.

F.   is alert to safeguard the public and his profession from those who might degrade public education or school administration.

G.   seeks no self-aggrandizement.

H.   refrains from making unwarranted claims, from inappropriate advertising, and from misinterpreting facts about his school system to further his own professional status.

I.   never makes derogatory statements about a colleague or a school system unless he is compelled to state his opinion under oath or in official relationships where his professional opinion is required.

J.   exhibits ethical behavior by explaining and giving reasons to individuals affected by demotions or terminations of employment.

Policy 2

The Professional School Administrator Obeys Local State, and National Laws; Holds Himself to High Ethical and Moral Standards, and Gives Loyalty to his Country and to the Cause of Democracy and Liberty.

The following examples illustrate but do not limit the applications of this policy:

A.   A legal conviction for immorality, commission of a crime involving moral turpitude or other public offense of a similar degree shall be sufficient grounds for expelling a school administrator from membership in the American Association of School Administrators.

B.   Affiliation with organizations known to advocate the forcible overthrow of the government of the United States is evidence of unworthiness of public trust. A person who is so affiliated shall not be permitted to become or to continue as a member of the American Association of School Administrators.

C. A professional school administrator, in common with other citizens, has a right and in many instances an obligation to express his opinion about the wisdom or justice of a given law. An opinion questioning a law, however, does not justify failure to fulfill the requirements of that law.

D. The ideals of his profession require a school administrator to resist ideological pressures that would contravene the fundamental principles of public education, or would pervert or weaken public schools, their educational program or their personnel.

E. It is unethical to ignore or divert attention from laws which are incompatible with the best interests and purposes of the schools, as a way of avoiding controversy. Rather the professional school administrator will take the initiative to bring about the reconsideration, revision, or repeal of the statute.

F. The professional school administrator will not withhold evidence or knowingly shield law breakers.

Policy 3

The Professional School Administrator Accepts the Responsibility Throughout his Career to Master and to Contribute to the Growing Body of Specialized Knowledge, Concepts, and Skills Which Characterize School Administration as a Profession.

The following examples illustrate but do not limit applications of this policy:

A. In addition to meeting the minimum standards required for legal certification in his state, the school administrator has a responsibility to satisfy the preparation standards recommended by his professional association, and has an obligation to work toward the adoption of these professional standards by the appropriate certification authorities in his state.

B. The school administrator has a professional obligation to attend conferences, seminars, and other learning activities which hold promise of contributing to his professional growth and development

C. It is in keeping with the highest ideals of the profession for the administrator to support local, state, and national committees studying educational problems and to participate in such activities whenever and wherever possible, consistent with his obligations to his district.

D. The school administrator has a leadership responsibility for the professional growth of his associates which requires encouragement of their attendance at appropriate professional meetings and their participation in the work of local, state, and national committees and associations.

E. Concern for improving his profession, and for education generally, requires that the school administrator seek out promising educational practices and relevant research findings and that he share with others any significant practices and research from his own institution.

F. The school administrator has a special obligation to contribute to the strengthening of his own state and national professional association.

Policy 4

The Professional School Administrator Strives to Provide the Finest Possible Education Experience and Opportunities to All Persons in the District,

The following examples illustrate but do not limit applications of this policy:

A. The school administrator will base differentiation of educational experiences on the differing needs and abilities of pupils, giving no preference to factors such as social status or other undemocratic or discriminating considerations.

B. A school administrator has an obligation to inform the board and the community of deficiencies in educational services or opportunities.

C. A school administrator resists all attempts by vested interests to infringe upon the school program as a means of promoting their selfish purposes.

D. A school administrator resists all attempts to exclude from considerations as teaching personnel members of any particular race or creed. He also resists pressures to employ teachers on the basis of the political, marital, or economic status of the applicant. The ability and fitness of the candidates for teaching positions are the sole criteria for selection.

E. A school administrator recognizes that the provisions of equal educational opportunities for all pupils may require greater or different resources for some than for others.

F. A school administrator is professionally obligated to assume clear, articulate, and forceful leadership in defining the role of the school in the community and pointing the way to achieve its functions.

Policy 5

The Professional School Administrator Applying for a Position or Entering into Contractual Agreements Seeks to Preserve and Enhance the Prestige of His Profession.

The following examples illustrate but do not limit applications of this policy:

A. A school administrator is morally committed to honor employment contracts. He shall refuse to enter into a new contractual agreement until termination of an existing contract is completed to the satisfaction of all concerned.

B. A school administrator does not apply for positions indiscriminately or for any position held by an administrator whose termination is not a matter of record.

C. Misrepresentations, use of political influence, pressure tactics, or undermining the professional status of a colleague are unethical practices and are inimical to his professional commitment.

D. Advertising, either to solicit new school positions or to offer professional consultation services, is inconsistent with the ideals of the profession of school administration.

E. A school administrator refrains from making disparaging comments about candidates competing for a position.

F. A school administrator refuses to accept a position in which established principles of professional school administration must be seriously compromised or abandoned.

G. A school administrator does not apply for or accept a position where a competent special professional investigating committee endorsed by the Association has declared working conditions unsatisfactory until such time as appropriate corrections in the situation have been made.

Policy 6

The Professional School Administrator Carries Out in Good Faith All Policies Adopted by the Local Board and the Regulations of State Authorities and Renders Professional Service to the Best of His Ability,

The following examples illustrate but do not limit applications of this policy,

A. Adoption of policies not in conformity with the administrator's recommendations or beliefs is not just cause for refusal by the administrator to support and execute them.

B. It is improper for an administrator to refuse to work at his optimum level,

C. A school administrator has an obligation to support publicly the school board and the instructional staff if either is unjustly accused. He should not permit himself to become involved publicly in personal criticism of board or staff members. He

should be at liberty, however, to discuss differences of opinion on professional matters.

D. If a situation develops whereby an administrator feels that to retain his position would necessitate that he violate what he and other members of the profession consider to be ethical conduct he should inform the hoard of the untenable position. In the event of his imminent dismissal the superintendent should request adequate reasons and, if they are not forthcoming, or if the situation is not resolved to his professional satisfaction, he should report to the public.

Policy 7

<u>The Professional School Administrator Honors the Public Trust of His Position Above Any Economic or Social Rewards.</u>

The following **examples** illustrate but do not limit applications of this policy:

A. To resist, or fail to support, clearly desirable approaches to improving and strengthening the schools is unbecoming to a professional person and unethical conduct on the part of a school administrator.

B. The school administrator has a commitment to his position of public trust to resist unethical demands by special interest or pressure groups. He refuses to allow strong and unscrupulous individuals to seize or exercise powers and responsibilities which are properly his own.

C. The rank, popularity, position, or social standing of any member of the school staff should never cause the professional school administrator to conceal, disregard, or seemingly condone unethical conduct. Any and all efforts to disregard, overlook, or cover up unethical practices should be vigorously resisted by a school administrator.

Policy 8

<u>The Professional School Administrator Does Not Permit Considerations of Private Gain or Personal Economic Interest to Affect the Discharge of his Professional Responsibilities.</u>

The following examples illustrate but do not limit applications of this policy:

A. A school administrator refuses to permit his relationship with vendors primarily interested in selling goods and services to influence his administration of the school system he serves.

B. It is improper for a school administrator to accept employment by any concern which publishes, manufactures, sells, or in any way deals in goods or services which are or may be expected to be purchased by the school system he serves,

C. It is improper for a school administrator to be engaged in private ventures if such endeavors cause him to give less than full-time concern to his school system.

D. This policy in no way precludes investment of personal funds of the school administrator in ventures not influenced by his position in a given school system provided his own professional obligations are not neglected.

E. During the time of his employment the school administrator shall have no personal interest in, nor receive any personal gain or profit from school supplies, equipment, books, or other educational materials or facilities procured, dispensed, or sold to or in the school system he serves.

F. It is a breach of public trust for a school administrator to use confidential information concerning school affairs (such as the knowledge of the selection of specific school sites) for personal profit or to divulge such information to others who might so profit.

G. It is inappropriate for a school administrator to utilize unpublished materials developed in the line of duty by staff members in a school system in order to produce a publication for personal profit, without the expressed permission of all contributors.

H. A school administrator must be wary of using free consultative services from a commercial concern which may in effect be a skillful technique for promoting the sale of instructional or other materials in which that concern has a pecuniary interest.

I. A school administrator does not publicly endorse goods or services provided for schools by commercial organizations.

J. The school administrator should not recommend the appointment of immediate relatives to positions under his jurisdiction.

POLICY 9

The Professional School Administrator Recognizes That the Public Schools Are the Public's Business and Seeks to Keep the Public Fully and Honestly Informed about Their Schools.

The following examples illustrate but do not limit applications of this policy:

A. A school administrator has an obligation to interpret to the community the work and activities of the school system, revealing its weaknesses as well as its strengths. It is unethical for a school administrator to present only the favorable facts to the patrons of the district.

B. A school administrator maintains confidences or qualified privileged communications entrusted to him in the course of executing the affairs of the public schools. These confidences shall be revealed only as the law or courts may require or when the welfare of the school system is at stake.

C. It is proper for a school administrator to discuss confidential information with the board of education meeting in executive session.

D. A school administrator considers that those with whom he deals are innocent of any disparaging accusations until valid evidence is presented to substantiate any charges.

OVERVIEW

High Standards of Ethical Behavior for the Professional School Administrator Are Essential and Are Compatible With His Faith in the Power of Public Educ4tion and His Commitment to Leadership in the Preservation and Strengthening of the Public Schools,

The true sense of high calling comes to the superintendent of schools as he faces squarely such widely-held beliefs as the following:

A. The effectiveness of the schools and their programs is inescapably the responsibility of the superintendent,

B. Every act, or failure to act, of the superintendent has consequences in the schools and in the lives of people.

C. In many situations and to many people in a community, the superintendent is the living symbol of their schools.

D. The public entrusts both the day-to-day well-being and the long-range welfare of its children and of its school system to the superintendent and the board of education.

E. The ultimate test for a superintendent is the effort which he makes to improve the quality of learning opportunity for every child in the schools.

F. In the long run, what happens in and to the public schools of America happens to America.

Appendix H

SUPERINTENDENTS' COMMENTS IN REGARD TO THE STUDY

1. "Probably read the AASA Code at one time but do not recall."

2. "I did not feel that your situations were very real and that many of your answers were very unrealistic."

3. "Sorry it took so long."

4. "Excellent idea, good luck."

5. "I would be interested in the results."

6. "Not all of the choices reflect options I would have followed. With some scenarios I would be more direct with the issue."

7. "Very interesting. Mostly, I would follow the school code, contract, or federal laws myself."

8. "This study makes me want to know about the AASA Code of Ethics and I will look it up after sealing my envelope."

9. "Although I encountered many of the situations in the first sections, none of the available choices matched what I really did. This was frustrating."

10. "Interesting—more real life options on question 12."

11. "The hypotheticals were interesting—but more than a few had other answers that would have been more appropriate."

12. "Great topic!'

13. "Well developed survey. Would like a copy of the results."

14. "Some choices in the first section were not necessarily indicative of an action to be taken. Hence some choices were made which the best choice was selected. Despite that choice not being fully indicative of what one would actually do. One set of choices did not yield any option worth choosing."

15. "I hope your meaning in the descriptive statements is the same as mine or some of the answers will be counter for what I believe."

16. "Interesting."

17. "Some of your choices to scenarios could have been more in line to what we are currently doing.'

18. "I like that scenarios were thought provoking in a couple of situations."

19. "I am new to the position so most do pertain to me."

20. "Thought provoking."

21. "Many items are vague—too vague to answer."

22. "Not enough latitude in choice of responses. As a result my responses are skewed."

23. "Interesting!"

24. "In the situational section I selected the most likely response knowing that in individual situations there may be an alternative other than those offered as choices."

25. "Scenarios were interesting. I chose the response that was best fit. Many of the responses were part of a progression of possibilities that I might use.

26. "I found many of your choices frustrating because many did not provide me with a choice I would pursue.'

27. "As shown I have dealt with all of the ethical situations but with slightly different positions than presented."

28. "Many of the questions are taken from real world occurrences. I try to give easy-to-remember guidelines to supervisors in my capacity such as investigate the allegation, improve instruction, initiate structure, show consideration, and illustrate from a real life situation how the administrator has to respond to the situation."

29. "For several of the situations I had a response different from the options."

30. 'Not all responses in section 1 lend themselves to the range of actions available to the superintendent."

31. "There were a number of situations in which the actions I would have taken were not available in the check list."

32. "Well done and I appreciate the importance of the topic."

33. "The twelve statements that educational leaders should subscribe to are general guidelines that are contained in the code of ethics.'

34. "Options to situations were limited in their thinking to real world."

35. "Questions forced me to select from stated options when I may have taken a vague action for that situation that was not noted."

36. "Interesting work. I suspect you will find most people consider themselves ethical. It would be interesting to see how truly ethical superintendents act. I am in the last year of a 5 year contract and retiring July 1. I have one of the most unethical and dysfunctional boards in our IU. I have always taken the high ground in my decision making. That has put me into conflict with the school board."

37. "Questions were good."

38. "Difficult to choose from the choices."

39. "Some tough questions! Most are very realistic.'

40. "Some questions difficult to give answers to."

Figure 1: An ethical, responsible and authentic decision-making matrix

Identified levels of ethical dimensions

(critique, justice, caring)

| Respond to and act upon the problem | Check organizational rules and policies | Ethical conscious-ness awareness | Ethical analysis Phase | • Personal and pro-fessional values

• Moral Judgment

• Decision-making

Obtain support and validation from political decision-makers | Assertivity: Confront concerned party face-to-face | Preserve one another's dignity

Respect others

Present strong and trans-parent reasoning | End the procedure

Anticipate conse-quences and effects |

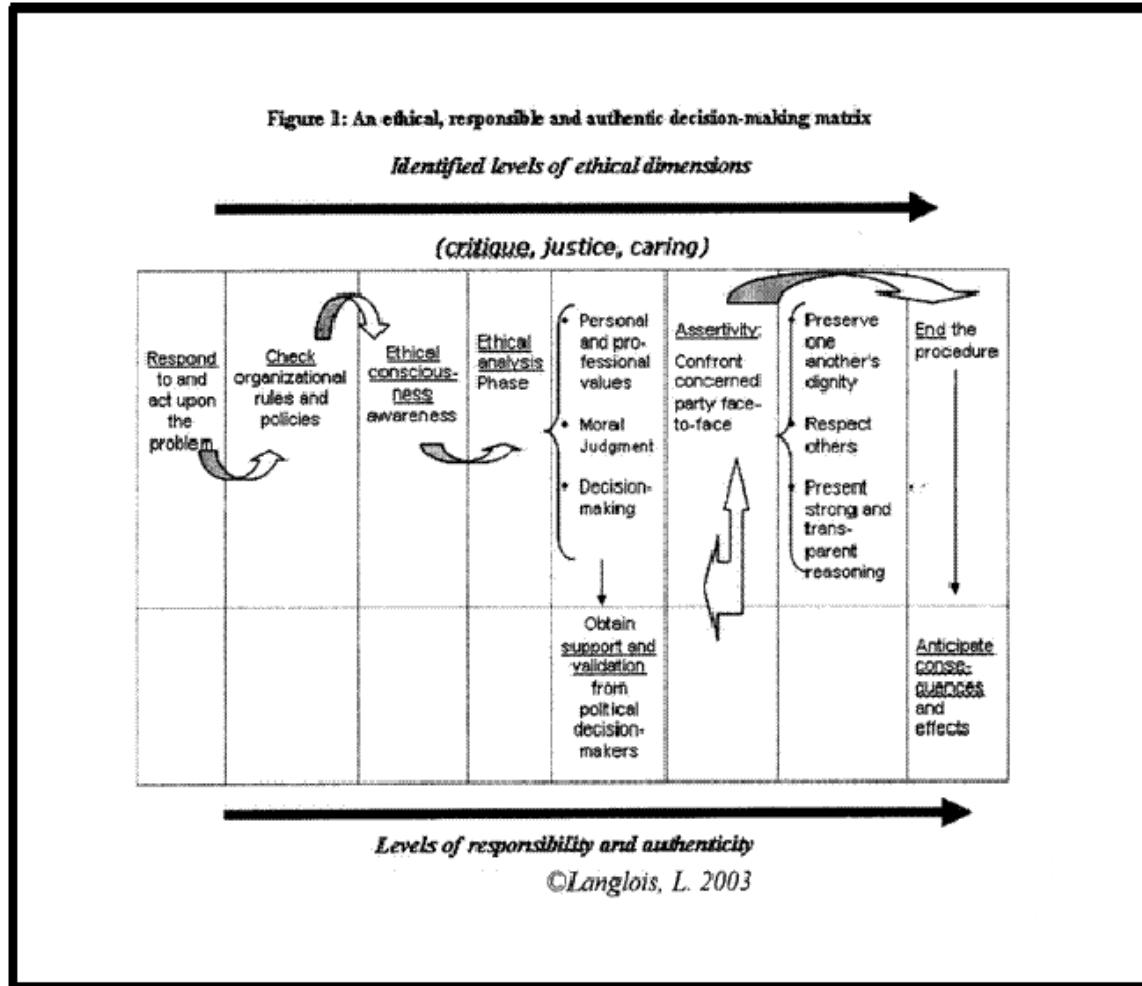*Levels of responsibility and authenticity*

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Figure 4. Ethical Decision Making Matrix (Langlois, 2003, no page given).