

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

CHARACTERISTICS OF ETHICAL DECISION MAKING PROCESS OF SCHOOL
LEADERS IN PUBLIC SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN DORMAA AHENKRO
MUNICIPALITY OF BRONG- AHAFO REGION IN GHANA



**A Dissertation in the Department of Educational Leadership, Faculty of Education
and Communication Sciences, submitted to the School of Graduate Studies,
University of Education, Winneba, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
award of the Master Philosophy (Educational Leadership) degree**

SEPTEMBER, 2017

DECLARATION

STUDENT’S DECLARATION

I, JANE CARR HUTTON, declare that this dissertation, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published work which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

SIGNATURE

DATE



SUPERVISOR’S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of dissertation as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: DR. ALEXANDER EDWARDS.

SIGNATURE

DATE

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DEDICATION

I am most grateful to the Most High God of the strength giving me to come this far in my academic journey.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTENT	PAGE
TITLE PAGE	
DECLARATION	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
DEDICATION	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	v
LIST OF TABLES	ix
LIST OF FIGURES	x
ABSTRACT	xi
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background to the Study	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem	4
1.3 Purpose of the Study	6
1.4 Research Questions	7
1.5 Significance of the Study	7
1.7 Limitations of the Study	10
1.8 Operational Definition of Key Terms	10
1.9 Organization of the Study	12
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	14
2.1 Introduction	14
2.2 Theoretical Bases of the Study	14
2.2.2 Feminist Moral Theory	15

2.3	Conceptual Framework for Decision Making	20
2.4	Ethical Framework	22
2.4.1	The Ethic of Justice	22
2.4.2	The Ethic of Critique	23
2.4.3	The Ethic of Care	24
2.4.4	The Ethic of the Profession	26
2.4.5	The Ethic of Community	28
2.5	Empirical Review	29
2.5.1	Concept of Ethics	29
2.5.1.1	Ethics Defined	30
2.5.1.2	Ethics in Schools	32
2.5.1.3	Moral Reasoning of Educators	34
2.5.2	Ethics in School Administration	34
2.5.2.1	Benefits of Codes of Ethics for Headmasters/mistresses	36
2.5.2.2	Ethical Dilemmas Faced by School Leaders	38
2.5.2.3	Ethical Decision: Fantasy or Reality for heads?	39
2.5.3	Ethical Leadership (empirical literature)	40
2.5.3.1	Ethics in School Leadership	45
2.5.3.2	Ethical School Administrators	46
2.5.3.3	Responsibility for Ethical Leadership	49
2.5.4	Decision-Making	53
2.5.4.1	Ethical Decision-Making	57
2.6	Citizenship	60

2.7.1	Aspect of the Code of professional Conduct for Teachers	60
2.7.2	General Definition of Misconduct	61
2.7.2.2	Absence from Duty	62
2.8	Summary of Literature Review	63
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY		65
3.1	Introduction	65
3.2	Research Design	65
3.3	The Study Area	65
3.4	Population	69
3.5	Sample and Sampling Technique	70
3.6	Research Instrument	71
3.7	Pre-testing of instruments	73
3.9	Ethical Considerations of the Study	74
3.10	Data Collection Procedures	75
3.11	Data Analysis	76
CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS		77
4.1	Introduction	77
4.4	The ethic of care	91
4.5	Ethics of Justice	94
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS		111
5.1	Introduction	111
5.2	Summary of findings	111
5.3	Conclusions	114

5.4 Recommendations	115
REFERENCES	116
APPENDIX: QUESTIONNAIRE	133



LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	PAGE
3.1: Number of Educational institution in Dormaa	70
3.2: Sample Size Distribution of Respondents	78
4.1: Demographic Distribution of Respondents	82
4.2 .Predisposition to Ethical Decision-making.	83
4.3. Explanations for choosing reprimand for absentee teacher	84
4.4. Reason for no reprimand	86
4.5 Reason of reprimanding students for their misconduct	86
4.6 Reasons for not reprimanding	89
4.7: Respondents' Use of Ethic of Critique Framework	92
4.8: Respondent Use of Ethic of Care Framework	95
4.9 Respondents use of Ethic of Justice framework	99
4.10: Respondents Use of Ethic of Profession Framework	101
4.11. Position Cross Tabulation Reprimand/Not Reprimand	102
4.12 Years in Position Reprimand/No Reprimand	103
4.13 Years of Teaching Experience by Reprimand/No Reprimand	104
4.14...Reprimand cross tabulation with Position of Respondents	105
4.15. Teaching experience cross tabulation with Reprimand/No Reprimand (students misconduct)	105
4.16: Gender against the need for a reprimand Crosstab	107
4.17: Should School management reprimand the students accordingly	109

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE	PAGE
2.1: Ethical Decision-making model: Humphrey, Jamosik, Creamer (2004)	21
2: Map of Study Area	66



ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the characteristics of ethical decision-making of Senior High School leaders in the Dormaa Ahenkro Municipality of the Brong-Ahafo Region of Ghana. The study was a descriptive survey that employed a mixed method approach. The study used census method to select 66 respondents consisting of Headmasters/mistresses, Assistant Heads, Senior House masters and Mistresses and Housemasters and mistresses. Descriptive statistics were used to analyse the data. The study found that school leaders were essentially pre-disposed to be professional in ethical decision-making with a tendency to applying school rules and regulations. Respondents overwhelmingly adopted the professional ethical framework to resolve ethical dilemma but also utilized ethics of care, justice and critique in their decision. The notable background characteristic of respondent's position and experience at that position influenced their choice of framework but experience in teaching mediated their choice towards a more caring and just attitude. In conclusion, school leaders in Dormaa Ahenkro Municipality are inclined to be professional in their ethical decision making but also indicate a tendency towards adopting multiple ethical decision making frameworks. The study recommends that the professional code of practice and ethics be regularly interrogated to incorporate issues of care and justice. Also the study recommends among others that the Ghana Education Service takes measures to address the tendency towards use of other ethics rather than the professional as well as to organize community-school relationships.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

In this twenty first century in which we live, many global issues like financial crisis, global warming, public scandals, and war affect schools today. Schools face some challenges that are relying on accountability, responsible and highly qualified teaching force to educate students in a pluralistic society (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005). Educational leaders will have to develop their own personal and professional code of ethics to be prepared to lead the twenty first century schools. Institutions must be prepared to be tolerant of a demographically diverse community (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005).

The power to run public education lies within the authority granted to educational leaders to make decisions. The driving force in their decision-making often depends upon whom and or what is demanding attention. It may be the loudest, most popularly accepted source, it may be the most politically threatening and powerful source; or it may be the most resilient, tireless, and unpleasant voice. Whether the influential force originated with the media, politicians, some unpopular but vocal group in the school, a committed educational leader must be aware of all forces when deciding how best to meet an educational outcome or mission. There are many ethical issues when it comes to what warrant the full attention of the leader (Strickler 2009).

Leaders in education must take stock of the responsibilities of their office. The exigent responsibility of leadership, yoked with modern day career pressures, magnifies the significance of each decision, these coercive influences have increasingly championed decisive, swift, efficient, and politically correct decisions and it is for those factors which education is paying a price (Dempster & Berry, 2003). Conversely, the process of reflective decision-making, espoused by John Dewey, the American Philosopher (Strickler, 2009), call upon the educational leader to utilize all previous training, teaching, and leadership experiences to dismiss the narrowness of self-interests, and to commit to the undertaking of reflective inquiry (Willower, 1994). By reflective inquiry one is able to consider all plausible solutions to a dilemma; the educational leader has the greatest opportunity to ensure that the final outcomes will be successful. However, because acting reflectively does not look decisive (Feldman, 2002), the committed twenty first century educational leader who seeks effective and ethical education in reflective inquiry will be criticized (Feldman, 2002).

Today's educational leaders are often trained to believe that effective leadership appears decisive and must swiftly resolve situations and challenges (Law, Walker & Dimmock, 2003). Consequently, when an educational leader delays a decision in order to become better informed regarding the dilemma at hand, his/her critics may interpret the delay as weakness and call for reasons. The reflective decision-making process utilizes a broad inquiry that responds to educational interests rather than public anxiety and fears. Reflective decision-making also tests individual reasoning and knowledge seeking which constantly challenges the integrity of educational leaders (Asseor & Oplatka, 2002). Such a process in decision making is rather good for ethical leadership.

Leadership in education or schools should not be attained by popularity or political expedience. Educational leaders should come from the teaching ranks, long service experiences, trained through advanced programmes and lengthy professional development.

This will help to identify the ethical decision making framework at work in routine school activities informing decision making in the district.

For without seasoned, mature, and ethically-grounded mentors, these new school leaders will eagerly seek advancement without fully appreciating the responsibilities and challenges that inextricably accompany school leadership (Asseor & Oplatka, 2002).

Particularly in secondary education where school leaders make many decisions affecting the welfare of students. When a situation arises requiring a decision between a right versus apparent right decision, school administrators face an ethical dilemma. Ethical dilemmas, now a part of everyday life in public schools, often test the personal, professional, and ethical values of school administrators as they struggle to do or say the right thing.

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School administrators face busy days filled with decisions, which cause stressful days and sleepless nights filled with anguish. (Cranston, Ehrich, & Kimber, 2003 p106.). Cranston et al. mention ethical dilemmas as so common in schools now that they have become the “bread and butter” of educational leaders’ lives. Begley and Stefkovich (2004) affirmed that value conflicts have always been present in school administration to some extent.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Most educational leaders in Ghana are by training and experience, equipped to employ ethics in decision making in institutions. (Sekyere, 2014) .Ethical direction is embodied in the code of conduct of many professions. However most school leaders experience ethical dilemma with regards to these directives in the application of professional of code school administrators for instance They struggle to make decisions reflecting the best interests of their students. School administrators do have ethical responsibilities. They must be knowledgeable and able to use and make moral judgments and decisions with the dignity of each person in mind, while promoting equality in all aspects of education (Begley & Stefkovich, 2007). School administrators are supposed to use an ethical reasoning framework during their decision-making process as suggested by Rebore (2001), who wrote: “The use of frameworks for ethical reasoning in decision-making is an untapped resource and a relatively recent phenomenon in education” (p. 31).

Maxcy (2002) noted “there is a crises in educational leadership” (p. 1), and many educational leaders have no sense of ethical direction. It has also been confirmed that an increase in accountability (McGhee & Nelson, 2005) has been encountered by unethical practices of educational professionals. Parry (2000) acknowledged that “although integrity and ethical leadership have recently enjoyed increasing focus, their relationship with leadership effectiveness remains under-researched” (pp. 1-2).

The Dormaa Ahenkro Municipality in the Brong Ahafo Region of Ghana is a school district where school leaders are faced with high level accountability, unethical practices among teachers and challenges with community relationships. Dery (2015) reported how the Region topped in examination fraud in the 2014 West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASCE), with particular mention of Dormaa Ahenkro municipality. A senior official of the Examination Council was said to have expressed disappointment, particularly at the type of people involved in the practice, saying parents and teachers, who ordinarily were supposed to speak against the practice, were deeply involved in and encouraged the practice Derry (2015). The involvement, whatever form, of examination malpractice by an educational leader constitutes professional ethical misconduct or behavior. Educational leaders cannot be seen as subverting the very system they are professionally trained to promote. It is thus the epitome of ethical dilemma for teacher to resolve decision making issues, in contravention of professional ethics.

Regardless of the situation, an educational leader must not be seen as promoting examination malpractice. This study seeks to comprehend the ethical decision making frame works at work in routine school activities informing decisions makings in the

Dormaa Municipality, and looks at the extent to which educational leaders may justify their approval of unethical practices in the school setting in situation amounting to ethical dilemma.

It appears that much has not been done about the ethical characteristics in the Municipality in the Brong Ahafo Region of Ghana. However studies have been conducted elsewhere on elementary school assistant principal's decision making analyzed through four ethical frameworks of justice, critique, care and the profession (Troy 2009). From the study it was recommended that it is not enough that assistant principals make decisions based on the best interests of the student when faced with ethical dilemmas, as suggested by Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005). Assistant principals must develop an ethical reasoning framework to ensure decisions made in the best interests of the student, that are right, fair, just, and good while dealing with competing demands and values of schools, parents, and students. It is against this perspective that the researcher embarked on the topic the ethical characteristics in the decision making process of second cycle school leaders in the Dormaa Ahenkro Municipality in the Brong Ahafo Region of Ghana.

This study therefore examines ethical characteristics which impact the decision-making process of school leaders in Dormaa Municipality.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to examine the ethical characteristics in the decision making process of second cycle school leaders in the Dormaa Ahenkro

Municipality in the Brong Ahafo Region of Ghana. Specifically, the study was designed to address the following objectives:

1. examine and analyse the pre-dispositions of school leaders towards ethical decision- making
2. determine school leader's choice of ethical framework in ethical decision making
3. examine the role of background characteristics in the choice of ethical framework in decision making and
4. compare the predisposition of gender groups towards choice of ethical framework

1.4 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the pre-dispositions of school leaders towards ethical decision- making?
2. Which ethical framework influences school leader's choice of ethical decision making?
3. How do the educational leaders background characteristics affect the choice of ethical framework in decision making process in their second cycle institutions?
4. What comparison can be made in the predisposition of gender groups towards choice of ethical framework in second cycle institutions in the Dormaa Municipality?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is significant to the ongoing formulation of a new leadership-training paradigm that has been the centre of debate and criticism (Quicke, 2000). The widespread

mandate to school districts, their leadership, and individual schools to produce improved student outcomes requires a new and more reflective array of leadership training criteria than was available to prospective administrators. The exploration of what is incorporated and valued by virtue of its inclusion into leaders' decision-making processes may yield data beneficial to the ongoing formation of a body of knowledge to better equip future educational leaders with pertinent skills and strategies to become more effective, more successful, and more reflective moral stewards. The findings of the study should be useful to school leaders who struggle to select the appropriate ethical values to resolve ethical dilemma.

Rebore (2001) suggested that the study of ethics provides a framework for decision-making through reflection, by the participants upon their own values. The study of ethics continues to approach issues through a disciplined way of thinking. Rebore concluded that the study of ethics provides educational leaders with a different response for educational leadership than those associated with management or business leadership. According to Dempster *et al.* (2002), school administrators make decisions daily with no laws or policies to guide them. Ethical dilemmas are not about right versus wrong, but are usually about right versus right, or value versus value, and the struggle encountered when dealing with the situation (Young, 1995). This study will be to school leaders who struggle to select the appropriate ethical value to resolve ethical dilemma.

In order to lead effectively, educational leaders need more than just the normative ideology of ethics; they need to have an understanding of what the behaviours of an ethical administrator might look like. They also need frameworks and valuation process encountered in school settings (Begley, 2006; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005). Ethical

behaviour is expected, yet rarely discussed. It was assumed that educational leaders would do the right thing when faced with an ethical dilemma. However, Campbell (2004) affirmed there is often very little open discussion of the ethics upon which the choices to be made in the difficult situation are based.

The information available from this study should also provide education policy makers with data and information to support their engagement with professional code of ethics, conduct and practice in the various specialized field in the education sector.

The study not only expands the existing knowledge of educational leaders' ethical decision-making, but also contributes to existing knowledge about ethical decision making by professionals in the teaching fraternity in Ghana.

The findings and recommendations of this study would be a useful source of literature for those institutions and researchers who want to embark on further studies on ethical decision-making process.

1.6 Delimitations of the Study

This study is delimited to second cycle institutions in the Dormaa Municipality because most of the students in the schools are adolescents and pose problems to the school leaders which stimulate them to be proactive and engage in daily decision-making.

Choice of respondents was restricted to school leaders in public Senior High School at the level of headmasters/mistresses, their assistants and senior housemasters /mistresses and housemasters/mistresses who are involved in daily decision making about students and their welfare as well as disciplining them. Form masters/mistresses and subjects heads are not included in this study. Students, teaching staff and parents'

perceptions and views of educational leaders“ decision making process also did not form part of this study.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

The study utilized the mixed method approach which is widely touted as most appropriate for exploration study of this nature. However, the researcher could not use some qualitative tools such as observation and in-depth interviews due to reasons of time and resource constraints.

The total number of respondents as obtained by census was not too large and could affect generalization. The reliability of the instrument was limited because the use of open ended questions though very revealing was not used extensively to probe the motivation of respondents. All the above mentioned could have implication for validity of the findings. In spite of the teething challenges, the study provided a framework through which scholars can conduct similar studies and recommend appropriate steps involved in making ethical decisions.

1.8 Operational Definition of Key Terms

Educational leader: Educational leaders are selected by upper levels of organizational hierarchy and have authority, which includes decision-making over those levels of the organization below them in the organizational hierarchy. In education these positions would range from Directors at the various levels of the educational ladder to heads of institutions (Sekyere, 2014).

Decision-making process: Evaluation of alternatives in the course of achieving an objective where expectations of achievement cause the decision-maker to choose a course of action that will most likely bring about the desired result (Harris 2001).

Ethics: How values are applied to the actual work of decision-making when determining right from wrong in the workplace to initiate an action (Josephson, 2009). Ethics is the study of what constitutes a moral life. Ethics is defined as the well-based standards of right and wrong of an individual's core beliefs and values.

Morals: Relating to the practice, manners, or conduct of men as social beings in relation to each other, in respect to right and wrong, so far as they are properly subjected to rules.

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

Ethical dilemma: An ethical dilemma is a situation that necessitates a choice among competing sets of principles, values, beliefs, and perspectives. Ethical dilemmas are not always about right versus wrong, but are usually about right versus right options. It is not always easy to decide which of the two rights will yield the best decision.

Ethical framework: An ethical framework is defined as a basic assumption about beliefs, values, and principles used to guide choices. The ethical frameworks used in this study are the ethics of justice, critique, care, and the profession.

Examination malpractice : an infringement of the rules governing the conduct of examination .

Examination fraud : a deliberate infringement of rules governing the conduct of any examination ,with the intent of securing a personal advantage.

School leaders : are teachers in senior high school who have other responsibilities and assist in the well being of students as a whole but in this it does not include formmaster\mistresses ,head of departments and subject teachers.

S H S: `Senior High School refers to the school system in Ghana establish to offer a the 3 year general education at the secondary level from form 1-3 (GES 2000)

S.M.B. School Management Board: is made up of the frontline of the school. They include the Headmasters/mistresses, the Assistant headmasters/mistresses; Administration, Domestic and Academics. It also includes the Bursar and Senior Housemasters and Mistress.

C.S. Circuit Supervisor

1.9 Organization of the Study

The study is organised under five chapters. Chapter one is the introduction and deals with the background which identifies the problem area and the problems to be investigated. The chapter also deals with research objectives, research questions, significance, delimitation and limitation of the study. Chapter two is the reviews of related literature. Literature was reviewed to show the theoretical framework and conceptual framework that supports the study. The literature review was related concepts of ethics and ethical decision making, responsibilities for ethical leadership, decision making, leadership preparation.

Chapter three discusses the methodology of the study. It describes the research design and instruments for the collections of data. This chapter describes the population for the study, the sampling technique and sample size, the processes and procedures adopted for data collection and analysis for the study. Chapter four presents the results and discussions of the findings of the study. Chapter five is about summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study. Recommendations from the findings and suggested areas for further research were also included in the chapter five.



CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

Chapter two of this study reviewed literature relevant and related to the study. The literature reviewed was related to adulthood theoretical bases and conceptual framework, and empirical reviews for the study. Thus, the literature review was focused on three thematic areas, namely: (i) adulthood in general and gender-orientation (Feminist Moral) theories, (ii) concepts such as ethics of care, justice, and critique to form the basis for the study and (iii) empirical review of ethical school leadership and ethical decision-making.

2.2 Theoretical Bases of the Study

The ethical dilemmas faced by educational leaders have been more challenging than in the history of public schools. Student proficiency, curriculum standards, increased diversity, compliance with stringent educational laws, budgetary restrictions, and high levels of accountability for increased performance have brought about school organizations that are complex and overextended (McGhee & Nelson, 2005; Murphy, 2002; Pardini, 2004). Consider also the wave of national, political, and social tragedies, as well as worldwide crises that have impacted on schools in many ways (Begley & Johansson, 2003; Bolman & Deal, 2003). Maxcy (2002) noted “there is a crises in educational leadership”(p.1), and many educational leaders have no sense of ethical direction. Parry (2000) acknowledged that “although integrity and ethical leadership have recently enjoyed increasing focus, their relationship with leadership effectiveness remains under-researched”(p.1-2). Fenstermaker (2004) reported that “females scored consistently

higher in making ethical choices than males” (p. v). Literature review confirmed that an increase in accountability (McGhee & Nelson, 2005) has been countered by unethical practices of educational professionals. .

2.2.2 Feminist Moral Theory

The theoretical bases of this present study is based on Feminist Moral Theory. According to Beck and Murphy (1997), “academics and professionals in education embrace one of two general ways of thinking about ethics. The first is evident in works that concentrate upon identifying and justifying certain principles” (p.33). Educators using this framework of ethics are concerned with rules and “assume that sound moral principles can be discovered by a process of careful reasoning” (Beck & Murphy, 1997, p. 33). Contrasting with the ethics of justice is feminist moral theory which is grounded in the perspective of human relationships and an ethic of care (Walker, 2003). As explained by Beck and Murphy (1997), “Scholars in this camp stress the importance of developing acute moral perception, or understanding persons and context, and of cultivating virtues”(p.33) Thus, this view embraces feminist moral theory by emphasizing “caring for individuals as unique persons” (Furman, 2003, p. 3). Decision-making practices, linked with an ethic of care, are focused on relationships and the “absolute regard for the dignity and intrinsic value of each person” (Furman, 2003, p.3).

Proponents of feminist moral theory espouse an ethic of care and relationship-building (Beck, 2004; Walker, 2003). Beck determined that the expectations of political leaders, teachers, and parents have created “divergent perspectives on educational purposes and on the role of administrators in fulfilling these purposes” (p.58) which may

be addressed through an ethics of care. Beck continued by suggesting that “an ethic of care has the potential to provide a solid foundation” (p.58) to meet the challenges facing administrators. According to Walker (2003), feminist moral theory “insists we look at the impact of intersections and distributions of social authority, privilege, and power both on morality as an aspect of social life and on ethics as the reflective and systematic representation of morality” (p.207). Tong (2003) determined: “People who adopt a feminine approach to ethics are generally interested in exploring the ethical implications of allegedly feminine concepts such as care and connectedness and contrasting them with the ethical implications of allegedly masculine concepts such as justice and autonomy”(p10).

Feminist moral theory provides a framework which provides educational leaders with a perspective of an ethic of care, thereby emphasizing the “intrinsic value of human beings and a belief that actions motivated by this ethic will be characterized by an unconditional commitment to persons” (Beck, 2004, p.71). Ethics, values, belief, and commitment, each a critical dimension of an ethical leader, collectively define the essence of effective leadership.

Gilligan (2003) determined that moral reasoning is predicated on an ethic of care and is contingent on relationships. Gilligan determined that “the voice of concern, connectedness, relatedness over time, and caring” (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005, p.122) or feminist voice, had not been acknowledged as an approach to solving moral dilemmas. Noddings (1993 cited in Devore, & Martin, 2008) explained that “feminists... argue that such an ethical orientation of justice strips human life of its humanity” (p.44). Hence,

literature suggests that conversations surrounding the issues of justice versus care will continue in the study of leadership (Collard, 2003).

Kohlberg, Levine, and Hewer (1984 cited by DeVore, & Martin, 2008) espoused a progression of masculine moral development based on justice, or “abstract rights, law” (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005, p. 122). Kohlberg’s theory of moral development was delineated as six hierarchical stages of moral reasoning ranging from “punishment and obedience orientation to the universal ethical principle orientation” (Sims, 2004, p. 108). Duty and justice are the determining ethical principles associated with Kohlberg’s model.

Additionally, Kohlberg *et al.* asserted that a theory of moral judgment, based on a combination of cognitive and developmental stages, was “the rational reconstruction of the ontogenesis of justice reasoning” (DeVore & Martin, 2008p. 212). According to Rebore (2001), “educational leaders desirous of leading an ethical life must eventually come to grips with the virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance”(p.26) which are traditionally termed the cardinal virtues. Rebore determined that the “contemporary understanding of virtue must be viewed in the context of human development in general; also, human development must be viewed as a process, which begins in early childhood, extends into adulthood, and terminates only with death” (p.26-27).

Kohlberg (et. al, 1984 cited in DeVore & Martin, 2008) further argued that the stages of moral development were universal to all people. Boss (2004) noted that “studies from more than forty Western and non-Western countries support Kohlberg’s theory that stages of moral development are universal. And cross-cultural findings also lend support to the claim that some cultures are more prone to promote virtue in their citizens”(p.209).

Criticisms of Kohlberg's model of moral development have emerged (Gilligan, 2003). In reaction to Kohlberg's findings that "women clustered at an inferior stage of moral development and that few women attained what he defined as the highest stage of moral reasoning," Gilligan (2003) noticed the "repeated exclusion of women from the critical theory-building studies of psychological research" (p.1) and began to develop an alternative theory surrounding the ethic of care. Foremost in Gilligan's critical assessment of the Kohlbergian concept was the masculine bias evident in the fact that Kohlberg choose males as subjects in his initial research projects (Boss, 2004). Additionally, Kohlberg "drew the conclusion on the basis of his all-male research that men operated at a significantly higher level of moral reasoning than do women, the majority of whom were determined to be at stage 3, the conventional stage" (Boss, 2004, p. 211). Gilligan (2003) countered that "women did not seem to progress linearly to higher stages in ethical problem-solving in accordance with Kohlberg's hierarchy. Women did not seem to make the same ethical choices, nor construe ethical issues in the same way as men" (Rabouin, 2006, p.5). Thus, the discourse regarding if women make ethical decisions differently than men continues.

Consequently, the dimensions of ethics are diverse and, as with any position of leadership, require a virtuosic mastery over a vast, complex array of knowledge and skill (Crawford & Nicklaus, 2000). Gilligan (2003) argued: "Given the differences in women's conceptions of self and morality, women bring to the life cycle a different point of view and order human experience in terms of different priorities" (p.22). Gilligan concluded that perhaps ethical dimensions of men and women are different. Boss (2004)

summarized the differences as men tend to be duty and principle oriented; women are more context oriented and tend to view the world in a more emotional and personal way.

Barnett 2001) asserted that “in becoming a moral leader, human beings must become conscious of their own thought processes, preferences, and values”(p.154). Beyond the personal aspects associated with ethical leadership are the principles of professional ethics. Johnson (2007) defined “principles of professionalism as ethical rules or decisions and performances that transcend personal considerations and circumstantial pressures and that promote the higher good of the organization and its clients” (p.31).

Kidder and Born (2002) proposed that decision-making is an ethical “process that applies structure in the midst of pressure and promotes rational discourse in the face of emotional tensions” (p.2). The quality of the decision is based on the leaders “ethical clarity and moral courage” (p. 5). Ethical decision-making is a difficult and emotional process; therefore, “we need to determine early on that moral reasoning is worth the effort. Only then will we be willing to invest the time and energy we need to improve our ethical fitness” (Johnson, 2007 p.41). Historically, research concerned with ethical leadership was framed around traditional moral theory associated with justice and duty (Kohlberg et al., 1984 cited in DeVore & Martin, 2008; Trevino, 2006). Current research of the personal and professional ethics of educational leaders, in relation to decision-making practices, is limited and “few empirical studies on ethical dimensions have been conducted on school administration” (Langlois, 2004, p. 80). This study, using the perceptions and insights of heads of second cycle schools, was intended to explore the decision-making processes utilized when confronted with ethical dilemmas within the context of ethics.

2.3 Conceptual Framework for Decision Making

The conceptual framework for this study flows from a model developed by Trevino (2002) for examining the variables in decision-making, as it relates to ethics within an organizational environment. This model suggests a sequence that most closely approximates decision-making in an educational environment, recognizing alternate sequences dependant on inputs. Trevino's (2002) model is prescriptive in that it promotes identification of the influences and issues at the attribute level of decision-making (Carroll & Johnson, 2000). The study employed concept in educational leadership ,ethical dilemma, ethical decision making and ethical framework. These have been defined in the literature. Humphery, Janisok etc (2004)

Step 1, represents an issue of ethical dilemma faced by an educational leader and subject to decision making. In step 1 the issue is defined .In step 2, an effort is made to resolve the dilemma faced by the school leader .the four choices available to decision maker represent utilisation of an ethical framework of either care, critique, fairness or profession. The basic element involved in each is subjected to consideration .in step 3.

In step 4, a decision is made to use an ethical framework to resolve the issue in step 1. This conceptual framework originally develop by Humphery etal (2004). is thus relevant to this study which sought to establish the kinds of ethical framework used by school leaders to resolve ethical dilemmas in decision making.

Flow chart for Ethical Decision-making

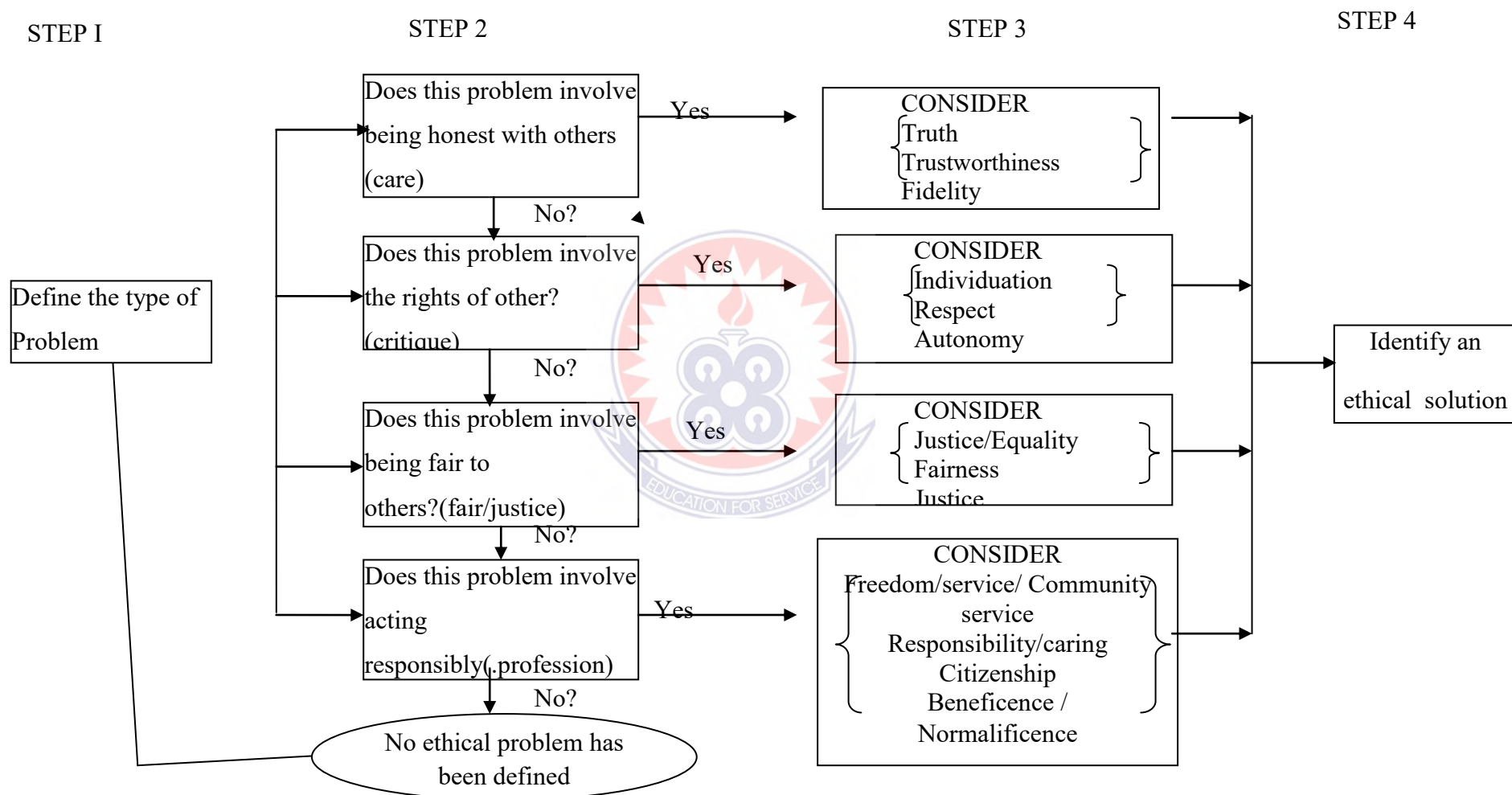


Figure 1: Ethical Decision-making model: Humphrey, Jamosik, Creamer (2004)

2.4 Ethical Framework

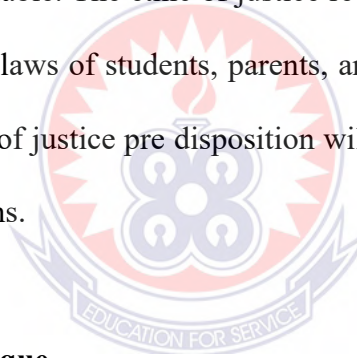
From earliest times, philosophers wrote of justice to mean fate versus free will, good and evil, and the relationships among human beings. Contemporary scholars began to write about justice, critique, and care. Starratt (2004) combined justice, critique, and care into the most recognized ethical frameworks in education, the tri-partite frameworks. An ethical framework was defined as a basic assumption about beliefs, values and principles to guide choices (Starratt, 2004). Furman (2004) understood that the three ethics complemented each other and thus became the foundation of an ethical school. Gaining recognition were the ethic of the profession and the ethic of community. The following focused on contemporary philosophers' ethical frameworks of justice, critique, care, the profession, and community as applied to the field of education.

2.4.1 The Ethic of Justice

Justice has a long debated meaning and history. Justice served as the foundation for legal principles and ideals, rights and laws, fairness and equity in individual freedom (Shapiro & Gross, 2008; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005; Stefkovich & O'Brien, 2004). According to Starratt (2004), the idea of fairness and equal treatment became the core values of the ethic of justice. He confirmed that the ethic of justice required treating others to a standard of justice applied in all relationships. Starratt posited that fairness, defined as the equitable distribution of resources and the application of rules and equal treatment, was concerned with justice in the social order. Shapiro and Gross (2008) affirmed that the ethic of justice continually raised questions about the just and fairness of laws and policies. They suggested that when viewing ethical dilemmas from the vantage

point of justice, queries regarding the interpretation of the rule of law and concepts of fairness and responsibility came into play.

In addition, Strike, Haller, and Soltis (2005), as well as Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005), affirmed that the ethic of justice supported the principle of due process and protected the civil and human rights of all individuals. Strike *et al.* (2005) supported the influence of justice in educational decision-making based on maximum benefits in respect to individual needs. Shapiro and Gross (2008) substantiated Shapiro and Stefkovich's earlier proposal that school administrators who considered each member of the community before making an ethical decision utilized the ethic of justice as they strived to be fair and equitable. The ethic of justice required an examination of the issues in terms of the rights and laws of students, parents, and school personnel. In the scheme of things the use of ethic of justice pre disposition will hesitate in punishing offenders to school rules and regulations.



2.4.2 The Ethic of Critique

Just as the ethic of justice was about fairness, the ethic of critique was about the barriers of fairness (Shapiro & Gross, 2008; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005; Starratt, 2004). Starratt affirmed that the ethic of critique sought to identify and remove barriers of favouritism and in doing so created an ethic of justice. Fairness, according to Starratt (2004), was the equitable distribution of resources and application of rules, which became the focus of the ethic of critique. Educators were forced to confront moral issues through the ethic of critique when schools disproportionately benefited some groups in society and failed others (Furman, 2004; Starratt, 2004). Starratt noted that the ethic of critique

challenged the status quo by involving social discourse, which allowed the marginalized a voice and exposed inequities.

According to Shapiro and Gross (2008) and Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005), the ethic of critique directed educators to an awareness of the inequities in society, as it pursued appropriate measures to correct laws, policies, and regulations inconsistent with sound educational practices. They confirmed that the ethic of critique forced educators to rethink, redefine, and reframe concepts such as privilege, power, culture, and in particular, social injustice. Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005), as substantiated by Shapiro and Gross (2008), suggested that school administrators who utilized the ethic of critique questioned not only the law when making an ethical decision, but also considered who made the law and who benefited most from its enforcement. School administrators, who became more knowledgeable and sensitive to inequities, applied the ethic of critique when making ethical decisions, especially when those decisions dealt with rules, code of discipline, gender, and differences in misbehaviour.

2.4.3 The Ethic of Care

A third ethical framework, the ethic of care, emerged out of the ethic of justice and shifted the focus from rights and laws to compassion and empathy. Less concerned with fairness, the ethic of care is more concerned with caring for individuals as unique persons (Furman, 2004). The ethic of care required absolute regard for the dignity and intrinsic value of each person based on relationships and demanded care in relationships with others. Starratt (2004) wrote that the ethic of care confirmed caring was the ideal fulfilment of all social relationships. Furman (2004) noted that the ethic of care balanced

the ethic of justice and the ethic of critique. Because of the focus of the ethic of care, the ethics of justice and critique would not be required in every situation if an individual's needs are met. Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) suggested that the ethic of care avoided using positions for personal gain through political, social, religious, economic, and other influences.

The ethic of care also focused on respect. Noddings (2003) noted that some thought an ethic built on caring to be tender minded. Shapiro and Gross (2008) acknowledged that the ethic of care discussed by feminist scholars, critical of the ethic of justice, who demanded that the ethic of care be implemented for moral decision-making. Noddings (2003) continued that an ethic of care was a tough ethic, was practical not romantic, and was not concerned with moral judgments. She suggested the idea that an ethic of care, perceived by many as a feminine ethic, often arose out of the experience of women being women. Noddings (2003) posited that human love and caring were more than enough to found an ethic of care.

School administrators who utilized the ethic of care valued relationships and connections in the ethical decision-making process, rather than techniques and rules (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005; Starratt, 1994). Shapiro and Stefkovich maintained that school administrators who utilized the ethic of care tried to balance power with caring and understood the need for nurturing and encouraging students. They declared that school administrators who utilized the ethic of care considered how they could help an individual student meet his or her needs and desires before making an ethical decision. Shapiro and Gross (2008) affirmed the relevance of the ethic of care for educational leaders when they are required to make moral decisions and resolve dilemmas. Shapiro

and Gross suggested a need for revising educational leadership training if the ethic of care implemented for dilemma resolution.

In summary, the ethics of justice, critique, and care each complemented the other in establishing an ethical school. The focus of ethics in education during the 1990s, centered on Starratt's tri-partite theory of justice, critique, and care. However, increased attention on the works of other contemporary scholars awakened an awareness of two additional emerging ethics, the ethic of the profession, and the ethic of community.

2.4.4 The Ethic of the Profession

Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) suggested that the ethical frameworks of justice, critique, and care needed expanding. Based on what they noticed in their classrooms, readings, and dialogues, they alleged the moral aspect of the profession was to serve the best interests of the student as the focus of ethical decisions. Stefkovich and Begley (2007) established that school leaders used the rationale, the best interests of the student, when making a difficult decision, but continued that when they explored the term best interests of the student, they found neither a firm definition nor consistency in use.

Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) called for school leaders to consider professional codes and personal ethical principles, as well as, standards of the profession, as they created a dynamic model that placed the best interests of the student at the heart of the ethics of the educational profession (Stefkovich & Begley, 2007; Stefkovich & O'Brien, 2004). Shapiro and Stefkovich noted that the ethic of the profession often meant codes, rules, and principles, all of which aligned with the traditional concepts of justice, but maintained that their interpretation of the ethic of the profession took into account other

paradigms such as professional judgment and professional decision-making. They maintained that the ethic of the profession should be central to complete the ethical frameworks of justice, critique, and care. Thus, a fourth ethic emerged, the ethic of the profession, focused on the best interests of the student.

Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) suggested that school administrators needed a clear understanding of the best interests of the student when making ethical decisions. They proposed that school administrators responded to dilemmas through use of multiple lenses. However, Begley and Stefkovich (2007) argued that Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) stopped short of proposing an actual sequence for applying the use of multiple lenses to dilemmas for resolution. Instead, Begley and Stefkovich (2007) alleged that the research of Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) suggested that administrators varied in their ethical postures and sequence of applying ethical frameworks. Begley (2006) called for a specific sequence for application of ethical frameworks, beginning with the ethic of critique, then the ethic of care, and ending with the ethic of justice.

According to Begley (2006), the ethic of critique allowed for an understanding of the situation, including the perspectives of those without a voice or equal representation. Begley suggested that logically following was the ethic of care, which equally assessed the situation in a humane way. Finally, Begley held that the ethic of justice maximized the benefits for all and respected the rights of the individual. Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) maintained that school administrators who used professional judgment utilized the ethic of the profession when considering the best interest of the student during ethical decisions. Shapiro and Gross (2008) agreed that the ethic of the profession placed the student at the centre of the decision-making process.

2.4.5 The Ethic of Community

Proposing a fifth ethical framework for educators, Furman (2004) argued a definite link between the literature on the work on community, which emphasized the importance of relationships, collaboration, and communication, and an ethic of community. She further argued that the ethic of community meant all who were morally responsible for schooling comprised the concept of community. An ethic of community addressed the challenges of daily life and work in schools through moral leadership and the development of moral practices. According to Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) the ethic of community included the customs, practices, and expectations set forth by the community whether the school community, the professional community, or the community at large.

Furman (2004) continued that the ethic of community captured the leadership practices lacking in the ethics of justice, care, critique, and the profession as it complemented those ethical frameworks. According to the Furman (2004), one important issue addressed in twenty-first century schools was how to ground leadership in the values of the community to ensure the achievement of values outcomes such as justice, equity, and learning for all children. She avowed an ethic of community concerned with the achievement gap, diverse populations, economic gaps, and the current environment of high stakes assessment and accountability, which contributed to the social injustices in schools.

In summary, contemporary scholars agreed that there are no easy answers to ethical dilemmas. They disagreed concerning the ethical framework used to formulate ethical decisions. As ethical decision makers, school administrators strive to create a

professional and democratic community. Ethical school administrators use one or more of the frameworks when faced with the challenge of ethical dilemmas. Figure 1 at page 20 summarizes the ethical frameworks.

2.5 Empirical Review

The empirical review looked at the various aspects of ethics, school leadership and decision making process. The concept of school administration suggests one who rightly and importantly holds a central position in the way schools operate and function in the teaching and learning of students. School administrators, as leaders, are expected to be of good character and behave in an ethical manner as a part of the educator's guiding credo (Begley, 2001; Fullan, 2003). In the past, scholars of educational leadership determined a need for ethical leadership in schools and called for reform in headship preparation (Begley, 2006; Levine, 2005; Petzko, 2008). Ethical dilemmas test the personal, professional, and ethical values of school administrators. When entangled in the web of ethical decision-making, school administrators are required to make value judgments about doing or saying the right thing. Each situation causes the school administrator to draw from core values and personal beliefs to resolve the ethical dilemma. Ethical dilemmas are a part of everyday life in schools.

2.5.1 Concept of Ethics

Ethics was derived from the Greek word ethos. Early philosophers differed in their discussions of ethics. According to Rebores (2001), Socrates possibly began the advent of ethical issues, when he went around Athens asking the citizens their opinions

concerning the meaning of human existence. Socrates felt so strongly about his search for the truth, that when accused of disturbing the social order, he drank hemlock and died, rather than give up his quest. Ethics is the study of what constitutes a moral life .

2.5.1.1. Ethics Defined

Philosophers and scholars have defined ethics for centuries. Bolman and Deal (2003) defined ethics as an individual's core beliefs and values. Begley and Johansson (2003) defined ethics as the customs belonging to one group as distinguished from another. Goree, Pyle, Baker, Hopkins (2007), Harris and Lowery (2004), and Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) defined ethics, in similar terms, as the reasoned study of philosophy that grappled with what was morally right and wrong, good and bad. Strike (2007) determined that the historical view of ethics was an inquiry into the nature of good living. He argued that the view of ethics being about morality, what was right or wrong, was too narrow. He suggested that the study of ethics should focus on the nature of good communities, because ethics was about a greater concern of how we should live together.

Starratt (2004) determined ethics as a term used in a variety of ways for a variety of purposes. He declared that ethics was the study of what constituted a moral life. He further suggested that ethics was the analysis of the principles, beliefs, values, and virtues of a moral life. According to Velasquez, Andre, Shanks, Meyer, and Meyer (1997), ethics consisted of constantly studying one's moral beliefs and moral conduct while striving to adhere to reasonable and solidly based standards. Henderson and Kasson (2004) defined ethics as the study of how moral standards influenced one's behaviour. Goree *et al.* (2007) discussed ethics as a gut feeling or conscience, but continued that ethics cannot

end in the gut. They argued that to grow ethically the feeling must move from the gut to the heart, mind, and soul. Bolman and Deal (2003) suggested that soul and ethics were inextricably intertwined. Others suggested that ethics and school leadership are inextricably intertwined (Begley & Stefkovich, 2007; Denig & Quinn, 2001; Fullan, 2003; Rebore, 2001; Starratt, 2004; Wager & Simpson, 2009).

Rebore (2001) wrote that ethics was a search for the truth that led to the goal of establishing ethical standards of conduct for educational leaders. He suggested that ethics was purposeful inquiry for knowledge used for making decisions about actions. Rebore concluded that educational leaders needed to study ethics because it provided a framework for ethical decision-making through a disciplined way of thinking as decisions were analyzed through the question of why rather than the management thinking of how or what. In a search of over 1,800 article abstracts, Ciulla (2004) found, what she described as, only a handful of articles that offered any in-depth discussion of ethics and leadership. Ciulla stated, “Ethics lie at the heart of all human relationships and hence at the heart of the relationship between leaders and followers”(p.xv). She determined that the study of ethics usually examined right, wrong, good, evil, virtue, duty, obligation, rights, justice, and fairness in human relations with other humans and living things. The author noted that some of the most frequently cited ethics texts in leadership articles and books were from business ethics. Ciulla shared that the reasons for this were threefold: i). that researchers were often in business schools, ii) that business ethics texts were written for a broad audience, and iii). That the content of business ethics research into managerial and organizational ethics was relevant to school leadership.

In summary, philosophers have discussed and argued differing views of ethics for ages. Justice, reason, benefit, and respect, common threads in each philosopher's ethical beliefs and principles, comprised the core beliefs of ethics and society. Discussions of ethics continued across many disciplines as philosophers and professionals continued to struggle with what exactly defines ethics. Starratt (2004) offered one of the most concise explanations of ethics when he concluded: Ethics were principles kept in a supply closet in one of the back rooms of our consciousness. They are maps we consult when the familiar terrain we are traversing becomes a tangle of underbrush with barely discernable and uncertain trails.

2.5.1.2 Ethics in Schools

The word ethics may be simply defined as the science of right and wrong, the science of moral principles, the science of moral judgment and conduct. It not only analyzes, classifies, describes and explains human actions as good or bad but also helps us know why and on what bases our judgment of human action is justified (Kizza, 2007). Ethical issues are part of everyday life in schools. They frequently arise from decisions which require value judgments about doing the right thing, or saying the good or best thing in a particular situation. Although doing the right thing seems easy enough most times when an ethically difficult situation arises, it may cause individuals to examine their ethics in practice (Campbell, 2004).

It is important to remember that schools have never been islands, able to ward off the effects of trends emerging in the wider society. However, it is equally important to understand that schools now are subject to the impact of global changes to which their

stakeholders require rapid local responses. Schools are subject to a lot of changes today, and with schools becoming increasingly self-managing environments, the heads have started to feel more pressure on their shoulders when dealing with ethically complex situations (Dempster & Berry, 2003). The ethics of practice has been a popular discussion topic in many professional fields, including education. Dozens of articles and chapters have been written on the ethics of practice in education, including debates about the desirability and feasibility of developing codes of ethics (Gordon & Sork, 2001). Today many professional communities have developed a code of ethics to make more specific the moral code that specifically applies to their situation. The code must be idealistic and also be practical, so that it can apply reasonably to all educational leaders. Some professions have certain and detailed codes of ethics that sometimes take the place of law (Haynes, 1998).

There are obstacles to being ethical, which include:

i. The ethics of self-interest. When the motivation for ethical behaviour is self-interest, according to Begley (2000), decision-making is reduced to risk-reward calculations. If the risks from ethical behaviour are high or the risks from unethical behaviour are low and the reward is high, moral principles succumb to expediency. This is not a small problem: many people cheat on exams, lie on resumes, and distort or falsify facts at work. The real test of our ethics is whether we are willing to do the right thing even when it is not in our self-interest.

ii. The pursuit of happiness. Enlightenment philosophers enshrined the pursuit of happiness as a basic right of free men. Dempster & Berry (2003). But is this pursuit a moral end in itself? It depends on how one defines happiness. Our values, what we prize

and desire, determine what we think will make us happy. We are free to pursue material goals and physical sensations, but that alone rarely (if ever) leads to enduring happiness (Glover, 2001). It more often results in a lonely, disconnected, meaningless existence. The morally mature individual finds happiness in grander pursuits than money, status, sex and mood-altering substances. A deeper satisfaction lies in honouring universal ethical values, that is, values that people everywhere believed should inform behaviour. That unity between principled belief and honourable behaviour is the foundation for real happiness (Feldman, 2002).

2.5.1.3 Moral Reasoning of Educators

Individuals who function as teachers and school administrators are expected to have a solid foundation of ethical values and moral reasoning (Cummings *et al.*, 2007). They posited that teachers should be able to make sound moral judgments and recognize the basic worth and dignity of all students. Cummings and his colleagues (2007) suggested that moral development continued to influence thinking about morality and moral development.

2.5.2 Ethics in School Administration

The concept of governance incorporates four fundamental issues:

- i. How an organization is managed to optimize performance and accountability.
- ii. How values and goals are reflected by the systems and structures that are created.

- iii. How leaders establish relationships that engender the commitment of those who work with and for them.
- iv. How the application of leadership is formally applied in the conduct of organizational business (Karri *et al.*, 2005).

In a school context, the head is mainly responsible for these four fundamental issues. Hence the school head must integrate his/her managerial skills with codes of ethics on which all staff has agreed. All school personnel, of course, are responsible for creating and maintaining a community conducive to academic, emotional and social learning, but the head is the primary architect and promoter of the values and standards that ensure everything and everyone in the school building function according to the highest ethical standards (Harsh & Casto, 2007). The educational programme housed in a school organization is supposed to serve moral purposes (the nurturing of human, social and intellectual growth of youngsters). Thus, although educational leaders do many generic things common to all administrators, these activities are aimed at promoting the educational goals of the institution (Starrat, 2004).

Moral leadership is essential for every organization of all types and in all corners of society. Administrators play a significant role in society as leaders and role models for today's students but future's leaders. To create a morally virtuous community, those who manage today's schools and business departments must invest in a continuing dialogue about their ethical duties to society and thoughtfully examine both their roles and the benefits that can come from honouring the responsibilities of ethical leadership (Caldwell & Jeane, 2007).

2.5.2.1 Benefits of Codes of Ethics for Headmasters/mistresses

Ethics deals with actions that are commonly seen as right or wrong. Showing favouritism in hiring a colleague over another one is discriminatory. We can say that it is clearly wrongheaded. An ethical leader not only endeavours to do the right things but also to do things right. As the school administrator is to consistently acts morally and therefore he/she should value social justice (Glanz, 2006). If the school administrator is inconsistent and behaves arbitrary, this causes him or her to lose his/her reliance among the other school staff and as a natural outcome of this, the decisions taken by the administrators become controversial.

Ethics seems to be part of the job. Administrators who are seen as unfair, unjust, inhumane, or capricious in their decisions usually buy themselves a great deal of trouble in their jobs. Indeed, it has been our experience that administrators are just as likely to fail because they are seen as unjust as they are to fail because they are seen as inefficient. The administrator who is unfair will soon be faced with a hostile faculty and an angry community. Ethics is an essential part of the job. Administrators deal with fairness, equality, justice, and democracy as much as they deal with test scores, teachers' salaries, parents, and budgets (Strike *et al.*, 2005). It is important for the reputation of schools that they have an ethical culture.

When viewed from the perspective of staff, their satisfaction and motivation will indisputably be enhanced when they feel that they are working at a school that is run with an ethical approach. Therefore, school heads should mind their ethical responsibilities for their teachers; should respect their individual rights and should be just (Karaköse, 2007). It is clear that head's ethical behaviours help create a trustful school climate. In such a

school climate not only school staff but also students have great benefit from educational process.

Numerous organizations including CHASS (Council of Heads of Assisted Secondary Schools) has articulated a variety of ethical behaviours expected of educational leaders. The Ministry of Education has also published codes of ethics for educational leaders (Sekyere, 2014). School boards need to develop their own code of ethic not only to reduce the risk of unethical conduct, but to reinforce the bonds of professional cooperation so sorely needed in any organization. From the beginning, the board needs to recognize that the process can be rewarding but it is often difficult. This happens because ethical issues, by their nature, can be controversial (Ministry of Education, 2007).

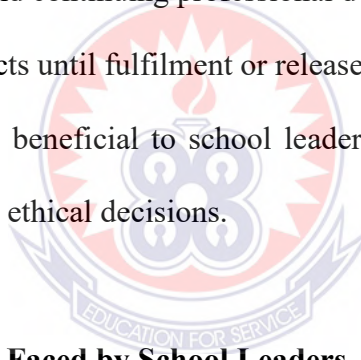
Although developing ethical codes is difficult in the beginning of the process, it facilitates both school administrators and personnel's work in the school. The school staff may reach an ethical standard for their decisions (Sekyere, 2014).

Sekyere (2014) listed these benefits of codes as it is below for educational administrator:

1. Makes the well-being of students the fundamental value of all decision making and actions.
2. Fulfils professional responsibilities with honesty and integrity.
3. Supports the principle of due process and protects the civil and human rights of all individuals.
4. Obeys local, state, and national laws and does not knowingly join or support organization that advocates directly or indirectly, the overthrow of the government.

5. Implements the governing board of education's policies and administrative rules and regulations.
6. Pursues appropriate measures to correct those laws, policies, and regulations that are not consistent with sound educational goals.
7. Avoids using positions for personal gain through political, social, religious, economic, or other influence.
8. Accepts academic degrees or professional certification only from duly accredited institutions.
9. Maintains the standards and seeks to improve the effectiveness of the profession through research and continuing professional development.
10. Honours all contracts until fulfilment or release.

Code of ethics are beneficial to school leaders for without established codes, it would be difficult to make ethical decisions.



2.5.2.2 Ethical Dilemmas Faced by School Leaders

Educational leaders may often be faced with choices that require them to make decisions. All these decisions may not have any clear cut resolution and are likely to be highly problematic. That's why heads may frequently face ethical dilemmas. In short an ethical dilemma comes out from a situation that requires a choice among competing sets of principles, values, beliefs, perspectives (Cranston *et al.*, 2003). An ethical dilemma is not a choice between wrong and right. It is a choice between two rights as stated by Kidder and Born (2002). Deciding whether scarce resources should go to a gifted curriculum or a dropout-prevention programme would constitute a dilemma and this is

very challenging for the head (Lashway, 2006). The head faces some ethical issues mostly about staff, students, financial matters and relations with public. Established codes of ethics help heads and show how to behave ethically.

2.5.2.3 Ethical Decision: Fantasy or Reality for heads?

Human beings are moral agents. They are responsible for their choices, and they have a duty to make choices in a morally responsible way. Thus, it is crucial that people should be able to reflect ethically on their choices and their actions. This is especially important when individuals have power and influence over the lives of others. We can think of few areas where it is more important than in the administration of schools (Strike *et al.*, 2005). Decision making is a crucial process for school administration. In a school context the head is the main decision maker in the school. Therefore, an ethical or unethical decision directly affects school climate positively or negatively.

It can be said that the causes of poor ethical decisions are often the same as the causes of poor decisions generally; decisions may be based on inaccurate theories about the world, about the other people or about us. Ethical decision making may be improved in the same way that general decision making is improved (Messick & Bazerman, 2006). It is undeniable fact that school administrators have to consider all the consequences of actions they planned.

Komives (2008) pointed out five principles in making ethical decision. These are:

- i. Respecting autonomy.
- ii. Doing no harm.

- iii. Being just.
- iv. Benefiting others.
- v. Being faithful (Glanz, 2006).

School heads need professional training as regards ethical decision making. It can be said that school heads should be better prepared to respond to the challenges of contemporary school leadership through professional development approaches that take account of the ethical complexity of school-based management (Dempster *et al.*, 2002). For ethical school governance, it is necessary that we need qualified school heads who have special training related to ethical decision making. Schools should provide this necessary training and support for administrators in a cooperative way.

2.5.3 Ethical Leadership (empirical literature)

With research related to the study of ethics and leadership, a brief review of the literature on ethics and leadership is necessary to find out what is known about ethical behaviour and leadership. Gini (2004) declared that “ethics and leadership are inseparable” (p.13). Branson (2007) confirmed, although the literature acknowledged the role of moral leadership, there was a blank spot in moral leadership research. According to Begley and Stefkovich (2007) values, ethics, and valuation processes were related to leadership. They wrote, “Leaders should know their own values and ethical predispositions” (p. 399). Begley and Stefkovich further noted that leadership was “essentially focused on people and relationships”. They defined the study of ethics as the life-long struggles and failures to be ethical, and the inconsistencies of ethical postures during the dilemmas of everyday professional life. They further declared that ethics is

highly relevant to school leadership. They suggested that valuation models were templates for moral action and cautioned against applying ethical postures without consideration of the consequences.

Branson (2007) examined the role of moral leadership and the effects of positively influencing a leader's moral development through its nurturing of moral development. Branson (2007) suggested that moral leadership is not a natural outcome, but situations that people wanted leaders to act morally. Branson defined acting morally as producing no harm to others and behaving in ways that showed interest in the well-being of others, rather than self-interest, as the driving motivation behind their leadership. He suggested that leaders had no formal exposure to moral decision-making and initiated what he determined to be an effective method for nurturing a leader's moral consciousness leading to moral development. Branson (2007) posited the view that leaders responded to moral situations reflexively. He held the view that through nurturing of the leader's moral consciousness and guidance with self-reflection, the leader could develop professionally as a moral leader. While his view was not the norm, he suggested that moral consciousness must be the essence of contemporary leadership. Branson concluded that leaders needed to learn how to self-reflect, not only to become morally accountable, but also to live a more fully human life.

In a proposal to study ethical leadership characteristics from a descriptive perspective, Brown *et al.* (2005) initiated conceptual and empirical groundwork to advance knowledge about ethical leadership. Brown and colleagues reviewed the literature and proposed a social cognitive theory as a basis for understanding ethical leadership. Brown and colleagues defined ethical leadership as demonstrations of

appropriate conduct through actions and relationships contributing to communication and decision-making with followers. Brown *et al.* (2005) hypothesized that ethical leadership positively related to employees' satisfaction with their leaders and developed a pool of 49 items to measure their hypothesis of ethical leadership. They conducted 20 in-depth interviews and used a five-point Likert-scale in a content analysis of the data.

Additionally, they implemented a 10-item questionnaire survey of 127 employees from a financial firm in the United States. A factor analysis, conducted using the data from the survey sample, indicated that ethical leadership positively related to trust in an effective leader, and negatively related to an abusive leader. The findings confirmed the hypothesis that satisfaction with the leader, perceived leader effectiveness, and job satisfaction were important predictors in ethical leadership.

Brown *et al.* (2005) suggested that ethical leaders became role models through Ethical behaviour. Ethical leaders who modelled ethical behaviour did so by rewarding Appropriate behaviour and disciplining inappropriate behaviour. Brown and colleagues found transformational leadership paradigms flawed leading to unethical behaviours in leaders who used rewards-and-punishment leadership styles. They further found that survey research linked leadership effectiveness with honesty and trustworthiness. Brown and colleagues concluded questions such as, "do individuals come to organizations as ethical leaders, or do organizations develop ethical leaders, and if so how, remained unresolved.

Similarly, Gini (2004) determined that the ethics of the leadership affected the ethics of the workplace and decisions of the workers regarding ethical behaviour. He declared that the terms business ethics and moral leadership were prime examples of

oxymorons. According to Gini (2004), neither term carried much credibility because so few models of ethical businesses and leaders existed. He suggested that the terms were more of a wished for ideal, not the actual mode of operation. Gini found that workers followed the example of perceived low ethical standards of their leaders and admitted to feeling justified with petty theft, indifference, absenteeism, and poor performance in the work place. Gini (2004) suggested that American workers are as ethical, in their job, as they perceived their bosses are ethical. He concluded that ethics and leadership are inseparable in the business organization.

In an empirical study of 206 mid-level managers, Deshpande (2006) examined the ethical climate and practices of successful managers. He found that public trust in non profit organizations eroded resulting in a loss of charitable donations. The author posited ethical behaviour in non-profit organizations as an issue demanding the attention of social scientists. He confirmed that most of the published research was theoretical, focused on attitudes, not on ethical behavior, and proposed to remedy the deficiencies. He acknowledged that important factors influencing ethical behaviour in employees were the ethical behaviours of the managers and the climate within the organization. Deshpande (2006) examined a previous study, which indicated that managers did not believe ethical behaviour was necessary for success. He proposed to re-examine this belief. Although 252 managers participated in the original sample, 206 participated in Deshpande's study, resulting in a response rate of 69% for the study. A four-point Likert scale measured the ethical climate of the organization and the perceived ethical behaviour of the managers. The participants identified professionalism, caring, and rules as the top ethical climates in

their organization. Over one third of the managers reported that unethical behaviours were necessary in order to be successful in their organization.

However, a factor analysis revealed a strong link between success and ethical behaviour, as two thirds of the managers reported that ethical behaviour was a factor contributing to their success. The results of Deshpande's study revealed a correlation between a manager's success and ethical behaviour when combined with trust. Deshpande (2006) concluded that future research should examine the impact of ethical climate types on the success of ethical behaviour management strategies.

Brien (2008) determined that the problem of ethical failure in organizations, a culture that failed to promote trust in the profession. He suggested that professionals occupied important and powerful roles which members of society dependent on and vulnerable to the actions of the professional. He analysed three methods for regulating ethical behaviour in professionals as codes of ethics, legislative, or self-regulatory. Brien (2008) pointed out flaws in each method and suggested a new solution for ethical regulation in professionals. Brien posited ethical behaviour in professionals promoted through a method he described as an Enforced Self-regulation (ESR). Brien (2008) suggested that a code of ethical behaviour, enforced by the professional society, was more likely to result in fewer ethical violations than other methods of regulating professional behaviour. Under Brien's ESR, each profession designed tailored codes of ethics and submitted the codes to a regulatory agency, with enforcement left to the profession. He suggested that the ESR method resulted in the ultimate goal of ethics as trust. Trust, defined by Brien (2008), involved a feeling of security and prediction about the behaviour of another person. Brien avowed that ethical behavior provided a level of

trust. Houston and Sokolow (2006) found trust was more about the leader trusting than another being trustworthy. Although Houston and Sokolow (2006) cautioned against blind trust. They affirmed that trust was the most precious gift a leader could give to others.

In summary, ethical is essential in leaders. Ethics and leadership are inextricably interwoven. Ethical leaders model the expected behaviour. The foundation of a successful leader is trust, achieved through the ethical behaviour of the leader. The ethical behaviour of the followers is based upon the ethical behaviour of the leader in the organization. The question remains whether ethical leadership is learned or if it is an inherent quality in some leaders and not others.

2.5.3.1 Ethics in School Leadership

Enlightened school leaders must be knowledgeable of moral and ethical dimensions inherent in any position of educational leadership. Denig and Quinn (2001) affirmed that schools are ethical organizations. As the leader of an ethical organization, school administrators confront a variety of ethical dilemmas and challenges daily. How school administrators resolve ethical dilemmas depends upon the administrators' training, values systems, and approaches to moral decisions (Denig & Quinn, 2001). Wagner and Simpson (2009) compared school leaders to moral architects who planned, designed, and constructed a framework that accomplished a set of desired goals, pursued in an ethical manner resulting in a more credible, informed, and civil society. They confirmed that, with a renewed emphasis in medical ethics, the word ethics implied rules, regulations, principles, and shared moral commitments common to a group of professionals. They

suggested a distinction between morals and ethics, although both terms referred to prescriptive rules as making something better, as guiding principles for an appropriate action. They further suggested that educational leaders worked in a setting of specific contexts limiting the range of goals and social dynamics. According to Wagner and Simpson (2009), this indicated that the leader was bound to the ethics of the organization of the school.

An overview of research in ethics and school leadership revealed concern for ethical leaders and ethical leadership development. The “No Child Left Behind Act” of 2001 (NCLB) further compounded the recent emphasis on accountability, which had its roots in the education reform initiatives. The NCLB Act stressed high standards and accountability in teacher quality. Briefly mentioned in the NCLB Act, was that leadership demonstrated ethical behaviour, but the act included no definition of that expectation. Thus, arose the issue of how ethical leaders of schools are developed.

2.5.3.2 Ethical School Administrators

School administrators face busy days filled with dilemmas and conflict (Harris & Lowery, 2004). School administrators are expected to resolve issues and to preserve the school’s culture and environment (Harris & Lowery, 2004; O’Neill, 2002), to work well with others, and are often called upon to be peacemakers (O’Neill, 2002). The school administrator recognizes ethical implications and knows how to act with integrity and fairness, and is committed to ethical and legal behaviour at all times (Glanz, 2006; Harris & Lowery, 2004).

School administrators are often unaware and unprepared for the growing number of daily ethical dilemmas. Stefkovich and Begley (2007) found that school administrators sought refuge in ethics when confronted with social issues. School administrators faced with dilemmas and challenged to make complex decisions, justified those decisions as made in the best interests of the student (Shapiro, 2006; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005; Stefkovich & Begley, 2007; Stefkovich & O'Brien, 2004). Marshall (2003) maintained, "You don't know what the right thing is all the time, but you do the very best that you can with each situation" (p.32).

According to Harris and Lowery (2004), other than religion, no issue compared to values in education. They maintained that parents and educators did not share the same values of the right way to resolve issues, which created conflict. Begley and Stefkovich (2004) confirmed that value conflicts had always been present in educational administration to some extent, "however, value conflicts now seem to have become a defining characteristic of the school leadership role" (p.134). School administrators needed to know conflict was natural but not always disruptive (Glanz, 2006). Harris and Lowery (2004) acknowledged that value conflicts and ethical dilemmas were never between a good and a bad alternative otherwise, there would be no dilemma. Young (1995) concurred that the dilemma occurred when the choices were equally undesirable.

Although, there has been an awakening of international scholarly interest in the study of ethics in leadership situations, Begley (2006) revealed several challenges associated with international scholars engaged in educational administration and moral literacy. One challenge was agreement with the vocabulary including the relationship between the terms used. Begley (2006) suggested terms such as values, morals, and ethics

used interchangeably led to debate regarding a philosophical, legal, pragmatic, theoretical, naturalistic, or social justice perspective of the definition. Begley (2006) sustained that living in a global society was another challenge associated with international scholars engaging in the study of educational administration and moral literacy. Each ethical scholar's work reflected the distinct social contexts of their country as each scholar approached the study of ethics from a variety of foundational perspectives. Begley (2006) revealed that some ethical philosophers or theorists grounded in philosophy focused on basic meanings associated with the terms. Others focused on moral orders and the adoption of the right values. Still others focused on the values of educators; however, those values were not necessarily the values of the profession, community, or society, which often resulted in conflicts and dilemmas.

Begley (2006) suggested that the potential for misuse of information regarding personal values led to more unresolved ethical questions. He revealed that a final challenge in the study of ethics and authentic leadership was that of the dark side of leadership, which Blase and Blase (2003) also exposed in their book; *Breaking the Silence*. Begley and Stefkovich (2007) acknowledged that leaders should know their own values and ethical predispositions, as well as, become more sensitive to the values orientation of others. Begley (2006) established that genuine leadership began with the understanding and thoughtful interpretation of valuation processes by individuals.

Begley and Stefkovich (2007) suggested that values related to leadership practices as a guide for action in resolving ethical dilemmas. They further suggested a strategic application of ethics through ethical postures a school community adopted such as an ethic of community or an ethic of justice. However, Begley and Stefkovich cautioned,

strategic adoptions of ethical postures might not be ethical, as leadership tools, for supporting decisions made or actions taken. They suggested that most current leadership development programmes emphasized the importance of ethics. However, they argued that was not enough. Their findings indicated that school administrators employed ethics as a guide when confronted with situations of high stakes urgency when consensus was impossible.

Begley and Stefkovich (2007) acknowledged merit in ethical actions through ethical frameworks such as an ethic of community, best interests of the student, or authentic leadership, but pointed out, that preparation programmes needed careful selection of such metaphors to make ethical leadership understandable.

2.5.3.3 Responsibility for Ethical Leadership

Providing the solutions for today's educational problems for whole schools, as well as individual students, is a responsibility that must be accepted by administrative leaders in education (Beck, 1994; Telford, 2006). Leaders in educational administration are usually appointed to their positions after having met educational, career, and certification requirements. Laub (2003) differentiates between the position held by a leader and the person holding a position. There are those who are appointed to leadership positions because of their leadership ability. There are also appointees to positions that lack leadership ability. Laub (2003) further noted that leadership skills can be learned and practiced effectively; conversely, those skills can deteriorate, diminishing administrative effectiveness with them. The clearer point from Laub is that organizations and scholars confuse the intended function of leadership with the various positions of leadership.

Laub (2003) pointed to the vagueness of any delineation between leading and managing. One difference that is crystal clear is that leaders make decisions over issues arising from their immediate involvement with what or who they lead; managers follow directions, decisions, or solutions of their superiors. For the purposes of this study, educational leaders or heads are considered educational leaders. Leaders in education are accountable for providing effective solutions for positive outcomes. For educational outcomes to be positive, their solutions must address multiple problems, as in the multiple methods utilized to address the different ways children learn the skill of reading. When focusing on educational leaders, one must recognize that heads are the chief architects of teaching and learning cultures, both positive and negative, by virtue of their decision-making authority (Murphy, 2002; Quicke, 2000).

Schminke, Ambrose, and Nebaum (2005) explored ethical climate and employee attitude where an educational leader displays moral actions that model moral reasoning. Although these researchers found that the organization in which the study took place exerted influences that could be oppositional; the moral and ethical development of the educational leader was a key determinant in how committed employees were to the mission of the division. Employee commitment was, in turn, a key determinant of the commitment of the division to the overall organizational mission and, ultimately, its success in attaining its goals. In their discussion of the findings, Schminke et.al (2005) noted that the educational leaders very often underestimated their influence. Day-to-day performance of the leadership component, which modeled individual moral and ethical maturity, had the strongest effect on the division as a whole and often balanced the climate-influence of the organization versus the division. Trevino (2002) indicated that

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

Today, national issues, deficiencies or shortcomings in the news automatically attribute educational performance as the root cause. The discourse from this thrust hotly impugns the decision-making rationale of school boards, supervisors and heads. They are condemned for their failure to anticipate and prepare students for tomorrow's challenges, while being held accountable to leave no student behind. Unfortunately for leaders in education, many administrators within our ranks provide high profile fuel for that fire. Beck and Murphy (1997) found that the traditionally accepted values of society dating back to the beginning of the 20th century are no longer traditionally reflected in our society's school communities, nor are they consistently reflected in the practice of today's educational leaders in our schools. Beck and Murphy (1997) attributed this erosion of values to the decline of such traditional social structures as a stable home life for children with two biological parents or an instilled patriotic allegiance to our country. Today, these examples of traditional structures are not available.

Normore (2004) pointed out that traditional value-set infusion to students was always strongly tied to the value-set of our schools and their leadership and that the current decline in values structures is strongly affiliated with our present-day schools and decreased leadership effectiveness. Callahan (2002) noted that educational leaders were trained to manage schools as a business enterprise and adopt the value sets that would enable them to do so. As the world leader in industry, our society's values were reflective

of dominance and power, the values implicit in leadership training programmes. These findings are completely congruent with Levine's (2005) premise that leadership preparation programmes in our country do not evolve at the same pace as global educational challenges.

Dempster and Berry (2003) urge caution about the minefield that educational leaders must navigate as they progress through their careers. The long-standing analogy of the „fishbowl“ in which all educators exist has become more relevant for present-day educational leaders. The analogy grows even more precarious as the poignant topics of ethics, morals, and values are now benignly labelled character education. „Missteps in the fishbowl are proving to be even more disastrous to professional reputations in this desensitized era when connected to leaders“ conduct. Begely (2000) and Murphy (2002) highlight the juxtapositions of professional success, task efficiency, political correctness, and notoriety against the qualities of morality, ethicality, truthfulness, and fairness. Any single paradox should be the necessary impetus to retool leadership training which prepares educational leaders for this new era of accountability, rife with ethical pitfalls.

Furman (2003) wrote concerning the implied links between ethical leadership practices and student outcomes. The specific leadership skill Furman refers to is decision-making. However, to be concerned about missing the implied ethical links in educational leadership. These missing links provide ammunition for the media, politicians, and special interest groups seeking a target. Writing, Hoy (2000) and Swanson (1995) stated that the ethics and defined values of the heads as decision-maker evolved from concepts developed in the Dewey era. Tempered and infused with ethical valuation, these concepts have become critical elements of the contemporary decision- making process. This

critical evolution, coupled with increasing dissolution in the profession, was the impetus for this study of educational leaders' decision-making processes and the valuations they encompass.

2.5.4 Decision-Making

Decision-making is one of the most, integral tasks in the administrative process. All of the professional experiences in an administrator's career comprise the frame against which he/she stretches each ensuing dilemma. (Troy, 2009) determined that reflective thinking, what the Greeks called „praxis,“ was the most crucial component thoughtful action that results in a choice or decision. The context within which a decision-maker must take action determines both the need to begin the decision-making process and the intensity of the reflection leading to a commitment to act. Willower (2004) extended Dewey's viewpoint when he referred to the practice of reflective administration in education. In Willower's perspective, the administrator or head is prepared for the decision-making process because of a prior commitment to the reflective process, which inevitably includes anticipation of the problematic.

Harris & Townsend (2007), Hoy (2000) and Miskel (2007) and McCormack (2008) classified decision-making situations using a variety of adjectives: structured and unstructured, defined and undefined, expected and unexpected. It is noteworthy that each pair of labels, when used within the context of a continuing activity, represents two ends of a spectrum. Sandwiching the forceful presence of all emerging issues sharpens the definition of the two extremes. Each emerging issue requires the decision-maker to process previous reflections within the present context.

Leithwood and Steinbach (2005) noted that in some instances, an emerging issue requires an untested form of reflection or response. Glover (2001) studied individual decision-makers confronted with moral/ethical dilemmas to observe their self-monitoring and self-consciousness during the reflection phase of their decision-making process. Although Glover's analysis of the data did not support the hypothesis of the study, the study's qualitative evidence suggests the need for continued focus on a decision-makers values assigned to factors and influences. The same influence may be inferred when looking at codes of conduct or ethics in a decision-makers work environment.

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

Schnebel (2000) also found that the personal values of the decision-maker may be reliable guides for ethical practice. Yet, organizational values may be in conflict to the degree that the decision-maker either breaks from the organization when following personal values or follows organization values while failing him- or herself. Identifying the values used in decision-making, allows one to categorize the motivating factors as

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

Marshall (2003) found that an ethical blur exists for all educational leaders because of competitions between commonplace organizational forces. Internal forces prevent the school organization from experiencing wide variances in outcomes valued and expected by the school communities. External forces demanded modification of both outcomes and the entire organization. Focusing on fledgling administrators, Marshall found that they battle not only external and internal competing forces as they hone their professional skills, but they battle positional forces that constantly test their values, morals, and ethical resolve. Because they occupy the lowest rung on the administrative ladder, these novice administrators are usually designated the first line of contact with difficulties rising from the teacher level.

New heads bow to the demands of the internal forces of the organization to survive in the administrative realm, while they have little input concerning the external forces. They are, in many respects, observers and, as observers, they begin to examine and form their administrative values, morals, and ethics. Armstrong (2004) accurately noted that the environment of educational administration has become a fast-paced setting that responds to pedagogical and non-educational forces alike. Completing routine administrative tasks, taking on menial supervisory duties, and facilitating classroom instructional needs do not build high level administrative skills. Eagerness to attain those skills can initiate conflict.

Successfully accomplishing an agenda, emanates from the top of many educational organizations very often depends on blind and flawless execution of strategy by subordinates. This execution includes absorption and disposal of negative reactions. (Troy, 2009) said that “the actions we take in daily life, other than those that are either routine or second nature (such as breathing or blinking), involve valuations of varying degrees”(p.97). A person carries out specific actions based on the degree of value or worth the perceived result has with that person. Assigning a value to any action or endeavour, to the extent that a decision is made to specifically act, means that the process and anticipated outcome are significant, prized, or valued in relation to actions carried out each day. Dewey stated that this assignment infers a possible involvement of emotion. The more emotion that an action or endeavour has associated with the decision to carry it out, the greater the worth or value it has with the individual. In the process of carrying out actions or endeavours jointly with others or in concert with their actions or endeavours, the display and estimation of value can be derived from the emotion evidenced together or individually. This observation and derivation then may become useful in eliciting certain responses or actions from others by either evoking the emotion associated with it or introducing a conflicting outcome valuation.

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

collectivist mores and a decision-maker influenced by a culture with individualistic mores.

2.5.4.1 Ethical Decision-Making

Not all decisions made in the course of a day qualify as ethical decisions. Callahan (2002) noted that many decisions are perfunctory; they are repeated over and over because much of the administrative function is repetitive. He recognized that there is a pause in the process when the problem before an administrator is neither routine nor simply right or wrong. Kimbrough (2005) delineated the responsibilities that define the educational administrator in the context of the ethical confrontations that regularly occur. Without memory of the moral accomplishments of the past, the individual has little capacity for a radical criticism of present ethical confrontations (Rieff, 2009). Without the inhibiting art of memory, self-interest grows to corrupt the whole decision-making process. At first the risks look small to the decision-maker in comparison to his or her potential rewards, but this is only because the risks to others have been left out of the equation.

Rest (2006) described ethical decision-making as a four-step process. Step one is moral awareness, where the decision-maker determines if the situation is a moral one. Step two requires a moral judgment as to the correct course of action. In the third step, the question of moral intent comes into play when the decision-maker weighs all the variables and their value to insure the moral value is chosen. Step four is the moral behaviour exhibited when execution of the deliberation in steps one, two, and three are implemented. Specific factors in the human condition have positive and negative

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

Camp -Evans (2001) illuminated the significance influence of values on the decision-making processes of leaders in education. She further noted that this illumination allows consideration of the individual decision-maker outside the accepted, exclusive rational frameworks and also allows examination of the specific actions of educational leaders in practice.

In order to better understand the heads, influence on decision-making, Camp-Evans (2001) examined the point at which values mattered in heads" decision-making. This examination, in two phases, focused on identifying the inclusion of values in the processes of eight decision-makers participating in the study. Phase one was a single question-generated discussion; the second phase was a common set of decision situations requiring reactions. More than one hundred values, categorized into four value types, were defined for the purpose of the study. The four categories included: (1) basic human values, such as survival and happiness; (2) moral values, such as responsibility and truthfulness; (3) social-political values, such as tolerance and citizenship; and (4) specific values, such as possessions and friends. After interviewing the eight participants, the resulting data were sorted using the four categories. Three categories were most

prevalent: basic human values, moral values, and social-political values. Two of these three were dominant in their importance to the participants: social-political and basic human values. The act of „participation“ was mentioned most often in the phase one discussion and was runner-up in phase two behind the act of „sharing“. When the phase one and two categories were combined, „knowledge“ was ranked highest by all participants and given third place status overall. From the interviews, Camp-Evans (2001) identified two categories of other influences that were evident in the decision-making process. „Internal“ or personal influences which stood out included concern for students, effect of the decision, and commitment to the decision by those affected. The other category, „external“ or non-personal influences, included time, money, and factual information (p.174).

The most frequent internal conflict experienced was an uncertainty as to what value was most relevant for the decision at hand. The most frequent external influence was a directive from a superior which contradicted a personally-held value. Camp-Evans (2001) determined that values became the filters for the reflective component of the decision-making process and possibly served as filters influencing action.

Kitchener (2005) identified and discussed a key occurrence in decision-making for educational leaders that are more than just an ethical dilemma. The dilemma occurs when two ethical rights compete against one another. Kitchener suggested that the solution lies in selecting the action that yields the greatest benefit. Kitchener further stated that one ethical principle may only be ignored by the ethical decision-maker when juxtaposed against another ethical principle. According to Humphrey, Janosik, and

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

2.6 Citizenship

Leithwood and Steinbach (2005) defined citizenship to include civic virtues and duties that prescribe how we ought to behave as part of a community. The good citizen knows the laws and obeys them, yes, but that is not all. She/he volunteers and stays informed on the issues of the day, the better to execute her/his duties and privileges as a member of a self-governing democratic society. According to Luckowski (2007), she/he does more than her "fair" share to make society work, now and for future generations. Such a commitment to the public sphere can have many expressions, such as conserving resources, recycling, using public transportation and cleaning up litter. A good citizen gives more than she takes (Strikes *et al.*, 2005). A good citizen has a moral reason to give more than he /she receives. Edwards (2009) describes Citizenship among organisation or a Professional body as Professional Citizenship. Professional Citizenship is expressed in good morals, purposeful and acceptable behaviour. Towards others. Edwards (2009) opines that Citizenship is for moral reasoning, meaning in life and diversity competences.

2.7.1 Aspect of the Code of professional Conduct for Teachers

The education of the children of Ghana is largely entrusted into the hands of the members of the Ghana Education Service. This places members of the Service, whatever their role, in a special position of responsibility, which requires exceptionally high standard of behaviour and conduct.

As articulated in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) which was ratified by Ghana in 1990 and the Children's Act of 1998 (Act 560), children in Ghana have a right to education and should be free from being subjected to harmful or degrading punishment and any type of violence or exploitative labour that shall deny the child of his/her right to education. Teachers, as duty bearers and members of Ghana Education Service have a responsibility to uphold and protect children's rights.

To this end, the Ghana Education Service finds it necessary to codify certain norms that should help achieve a high standard of competence and good behaviour. A Code of Conduct was drawn up for the guidance of the Teachers of the Ghana Education Service including those engaged in administration, teaching and other supporting services in the performance of their duties. (GES, 2012). This Code provides a frame of reference for both the disciplinary authority and members of the Service when it becomes necessary to initiate disciplinary action against erring members.

2.7.2 General Definition of Misconduct

- i. Conduct in this context is behaviour, attitudes and character exhibited, for example, by anyone within and outside the working environment. The standards of conduct generally required of any member of the Ghana Education Service (GES) would be leadership, selflessness, comportsment, integrity, impartiality, fairness and honesty in matters affecting work and status of the profession.
- ii. Any act of omission without reasonable excuse by an employee that amounts to a failure to perform in a proper manner any official duty assigned to him or her as such or that contravenes any rules of regulations or enactment relating to the Education Service

or that is otherwise prejudicial to the efficient conduct of the Education Service into disrepute shall constitute a misconduct. (Ghana Education Service. Council (GES,2000)

2.7.2.2 Absence from Duty

- i. No teacher may leave the school during school hours without the permission of the head of the institution.
- ii. A teacher leaving the school for duty elsewhere shall inform his head of his whereabouts to facilitate his recall in an emergency.
- iii. A teacher shall not absent himself/herself from work on grounds of ill-health without permission from his/her head and subsequent submission of a medical certificate from a certified medical practitioner if he/she has to be absent for more than five (5) working days.
- iv. A teacher shall not absent himself/herself from assigned work without permission.
- v. It is misconduct for a teacher to absent himself/herself from duty for one (1) or more days continuously without permission or reasonable excuse or cause.
- vi. A teacher who absents himself/herself from duty continuously for ten (10) days or more shall be deemed to have vacated post.
- vii. No teacher shall leave Ghana without a written permission from the Director-General of the Ghana Education Service.

1. Classification of penalties

- i. Any breach or non-observance in any section or part thereof of any of the foregoing rules and regulations shall constitute a misconduct for which the offender shall be liable to a disciplinary action.
- ii. The penalty for the various categories of misconduct shall be as follows:

1. Category 'A' Penalty for Minor Misconduct

- i. Warning or reprimand (plus surcharge where applicable, to be given, in writing always for record purposes).
- ii. Forfeiture of pay.
- iii. Suspension with loss of pay and/or allowance (For a period of not more than one month).
- iv. Stoppage of increment. (This means non-payment for a specified period of an increment otherwise due or one year.)
- v. Disciplinary transfer.
- vi. Termination – For persistent misconduct.

Any of the above penalties may be imposed on an Employee for any of the minor misconduct, as the disciplinary authority may consider appropriate and desirable in any particular case.

2.8 Summary of Literature Review

Educational leaders are supposed to manage an educational set up or organizations. The ethics of educational administration is about administrators establishing an ethical environment. Hence the administrator should have the moral

responsibility and the desirable or prescribed ethical standards (Starrat, 2004). Having moral responsibility and ethical standards are essential elements in our schools / Educational System. However, without practice they have no meaning. A code of ethics in itself, cannot guarantee ethical practice and professional citizenship. We need moral reasoning, purposeful life, and respect for differences (Edwards, 2009). A code of ethics speaks to the very best that a profession is or strives to be. It is idealistic side of a profession. A projection of the vision of the professional identity as it ought to be (Connelly & Light, 2001).

Finally, school heads have a key role in managing schools rightly because they are the main decision makers, they are school leaders, and they have more responsibilities than the other staffs. Hence heads ethical behaviours and decisions directly affect school climate positively. Heads must follow codes of ethics and always think of students first in their decision making. In such an ethical school environment success is a definite outcome of the educational process, teaching and learning become professional outputs of desirable behaviour and ethical decisions.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology used to explore the purpose and answer the research questions in this study. This chapter is organized in the following sectors: (a) Research design, (b) The study area, (c) population and population sampling, (d) Research Instrument, (e) Data collection, (f) Data analysis.

3.2 Research Design

The design for this study is a descriptive survey which employs mixed methods thus using both qualitative and quantitative research method. A questionnaire designed to collect data on the characteristics of decision making, of school leaders in the Dormaa Municipality in the Brong Ahafo Region, was constructed. Glatthorn and Joyner (2005) noted, “descriptive research is used to describe the characteristics of a population by directly examining samples of that population” (p.101).

3.3 The Study Area

Brong-Ahafo is one of the 10 regions of Ghana, it has a territorial size of 39,557(sq .km) representing 17percent of the Ghana’s total land mass. It is the second largest region after the Northern Region. It is bounded on the North by the Northern Region, the Volta and Eastern Region to the East and south east respectively and Ashanti and Western regions to the south, and La Cote d’Ivoire to the West (Anane -Agyei 2012).

. Brong- Ahafo affectionately called B-A has the reputation of being Ghana's food basket as it supplies about 30 percent of the nation's food needs. The region has tourist attraction such as Bono Manso the cradle of Akan civilization, Bui National Park and Dam, Busia Mausoleum and Arch, Nchiraa and Kintampo Waterfalls, Ostriches at Nwoase near Wenchi, and many other places. The major festivals in the region are Apuor, Kwafie, Munufie, Kajuji, Adekyem, and Nkyifie yam festivals. (Anane -Agyei 2012)

Dormaa Municipal is one of the twenty-seven (27) administrative districts within the Brong Ahafo Region of Ghana. It is one of the oldest districts in the Brong- Ahafo Region of Ghana. As the population increased with associated development and expansion in basic infrastructure, the district attained the status of a municipality and later „gave birth“ to two other districts, the Dormaa East and West districts. The district was created by the Local Government Act 1993 (Act 462). The municipality is situated at the western part of the Brong- Ahafo Region. It lies within longitudes 3° West and 3.30° West and latitudes 7° North and 7.30° North. It is bound in the north by the Jaman South district and in the east by the Dormaa East district, in the south and south-east by Asunafo and Asutifi districts respectively, in the west and south-west by Dormaa West and in the west and north-west by La Cote d'Ivoire. The municipal capital is Dormaa Ahenkro, located about 80 kilometres west of the regional capital, Sunyani. The municipality has a total land area of 1,210.28 square kilometres, which is about three (3.1) percent of the total land area of Brong-Ahafo Region. (Ghana Statistical service 2007).

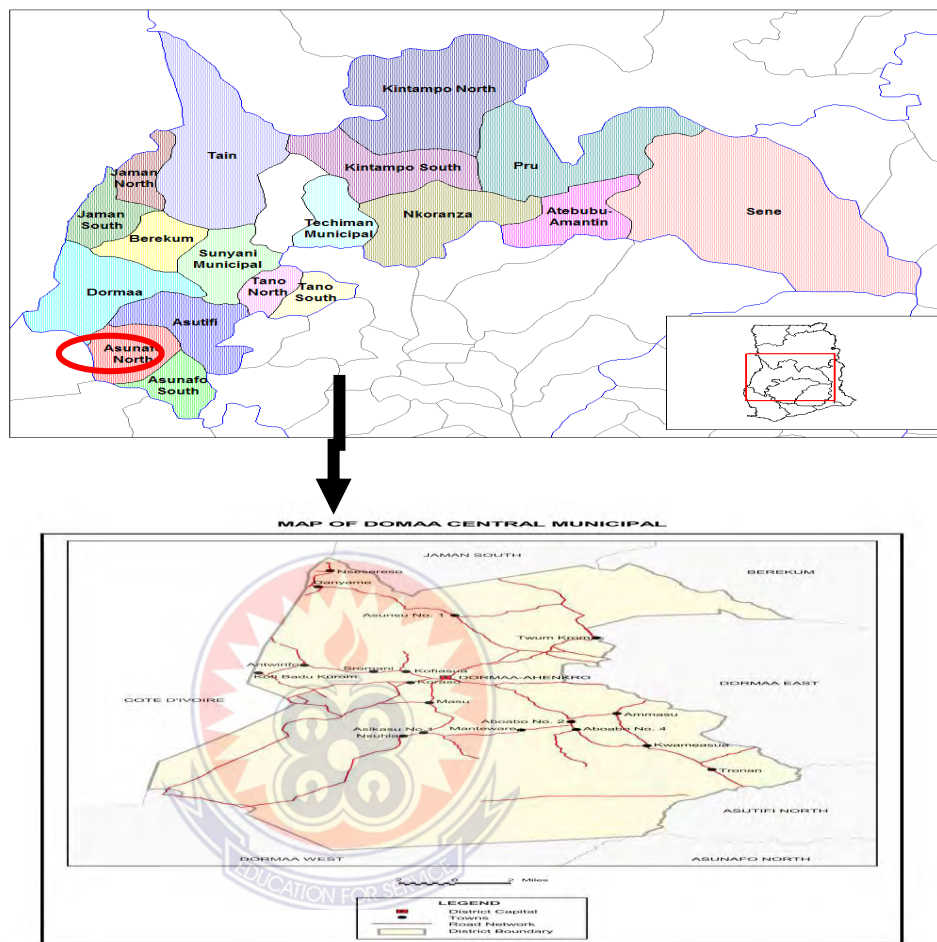


Fig 2: Map of Study Area

The Dormaa Municipality falls under Dormaa Traditional Area with the paramount chief at DormaaAhenkro. The main festival of the people is the Kwafie festival. This festival is celebrated once in every four years (i.e. in November). The recent one was celebrated in November, 2010. The Bonos are the all major ethnic group in the municipality constituting about 96 percent. Anyins are a little over two per cent (2.4%), Northerners one per cent and others, less than one per cent (0.6) (Dormaa Municipal Assembly, 2010). The major language spoken is Bono-Twi. Farming is largely carried

out on small-scale basis. At the moment the poultry industry specifically, eggs production is operating on large scales. Livestock such as cattle, sheep, goats and grass cutters are also reared. However the municipality is the focus of intense activity on market days with people congregating from even La Cote d'Ivoire.

The municipality is endowed with sites of historic and aesthetic importance. These include: The Pamu, Mpameso and the Tain Forest Reserves all of which provide natural habitat for game and wild life, especially elephants and monkeys. Monkeys are found in a sacred grove located at the outskirts of Duasidan, a village which is about 9 kilometres away from the municipal capital, Dormaa Ahenkro. The Ghana-La Cote d'Ivoire border demarcation at Kofi Badukrom is also very attractive. One of the finest custom checkpoints in the country (Gonokrom customs check point) is also found in the Dormaa Municipality. (Ghana Statistics Service, 2005).

Dormaa Ahenkro is the base of sensational Aduana Football Club that made history in 2010 as the first Ghana football club to win the premiership trophy on their maiden entry to the competition. There is Dormaa Educational Endowment Fund which help to promote education in Dormaa Traditional Area and Ghana in general (Anane - Agyei 2012) The foregoing suggest and indeed is reflected in the status of Dormaa Ahenkro as a place of intense social and economic activities.

The Dormaa Municipality has over three hundred and fifty educational centres ranging from kindergarten to college of education as shown in the table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Number of Educational institutions in Dormaa Municipality

Level	No. of Public school	No. Private school	Total
Kindergarten	128	49	177
Primary	136	44	180
Junior High (JHS)	85	34	119
Senior High (SHS)	5	3	8
College of Education	-	1	1
Grand Total	354	131	485

Source: Dormaa Municipal Directorate of GES, (2010)

3.4 Population

According to Babbie (2005), population is the group to which the results of the study are intended to apply. It is the population which the researcher is interested in gaining information and drawing conclusions (Sarantakos, 2005).

For the purpose of this study, the population (participants) for this study consisted of all headmasters / mistresses, assistant headmasters/ headmistresses, senior housemasters /mistresses and house masters /mistresses in Public Senior High Schools in Dormaa Municipality of the Brong Ahafo Region.

This population is responsible for key decisions in the educational sector and thus relevant to the study. Dormaa Municipality comprises five schools. In all, a total of 66 respondents constituting the entire population was used for the study. The distribution of respondents is shown in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Distribution of Respondents

Name of School	Housemaster /Mistress	Senior House Master/Mistress	Assistant Headmaster/ Mistress	Headmaster/ Mistress	Sub Totals
Dormaa SHS	24	2	2	1	29
C.A.C SHS	4	1	2	1	8
Salv. Army SHS	5	1	2	1	9
Mansen SHS	6	2	2	1	11
Wamanafo Sec/Tec	5	1	2	1	9
Total	44	7	10	5	66

3.5 Sample and Sampling Technique

The census technique was employed in this study. Osuala (1982) posits that the nature of the population, type of sampling design and the degree of precision the researcher will need should be considered before determining the appropriate sample size. In line with this, and due to the number of public Senior High Schools in Dormaa Municipality and the degree of precision with which the researcher wanted to generalize the results, it was prudent and expedient to select all headmasters /mistresses, their assistants, senior housemaster, mistresses and housemasters and mistress. This was in line with the submission of Gay and Airasian (2003) that there is the need to study the entire population if it is small this is what is referred to in research terms as the census method.

This census method is employed in a study when the population is less than 200 participants. A situation of that nature, it calls for the use of the entire population to enable generalization to be made (Lodico, Spaulding & Voegtle, 2010). In this study the entire population for the study sixty-six,(66) were used. The statistics covering the population is presented in Table 3.2.

3.6 Research Instrument

Questionnaire was the main instrument used for the study. Since the study made use of both qualitative and quantitative research methods to improve the validity and reliability of the results. According to Patten (2004) the credibility issue for qualitative enquiry depends on three distinct but related elements. Namely rigorous techniques and methods; the credibility of the researcher and philosophical belief in the phenomenological paradigm. In this study the researcher brings to bear, over ten years of experience in teaching and administrating to S.H.S students at the house level .This experience is expected to enhances the credibility (Patten,2004) on the research design and specially on the questionnaire construction and development of this study.

Structured questionnaires were used to obtain data from headmasters/mistresses, assistants headmasters /mistresses, senior housemasters/mistress and housemasters and mistresses. Structured questionnaires are used as the main tool for data collection from the study population. The reasons why the questionnaire was found as the most appropriate tool is that besides its potential to produce accurate information from many respondents within a short time, it is quite inexpensive in terms of time, specifically, the

questionnaire was used as the main data collection instrument for collecting data from the respondents because:

- a) in a cost effective manner, a large amount of data was collected from a lot of the respondents within the shortest possible time.
- b) As compared to other forms of data collection instruments, questionnaires could be more objectively analysed.

According to Creswell (2005), questionnaires have certain disadvantages. The first is that they do not allow for probing, prompting and clarification of answers given.

The second is that they do not provide opportunity to collect additional information from the respondents. These limitations were addressed by providing open-ended questions on the questionnaire.

To ensure that the questionnaire contained relevant questions that can answer the research questions and objectives, the instrument was structured into sections, with each section focusing on one or two objectives of the study. The first section however, elicits the demographic characteristics of respondents. The major demographic variable includes: age, position, gender, number of years in current position, total number of years in teaching, qualification and others. These demographics are relevant in exploring how they relate to the research questions and objectives of the study.

The second section focuses on the ethical scenarios of which was made of respondents reading through a given scenario and using it to answer given questions.

Thus respondents should choose reprimand, can't decide or should not reprimand and write the explanation of choice on the first question. Respondents were to write their opinion, because participants are teachers and can write extensively on their opinions

which help to demonstrate their beliefs and behaviours in certain instances. The third section contained items of close-ended questionnaires consisting of ethical framework statement for respondents to agree or disagree.

The likert-type scale of structuring items was adopted for the items. The items were constructed based on 5 point Likert-type of scale showing 1 – strongly disagree (S.D.), 2 – Disagree (D), 3 – Not sure (N.S.), 4- Agree (A), 5– Strongly Agree (S. A.)

The section has to do with applying the understood scenarios to the statement from the scale given in the situation which were concerned with the use of various ethical framework in decision making.

3.7 Pre-testing of instruments

Pilot study was conducted at Bechem Presbyterian Senior High school, the purpose was to ensure the questionnaire instrument was clearly understood, the responses clear and unambiguous and intent of the researcher evident in order to refine the items on the questionnaire so that respondents would have no problem in answering the questions when administered during the actual study on the field. The rationale for pre-testing of the instrument was also to evaluate the validity and reliability of the instrument when used for the main research. An instrument is valid if it measures what it is intended to measure and accurately achieves the purpose for which it is designed (Patten, 2004). According to Patten, no test instrument is perfectly valid. The researcher needs some kind of assurance that the instrument being used will result in accurate conclusions. These principles were addressed when designing the questionnaire through pretesting of the instrument. This was against Moser and Kalton (2008) assertion that no matter how

experienced the questionnaire designer may be, any attempt to ignore the preparatory stages will seriously jeopardize the quality of the questionnaire. To ensure the validity of the instruments, the questionnaire was given to the supervisor for scrutiny, since validity is determined by expert judgment (Tannor, 2011).

Apart from this, the instrument was pretested in determining how reliable it is for data collection in the main survey within one Senior High School. The participants were teachers, head of departments and few subject heads. Pre testing of the survey instruments helped to identify potential challenges to be encountered during the main study by improving the questionnaires, and identified the key issues to be investigated. A few revisions were made to the instruments after the pre-test.

Pre test are conducted primarily to develop and test adequacy of the research instruments as well as assess their feasibility. (Pattern 1990) suggest the credibility of qualitative aspect of an inquiry or of a study is specially depends on credibility of the researcher because the researcher is the instrument of data collection and centre of the analytic data process. This researcher therefore brought first to the pretesting her qualification, experience and perspectives as an educator.

3.9 Ethical Considerations of the Study

Ethics focuses on concepts and principles of how human beings do things, think and behave. In research context, ethics is concerned with the moral concepts and principles that underpin socially recognized and sanctioned professional and legal obligation (Stommel & Wills, 2004). Ethical consideration in this study referred to protecting the rights of the respondents and the institutions in which the research was

conducted. Protecting the rights of the respondents was ensured by obtaining informed consent of the headmistress/headmasters and teachers, maintaining confidentiality and anonymity by not asking respondents to write their names, privacy as well as respect of dignity of the respondents. For protecting the rights of the institutions, a written permission to conduct the study was sent to the authorities of the schools to obtain permission before the study was conducted there.

Concerning accessibility, the schools, heads and the teachers participated voluntarily through the permission of the educational authorities. Through a letter to the educational authorities, the heads of schools and the teachers in the survey area were well informed and clearly understood the objective for this research.

Confidentiality was also ensured during the conduct of the study, transcriptions of the questionnaire, analysis and reporting. The participants in the study were assured of anonymity, and their names were not disclosed in any way. The information provided did not incriminate the respondents in any way either.

3.10 Data Collection Procedures

Before embarking on the data collection exercise, contacts with the selected schools were made through mates and friends in the study area. Permission was sought from the heads of the institutions concerned before the instrument was administered. A letter of introduction was obtained from the Department of Educational Leadership, University of Education, Winneba, Kumasi Campus, was sent to the schools. A covering letter was attached to the questionnaire to explain the objective of the study and the data needed. A visit was made to the schools to interact with the respondents and to establish

rapport with them for the conduct of the study. A date was then fixed for the distribution and completion of the questionnaire for the teachers. The questionnaire was administered in each of the four schools personally on scheduled dates which were convenient to the teachers and the headmistresses of the sampled schools. The questionnaires were received back on the same day they were administered to ensure high return rates.

3.11 Data Analysis

The data collected through the instrument was categorized and organized by theme according to their conceptual similarity. The quantitative data were analysed and then described based on the methods which best suited to their nature. The same scores were given to items with the response strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree. For ease of analysis, the responses of strongly agree and agree were combined and strongly disagree and disagree were also combined. Items with „should reprimand, „Not Sure“ and „should not reprimand“ responses were scored 1, 2 and 3 respectively. Since the study was purely descriptive, descriptive analysis was used. Frequency and percentage distribution were used to analyse various characteristics of the sample population such as sex, academic qualification, and experience. Frequency, mean score, standard deviation was used.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results and findings which emerged from the study. It focuses on the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents, respondent's pre-disposition in resolving ethical dilemma and respondent's use of ethics of justice, care, critique, profession in decision making. The chapter also examines how the professional and training background of educational leaders in Dormaa municipality Second Cycle institutions influences their ethical decision making processes and compares the ethical decision making of gender groups in educational leadership.

This section presents the demographical characteristics of the respondents. It focuses on their gender, age, education, position, experience on the job and teaching experience profiles which are presented in the table 4.1.

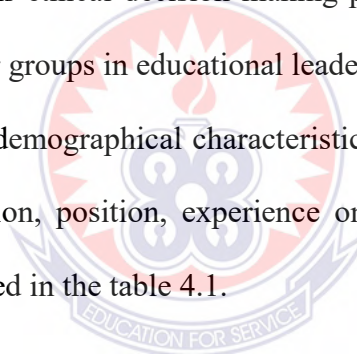


Table 4.1: Demographic Distribution of Respondents

Description		F	%
Gender	Male	43	65.2
	Female	23	34.8
Total		66	100.0
Age (in years)	20-25	1	1.5
	26-35	21	31.8
	36-45	20	30.3
	46-55	15	22.7
	56-60	9	13.6
Total		66	100.0
Qualifications	Bachelors	47	71.2
	Masters	18	27.3
	Others	1	1.5
Total		66	100
Position	Headmaster/mistress	5	7.6
	Assistant Headmaster/mistress	10	15.2
	Senior Housemaster/ Housemistress	7	10.6
	Housemaster/ Housemistress	44	66.7
Total		66	100.0
Years in Teaching	< 3	1	1.5
	4-6	13	19.7
	7-10	7	10.6
	11-14	9	13.6
	> 15	36	54.5
Total		66	100.0
Years in Current Position	1-5	41	62.1
	6-10	13	
	11-15	9	13.6
	16-20	2	3.0
	>20	1	1.5
Total		66	100.0

Source: Field Data (2016)

4.2.0 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

From Table 4.1 majority of the respondents were males 43(65.2%) with females forming the minority 23(34.8%). This indicates that the finding of this research reflect more male view than females. Table 4.1 shows that majority 21(31.8%) were between the ages of 26 – 35 years, with 1(1.5%) of the respondents between 20–25 years. Forty-four (66%) of respondents were 36 years and over 24 (36.3%) aged 46 and over. The majority (63.6%) of the respondents can thus be said to be in their youthful age group. (20 – 45 years). Table 4.1 shows that majority of the respondents were in their youthful adult age.

The table further indicated that majority 47(71.2%) of the respondents have Bachelor's degree which is the minimum teaching qualification in professional teaching in Senior High School and some 18(27.3%) had Masters degrees while 1(1.5%) had „other“ qualification such as diploma and maters degree qualification not normal in the system. Educational background of the respondents is likely to influence attitude towards social situations requiring decision making. The level of education of the respondents is expected to help explain various ethical framework school leaders employ. This means that the teachers in this study area have a high level of education and are thus expected to appreciate and have a good understanding of the research instrument as well as the objectives and goals of the questionnaire.

Most educational leaders hold administrative, housekeeping or teaching positions that trigger decision–making affecting students and teachers alike. The position of respondents is shown in table 4.1.1. The table shows that five of the 66 respondents were head teachers of Senior High Schools representing 7.6% of the total, while 10 (15.2%)

respondents were Assistant Head teachers. seven Senior Housemasters /Mistresses and majority (44) of the respondents were House Masters /Mistresses representing 66.7%.

Table 4.1 also presents information on the extent of teaching experience of respondents in terms of number of years spent in teaching. The length of teaching service account for the experiences of the school leaders. The majority of respondents (68.2%,) have taught for over 10 years. Thirteen respondents, representing (19.7%) have worked for 4-6 years. Seven (10.6%) of respondents have taught for 7-10years and only one respondent, constituting 1.5% have taught for nearly 3 years and below. From the data, the majority of teachers have over 6 years of work experience. And thus, are expected to be experienced enough to guide the attitudinal formation of their students. Due to this rich experience in teaching that the respondents had, the study was expected to validly yield the ethical frameworks mostly used by educational leaders.

From the survey it was clear most of the respondents 41(62.1%) had spent 1 – 5 years in teaching leadership while 13(19.7%) respondents had spent 6 – 10 years in their current positions. and 9(13.6%) have had their positions for 11 – 15 years while 2(3.0%) and 1(1.5%) had been in the same position for over 16 – 20 years and over 20 respectively. Number of years an individual serve in a position has influence on decision making and indicates a pool of experiences that should be able to handle difficult ethical dilemmas. It indicates that the respondents had spent many years implementing educational policies. This experience in leadership position should affect decision making.

4.2.1 Research question 1: What are the attitudinal pre-dispositions of school leaders towards ethical decision- making?

The first specific research question was what are the attitudinal predisposition towards ethical decision making by educational leaders. Respondents were expected to choose a reprimand as a predisposition towards the enforcement of school rules and regulations. (pro-regulation) or „not reprimand „suggesting a disposition towards critical of enforcement of school rules and regulations .

The study sought to determine respondents pre-disposition towards ethical decision-making in the school context. Pre disposition is the tendency to hold a particular attitude or act in a particular way. It is the state of being likely to behave on a particular way (New English Dictionary, 2016). The purpose is to declare the orientation of school leaders towards hypothetical situations from which they direct their choice of ethical frameworks in decision making. By this objective respondent may be described as either pro-regulation or critical of regulation.

Two scenarios describing infringements of school rules and regulations were offered. Respondents were to choose a reprimand or „should not reprimand“ posture for school authority. It presented a direct opportunity to agree or disagree with school rules which support sanctions for an absentee teacher (teacher misconduct) as well as for students“ after-hours activities (misconduct of students). Inevitably the majority of respondents approved sanctions for both infringements as depicted in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2. Predisposition to Ethical Decision-making

ATTITUDE	SCENARIO I TEACHER MISCONDUCT		SCENARIO II STUDENTS MISCONDUCT	
	NO.	%	NO.	%
Reprimand	38	57.6	44	66.7
Can't decide	4	6.1	4	6.0
Should Not. Reprimand	24	36.4	18	27.3
Total	66	100	66	100

Source: Field Data 2016

The overwhelming response is for reprimand of both teachers (57.6%) and students (66.7%). However, a notable minority of sentiments in opposition to reprimand exists for both situations. Thirty-six percent (36%) of the respondents objected to reprimand for the teacher while 27.3% did not approve a reprimand for the students. Only 6.0% could not make a decision. The should not reprimand faction represents viewpoint contrary to the regulations of Ghana Education Service and its professional code of conduct. The two situations suggest an inherent ethical dilemma for the professional teacher and school leaders who are the respondents. Ghana Education Service code of conduct labels absenteeism on the part of teachers as misconduct (GES, 2010) and prescribes a reprimand for it. A reprimand is a formal expression of disapproval.(Cambridge University Press,2016).It is either written or oral .Reprimand, in ethical issues relating to educational leadership issues may be said to arise out of a dilemma as to the choice of appropriate action applicable to the situation. Respondents understanding of the situation may found in the explanations offered by them for their attitudinal posture as indicated in Table 4.3. for teacher absenteeism.

Table 4.3. Explanations for choosing reprimand for absentee teacher

Reason for Reprimand	No.	%
Against GES rules and regulations	21	31.8
Unethical/Unprofessional	8	12.1
Sanction necessary as deterrent	7	10.6
Deception/Ruse	3	4.5
Total	38	57.6

The explanations or reasons offered by „reprimand respondents „ for choosing a reprimand for the absentee teacher is connected to official GES position as stated in its code of conduct and inherent in the training and education of teachers. The reasons are either regulatory (31.8%) or related to the ethical conduct of teachers (unprofessional, unethical) (12.1%) or deemed necessary to serve as deterrent (10.6%). A few were angered that the absentee’s excuse amounted to deception (4.5%). For the student situation, the reasons given by respondents, coming from the perspective of teachers or former teachers of students now school leaders, suggested a straight-forward case of „breaking rules“. To gain some comprehension of the ethical dilemma facing respondents in this situation it is necessary to look at the reasons offered for taking an alternative, opposing the official viewpoint. Table 4.4 provides such reasons.

Table 4.4. Reason for no reprimand

Reason for Reprimand	No.	%
Prior permission was sought and given	10	41.7
Real reasons not an issue	2	8.3
It's a first offence	7	29.2
Thorough investigation is needed before jumping to conclusions.	7	10.6
	4	16.7
Other	1	4.1
Total	24	100

Source: Field Data 2016

The “No reprimand” faction (n = 24 at 36.4% of all 66 respondents) are primarily of the belief that once the school Head was notified earlier, no reprimand was necessary. In response to research question what are the attitudinal pre-dispositions of school leaders towards ethical decision- making an example of actual statements may be instructive.

“ *The man may be sick officially, so whatever he does afterwards is his own problem*”

“ *The teacher asked for permission and it was granted so there is no need for any punishment. The co-workers could easily be his enemies*”

“ *needs thorough investigation before deciding what to do*”

- “ *I think policies when made should not be rigid but must have a human face as well: Alex should only be reprimanded if previous records follow the same pattern.*”
- “ *I think if anyone should be reprimanded it should be the Head. He did not just leave but had asked for permission.....*”
- “ *There are series of events in the curriculum which takes away all of a person’s time but Mr. Alex asked permission. He should not be reprimanded by the circuit supervisor.*”
- “ *Hearing from a colleague teacher that, the said teacher wasn’t actually sick isn’t enough evidence to reprimand the said teacher. Besides when you are sick it doesn’t mean you can’t go to your farm... exercising will even help....*”

All these statements indicate concern for other people in a given disciplinary situation. There always exists the professional attitude and a caring attitude in social conflicts. The teacher misconduct scenario suggests an existing predisposition among respondents to show care.

The scenario regarding the student misconduct presents an identical profile. The reprimand movement for the students all indicated infraction of regulation as reason enough for reprimand as indicated in Table...4.5...

Table 4.5 Reason of reprimanding students for their misconduct

Reason for Reprimand	No.	%
Against rules and regulations are in force at all times even on the last day	25	57.8
For deterrence effect	14	31.8
Discipline of all time	5	11.4
Total	44	100.0

The reasons are all in keeping with GES rules and clear. However, for the other respondents (n = 18, 27% of all respondents) other reasons could be adduced to justify a should not-reprimand case as shown in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6 Reasons for not reprimanding

Reason for Should Not Reprimand	No.	%
Untimely response/punishment should be timely to be effective	15	83.4
School was almost over for the students	1	5.6
It was a disciplinary issue so should not affect results as the the only punishment possible	2	11.1
Total	18	100.0

Source: Field Data 2016

As part of the first research question which suggest the pre disposition to attitude of “no reprimand” respondents were asked to explain their choice of no reprimand for students caught misbehaving, as earlier outlined. .Most respondents suggested, it amounted to an injustice to punish students who were eventually existing school and other respondents believed the delay in deciding the fate of the students until the results were published and indeed available to the students. some of the statements of no reprimand included:

“The issue was solely about discipline, so their examination result don’t even come in”

“The school management should not reprimand the students because they did not punish them at the right time as no decision was taken at the right time”

“The SMB delayed in their judgment”

“Students must not be reprimanded to such extent, as withholding their result. Such action is extreme”

“The School Management Board has acted irresponsibly by not taking decision on the students early enough”

Clearly some sympathy exists for the students with regard to the timing of reprimand, the nature of the offence being committed on their last day in school and the use of withholding results as punishment, if any punishment is necessary at all. The two polar position of reprimand and should not reprimand, indicates that there is a pre-disposition to act professionally but this does not negate the existence of elements of care, concern, sympathy, justice and critique in the moral reasoning of school leaders which they may utilize in future decisions within the school context.

Ethical pre-dispositions are a basis to explain value orientation of school leaders as in a guide action in resolving ethical dilemmas (Begley & Stefkovich, 2007). The value orientation expressed for the forgoing is overwhelming for conforming to the professional code. Glanz (2006) insists ethical leaders must endeavour to do the right things as also do things right. In Dormaa the orientation is obviously to do the right things,

4.3 Research Question: Which ethical framework influences school leader's choice of ethical decision making?

The second research question sought to establish the ethical framework school leaders normally use in the school setting. The ethical framework available to school leaders may be grouped into those relating to critique; care; justice and professional. Carefully chosen statements reflecting a critical attitude to these ethical framework scenarios were presented to respondents for their agreement or disagreement.

Ethic of Critique

The ethic of critique questions the role of power, subordination and minority rights in decision-making (Furman, 2004; Starratt 2004). Table 4.7 provides indications of respondents' inclination to use of critique ethical framework. Over 90% of respondents agreed there is a need to take circumstances into account when taking any decision. That the mean value for this statement was 4.3 with a standard deviation of .744 suggests that this response was not much in dispute, as taking circumstances into account is to consider barriers to fairness. However, some 47.0% disagreed that there were too many policies

and rules in the study area with only 23% in agreement. Over 48% disagreed with the statement that they should be concerned about the extent to which the law is applied in schools with 43.9% in agreement suggesting a close decision. Not to question how the law is applied implies sticking to regulations and thus approving a reprimand. The most cogent statement relating to the ethic of critique is the position on the disadvantaged. A last statement read “The rules are often unfair to subordinates (students) in our school system”. Some 14% agreed and 51% disagreed. The basic tenet of the critique ethic is to acknowledge the differential effect of sanctions on minorities and subordinates. (Shapiro & Gross, 2008; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005; Starratt, 2004). The ethic of critique was about barriers to fairness (Shapiro & Gross, 2004), Shapiro and Stefkovich, (2005); Starratt (2004). Removing barriers create an ethic of fairness. But It may be suggested barriers to fairness are inherent in code of conduct and rules and regulations (Starratt, (2004). Respondents who are pre disposed not to reprimand can be said to be critiquing.

Table 4.7: Respondents’ Use of Ethic of Critique Framework

Item	Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean	Std
There is a need to take circumstance into account when taking any decision	42.4	50.0	3.0	4.5	0	4.3	.744
There are too many policies and rules in the Dormaa Municipal educational system	10.6	13.6	28.8	40.9	6.1	2.82	1.09
I am always concerned with	19.7	24.2	7.6	33.3	15.2	3.00	1.4

how far the law must be applied in schools, these are children (girls, having fun watching movies, and they are completing school.								
The rules are often unfair to subordinates (students) in our school system	4.5	10.6	16.7	51.5	16.7	2.35	1.030	
Expected average	19.3	24.6	14.0	32.6	9.5	3.1	1.0	

Source: Field data (2016)

Key: SA = Strongly Agree, A=Agree

Clearly school leaders (respondents) agree to statements that are professionally driven (too much rules; take circumstances into account) but dispute the rules are unfair to students. There is almost even split in the case of actual students in statement three. The statement three 43.9% were for students as 48.5% disagreed to reprimand 7.6% were not sure; a tendency that question the professional code. Clearly regulations were reacting to unfairness in the statement three.

This outcome summary of the study suggests confirmation for Furman (2004) and Starratt (2004). Starratt (2004) affirmed that the ethic of critique sought to identify and remove barriers of favouritism and in doing so created an ethic of justice. Fairness, according to Starratt (2004), was the equitable distribution of resources and application of rules, which became the focus of the ethic of critique. Starratt avowed that the ethic of critique challenged the status quo by involving social discourse, which allowed the marginalized a voice and exposed inequities. These findings of the study are also consistent with those of Shapiro and Gross (2008) and Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005). According to Shapiro and Gross (2008) and Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005), the ethic of

critique focused educators on an awareness of inequities in society such as in statement three, as it pursued appropriate measures to correct laws, policies, and regulations inconsistent with sound educational practices. They confirmed that the ethic of critique forced educators to rethink, redefine, and reframe concepts such as privilege, power, culture, and in particular, social injustice. They further reiterated that school administrators who utilized the ethic of critique questioned not only the law when making an ethical decision, but also considered who made the law and who benefited most from its enforcement. School administrators, who became more knowledgeable and sensitive to inequities, applied the ethic of critique when making ethical decisions, especially when those decisions dealt with rules, code of discipline, gender, and differences in misbehaviour. However, in this study the inclination towards using the ethic of critique was not overwhelmingly apparent except for statement 3.

4.4 The ethic of care

The ethic of care is concerned with people and relationships. Starratt (2004) wrote that the ethic of care confirmed caring was the ideal fulfilment of all social relationships. The Table 4.8 reveals how respondents were inclined to be caring.

Table 4.8: Respondent Use of Ethic of Care Framework

Item	Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean	Std
One needs to be empathetic when dealing with people in every situation	28.8	43.9	4.5	19.7	3.0	3.76	1.164
Human beings capable of making mistakes and must be forgiven as such.	18.2	30.3	10.6	34.8	6.1	3.20	1.268
All infractions committed in Dormaa are on Tuesday-market days and they affect livelihoods (market business). Those days must be specially considering Money matters underscore most of offences in the sector especially in Dormaa	15.2	9.1	13.6	37.9	24.2	2.53	1.361
	12.1	31.8	27.3	22.7	6.1	3.21	1.117
Expected Average	18.6	28.8	14.0	28.8	9.9	3.2	1.2

Source: Field data (2016)

Key: SA = Strongly Agree, A=Agree

Table 4.8 shows that 72.7% of the educational leaders of senior high schools agreed to the statement “One needs to be empathetic when dealing with people in every situation” whilst only 22.7% disagreed to the statement with 4.5% not sure of their responses. The mean score was 3.76 and a standard deviation of 1.164. This result would find favour with Furman (2004) who argued that the ethic of care is more concerned with compassion, empathy and caring for individuals as unique persons.

On the statement “Human beings capable of making mistakes and must be forgiven as such” 48.5% of the leaders agreed whilst 40.9% disagreed and 10.6% were not sure of their responses. To agree to the statement is to forgive as those who are forgiving will not reprimand but show care, apparently sentiments were equally divided. This finding agrees with those of Furman (2004). He was of the view that because of the focus of the ethic of care, the ethics of justice and critique would not be required in every situation if an individual’s needs are met.

For the statement “All infractions committed in Dormaa are on Tuesday-market days and they affect livelihood (market business). Those days must be specially considered” only 24.3% of the respondents agreed whilst as many as 62.1% disagreed with 13.6% of the respondents not sure of their responses. The mean score was 2.53 with 1.36 standard deviation. The indication is that some respondents acknowledge the role of livelihood in people’s daily affairs. For the statement “money matters underscore most of offences in the sector especially Dormaa”, 43.9% agreed with 28.8% disagreeing and 27.3% not sure of their responses. This trick question provides some support for the role local livelihood on decision making. This showed that majority of the educational leaders in senior high schools sometimes adopt the ethic of care when taking decision.

This finding from the study confirmed those of Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005). Shapiro and Stefkovich maintained that school administrators who utilized the ethic of care tried to balance power with caring and understood the need to nurture and encourage. Furman (2004) noted that the ethic of care balanced the ethic of justice and the ethic of critique. Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) suggested that the ethic of care avoided using positions for personal gain through political, social, religious, economic, and other influences may exist.

4.5 Ethics of Justice

The ethic of justice is available to decision makers who wish to be fair to all actors in the decision making scenarios including authority. Table 4.9 shows how respondents were inclined to be fair in their approach.

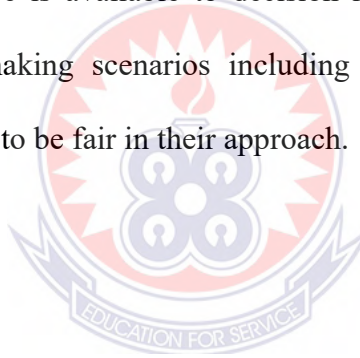


Table 4.9 Respondents use of Ethic of Justice framework

Item	SA %	A %	NS %	D %	SD %	Mean	Std
SMB must apply rules systematically and fairly across all offences	43.9	51.5	4.5	0.0	0.0	4.39	.579
SMB must be human and not stick strictly to policy prescriptions in all disciplinary circumstances for to err is human.	6.1	36.4	6.1	39.4	12.1	2.85	1.218
SMB must back up school leaders who make strict decisions based on their convictions and judgement.	15.2	60.6	7.6	13.6	3.0	3.71	.989
Rules were made regardless of personal background and should be respected	47.0	40.9	3.0	7.6	1.5	4.24	.946
Expected Average	28.1	47.3	5.3	15.2	4.2	3.8	0.9

Source: Field Data (2016)

Key: SA = Strongly Agree, A=Agree

Table 4.9 indicated that most of the educational leaders in Senior High Schools agreed to all the four statements presented to them positively with respect to ethics of justice. For instance, in the statement “school management boards must apply rules systematically and fairly across all offences”, 95.4% of the respondents agreed to the statement with 4.5% not sure of their responses and none of them disagreed. This is to be expected but does not explain why respondents were strongly for reprimanding the misconduct of the student’s scenario. On the other hand, only 42.5% of the respondents

agreed to the statement “school management boards must be human and not stick strictly to policy prescriptions in all disciplinary circumstances ” whilst 51.5% of them disagreed with 6.1% not sure of their responses. Those disagreeing will be disposed to reprimand. The mean score was 2.85 with a standard deviation of 1.218 suggest disagreement was clearly in the majority. With regard to the statement “School management Board must back up school leaders who make strict decision based on their convictions and judgment”, 75.8% of the school leaders agreed to the statement whilst only 16.6% disagreed with 7.6% not sure of their responses. The mean score was 3.71 with a standard deviation of .989. Needless to say this is to be expected as an ethical position for school leadership. Similarly, 87.9% of the respondent agreed to the statement “Rules were made for all regardless of personal background and it should be respected” with only 9.1% disagreeing to the statement. The mean score was 4.24 with a standard deviation of .946.

The overall expected average for ethics of justice showed that 75.4% of the respondents agreed with the positive statements with only 19.4% of the respondents disagreeing with the statement and 5.3% not sure of their responses. This result confirms a tendency towards a one-sided approval of statements in respondent’s personal favour. This outcome of the study is not different from those of Shapiro and Gross (2008) who argued that school administrators who make an ethical decision utilized the ethic of justice as they strived to be fair and equitable. The ethic of justice required an examination of the issues in terms of the rights and laws of students, parents, and school personnel. The results so far showed that majority of the educational leaders take into consideration ethics of justice when taking decisions but not in enough numbers to suggest widespread inclination towards fairness which is the basis of the ethic of justice.

4.6 Ethics of Profession

The professional attitude is acquired by training and imbues decision makers with a predisposition adopted by the teaching profession. It is by definition a framework that resolves decision makers of any dilemma brought about by individual psychological disposition. The extent to which respondents utilize professional strictures in making decisions is revealed in Table 4.10

Another ethical principle relates to ethics of profession. The results in Table 4.10 indicated that of the five statements, majority of the educational leaders agreed to four of the statements. For the statement “Relaxing rules can help teaching and learning in a way around the Dormaa area because of its economic status” only 24.2% of the respondents agreed, with 3.0% not sure of their responses and as many as 72.7% of the respondents disagreeing to the statement. The mean score was 2.29 with a standard deviation of 1.234. This posture of respondents may suggest that respondents expect standards to be maintained regardless of external factors such as the role of livelihood as money.

Maintaining standards, which are designed to ensure quality in the school enterprise is certainly in the student’s best interest. This finding of the study is consistent with those of Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005), Stefkovich and Begley (2007) and Stefkovich (2006).

They found that school leaders should consider professional codes and personal ethical principles, as well as, standards of the profession, as they created a dynamic model that placed the best interests of the student at the heart of the ethics of the educational profession.

With the statement “students deserve our exclusive attention at all times during class hours” 81.8% of the respondents agreed to the statement with only 15.2% of them disagreeing to the statement. The 15.2% disagreeing will be in consonance with the 36% who opted for reprimand the absent teacher. Whilst 3.0% of the respondents were not sure of their responses, the mean score calculated was 3.98 with a standard deviation of .561. It was also found that whilst as many as 97.0% of the educational leaders agreed to the statement “Teachers should set an example for others in society everywhere” none of them was found to disagreed with only 3.0% not sure of their responses. The mean score was found to be 4.53 with a standard deviation of 1.108. In considering the statement “At all times one should all think of the students” best interest and care” 86.4% of the respondents agreed to the statement but only 10.6% of them disagreed to the statement with 1.5% of them not sure of their responses. The mean score was found to be 4.06 and a standard deviation of .699.

Respondents position, with as many as 90.9% approval of the statement “school leaders must always be vigilant to avoid non-professional decisions” indicated that majority of the educational leaders in senior high schools in the Dormaa Municipality are disposed to be fair when taking decisions.

Table 4.10: Respondents Use of Ethic of Profession Framework

Item	SA (%)	A (%)	N S (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mea n(%)	Std
Relaxing rules can help teaching and learning in a way around the Dormaa Municipality because of its economic status	12.1	12.1	3.0	37.9	34.8	2.29	1.234
Students deserve our exclusive attention at all times during class hours	40.9	40.9	3.0	6.1	9.1	3.98	.561
Teachers should set an example for others in society everywhere	56.1	40.9	3.0	0	0	4.53	1.108
At all times we should all think of the students' best interest and care.	37.9	48.5	1.5	7.6	3.0	4.06	.699
School leaders must always be vigilant to avoid non-professional decisions.	50.0	40.9	7.6	1.5	0	4.39	1.379
Expected Average	39.4	36.7	3.6	10.6	9.4	3.9	0.9
Mean of Means	23.1	32.0	8.6	24.0	12.3	3.3	1.0

Source: Field Data (2016)

Key: SA = Strongly Agree, A=Agree

The outcomes of the study confirmed the findings of Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) and Shapiro and Gross (2008). They reported that those school administrators who used professional judgment utilized the ethic of the profession when considering the best interest of the student during ethical decisions. Shapiro and Gross (2008) agreed that the ethic of the profession placed the student at the centre of the decision-making process. In this study the only consistent inclination, in resolving ethical dilemma is in the adoption of ethics of profession.

4.7 Research Question 3: How do the educational leaders background characteristics affect the choice of ethical framework in decision making process in their second cycle institutions?

The third research question sought to establish the influence of background on choice of ethical framework in decision-making. The purpose was to find out if personal variables of age, education, experience in the position and experience as a teacher mediates decision-making. The variable of position was used as a proxy for age, and education as these were directly related to position held. Only experienced teachers were qualified to be school leaders and this is reflected in the age. Position held at any given time is a function of age and education. For the same reason, experience as a teacher is used as a proxy for other background variables as it is a known function for all personal variables arising out of training and development in teaching and includes even administrative experience along the career ladder.

The teacher misconduct variables of position and years of experience in that position as a teacher was cross-tabulated against reprimand/should not reprimand variables. In the specific case of teacher misconduct, there are indicated in Table...4.11

Table 4.11. Position Cross Tabulation Reprimand/Not Reprimand

Position	Reprimand		Can't Decide		Not Reprimand		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Headteacher	5	13.2	0	0	0	0	5	7.6
Asst. Headteacher	6	15.8	0	0	4	16.7	10	5.2
Snr. Hmt/Hms	6	15.8	0	0	1	4.2	7	10.6
Housemaster/Hms	21	55.3	4	100.0	24	100	44	66.7
Total	38	100	4	100	24	100	66	100

Source: Field Data 2016

All Heads opted to reprimand which is the ethical attitude for school leaders as professional teachers. They were supported in the attitude by roughly half (six respondents out of 10) by Assistant Heads, four of whom did choose not to reprimand. Heads schools must show ethical leadership by conforming to laid down rules. At the Senior Housemaster/housemasters level the decision choice was also one-sided with the majority choosing reprimand. However, at the Housemaster/Mistress level could be found all shades of opinion with respect to teacher misconduct. Housemaster /Housemistress provides the largest majorities for both Reprimand (55.3%) and should Not Reprimand (79.2%) factions of all respondents who either opted to reprimand or Not reprimand respectively. What is clear is that the more Senior positions are less ambivalent in the ethical decisions and face less ethical dilemmas in making decision..

The study also crosses tabulated years of experience in current position as Head, Assistant Head, Senior Housemaster, Housemistress with their willingness to reprimand or not to reprimand as in Table 12.

Table 4.12 Years in Position Reprimand/No Reprimand

Years in position	Reprimand		Can't Decide		No Reprimand		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1 – 5 years	18	47.4	4	100	19	79.2	41	62.1
6 – 10 years	9	23.7	0	0	4	16.7	13	19.7
11 – 15 years	8	21.1	0	0	1	4.2	9	13.6
16 – 20 years	2	5.3	0	0	0	0	2	3.0
Above 20 years	1	2.6	0	0	0	0	1	1.5
Total	38	100	4	100	24	100	66	100

Source: Field Data, 2016

The reprimand attitude was distributed across all years of experience in positions (from one year to over twenty years) while the should Not Reprimand faction was confined to more extensive experience category. All shades of opinion thus existed in the early years implying a tendency towards professionalism as the years move on. However, with respect to years involved in teaching the converse clearly applies as Table 4.13 suggests.

Table 4.13 Years of Teaching Experience by Reprimand/No Reprimand

Experience in Teaching	Reprimand		Can't Decide		No Reprimand		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<3	0	0	1	25.0	0	0	1	1.5
4 – 6 years	5	13.2	2	50.0	5	20.8	12	18.2
7 – 10 years	5	13.2	0	0	2	8.3	7	10.6
Above 10 years	28	71.1	1	25.0	17	70.8	45	68.2
Total	38	100	4	100	24	100	66	100

Source: Field Data 2016

Respondents with less than three (3) years of teaching experience provided 25% of „can't decide“ responses the 4 – 6 years group 50%,. The 4 – 6 years provided all shades of opinion on the matter of reprimand at minimal values. At above 10 years were the majority of both the reprimanding (71%) and not reprimanding (70.8%). Thus experienced teachers were likely to be more ambivalent in their choice of ethical framework. The more experienced teachers may be said to reflect more carefully over their use of professional ethics than the younger ones. That use professional ethic is questioned by some suggestion the intrusion of critique, care and justice ethical values into professional domain..

Students misconduct

For student misconduct the picture is only slightly different as shown in Table 4 14

Table 4.14 Reprimand cross tabulation with Position of Respondents

Position	Reprimand		Can't Decide		No Reprimand		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Headteacher	5	11.4	0	0	0	0	5	7.6
Asst. Headteacher	6	13.6	0	0	4	22.2	10	15.2
Snr. H/H	5	11.4	1	33.3	1	5.6	7	10.6
HH/H	28	66.6	3	66.7	13	72.2	44	66.7
Total	44	100	4	100	18	100	66	100

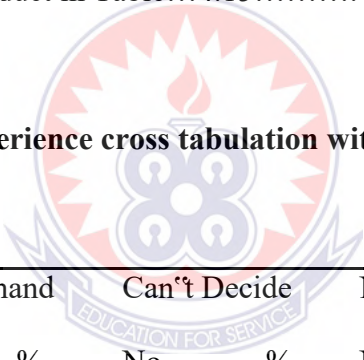
Source: Field Data 2016

All five (5) headteachers choose a reprimand posture as professionally required. Heads were 11.4% of the entire respondent group that opted for reprimand. Assistant Heads, which group contributed 15.2% of all respondents, were evenly divided with six (6) of the ten (10) opting for reprimand and four (4) choosing not to reprimand. The majority of Senior Housemasters and mistresses (five out of seven) were reprimanded with just one (1) person indecisive and one other person choosing not to reprimand.

The majority consisting 44 respondents (66.7%) were Housemasters/Mistresses. This frontline leadership position in schools, chose reprimand (66.6% of all reprimanding respondents) and 13 or 72.2% of all „no reprimand“ teachers while only three (3) of them could not make a decision. Clearly, the burden of resolving ethical dilemmas in making leadership decision fell on this group which provides majority reason for the Reprimand

as well as the Reprimand groups. It may be safely assumed that with respect to position and in the matter of student misconduct, the more senior your position, the more a respondent would be disposed, inclined or constrained to follow the official directive. The exception seems to be Assistant Heads who appear ambivalent on the matter. Years of experience as a teacher, though distinct from years of experience at the present job is expected to have more influence on decision-making especially since the respondent will then have had more interaction, in total. If seniority in administration suggests an inclination for adopting the professional attitude then seniority in teaching experience can but have the same effect. The true picture is depicted for the specific scenario of student misconduct in Table...4.15.....

Table 4.15. Teaching experience cross tabulation with Reprimand/No Reprimand (students misconduct)



Years of Experience	Reprimand		Can't Decide		No Reprimand		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<3	1	2.3	0	0	0	0	1	1.5
4 – 6 years	6	13.6	0	0	6	33.3	12	18.2
7 – 10 years	5	11.4	1	33.3	1	5.6	7	10.6
Less than 10 years	32	70.5	3	66.7	11	61.1	45	68.2
Total	44	100	4	100	18	100	66	100

Source: Field Data 2016

This suggestion that seniority deepens professionalism was not confirmed for the 1 – 3 years“ group at 19 respondents out of 24(79.2%) of valid respondents) and the 6 – 10-year group at 16% valid responses. All possible attitude to reprimanding could be found in the early years of appointment to position while the longer one stays in a position the more likely to reprimand or indicated by the 47.4% of 1 – 5 years of experience to the 21.1% of 11 15 years and 2% at above 20 years.

Findings for the cross tabulation suggest in the first five (5) years in a position respondents are more likely to be ambivalent in their attitude to rule infractions.

A last measure for background influence on pre-disposition to ethical framework choices is to examine the effect of years of teaching on the issue of reprimanding a fellow teacher who has erred.

The data suggest that the least experienced teachers (less than 3 years) were favourably disposed to the official directive to reprimand. The 4 – 6 years“ group was split evenly between six (6) for reprimand and six (6) for no reprimand. Also the 7 – 10 year group has more respondents inclined to be reprimanding than not reprimanding with a similar position for Senior Housemasters and Mistresses. The majority of those reprimanding can be found in the group at 70.5% of all reprimanding but also 61% of all No reprimand. The predisposition to be professional in Reprimanding among the more senior levels has been noted but so is the pre-disposition or inclination to show care by this group with respect to teaching experience. The dilemma may be explained by the presence of all ethical traits in the development of teachers along their career paths.

4.10 Research question 4: what comparison can be made in the predisposition of gender group towards choice of ethical framework in second cycle institutions in Dormaa Municipality

The final research question sought to interrogate the relationship between gender and choice of ethical decision-making framework. It hoped to uncover and understand how males and females were disposed to reprimand or should not reprimand. Women are noted in popular literature for their role as caregivers and nurturers while men respond to the disciplinarian stereotype.(Gilligan,2003) The study first looked at the intrusion of personal issues into decision making by eliciting the level or extent of approval for the situation of the scenario of teacher absentee. Respondents' perception of the supervisor's duty is revealed in Table 4.16

Table 4.16: Gender against the need for a reprimand Crosstab

		Should Alex the CS, reprimand the teacher accordingly for Teacher misconduct			Total
Gender	Should reprimand	Can't decide	Should not reprimand		
Male	25 (65.8)	2 (5.2)	16 (66.6)	43 (65.1)	
Female	13 (34.2)	2 (5.2)	8 (33.3)	23 (34.8)	
Total	38 (100.0)	4 (100.0)	24 (100)	66 (100.0)	

Source: Field Data (2016) *parentheses contain percentages

In response to the question pertaining to the CS reprimanding teachers, thirty eight respondents agreed that they should be reprimanded, four could not decide and 24 held the opinion that they should not be reprimanded. Of the 38 respondents who recommended reprimand of the errant teacher, 65% were male and 34 % female. For those who disagreed to reprimand, 66% were male and 33% female. Table 4.16 shows that males (65.8%) are more inclined to reprimanding than females (34.2%). Hence men were still in the majority in terms of agreement with reprimanding (66.3%). In their view, the CS had a duty and he ought to perform that duty in which a teacher ought to be reprimanded by the Circuit Supervisor. According to the ministry of Education (2002), the Circuit Supervisor is to support teachers and head teachers through provision of professional guidance and advice. They are described as the critical friend of teachers and head teachers in the effort to improve school management and classroom instruction with a view to enhance learning. This finding goes to confirm the perceptive view of Boss (2004) that men were oriented towards duty and principle.

The findings with reference to the females refuted the claim by Boss (2004) that women are more context oriented and tend to view the world in a more emotional and personal way. It revealed that amongst male and female school leaders, there was a need to adhere the practices, customs and most importantly expectations in the professional community and an adherence to laws and rules (Shapiro & Stefkovich; 2005).

Based on the disproportionate number of males as against females, it is clear no definitive statement can be made on gender differences in ethical decision making. This statement is emphasized by respondents' agreement to the necessity of the School

Management Board disciplining students who were exiting school anyway after their final examinations.

Table 4.17: Should School management reprimand the students accordingly

Crosstab

Should School management reprimand the students accordingly?

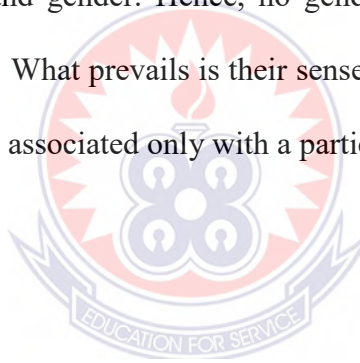
	Should reprimand	Can't decide	Should not reprimand	Total
Gender				
Male	28 (63.66)	2 (66.6)	12 (66.6)	43 (65.6)
Female	16 (33.4)	1 (33.4)	6 (33.4)	23 (34.4)
Total	44 (100.0)	3 (100.0)	18 (100.0)	66 (100.0)

Source: Field Data (2016) * parentheses contain percentages

Within gender group on the issue of misconduct of students in illicit school behaviour and in order to find out whether ethical dilemmas of men and women were different respondents were asked “should management reprimand students accordingly?” The responses have been presented in Table 4.17, Forty -four respondents agreed that students should be reprimanded, 3 could not decide and 18 concurred that students should not be reprimanded. From the Table 4.17, 28 out of 43 males representing more than half of the males in this study held the opinion that students must be reprimanded by school management. 16 females agreed that students should be reprimanded, a female respondent could not decide and 6 held the view that students should not be reprimanded

accordingly. From the table majority of both sexes were oriented towards the same perspective, thus students should be reprimanded by school management accordingly. What thus prevailed was an orientation towards professionalism and community in both sexes. This indicates that school leaders irrespective of their gender were oriented towards adherence to rules, customs and expectation of the professional community as well as towards an alignment of codes and rules with justice (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005). Indeed, Brown et al (2005) advocate the benefit of adopting multiple ethical pistures.

These findings show that there is no distinctive thinking or attitude with respect to ethical decision making and gender. Hence, no gender is inclined towards adopting a particular ethic as a group. What prevails is their sense of professionalism and caring and therefore no gender can be associated only with a particular ethic.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the procedures involved in the study. It also presents a summary of the key findings and draws conclusions. It finally makes recommendations for policy and practice.

5.2 Summary of findings

The purpose of this study was to examine behavioural characteristics and ethical decision making process of second cycle school leaders in the Dormaa Municipality in the Brong-Ahafo Region of Ghana. Specifically, the study was designed to

1. Determine the attitudinal pre-dispositions of school leaders towards ethical decision- making?
2. Determine which ethical framework influences school leader's choice of ethical decision making?
3. Determine how Educational Leaders background characteristics affect the choice of ethical framework in decision making process in their second cycle institutions?
4. Examine the perceived similarities/differences in the predisposition of gender groups towards choice of ethical framework in second cycle institutions in the Dormaa Municipality?

Key Findings

The findings of the study include the following:

With sixty-six respondents (n=66), majority were males (65%) and the remaining females (34%) thus reflecting more of a male view point. A greater part of the respondents was in their youthful ages (36%) thus between 18-35 years. Out of the 66 respondents 98% representing a bulk of them had tertiary education of which 27% held Master's Degree. Most of the respondents (66%) were house masters/mistresses. Majority of the respondents (68%) have been in service for 10 years and above with 62% having served in the same position for up to five years.

- ❖ With reference to the first specific objective which sought to determine the pre-dispositions to ethical decision making, most respondents reprimanded excuses on the job. An average 61.1% of respondents disagreed with being lenient with school rules. School leaders were strict with school rules and would reprimand an absentee teacher regardless of excuse.
- ❖ Respondents (School leaders) in Dormaa are disposed to making ethical decision in keeping with their code of profession. In choosing an ethical framework, 47% of respondents disagreed that there were too many rules and policies with 23% in agreement. Over 48% held the view that leaders should not be concerned are the extent of the application of school rules with 43.9% in agreement suggesting a close decision. 51% disagreed that school rules were unfair to subordinates (students). The remaining 14% agreed to the statement. 72% of educational leaders of senior high schools

agreed that educational leaders must show empathy when dealing with people in every situation.

About sixty-two (62.1%) of respondents disagreed that all infractions were committed on the Tuesday market day while 24.3% consented to the statement. While 51.5% disagreed that school management board must be human and not strictly stick to policy prescription in disciplinary matter, 43.5% consented. 75.8% of school leaders consented that school management board must support educational leaders who make strict decisions based on their convictions and judgement. 16.6% were against this assertion.

Out of the 44 respondents, 87.9% supported the statement that rules were made for all persons irrespective of one's background. Only 9.1% held a dissenting view. As many as 72.7% of respondents disagreed that relaxing rules can aid teaching and learning in Dormaa Municipality because of economic status. 86.4% educational leaders subscribed to the statement that the best interest and care of the students should be paramount at all time. 10.6% contended this view. As many as 90.9% of respondents concurred that educational leaders must be watchful to prevent unprofessional decisions.

- ❖ With respect to research question 3 thus educational leaders' background and ethical decision making the study also revealed in order to make effective decisions, leaders must have submitted themselves to longer years of education to gain experience. This fact is substantiated with a strong relationship between leader's position and their ethical decision making.

The likelihood to use professional ethical framework increases with scenarios. The converse is also true for increasing experience for teaching. The more experience a teacher has, the more likely they are to use multiple ethical framework at different occasions.

- ❖ There was no definitive conclusion on gender differences and ethical decision making. Hence, no defined relationship was evinced between gender and ethical decision making.

5.3 Conclusions

On the basis of the key findings the following conclusions can be made :

- Respondents were predisposed to reprimand excuses on the job. with a large average of 61% objecting to leniency with school rules.
- Respondents (school leaders) in Dormaa Municipality are disposed to utilize ethic of profession, as directed by their code of conduct in resolution of ethical dilemmas such as teacher or student misconduct.
- The background characteristics of respondents experience on the job and experience as a teacher mediates most tendencies to professional rules and regulations in resolving ethical dilemmas.
- Gender influence in the choice of ethical decision was almost nonexistent and all gender group tend to act professionally and also exhibit to show care and justice frameworks .

5.4 Recommendations

The study therefore recommends the following: :

- ❖ Clearly school leaders are disposed to act professionally and conform to codes of practice. This code should be the subject of frequent interrogation at seminar and orientations in order to clarify issues and make them more relevant especially in the early years of appointment to new positions. This will require the intervention of the Ghana Education Service through its Regional and Municipal Directorates.
- ❖ Teachers also need frequent refresher courses over time to validate increasing concern for care and justice to prevail. Refresher courses will bring this concerns to the fore and indicate to teachers the relevance of alternatives to strictly professional activities and conduct.
- ❖ .The interaction between teachers and the community should be properly defined by school heads.
- ❖ It is the contention of this researcher that the subjective reality of the prevailing local environment must be acknowledged and should be the focus of further study.

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APPENDIX A

INTRODUCTORY LETTER



APPENDIX B

University of Education-Winneba

College of Technology Education

Department of Educational Leadership

Questionnaire

TOPIC: CHARACTERISTICS OF ETHICAL DECISION MAKING PROCESS OF SCHOOL LEADERS IN PUBLIC SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN DORMAA AHENKRO MUNICIPALITY OF BRONG- AHAFO REGION IN GHANA.

Preamble: This study is being conducted as part of the requirement for the award of Masters Degree in the above mentioned institution. It investigates the *Behavioural Characteristics And Ethics Of Decision Making Process Of School Leaders In Public Senior High Schools In Dormaa Ahenkro Municipality Of Brong-- Ahafo Region In Ghana*. please, kindly provide the needed information to make this study a success. Any information given out shall be treated as confidential and only used for the research being conducted. Thank you.

ETHICAL LEADERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE

Purpose of the Study: This research project is to explore possible relationships between educators' ethic of justice, care, critique, profession and decision making.

All participants should know: a). All participation is completely voluntary.

b.) This survey will be completely confidential and no participants are required to identify themselves in any way.

c.) Either participation or non-participation will have no effect on any relationships.

Directions: This survey is divided into THREE sections. Section 1 is for you to tick what describe you best. Section 2, please read the scenario and tick whether you agree to reprimand, or not and give explanation to your choice. Section 3 is to do with the degree to which you agree to ethical dilemmas in situations, which call for ethical leadership decisions.

SECTION A

BIOGRAPHIC

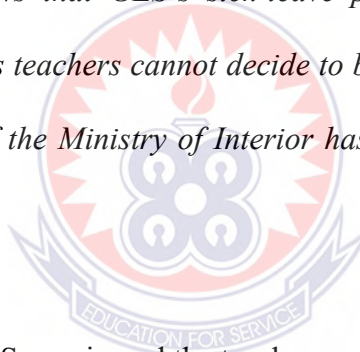
1. Gender: Male Female
2. Position: Head teacher Asst. Teacher Snr House Master/Mistress
 House master/Mistress
3. No of years in current position _____
 1 – 5 6 – 10 11 – 15 16 – 20 above 20 years
4. Total number of years teaching: _____
 < 3 years 4 – 6 years 7 – 10 years above 10 years
5. Age: 20 – 25 26-35 36-45 46-55 56-60 other _____
6. Qualification: Diploma Bachelor Masters Other: _____
7. School: KG – JHS KG – P5 P6 – JHS SHS Other: _____
8. The School is: Private Public Other: _____

SECTION B

ETHICAL FRAMEWORKS

Scenario 1: CIRCUIT SUPERVISOR AND TEACHER ABSENT TO FARM

Alex is a Circuit Supervisor and he went to a school only to be told a teacher has taken a sick day the previous day off from school. However, Alex has learned from the other teachers / co-workers that the teacher was not actually sick, but used the day as a “farming” day – to go to his farm. That is, the teacher was not physically sick but felt tired mentally and decided to release tension at the farm, which happens to be a National Farmers’ Day. Alex knows that GES’s sick-leave policy does not allow for such a behaviour. The policy says teachers cannot decide to be out of class for such a reason as National Farmers’ Day if the Ministry of Interior has not declared the day as a public holiday.



9. Should Alex, the CS, reprimand the teacher accordingly? *(Check one)*

_____ Should reprimand _____ Can't decide _____ Should not reprimand

10. Why? *Please explain your answer*

.....

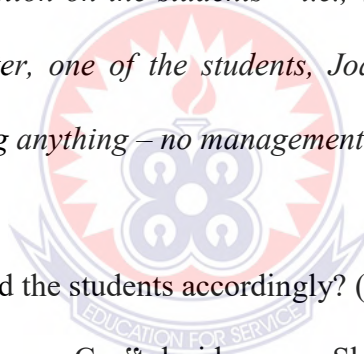
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Scenario 2: MISS DARLING AND THE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT DECISIONS

Miss Darling is a housemistress. She was once going around her routine house checks when she heard unusual noise from the senior prefect's cubicle. To her surprise the girls were watching a late movie on a laptop so she seized the laptop. The movie was not appropriate for the girls and the time was also against the school regulations. These were final year students who were left with their last paper examination the following day before departure from the school. They came to demand their laptop from Miss Darling, who also insisted on punishing the girls before releasing the laptop. The case was reported to the School Management Board (SMB). SMB promised to investigate and to place an appropriate sanction on the students – i.e., withholding the girls' examination results. A few months later, one of the students, Joana, was able to take her results without management doing anything – no management decision.



11. Should SMB reprimand the students accordingly? (Check one)

_____ Should reprimand _____ Can't decide _____ Should not reprimand

12. Why? Please explain your answer

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SECTION C

Please consider the given scenarios and express your level of agreement with the following statements in the light of decision-making by ticking a box against the statement. **There is no RIGHT or WRONG answer**

5. Strongly Agree 4. Agree 3. Not Sure 2. Disagree 1. Strongly Disagree

STATEMENT	STRONGLY	AGREE	NOT SURE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY
13. Sometimes one cannot avoid taking a day off for personal reasons					
14. Alex the CS can overlook since the teacher had a good cause to “farm”.					
15. There is a need to take circumstances into account when taking any decision					
16. There are too many policies and rules in the Dormaa educational system					
17. I am always concerned with how far the law must be applied in schools; these are children (girls) having fun watching movies; and they are completing school.					
18. The rules are often unfair to subordinates (students) in our school system					
19. One needs to be empathetic when dealing with people in every situation					

20. Human beings capable of making mistakes and must be forgiven as such					
21. All infractions committed in Dormaa are on Tuesday-Market days and they affect livelihoods (market business). Those days must be specially considering.					
22. Money matters underscore most offences in the sector especially in Dormaa					
23. SMB must apply rules systematically and fairly across all offences					
STATEMENT	STRONGLY	AGREE	NOT SURE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY
24. SMB must be human and not stick strictly to policy prescriptions in all disciplinary circumstances for to err is human.					
25. SMB must back up school leaders who make strict decisions based on their convictions and judgment					
26. Rules were made for all regardless of personal background and it should be					
27. Relaxing rules can help teaching and learning in a way around the Dormaa area because of its economic status					
28. Students deserve our exclusive attention at all times during class hours					
29. Teachers should set an example for others in society everywhere					
30. At all times we should all think of the student's best interest and					

care					
31. School leaders must always be vigilant to avoid non-professional decisions					
32. Miss Darling can make life easy for herself by ignoring the girls“ watching late movies, after all the girls are just about to leave the school					

THANK YOU

