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The effects of professional experience on ethical profiles of housing and residence life staff

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The effects of professional experience on ethical profiles of housing and residence life staff

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Mississippi State University

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

in Counselor Education

in the Department of Counseling, Educational Psychology, and Foundations

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The intent of this study was to explore and understand the effects of professional experience on the ethical profiles of housing and residence life staff. Through a survey design, this study used the Managerial Ethical Profile (MEP) to analyze the professional experience of members of the Association of College and University Housing Officers – International (ACUHO-I). The MEP scale measures the range of influences on respondents and describes the major tendencies by placing respondents in ethical profiles. Results from this study indicated that professional experience does influence respondent ethical profiles. This study contributes to the field of higher education by informing university administrators how professional experience plays a role in their staff members' day to day work and responses to decision making.

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this to my family. I am very thankful and grateful for all of those who pushed me during the process of completing my degree. To Larry, my husband, for always telling me to not give up and to my son, Brody for always saying just finish the paper, Mom. This has taken away countless hours and months away from my family and I just have to say thank you.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Contemporary higher education operates in an environment characterized by a constant flow of new, different, and unexpected events, occurring in rapid succession (Kinser & Hill, 2011). As such, colleges and universities are being challenged across multiple fronts. From financial crisis to global competition (Goldstein et al., 2014; Schuh, 2009), institutional administrators are pressed to re-evaluate their missions, practices, and models of operation to meet the challenges of this external terrain. Moreover, this rapidly changing environment presents challenges to administrators that force them to reconsider both the principles and structure of their decision-making processes (Kinser & Hill, 2011).

Challenging Decision-Making Landscapes for Residence Life Professionals

Housing and residential life has long been regarded as a dynamic work environment due to the number of issues that goes on specific to this unit such as: upkeep and maintenance, educational interventions, enforcement of housing polices, and compliance with fire and safety regulations (Schuh, 1984). More recently, housing departments have faced particularly difficult decision-making challenges at the hands of turbulent environmental pressures, particularly in relation to COVID-19 response (Association of College and University Housing Officials – International [ACUHO-I] Re-entry to Fall 2021 Workgroup, 2021; Cherwin, 2022; Williams, 2020). These have included deliberations about whether to stay open or close down residence halls in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic (Kamanetz, 2020; Murakami, 2020), quarantining

sick students (Johnson, 2020; Thomason, 2021), whether and how to vaccinate students (Sullivan, 2021) and staff (DeNiro, 2021) in residence, whether to refund money for time lost in residence during COVID (Leckrone, 2020; Williams, 2020), overworking front-line staff in risky work environments (Boettcher, 2020), and how to manage staff shortages resulting from the post-COVID “Great Resignation” (Walton, 2022).

Leaders’ jobs in residence life are further complicated by a backdrop of pre-COVID legal and policy pressures that likewise fuel difficult decision-making landscapes (Nguyen et al., 2018). For instance, state legislation targeting trans identity (Marine, 2011; Rankin, 2006; Rankin & Beeymn, 2011) uncomfortably shifted the way residence life professionals could ensure equitable living arrangements and support for these communities living in campus housing (Garvey et al., 2018). Likewise, overhauled Title IX guidance via a 2011 Dear Colleague letter (Office for Civil Rights, 2015; Stagg & Storch, 2015) created a disconcerting role for live-in residence life staff as compliance monitors (Najmabadi, 2016). Another example includes Fair Labor Standards Act (Kline, 2016; United States Department of Labor, 2016), which placed upper-level residence life leaders in the dubious position of having to define, limit, and redistribute “work” as it pertained to the 24-7 accessibility culture of the live-in professionals (Asimou & Adams, 2016).

Environmental Response as an Ethical Dilemma in Residence Life

The key factor that makes decisions around these complicated issues is that they operate as ethical dilemmas for residence life administrators. As campus practitioners who provide services for the growth, development, and welfare of college students outside of the formal classroom setting (Evans et al., 2010; McClellan & Stringer, 2009; Schuh et al., 2011), these professionals are responsible for supporting diverse student populations and advocating for their

specialized needs. As such, they strive to create campus environments that are, at a minimum, inclusive of all students; but ideally socially just for all (Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education, 2015). State and federal mandates can affect how services are provided, and which student populations will benefit from the work of these student affairs administrators (Hinds, 2018; Wesaw & Sponsler, 2014). As such, today's decision-making landscape in a crisis-infused environment places puts pressure on these leaders to consider positions that might run contrary to their personal and professional convictions.

It goes without saying that professionals whose personal values align with a mandate, are more likely to adhere to the mandate and even embrace the enforcement. However, what happens when a professional's personal values do not align with the values espoused by a particular state or federal mandate? Student affairs professionals, and particularly Residence Life professionals, do not leave their personal beliefs and ethics behind when they begin their workday; they bring their own individual values with them (Landau & Osmo, 2003).

Today's state and federal mandates raise the stakes for Residence Life decision-making by challenging administrators to reconcile relevant personal, professional, institutional, and societal values (Gardner, 2004; Homer & Kahle, 1988; Pimentel et al., 2010). As such, decision making related to a policy or mandate no longer hinges simply on how one *might* comply but whether student affairs administrators *should* comply. Therefore, state, and federal mandates addressing the rights and welfare of students create ethical dilemmas for student affairs decision making and action (Goldstein et al., 2014).

Divergent Ethical Approaches across Residential Life Staff

Theoretically, professional codes of ethics provide a shared platform that can guide residence life professionals when pressed to make decisions in ethically charged environments,

especially at the intersection of policymaker interests, institutional accountability, and student support or advocacy (Hirschy et al., 2015). However, three factors about the organization of residence life work often complicate ethical decision making in the context of residential life teams.

First, within an institutional context, residential life teams are commonly comprised of a bureaucratically organized set of workers ranging from pre-professional leaders (e.g., undergraduate student leaders in residential life such as resident advisors/assistants and Residence Hall Association officers and graduate student residential life assistants to entry-level residence life coordinators, mid-level area coordinators and assistant/associate directors, and upper-executive level professionals (e.g., director or executive director of residence life & housing). These positions are arranged in a hierarchical structure of subordinates and supervisors that each are assigned to a scope of responsibility and afforded decision-making authority in accordance with their position in that hierarchy.

Second, the positions held within the residence life hierarchy are often related to patterns in leaders' age, professional experience, and time in the field. For instance, the youngest and least experienced leaders in a residence life organization naturally occupy pre-professional positions in a given division while the oldest and more experienced leaders can be found in executive positions. This suggests that residence life professionals are likely to socialize into the profession and into the cultural-ethical norms of their work gradually, over the course of their career in the field (Liddell et al., 2014). Becoming a residence life professional evolves over the course of a career whereby early professionals approach problems, crises, and decision making using different frames of reference than their counterparts in mid- vs. upper-level positions of authority (Molina, 2016).

Therefore, third, at any given time in a given residential life department, workers within the department hierarchy are likely to make decisions based on assumptions reflecting the bounded knowledge accessible to them by virtue of their place in their departmental hierarchy, the degree to which they have fully internalized socialization into the residential life profession across their career, and potentially the influences of their generational disposition toward the ethical issues presented to them. This combination of factors sets the stage for potential conflicts between residential life leaders at different levels of professional tenure as to how they may recognize, interpret, and evaluate their roles, responsibilities, and responses to ethical dilemmas relevant to shared work obligations (Nevill & Brochu, 2019).

Purpose of Study

In summary, contemporary residence life departments are increasingly exposed to pressures from swiftly evolving crisis scenarios, constantly changing environmental conditions, and pressures to accommodate external policy mandates that operate from values frameworks oppositional to the ethical position of the residence life profession. Departmental responses to these forces rely upon coordinated efforts (both decision making and action) by residence life staff across different levels of authority, experience, and socialization into the ethical principles shared in the field. However, inter-staff conflict can arise when entry-level professionals approach ethical decision making with a framework divergent from senior-level professionals in the same department.

Values have long been associated with individual decision behavior. However, the role played by the profile of personal-professional values in decision making within an organization is less clear (Fritzsche & Oz, 2007). Contemporary residential life professionals should be concerned about the decisions their practitioners face and the influence that their personal-

professional values may have on their decision-making (McDonald et al., 2006). Administrative decisions related to crisis response and policy enforcement have important consequences for the students, divisions of student affairs, institutions, and higher education at large, it is important to examine the intricacies of this issue.

To meet these dual expectations, student affairs professionals must be able to compare the value and effectiveness of multiple ethical models in complex situations on their college campus (Sundberg & Fried, 1997). Research conducted in the broad field of student affairs suggests that ethical decision-making is an issue that needs further exploration (Hornack, 2009; Humphrey, 2008; Janosik et al., 2004; Kelly, 2005; McDonald et al., 2006; Nash, 1997). Ethical decision-making is of particular importance since it largely encompasses what student affairs professionals do on a day-to-day basis (Janosik et al., 2004). Ethics are at the core of student affairs, putting each practitioner center stage to serve as both a role model and moral conscience for their campus (Humphrey et al., 2004).

To fill the identified gaps in our understanding of divergent values across residence life staffs and the call for research on ethical decision making in Student Affairs, the purpose of this study is to examine the comparative ethical profiles that entry- vs. senior-level staff engage to navigate the turbulent environments prevalent in residential life departments today.

Research Question

Given these parameters, the following overarching research question will guide the research: How does the professional experience of residence life staff influence the ethical profiles they are likely to use as frameworks for responding to ethical dilemmas in the field?

Study Significance

The goal of this study is to forge an understanding of factors that challenge residence life administrators when faced with ethical dilemmas in their daily work. Additionally, the study strives to understand how administrators with relatively similar professional training and related value sets may potentially enact different, and potentially contrary, decisions leading to conflict among the staff.

It is important to note that the purpose of this study was not to evaluate the quality of the response made by the professionals. Rather it is to critically explore the principles, assumptions and values that serve as the foundation of the decision-making process for housing and residential life professionals. An important aspect of this study will be to aid higher educational administrators in understanding the values and principles used by housing and residential life professionals and will further provide recommendations for ways to train and address personal values within decision-making. Consequently, this study will be significant in its potential to better inform the day-to-day practice of student affairs professionals in the resolution of ethical dilemmas.

From a theoretical point of view, this research will help advance a values-centered model of ethical decision-making that will help student affairs administrators better understand the challenges faced by student affairs professionals within housing and residential life, at different levels, when faced with negotiating complex, value-infused decision-making environments. Not only will such a model help the field of student affairs understand the tensions administrators face in carrying out their work, but it may also help to explain the alternative actions administrators take in morally challenging situations.

From a practice perspective, the results from this study will help student affairs administrators engage practitioners in specifically designed training exercises that will create dialogue about the impact that different value sets can have on their daily work. Especially in an era with increased regulatory pressures where governmental values clash with professional values of student affairs, this research can further bring acknowledgment and discussion of these tensions.

Overview of Research Design

This study is comprised of five components. The first two components of the study will set the foundation. The first component was the introduction of the study and included the purpose of the study, the research question, significance of the study and the overview of the research design. The second component will provide a review of literature pertaining to research and practice to ethical decision-making, ethical dilemmas, and ethical decision-making both broadly and within student affairs. Additionally, this component will outline the different types of values that shape decision making in the field of student affairs and the institution.

In order for readers to come away with a clear understanding of how the study will be conducted and know precisely what procedures to follow should they want to replicate the study; the research design will be described in sufficient detail in the third component. Participants for this study will be current members of the ACUHO-I. ACUHO-I's core purpose is to advance the campus housing profession in service of students. The data collection for this study used a web-based survey that was sent via email to current housing and residential life professionals who were members of ACUHO-I. The data for this study was analyzed by using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). This component included descriptive statistics which will give an overview of the participants.

A factual reporting of the study results is outlined in the fourth component. Findings are organized around hypothesis. Tables are used to summarize the results which are from SPSS. The final component discusses the implications of the study findings. This final component includes implications for higher education practice as well as implications for future research. The chapter ends with a conclusion summarizing the importance of the study findings.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

To investigate the relationship between personal characteristics, personal values, and compliance with state and federal mandates, the literature review addresses these topics as well as factors related to ethical decision making. Elaborated throughout this chapter are operational definitions for related concepts (see Appendix A).

Ethical Dilemmas

The ethical dimensions of leadership have received increased emphasis in recent literature (Campbell, 1997; Cooper, 1998; Duignan, 2002; Gorman & Pauken, 2003; Roth, 2003; Strike, 2003). This attention has been, in part, driven by the belief that values, morals and ethics are the bulk of leadership and administrative life. Duigan (2002) puts it, if leaders are to act on what they know to be right then they need ethical frameworks to guide their practice. Furthermore, communities expect those who hold leadership positions to act rightly and promote good rather than evil (Evers, 1992). Professional accountability is concerned with upholding the standards of ethics of one's profession (Edwards, 2001; Eraut, 1992). When contractual accountability, accountability to the government or system, is strong and competes against moral and professional accountabilities, there is heightened potential for ethical dilemmas to emerge.

A focus on the ethical dimensions of leadership has become a key theme in the educational leadership and management literature. Moreno (2011) defined an ethical dilemma as a situation that requires a judgment call when there is more than one right answer and there is not

a win-win solution. Additionally, an ethical dilemma is recognized as a situation in which two or more values are in conflict and whose resolution requires the negation of at least one of those values. Leaders are often faced with ethical dilemmas in the daily course of their work as they are required to make complex decisions in the best interests of their organization. This is understandable given complex challenges and competing forces that affect leadership which is clearly a values-based activity (Walker & Shakotko, 1999).

At its core, an ethical dilemma requires a decision to be made. Dewey's Moral Philosophy proposed that this ethical decision-making process follows three distinct stages: (1) What is the problem or dilemma? (2) What are the alternatives? (3) Which alternative is best? Social psychologists have expanded on these stages and suggested that there are cognitive stages that the individual experiences during the decision-making process. At the center of this process is the individual decision maker who experiences the demands and pressures from numerous sources (Anderson, 2019).

Ethical dilemmas tend to be complex, and administration can be quite deficient as decision makers. The most important requirement for making solid management decisions is a deep understanding of the phenomena that the decision may involve (Oxenfeldt et al., 1978). The amount of time that administrators must devote to decision-making typically increases as one advances up the career ladder. Student affairs administrators often find themselves engaged with serious ethical issues (Eberhardt & Valente, 2007). The results of these decisions can affect how their performance is evaluated therefore they usually devote the largest proportion of their time to decision-making.

Janosik, Creamer, and Humphrey (2004) created a simple 6-item electronic questionnaire. The questionnaire asked respondents to briefly describe ethical dilemmas that they

had encountered in their current position. The survey was administered through Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education member database to have a wide variety of student affairs professionals complete the survey. The study found that administrators reported different types of concerns based on gender, years of experience, and position. Respondents holding higher up positions within their organization reported greater than expected numbers of ethical problems. Additionally, respondents working at larger institutions reported greater than expected numbers of ethical issues.

Eberhardt and Valente (2007) surveyed 280 participants who represented almost every area of student affairs administration. Responses to the survey revealed that most student affairs professionals routinely encounter ethical dilemmas in their work. Balancing conflicting responsibility of serving the needs of students while also serving their institution was the most common dilemma reported. Some survey respondents reported that other ethical dilemmas arise when they are called upon to make exceptions to institutional policies for students. A significant number of conflicts collected through the survey described ethical dilemmas that challenged personal and professional values in the workplace. Participants also reported ethical issues that placed institutional interests and professional values in conflict. It quickly becomes apparent that student affairs work, and resolution of ethical dilemmas have additional challenges because these professionals work in the educational environment where they strive to develop emerging adults into ethically-sound individuals. Due to this responsibility, more pressure is placed upon student affairs professionals to follow personal and professional ethical codes.

Administration decisions are usually made for and about others which involve a distribution of power since these administrators often decide who gets to decide what. In essence, administration is constantly faced with value choices. Logically, decision making is a process

where the administration must make a choice. This choice involves the capacity of the whole person including intellect, emotions, and values (Stogdill, 1974). These choices are influenced by one's value system and professional value system. Administration must be willing to engage in a continuing process of evaluating their personal values, professional values, and organizational values to develop certain capacities and a combined set of values that honor people, share governance, and produce quality performance (Fairholm, 1991).

Values

Values have had a place in the research throughout various fields such as sociology, psychology, and anthropology. Values have been seen as a key factor in investigating human and social dynamics (Schwartz, 2007). Since values develop and evolve in a social context, values can be seen as a link between self and society (Rokeach, 1973). It has also been suggested that values may underlie and explain individual and organizational behaviors. Within the various fields of research, each has developed its own way of viewing values. Palermo & Evans (2007) found that the association between personal values and ethical decision making was significant. The results of their study provided evidence of the impact of personal values as predictors of reported behaviors in ethically intensive dilemmas. They also demonstrated that some value dimensions appear to be more important than others in information decisions in ethical dilemmas. These results do strongly suggest that underlying personal values must be addressed, identified, and critically reflected upon within the ethical decision-making process.

While definitions differ, there appears to be a general agreement that values influence behavior (Mayton et al., 1994). Numerous scholars have suggested that behavior is a result of values and attitudes. Both Conner and Becker (1979) and Homer and Kahle (1988) propose that values provide the basis for the development of individual attitudes that lead to specific decision-

making behavior. Beyond attitudes and behaviors, personal values may also influence decision making in business and organizational contexts (Shafer et al., 2001). This potential link between values and managerial decision making has been recognized for years. More recently, the influence of personal values on ethical judgments has been formally recognized in models of ethical decision making in organizations. Hunt and Vitell (1991) included values in their model as one of several personal characteristics that potentially influence all phases of the ethical decision process.

Values have been systematically studied by behavioral scientists since the mid-1930s (Conner & Becker, 1979). With the contributions to literature that explore personal values, the term “value” has been defined and presented in a variety of ways. A value has been defined as an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is preferred to an opposite end state or mode of conduct for living one’s life (Kahle, 1983). A value is an explicit or of the desirable which influences the selection from available modes, means, and ends of actions.

Throughout the literature, values have been subdivided into instrumental values and terminal values. Instrumental values are modes of behaviors used day to day (Nonis & Swift, 2001; Rokeach, 1973). These values include moral and competence or self-actualization values; these can generate feelings of guilt for wrongful actions. Instrumental values can be grouped in to three categories: conformity, virtuous, and self-direction (Crosby et al., 1990). One may experience conflict between the three subgroups that may lead to feeling shame about personal inadequacy rather than feel guilty over wrongdoing.

Terminal values are self-sufficient end states of existence that a person strives to achieve. In contrast to instrumental values, terminal values can be either self-centered or society centered.

Terminal values can be grouped into four categories: idealism, security, self-actualization, and hedonism (Crosby et al., 1990). Terminal values may be intrapersonal or interpersonal (Rokeach, 1973). However, a review of the current literature indicates a greater focus on values as modes of behavior, the instrumental values, rather than terminal values.

Milton Rokeach's theory of human values identified values as mental entities or very general attitudes, the valence of objects, personality types, or individual collective ideas that serve as standards or criteria of conduct (Rokeach & Rokeach, 1989). The theory of human values suggests that there are limited number of values defined at the individual level and that these can be prioritized into a value hierarchy of importance. Other assumptions include that this value set is universally applicable, with degrees of difference, across cultures.

Ethical Decision Making and Student Affairs

Within the business world, corporate culture is often described as one of the main determinants of ethical or unethical behavior (Ardichvili & Jondle, 2009). Cultures that are complex and have formal and informal systems, and practices that may be considered elements of the main determinants are seen within institutions of higher education (Ardichvili et al., 2009). One fundamental characteristic that both employees and organizations share is that of values. Organizational values permeate all decisions and seem to dictate organizational action. Whether or not it originates from the organization itself or the individual member, it can have the tendency to dominate action and determine rewards within an organization (Fairholm, 1991).

An organization can control the behavior of individuals by creating organizational values or standards. Ford and Richardson (1994) examined the following organizational factors: rewards and sanctions, codes of conduct, organization size, and industry type. It was concluded that the existence of these factors tends to influence an individual's ethical decision-making. The

type of industry had no influence on ethical decision making. Similarly, Loe et al. (2000) stated that codes of ethics, rewards and sanctions, and size of the organization do impact decision-making. Likely the result of placing people in situations that is at odds with their personal values will not be positive for either the organization or individual because organization values have a direct impact on the individual(s). An organization that is perceived to embrace values such as integrity might have individuals with strong attachment to the organization, independent of one's own value hierarchy.

Organizational and personal values saturate all decisions and seem to dictate organizational action (Fairholm, 1991). If there is a conflict between an individual's personal and organizational values, some believe that the organizational values will take precedence to promote self-interest for the individual. On the other hand, personal values may fuse with organizational values to determine value judgments in each situation (Rowe & Boulgarides, 1992). Hodgkinson (1996) stated that the potential for personal values will strongly influence any given decision making. These personal values can never be completely expunged from a decision-making role.

Within a higher education organization, the division of student affairs is one piece of the organization. Student affairs is an umbrella term that refers to the university offices and departments that provide services, programs, and resources that help students develop and grow outside the classroom (Fried, 2003). Housing and residential life is one of many specific functions within the field of student affairs. Other student affairs operations include student activities, athletics, wellness programs, career services, student conduct, multicultural programs, and Greek life, just to name a few.

Student affairs practitioners serve as both role models and the moral conscience for universities (Humphrey et al., 2004). The beginning of student affairs was rooted in faculty's need of assistance with the regulation of college students' behavior (Rhatigan, 1993). Student affairs is an auxiliary function that focuses on the management of student behavior rather than contributing to learning (Fried, 2003). The profession has expanded its focus beyond accountability to include student development in recent years (Baldizan, 2008; Fried, 2003). However, a primary focus in the field is role modeling and enforcing behavior standards. Student affairs practitioners are held to a high standard due to their regular interactions with students (Lampkin & Gibson, 1999). High expectations extend beyond their professional life, into their personal lives. Due to the mentoring capacity and intimate relationships with students, student affairs professionals are expected to demonstrate ethical behavior in all aspects of their lives.

Janosik et al. (2004) conducted an assessment that examined the types of ethical problems that face student affairs professionals in their daily practice. This study found that there are some ethical concerns more prevalent than others. Additionally, this study showed that variance in ethical concerns exists amongst student affairs practitioners depending on their gender, years of experience, position-level, and institution size. The findings from this study support for additional exploration of potential differences in personal values held by student affairs professionals who are characterized by various personal attributes.

The charge of student affairs is value-laden in which ethics lie at the heart of the profession and is a trait of effective student affairs practice (Dalton et al., 2009; Janosik et al., 2004). Personal values play an important role in ethical decision-making for student affairs professionals. Beyond personal value sets, student affairs professionals find themselves with additional sets of codes of ethical responsibility when managing ethical issues. While personal

values are a primary influence on ones' daily choices (Dowd, 2012), professional codes define a minimum standard of ethics that is unique to the student affairs profession (Hornack, 2009).

Kelly (2005) conducted a study that explored the critical values used in ethical decision-making by senior student affairs leadership. This study revealed the potent influence of personal attributes in ethical decision-making. Each person's ethical decision-making was informed by the narrative of their lives. Few of the study participants claimed to be familiar with their fields' ethical codes. Additionally, few participants reported having taken a class on ethics in graduate school. The findings suggest a need for further examination of values held by student affairs professionals who vary in personal attributes as well as their knowledge of the fields' professional code of ethics.

Influence of Professional Codes on Ethical Decision Making

Personal values play an important role in ethical decision-making for student affairs professionals. While these personal values are the primary influence on the daily choices, professional codes define a minimum standard of ethics that is unique to the profession (Hornack, 2009). There are multiple codes that influence this field, some are broad and overarching while others are much more specific. Student affairs have multiple sets of codes, some that are specific while others are very broad. Student affairs professionals, regardless of their role, make every effort to work within the profession's stated values and principles (Blimling & Whitt, 1998). Special attention is given to the influence of Kitchener's (1985) five principles of ethical decision-making because they will represent the combination of codes relevant to this study.

The Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS) in Higher Education is a group of professional associations who work hand in hand to develop standards and guidelines for the

profession. The CAS Statement of Shared Ethical Principles strives to incorporate the shared values by the 35 professional associations encompassed by this group. The statement is essentially constructed by Kitchener's (1985) principles of ethical decision-making. The statement does not create additional specific codes of ethics, but it is intended to highlight the shared nature of the principles claimed by the many professional organizations within the council.

National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) is a professional association for student affairs professionals from all areas within the field. This association largely claims the CAS Statement of Shared Principles as their code of ethics but secondly endorse their own Standards of Professional Practice. Within these standards there are 18 principles that take a broader approach in defining professionalism, respecting local authorities, and an obligation to engage in professional development (NASPA, 1999).

American College Personnel Association (ACPA) is another student affairs professional association that has a broad representation across the field. The professional codes of ethics for this association are also built on Kitchener's (1985) five principles of ethical decision making. Their code of ethics encourages self-governance as a primary line of defense. These codes communicate rules of professional acumen, appropriate and effective student interaction, highlights responsibility to the institution, and ultimately calls for service to society (ACPA, 1993).

These codes were developed to serve as the basis for ethical behavior for student affairs administrators in higher education (Canon & Brown, 1985). Student affairs professionals, regardless of role, operate within the profession's stated values and principles (Blimling, 1998). Student affairs professionals are moral leaders on campus and these codes summarize the nature

of behavior that is expected of student affairs professionals. Therefore, student affairs professionals need to understand their own value system because they need to acknowledge how their beliefs will interface with those of the profession.

Additionally, these standards that student affairs professionals agree to be guided by can help to illuminate the process of ethical decision-making for student affairs professionals, however, they cannot guarantee moral outcomes. Many complex and difficult situations confronted in student affairs will be ethical conflicts. Student affairs professionals can become competent in ethical decision making through practice over time in different circumstances.

Reybold, Halx, and Jimenez (2008) explored how student affairs professionals define ethics within their profession and what prepares them to make ethical decisions. Additionally, this qualitative study examined how these professionals make and justify their decisions in their daily practice. Most participants emphasized their own personal morality when asked to define their professional ethics. Family upbringing was most cited when participants were asked how their ethicality developed. The researchers suggest that the field of student affairs could benefit from additional exploration of the congruence and practical application of professional codes of ethics. This study provides added support for the research questions presented in this study.

Many divisions of student affairs include areas such as admissions, financial aid, housing and residential life, student activities, athletics and recreation services, and judicial affairs. Like any other organization, there are competing demands and conflicting advice in the field of student affairs when accomplishing a particular goal. These administrators may in part address issues such as diversity, access, or equality by utilizing their professional codes.

Successful administration within student affairs depends upon the individuals' ability to pick their battles wisely and compromise as necessary. The challenge that student affairs

professionals face is how to decide which decision reflects core ethical values and cannot be compromised (Blimling, 1998). Since the field of student affairs is a profession laden with values (Young & Elfrink, 1991) the professionals in this field will face the ethical decision process with a set of personal values and professional values that potentially may lead to conflict for the individual.

Due to the vast areas of concerns presented, student affairs administrators must reevaluate their decision-making process and personal conscience (Dalton et al., 2009). This encompasses one's personal beliefs and convictions that are formed by life experiences. Conscience is important in ethics because it helps to define personal responsibility and to balance various realms of responsibility. If a student affairs professional believes that a decision will intrude upon their personal beliefs or values, they must decide whether to follow their conscience. However, when deciding to follow one's conscience, the professional must weigh and accept the practical consequences of acting based on individual conscience. Personal values have been viewed as important determinants of specific attitudes and human behavior (Rokeach, 1973). Values are typically acquired early in life from early conditioning, experience, and significant events (Rokeach, 1973; Rowe & Boulgarides, 1998).

When events arise and the solutions are non-obvious, administrators are caught between simply being responsive (Kinser & Hill, 2011) and then being held accountable. Most think that these responses or decisions occur because of a presidential or cabinet level mandate but due to the common structure of most student affairs divisions (Ambler, 2000; Kut & Banning, 2009; Manning et al., 2006), there are many important decisions being championed by entry to mid-level student affairs administrators who may have little formal authority (Kezar & Lester, 2009).

Reybold, Halx, and Jimenez (2008) examined how student affairs professionals define ethics with respect to the profession, what prepares them to make ethical decisions, and how they justify their decisions. When professionals were asked to define professional ethics, many participants emphasized their own personal values while few participants mentioned professional codes of the profession. This study suggests that student affairs professionals could benefit from increased exploration of the congruence and practical application of professional codes and personal values.

Kelly (2005) studied the critical values used in ethical decision making by senior student affairs officers. This study revealed the compelling influence of personal values in ethical decision making. Again, few participants claimed to be familiar with their professional ethic codes. These findings suggest a need for further investigation of values held specifically by student affairs professionals who vary in their personal attributes as well as their congruency to the fields' professional codes and standards.

While few studies have explored student affairs professional's values and ethical decision-making processes, those reviewed in this chapter support for further exploration of what these values are. These studies suggest that personal values carry a considerable influence in decision making. Additionally, these values can, at times, conflict (Dalton et al., 2009). Therefore, individual differences present a mitigating factor in explorations of personal values. As such, personal factors cannot be disregarded or ignored.

Personal-Professional Attributes involved in Ethical Dispositions

This chapter thus far has focused on literature that examines ethical dilemmas, professional codes and standards, and the influence of values on ethical decision making with in the field of student affairs. The following section explores literature that addresses the effects of

various personal-professional attributes that may influence ethical profiles and justifies the personal factors that were examined in this study.

Gender. There is substantial amount of literature that has been published on gender in relation to ethical decision-making. Studies reveal that females possess higher ethical standards (Ruegger & King, 1992). Gilligan describes a moral universe in which women see moral requirements as emerging from the needs of others in context of particular relationships. This has been dubbed as “ethic of care” (Gilligan, 1982). A study conducted by Gilligan and Attanucci (1988), confirmed that the care focus is much more likely present with women during moral dilemmas and if women were excluded from the study of moral reasons, the care focus could easily be overlooked. Ruegger and King (1992) conducted a study that had a sample of 2,196 students at the University of Southern Mississippi that found that females were more ethical than males in six out of the ten ethical indices used in the study. Also, in a sample of 421 insurance employees working for small insurance firms found that male and female subjects differed on one out of the four ethical dilemmas presented in the study (Serwinek, 1992). In a study conducted amongst student conduct administrators, females were found to be significantly more likely than males to consider ethical models as well as institutional mission in their ethical decision-making process (Dowd, 2012). Gender was a variable in this study to see how it influences the ethical profiles of student affairs professionals.

Years of experience. Ethical decision making develops over time, after having faced multiple sets of decisions, which demand choices to make quickly and, on the spot, then later reflected upon (Hornack, 2009). Research in cognitive psychology suggest that most part of the experience's advantage of the decision-maker is placed on their greater knowledge stock (Spiegel, 2017). It is plausible that student affairs administrators with longer tenures have a

better understanding of professional codes that allows them to act more ethically in situations. The current study will control for years of experience with a prediction and will investigate whether professional experience influences ethical profiles of housing and residence life professionals.

Decisions about policy enforcement can be difficult for the newest leaders in residence life, (resident advisors/assistants) owing to their ages relative to residents and a general discomfort with the authority enforcement in that relationship (Wilson & Hirschy, 2006). Nguyen et al. (2018) argue that lack of legal knowledge and training among rising residence life professionals may also contribute to the uncertainty of decision making around policy issues in the field.

Education Level. There are various levels of degrees among student affairs professionals that range from bachelor's degree to doctorates (Hornack, 2009). There are studies that show employees with additional education tend to possess higher ethical standards and abilities (Browning & Zabriskie, 1983).

Age. Models and theories have been created that demonstrate a positive correlation between age and ethical decision making (Kohlberg, 1984). There is a consensus among social scientists that ethical decision-making ability (Elango et al., 2010; Ruegger & King, 1992) and ethical standards improve with age.

Institution type. Student affairs professionals are employed by a wide variety of higher education institutions. Some are publicly funded, while others are private funded. There are multiple types of institutions: community colleges, liberal arts colleges, research institutions, and religious affiliated institutions. Dey et al. (2010) reports that student affairs professional's perception of their role in ethical decision-making abilities varies by institution type.

Specifically, professionals at religiously affiliated institutions are more likely to believe their institution should focus on ethical decision making than their colleagues at secular institutions.

Summary

As evidenced by the literature review, several factors can influence the ethical disposition a residence life professional operates under when faced with dilemmas fueled by crisis and policy pressures. Professional ethical codes play a significant role in shaping the tools residence life staff have at their disposal to guide decision making and action. Professional ethical codes, however, can be operationalized differently based on the ways that entry-level leaders in a department make meaning of those cultural norms in comparison to senior-level residence life administrators. Chapter 3 will introduce a conceptual model that understands these differences as alternative ethical profiles and will outline a strategy for examining this proposition.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the study is to explore how the professional experience of housing and residence life staff members may influence their ethical profile. This chapter outlines the methodology used to carry out this study and a description of the housing and residential life professionals across the country who participated in the study.

Quantitative Approach

This study used an analysis of numerical data to explore correlations between participants' professional experience and responses to the survey questions. The quantitative approach was selected for this study because the researcher was independent from the research. The language of the research is impersonal and formal while using words such as relationship, comparison, and within-group (Creswell, 1994). In quantitative research, the intent of a study is to develop generalizations that contribute to the hypotheses and enable the researcher to better predict, explain, and understand the phenomenon being studied.

Quantitative research is composed of two distinct yet methodologically interconnected research approaches; experimental and survey research (Creswell, 1994; Davis, 2007). The quantitative research method employed in this study is that of survey research. Survey research is a non-experimental research approach used to gather information about relationships that may exist between variables in a pre-determined population through the data collection process by asking questions of people (Babbie, 1990; Bartlett et al., 2001; Creswell, 1994).

The data collected by this study could be generalized from a sample of responses to a particular population. Among reasons for selecting survey strategy for this study, was the appropriateness and convenience for collecting categorical data to describe a sample representative of the population. A quantitative method is ideal given that this study aims to explore how specific variables are associated with specific outcomes.

Survey methodology was selected for this research study to be able to generalize from a sample to a larger population so that interpretations can be made about characteristics, attitude, or behavior of the selected population. Survey data is the preferred type of data collection procedure for this study due to the advantages of rapid turn-around in data collection and the ability to identify attributes of a wider population from a smaller group of individuals (Kelley et al., 2003; Umbach, 2004). The survey was cross-sectional because it was collected at one point in time (Creswell, 1994; 2009). Surveys are designed to provide a snapshot of how things are at a specific time (Denscombe, 1998). During this time, there is no attempt to control conditions or manipulate variables.

Instrumentation

The Managerial Ethical Profiles (MEP) developed by Casali (2007) was selected for this study (see Appendix F). The MEP is a tool purposely developed to capture managerial ethical profiles and to overcome some of the flaws that has limited previous tools (Casali, 2007; 2008; 2009). The MEP measures the degree of influence of different ethical principles and generates a profile of each manager's ethical decision-making style. This tool can be used to identify strengths and weaknesses in the decision-making capabilities of teams, both small and large (Casali, 2011).

The MEP is a self-reporting scale that measures the perceived influence that common ethical frameworks have on decision-making. This tool consists of a total of 52 items covering a wide set of factors that influences managerial decision making, such as ethical factors, individual factors, organizational factors, and external factor. The questions ask the respondents to assess the degree of influence different items play when making decisions. The objective of this tool is to classify respondents based on their real ethical preferences, rather than pushing them into a predetermined box. This tool creates the profiles from the survey responses themselves. There are five managerial ethical profiles that have derived from the MEP. Each profile is described below:

Profile 1 is the Duty Follower – “do what is right no matter what the costs.” Manager decisions in this profile are more guided by rules and duties than considering the consequences of those actions. This profile has a strong propensity to follow duties and faithful to the rules. Their major concern is about the moral standing of themselves.

Profile 2 is the Chameleon – “when in Rome do as the Romans do.” Such as a chameleon changes its skin color to fit in with its surroundings, managers in this profile assess different ethical viewpoints and decide which is the most appropriate for a particular situation. Compared to other profiles, managers in this profile have less independence in ethical decision making because they are strongly affected by significant others (experts/superiors) and the organizational culture.

Profile 3 is the Guardian Angel – “following those duties that promote the greatest good.” Managers in this profile feel a duty to consider the consequences of their decisions and to treat others fairly. They obey rules, but at the same time, they use their wisdom as well to consider the impact on others of doing so.

Profile 4 is the Defender – “the defender of faith.” Managers in this profile are very loyal to their organization and would make decisions to protect the organization’s reputation. These people are important to a company because they are most loyal and less likely to undermine its goals. This manager would accept a gift only if that action would benefit their organization. Excessive loyalty of the defender is not always helpful.

Profile 5 is the Knight – “being the best I can be, doing the best for everyone and doing the right thing in all situations.” Managers in this profile are more consistent in trying to maximize their values, the organization values, keeping economic factors in the picture and considering the impact of decisions on all stakeholders.

The MEP questionnaire was purposely developed by Casali (2007) to capture managerial ethical preferences of people, because he saw a need to better understand the individual factors that influence managerial ethical decision-making. He has conducted studies with different populations including academics, nursing students, small and medium size business managers, and healthcare industry managers. The objective of his studies was to classify respondents based on their real ethical preferences, rather than pushing the respondents into a predetermined box. The five MEPs represent a mix of ethical principles that the managers are influenced by when making decisions. It is important to emphasize that the five profiles are ethical in nature, however, they would look at the same problem and may assess it based on a different criterion.

The MEP was selected for this study because housing and residence life area is often seen as a business and those within the department operate as managers. This questionnaire is appropriate for the study because it assesses ethical profiles. This study sought to compare the responses among those professionals of varying experience levels and time in the field.

Leadership in housing and residence life can use the results of this study to better assess risks related to giving autonomy in terms of decision making.

Data Collection Strategy

Questionnaire Distribution

The Internet has become the communication method of choice for people and researchers from many disciplines see the benefits of collecting data using the Internet (Granello & Wheaton, 2004; Schleyer & Forrest, 2000). The MEP was adapted to a Qualtrics survey. The survey was deployed electronically to all members of ACUHO-I at the time of distribution. The introductory recruitment email (Appendix B) outlined the purpose of the study, an explanation of confidentiality and a general statement about what the participants can expect if they choose to participate. The participant consent form (Appendix C) followed the recruitment email. The survey was deployed in February and remained open for two weeks from the date of the invitation to participate email was delivered. The researcher selected the month of February because the housing and residence life professionals have most likely completed their reopening of residence halls and return from winter break. There were no incentives offered to respondents that participated in the survey. To reduce the concern of receiving a low response rate, several researchers have advocated for multiple reminders (Crawford et al., 2001; Granello & Wheaton, 2004) and to reach maximum percentage of returns, a planned follow-up is recommended and seen as essential (Bailey, 1994). The researcher sent a email survey reminder (see Appendix D) to the members to gently encourage participants to take part in the study.

Data Organization Strategy

The purpose of data analysis is to present the data that were collected from the study in a summarized way that is comprehensible (Coughlan, Cronin, & Ryan, 2009). Data organization and analysis is the process of bringing order, structure, and interpretation to the collected data (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). The questionnaire data were downloaded into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet then loaded into SPSS statistical software for data analysis. The data were coded following a codebook (Appendix F).

Missing data, where values on one or more variables are not available for analysis, are a fact of life when conducting survey research. Rarely does a researcher avoid some form of missing data (Hair et al., 2010). Missing data are rarely known beforehand and the researcher must decide how prevalent the missing data is to the study. For the current study, incomplete questionnaires were not considered during the data analysis process. The researcher knows the practical impact of not including incomplete questionnaires did result in the reduction of sample size that was available for analysis.

Participants

Population

Participants for this study work within a housing or residence life department in a university setting. Housing and residence life professionals make daily decisions that cover diverse domains. There are policies and procedures within this area that must be implemented and enforced. To recruit housing and/or residential life professionals, the researcher will utilize ACUHO-I to survey this specific population.

ACUHO-I is the leading resource for the higher education housing industry professionals. This organization advances excellence in housing programs and staff by promoting best

practices, networking, professional development, and involvement opportunities. ACUHO-I's core purpose is to advance the campus housing profession in service of students (ACUHO-I, 2018). The ACUHO-I membership database is a comprehensive database of all affiliates and will allow the researcher to survey a wide population of professionals from more than 950 institutions across the globe that call ACUHO-I home. Participants will be current ACUHO-I members employed by institutions of higher education. This population lends itself well to the study given that members of the association, by nature, have jobs that involve housing and/or residence life. Furthermore, the association's membership is diverse in gender, age, institution-type, etc.

Sample

The survey was sent to current members of ACUHO-I at the time of the study. A total of 109 respondents completed the survey; 77 (70.6%) did not answer any of the demographic questions. Of the 32 who did respond to demographic questions, 20 indicated that their sex at birth was female and 11 were male. All 20 who reported their sex at birth as female also reported their gender as female, while 9 reported their gender as male, 2 as non-gender conforming, and 1 as a gender not listed as an option. The majority of those who answered the demographic questions indicated their race as Caucasian (30 out of 32) compared to African American (2 out of 32). Table 1 presents an overview of the personal demographic characteristics of the participants who completed the survey.

Table 1

Participant Personal Demographics

	Responses	%
Sex Assigned at Birth		
Male	11	10.1
Female	21	19.3
Missing Data	77	70.6
Gender		
Male	9	8.3
Female	20	18.3
Gender Variant/Non Conforming	2	1.8
Not Listed	1	0.9
Missing Data	77	70.6
Race		
Black/African American	2	1.8
Caucasian	30	27.5
Missing Data	77	70.6
Total	109	100%

In terms of professional experience, the majority of those who responded to the demographic questions were mid-level with 12-20 years of experience, while 10 out of 32 (31.2%) were either graduate students or entry-level professionals. The majority were employed at 4-year institutions (only 1 reported serving at a 2-year institution), and most worked at a public institution (21 out of 32). Table 2 presents a breakdown of the participants' current position in housing and residence life.

With only 109 respondents, the results of this study are not likely to be generalizable. It is difficult to know based on the few who responded to the demographic questions whether those

who responded were a good cross-section of the field of housing and residence life. However, the responses to the survey may be representative of the white women in the field.

Table 2

Participant Current Position Demographics

	Responses	%
Years in field		
0-3	5	4.6
4-6	5	4.6
7-11	6	5.5
12-20	10	9.2
21 or more years	6	5.5
Missing data	77	70.6
Position Level		
Graduate assistant	1	0.9
Entry level	9	8.3
Mid-level	12	11.0
Senior/Executive	10	9.2
Missing data	77	70.6
Institution Type		
Private, 4 year	10	9.2
Public, 2 year	1	0.9
Public, 4 year	21	19.3
Missing data	77	70.6
Total	109	100%

Data Analysis Strategy

Research Question and Hypotheses

The guiding research question for the study is how does the professional experience of residence life staff influence the ethical profiles they are likely to use as frameworks for responding to ethical dilemmas in the field?

Hypothesis 1: The entry level professionals will have higher Knight scores than their counterparts.

Hypothesis 2: The longer a person has been working in the housing and residence life field, the stronger their relationship will be with the Defender profile.

Analysis of Data

To test Hypothesis 1 (entry level professionals will have higher Knight scores than their counterparts) an independent samples t-test was conducted. The independent samples t-test is used when there are two separate groups of individuals in a study. This statistical test determines whether there is a statistically significant difference between the means of the two groups. The two groups in this study were entry level and all other levels. It is worth studying how the professional experiences of these two groups influence their ethical profiles. Entry level people are essentially at the starting point of their careers and have not entrenched in the field or their current organization. Whereas the other group has spent more time in the field and have potentially worked at various institutions.

Hypothesis 2 (the longer a person has been working in the housing and residence life field, the stronger their relationship will be with the Defender profile) was analyzed by using Pearson's correlation. The correlation is a number between -1 and 1 that measures the strength and direction of the relationship between two variables. A value of 0 indicates that there is no association between the two variables. A value greater than 0 indicates a positive association; that is, as the value of one variable increases, so does the value of the other variable. A value less than 0 indicates a negative association; that is, as the value of one variable increases, the value of the other variable decreases. By utilizing this correlation, the researcher is looking to see if there

is a causal relationship between the two variables (years in the field and Defender profile). This analysis tests how a professional's longevity relates to their commitment to their organization.

Limitations

The results of this study may not be generalizable to the population of housing and residence life professionals. This study was limited to current members of the ACUHO-I at the time of the study. It is important to note that there are other professional organizations in which these professionals are affiliated with on both the regional and state level. It is uncertain whether the response rate would have been affected if the survey was sent to all (national, state, and regional) housing and residence life associations. A broader selection of participants from throughout the country may add strength to the study by including more geographically diverse institutions and participants.

When conducting a study, it is important to have a sufficient response rate. The response rate for the study was low. Possible ways to increase participation would be to offer incentives to the respondents that complete the survey. One incentive that could be given to respondents of this survey is their individual profiles that were identified from their responses. Sharing this incentive at the beginning of the survey may have produced additional completed surveys.

Surveys are one of the most useful and frequently used methods used to gather data. The survey used for the study did not produce the number of responses that the researcher wanted to have at the close of the survey. There are many different factors that may influence whether individuals participate or do not participate in surveys. These factors may differ across social and demographic groups. Evidence is mixed as to whether there are differentials in survey participation by race and ethnicity (Ofstedal & Weir, 2011).

The lack of diversity in the responses is an additional limitation. There were only two individuals identifying as racially minoritized out of the 32 respondents who completed the survey. This is a limitation to the study as individuals from minoritized groups are likely to present different perspectives. I acknowledge as a student affairs administrator that leaders from minoritized identities are requested to serve on committees, taskforce, and often participate in research which can lead to being overtaxed. According to the annual report released by the College and University Professional Association for Human Resources (CUPA-HR), only ten percent of higher education professionals are black and African American (Whitford, 2020). The low response rate from minoritized groups could have been due to the current ratios within the field.

An additional way to enrich the data collected, would be to ask respondents to participate in a follow up interview. Using a qualitative method such as narrative inquiry, could shed light on personal experiences of the respondents. This type of method used to additionally explore this area, could produce rich descriptions, and generate ways that the field can work more efficient with their staff members regarding decision making.

This study opted to use the MEP due to the lack of instruments that measured the topic of the study. The researcher was unable to edit the survey to tailor it to the targeted population. However, there are ways that have been researched and tested that can improve participation. One way to enhance the response rate would be to evaluate the content and the length of the survey. It is very important to pay attention to the time burden that the participants experience. The instrument used for the study was comprised of 52 questions which may have led to the number of incomplete responses. Additionally, using a survey that has been previously validated

is highly recommended (Booker et al., 2021) because the survey has been utilized and vetted with various groups of respondents.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Overview of Analysis

For this study the MEP was administered to participants that were members of the ACUHO-I. There were 32 respondents who completed the entirety of the MEP. The data received from these respondents did not support hypothesis one but contradicted hypothesis two.

Study Variables

In this study, professional experience of housing and residence life staff is the factor that relates directly to the individual decision maker and that can influence ethical decision making. The study had examined two independent variables which were related to the professional experience of the respondents (position level and time spent in the field). The aim of the MEP is to combine many factors that influence ethical decision making. What would happen when a person is put into a situation of making a decision and they fall into a particular ethical profile? The dependent variables in this study were the five MEPs (Knight, Defender, Chameleon, Duty Follower, Guardian Angel). The five profiles represent a mix of ethical principles that individuals are influenced by in their ethical decision-making processes.

The MEP is a scale that was purposely developed to capture managerial ethical preferences (Casali, 2009; 2007). The scale consists of 52 items covering several criteria that influences managerial decision making such as ethical, individual, organizational, and external. The first 24 items were intentionally developed as a multidimensional ethical scale representing

different principles from four major schools of moral philosophy: egoism, utilitarianism, virtue ethics and deontology in addition to eight ethical sub-scales. The overall objective of the scale is to classify respondents based on real ethical preferences, rather than push them into a predetermined box.

Analysis of Hypothesis One

The first hypothesis states that the entry level professionals have higher Knight scores than their counterparts. To test this hypothesis, an independent samples t-test was used to compare the entry level participants with all others to test if there is a significant difference between different points in positions. The independent samples t-test compares the means of two independent groups to determine whether there is statistical evidence that the associated population means are significantly different. The researcher expected to see the entry level respondents would have higher Knight scores on the MEP due to being new to their career and organization. The MEP score for the Knight profile is 7.0. Respondents that fall into this profile try to maximize their values, the organization's values, and impact of decisions on all stakeholders. Jones and Gautschi (1988) found that master's degree students were less likely than bachelor degree students to exhibit a loyalty response. Additionally, Hall and Berardino (2006) suggested that young adults are influenced by their attitudes in the way that they perceive an ethical situation.

Of the 109 respondents, 9 reported their professional level as entry level, 23 at a different professional level, and 77 did not respond to this question. The entry level respondents had a mean Knight score of 6.778, while the others had a Knight score of 7.032. This means that the non-entry level respondents had a higher Knight score; however, the differences were not significant. Table 3 displays the results of this analysis.

Table 3

Knight group statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Entry Level	9	6.778	2.438
All Others	23	7.032	1.622

This study found that entry level professionals in housing and residence life that completed the survey did not have a significantly higher Knight score contrary to the hypothesis. The small sample size likely contributed to the lack of significance in the differences. Also worth noting is that the standard deviation for the entry level group was much higher than the other groups. This shows the researcher a much larger spread among the entry level respondents. Even though the results are not what was predicted by the researcher, there is still reason to think that the entry level individuals will fall into the Knight profile. This warrants further investigation to validate this result.

Analysis for Hypothesis Two

The second hypothesis states that the longer an individual has been working in the housing and residence life field, the stronger their relationship will be with the Defender profile. Those in the Defender profile are very loyal to their organization and will make decisions to protect their institution. In relation to professional experience, Kidwell, Stevens and Bethke (1987) argued that the greater the working experience, the higher the likelihood of ethical behavior. Additionally, Weeks et al. (1999) discovered that people in the latter stages of their careers were more inclined to make moral decisions. Some research did not find significant correlation between years of professional experience. However, multiple studies did find that

well trained and highly professional individuals find ways to minimize conflict between their profession and organization (Gunz and Gunz, 2008).

Due to greater work experience, the researcher believes the stronger their relationship will be with the Defender profile. The longer a person works for an organization the more loyal they become to their entity. Additionally, these people are less likely to undermine the goals of their organization. To test this hypothesis, a Pearson's Correlation was conducted, which is one of the most common ways of measuring a linear relationship between two variables.

For hypothesis two the Defender profile is the dependent variable which is a composite of a set of questions within the MEP. For this hypothesis, time spent in the field was calculated in bins rather than in years. Therefore, the independent variables were categorical rather than continuous. With a Pearson correlation, the researcher wants the percentage to fall between 33 and 55 percent. The Pearson correlation did show a negative 44%, which is significant at the less than .05 level. Due to the negative direction, this shows as the time goes up, the strength of the Defender profile goes down. Therefore, the longer the person is in the field, the less they will lean towards the Defender profile.

These findings are opposite of what the researcher hypothesized the results would show. The longer the time spent in the field might move an individual away from the Defender profile due to these folks being able to find a balance between their value sets. Due to the significance of this relationship, this does warrant further investigation to isolate which profile these professionals that have spent time in the field would see as more important to them. Additional investigation would also allow the researcher to confirm the intensity of this relationship.

Summary

This study aimed to examine how the professional experience of housing and residence life professionals shape their ethical profile by utilizing the Managerial Ethical Profile questionnaire. Once data was collected and analyzed, the results did show that professional experience had an influence on respondent profiles. Due to the results contradicting the study's hypothesis, the need for additional research is warranted. The next chapter will provide possible future research and implications in the student affairs field.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The goal of this chapter is to summarize the study's central purpose, presents the study's limitations, discusses implications for practice and future research. The intent of the study was to explore how the professional experience of housing and residence life staff members may influence their ethical profile. It does this by surveying these professionals within the field at the time of the study. The results of this study indicates that the MEP scale is a useful instrument for further inquiry into student affairs administrators ethical decision making. The scale assesses the preferences of individuals with regards to what they report to be the most important ethical principle they draw on in their decision making. The study did reveal that the professional experience of housing and residence life professionals does influence their ethical profile.

This study is relevant to the field of student affairs because many areas such as housing and residence life make decisions at all levels within the organization. This study shows that individuals within housing and residence life draw on a range of ethical frameworks in their everyday decision making. Respondents at the entry level did not have a higher Knight profile score which shows they may not be able to maximize their values along with the organization values due to being new to their organization. However, the respondents with more years in the field of housing and residence life did not have a positive relationship with Defender profile which shows these respondents are able to balance the competing values during the process of

decision making. Due to the response rate of the study, the findings should be viewed with some degree of caution of their generalizability to the overall population.

Recommendation for Future Research

There appears to be a lack of theory and current literature that helps leaders deal with conflicts of values when faced with an ethical decision. When faced with this type of conflict, it can create a breakpoint moment for student affairs professionals when decisions must be made that have a lasting impact on the individual and their career. Development of a leadership theory that promotes understanding of conflicting values will help future leaders in student affairs prepare for their journey ahead while assisting those current leaders who are facing their breakpoint moment. Additionally, this leadership theory would bring light to the coping process after a decision has been made or implemented.

The need exists for more large-scale studies incorporating values, personal and professional demographics and ethical decision making. This study brings attention to the importance of further research on ethical decision making specific to housing and residence life professionals and how their professional experience influences their ethical profile and decision making. Research that explores how personal and professional demographics influence the ethical decision-making process of these professionals and others within higher education is needed. This initial study was exploratory and replication of this study with a larger, more heterogeneous sample could alleviate some of the limitations and strengthen the data results.

This study was born out of a personal desire after spending 10 years working in a housing and residence life setting. The researcher sought to explore the influence of personal and professional demographics of housing and residence life professionals on their day-to-day ethical decision making. Research of this nature might illustrate fundamental differences and similarities

in the training and preparation of these professionals. Another point to consider is that leadership training should include conversations regarding the conflict of values and ethical decision making.

Longitudinal research, including surveying the individuals over a period of years, would allow researchers to see how, if at all, their personal and professional demographics influence their decision making. Perhaps the personal and professional demographics of novice housing and residence life professionals will change over time as they become seasoned professionals. In particular, the use of the longitudinal data on ethical decision making in this area of student affairs may assist those who teach in graduate programs to conceptualize new and innovate ways to support students entering the field, especially those who may one day become a housing and residence life professional or senior student affairs officer.

Student affairs graduate programs are designed to prepare students for real the real world of student affairs. This study can be used to develop course material that would provide students material about the various value sets that may influence their ethical decisions that they may face and the process of how to resolve those dilemmas. The profiles from the MEP not only contribute to self-awareness and organizational knowledge, but it also has a clear implication for design and implementation of ethics education or training in the student affairs field. These ideas above would better prepare graduate students for their profession within student affairs.

Conclusion

Administrators within higher education do not need a research study to tell them that ethical decision making is multifaceted because they live that complexity every day. As a now seasoned student affairs professional, I had a desire to do this study because of my own personal experiences while working in a housing and residence life area on a college campus early in my

career. The ways that higher education leaders negotiate conflicts with personal values and ethical decision making is not well-documented in the literature.

There is no leadership text or course that can fully prepare a college campus leader for every decision they will face. It is my hope that current and future higher education administrators will find this initial study of how personal and professional demographics may influence decision making processes of their professionals, will enrich their understanding of decision making and how they can assist their folks in navigating the conflicts that may arise as they take on their own leadership journey.

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APPENDIX A
OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

Table A1

Operational Definitions

Word	Definition	Source
Values	Socially and personally shared ideas that represent beliefs about what is good, desirable, and righteous. They are preferred beliefs and expectations of how individuals should behave.	Rokeach, 1973 Suar & Khuntia, 2010
Value System	An enduring organization of beliefs concerning preferable modes of conduct or end states of existence along a continuum of relative importance.	Rokeach, 1973
Organization Value	Beliefs and ideas about standards of behavior that members of an organization should exhibit in the endeavor to achieve organizational goals within the organizational community.	Hill & Jones, 2001
Personal Values	On the individual level, values are social principles, goals, and standards that members of a culture believe that intrinsic worth. Practice of one's personal morality and what is right and good for society.	Kluckhohn, 1951 Rokeach, 1973 Schwartz, 1994 Hatch & Cunliffe, 2006
Ethics	Branch of philosophy that addresses questions of how people ought to act toward each other, that pronounces judgments of value about actions.	Taft & White, 2007 Kitchener, 2000
Ethical-Decision Making	Faced with deciding between competing moral obligations or between competing claims about what is right.	Kitchener, 2000
Ethical Dilemma	Situation that involves the challenge of two ethical paths and choosing those paths.	Moreno, 2001 Humphrey, 2008

APPENDIX B

INTRODUCTORY RECRUITMENT EMAIL

Dear Housing & Residence Life Professional,

My name is Sirena Cantrell and I am conducting research on the influence of personal values and ethical decision making among housing and residence life professionals as part of my doctoral dissertation under the direction of Dr. Danielle Molina in the Counselor Education program at Mississippi State University.

You are invited to participate in this study because your title and responsibilities include housing and/or residence life role. This study seeks to understand the impact that personal values have on the ethical decision-making process of housing administrators, emergent student policies contributing to ethical decision making, and values that administrators allow to supersede in decision making.

The results of this research will help us in understanding how values influence decision making in housing and/or residence life around emerging policies. Findings from this study will also help senior student affairs leaders prioritize and implement educational strategies to aid housing administrators in the ethical decision-making process and support these administrators who are currently experiencing the impact of their values.

You will be asked to voluntarily complete a web-based survey. The survey is organized into three brief sections and will take approximately 8-10 minutes to complete. Your involvement in this survey is voluntary and will be kept confidential. There are no identified risks with your involvement.

Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval for this study was obtained from Mississippi State University. Completion of the survey constitutes consent. Study findings will be disseminated at conference presentations and publications in professional journals. No personally identifying information will be asked and anonymity will be protected. No one will be able to connect your name with the study findings. You may exit the survey and end your participation in this study at any time. If you have questions or want to further discuss the study, please contact Sirena Cantrell at sls136@msstate.edu or dissertation advisor Dr. Danielle Molina at dmolina@colled.msstate.edu.

If you choose to continue, the survey can be accessed here. If the survey does not open automatically, please copy and paste the following link to your internet browser's address bar:

“direct link to survey here”

If you have any questions about this research, please feel free to contact me at slcantrell@muw.edu. This study has received approval through the Mississippi State University IRB process.

Thank you in advance for your participation – I trust this research will yield valuable information about values and decision making.

Sincerely,

Sirena Cantrell
Doctoral Candidate, Mississippi State University
sls136@msstate.edu

APPENDIX C
PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

I state that I wish to participate in the research survey being conducted by Sirena Cantrell, under the guidance of Dr. Danielle Molina, of Mississippi State University.

I understand the purpose of the study is to understand how values may influence decision making in housing and/or residence life around emerging policies. Findings from this study will also help senior student affairs leaders prioritize and implement educational strategies to aid housing administrators in the ethical decision-making process and support these administrators who are currently experiencing the impact of their values.

I understand that I agree to voluntarily complete a web-based survey. The survey is organized into three brief sections and will take approximately 8-10 minutes to complete. I understand that my involvement in this survey is voluntary and will be kept confidential. There are no identified risks with my involvement. I understand that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty.

For more information, I can contact the principal investigator through the following information:

Sirena Cantrell, Dean of Students & Title IX Coordinator
Mississippi University for Women
1100 College Street, Box 970
Columbus, MS 39740
662-216-6083 WORK
920-728-3088 HOME
sls136@msstate.edu

By clicking on the survey link below, I give consent to participate in this research study.

APPENDIX D
EMAIL SURVEY REMINDER

My name is Sirena Cantrell and I am conducting research on the influence of personal values and ethical decision making among housing and residence life professionals as part of my doctoral dissertation under the direction of Dr. Danielle Molina in the Counselor Education program at Mississippi State University. The results of this research will help us in understanding how personal values influence our ethical decision making in higher education institutions.

This email serves as a reminder, if you have not yet taken or finished this important survey, your survey answers are important to this study. Your time is very much appreciated as I strongly believe in studying personal values and ethical decision making. The results of this research will help us in understanding how values influence decision making in housing and/or residence life around emerging policies. Findings from this study will also help senior student affairs leaders prioritize and implement educational strategies to aid housing administrators in the ethical decision-making process and support these administrators who are currently experiencing the impact of their values.

You are invited to participate in this study if you are currently a housing and residence life administrator. You will be asked to voluntarily complete a web-based survey. The survey is organized into three brief sections and will take approximately 8-10 minutes to complete. Your involvement in this survey is voluntary and will be kept confidential. There are no identified risks with your involvement.

If you choose to continue, the survey can be accessed here. If the survey does not open automatically, please copy and paste the following link to your internet browser's address bar:

“direct link to survey here”

If you have any questions about this research, please feel free to contact me at sls136@msstate.edu. This study has received approval through the Mississippi State University IRB process.

Thank you in advance for your participation – I trust this research will yield valuable information about ethical decision making and personal values.

Sincerely,

Sirena Cantrell
Doctoral Candidate, Mississippi State University
sls136@msstate.edu
Committee Chair: Dr. Danielle Molina, dmolina@colled.msstate.edu

APPENDIX E

SURVEY

Managerial Ethical Profile (MEP) of Housing and Residence Life Professionals

Standard: Thank you for being willing to complete the questionnaire. (62 Questions)

EndSurvey:

Page Break

Start of Block: Thank you for being willing to complete the questionnaire.

MEP Questionnaire When fulfilling the requirements of your position in your organization, please indicate the importance of the followings in your decision-making process.

Page Break

Q1 Providing the highest economic return (profit) for the organization.

- Extremely important (1)
- Very important (2)
- Fairly important (3)
- Not very important (4)
- Not at all important (5)

Q2 Minimizing costs for the organization.

- Extremely important (1)
- Very important (2)
- Fairly important (3)
- Not very important (4)
- Not at all important (5)

Q3 Protecting the reputation of the organization.

- Extremely important (1)
 - Very important (2)
 - Fairly important (3)
 - Not very important (4)
 - Not at all important (5)
-

Q4 Optimizing resources of the district/hospital/unit/dept.

- Extremely important (1)
 - Very important (2)
 - Fairly important (3)
 - Not very important (4)
 - Not at all important (5)
-

Q5 Attaining organizational yearly budgets (short term).

- Extremely important (1)
 - Very important (2)
 - Fairly important (3)
 - Not very important (4)
 - Not at all important (5)
-

Q6 Being in line with the organizational mission.

- Extremely important (1)
 - Very important (2)
 - Fairly important (3)
 - Not very important (4)
 - Not at all important (5)
-

Q7 Generating the greatest overall benefits for the district/hospital.

- Extremely important (1)
 - Very important (2)
 - Fairly important (3)
 - Not very important (4)
 - Not at all important (5)
-

Q8 Not harming the clients/patients.

- Extremely important (1)
 - Very important (2)
 - Fairly important (3)
 - Not very important (4)
 - Not at all important (5)
-

Q9 Respecting organizational' rules and regulations that have been created for the greatest benefit for all stakeholders.

- Extremely important (1)
 - Very important (2)
 - Fairly important (3)
 - Not very important (4)
 - Not at all important (5)
-

Q10 Obeying the law (state and federal).

- Extremely important (1)
 - Very important (2)
 - Fairly important (3)
 - Not very important (4)
 - Not at all important (5)
-

Q11 Creating the greatest overall benefit for the local community.

- Extremely important (1)
 - Very important (2)
 - Fairly important (3)
 - Not very important (4)
 - Not at all important (5)
-

Q12 Creating the greatest overall benefit for the wider community.

- Extremely important (1)
 - Very important (2)
 - Fairly important (3)
 - Not very important (4)
 - Not at all important (5)
-

Q13 Being most in line with your core personal values.

- Extremely important (1)
 - Very important (2)
 - Fairly important (3)
 - Not very important (4)
 - Not at all important (5)
-

Q14 Being most in line with the person you want to be.

- Extremely important (1)
 - Very important (2)
 - Fairly important (3)
 - Not very important (4)
 - Not at all important (5)
-

Q15 Respecting dignity of those affected by the decision.

- Extremely important (1)
 - Very important (2)
 - Fairly important (3)
 - Not very important (4)
 - Not at all important (5)
-

Q16 Being able to empathize with clients.

- Extremely important (1)
 - Very important (2)
 - Fairly important (3)
 - Not very important (4)
 - Not at all important (5)
-

Q17 Acting openly when making decisions.

- Extremely important (1)
 - Very important (2)
 - Fairly important (3)
 - Not very important (4)
 - Not at all important (5)
-

Q18 Making "care for the sick" paramount in determining decision alternatives.

- Extremely important (1)
 - Very important (2)
 - Fairly important (3)
 - Not very important (4)
 - Not at all important (5)
-

Q19 Giving the opportunity to all affected parties or their representatives to have input into the decision making process.

- Extremely important (1)
 - Very important (2)
 - Fairly important (3)
 - Not very important (4)
 - Not at all important (5)
-

Q20 Treating others as you want others to treat you.

- Extremely important (1)
 - Very important (2)
 - Fairly important (3)
 - Not very important (4)
 - Not at all important (5)
-

Q21 Treat people as ends not as means.

- Extremely important (1)
 - Very important (2)
 - Fairly important (3)
 - Not very important (4)
 - Not at all important (5)
-

Q22 Ensuring that confidentiality is maintained at all times.

- Extremely important (1)
 - Very important (2)
 - Fairly important (3)
 - Not very important (4)
 - Not at all important (5)
-

Q23 Maintaining a fair process at all times.

- Extremely important (1)
 - Very important (2)
 - Fairly important (3)
 - Not very important (4)
 - Not at all important (5)
-

Q24 Ensuring that the organization "duty of care" is maintained at all times.

- Extremely important (1)
- Very important (2)
- Fairly important (3)
- Not very important (4)
- Not at all important (5)

Page Break

INDIVIDUAL FACTORS Please rate the following INDIVIDUAL factors in terms of their influence on your decision-making process.

Q1 Receiving rewards or minimizing punishment to yourself.

- Extremely influential (1)
 - Very influential (2)
 - Influential (3)
 - Not too influential (4)
 - Not influential at all (5)
-

Q2 Fulfilling expectation of your colleagues.

- Extremely influential (1)
 - Very influential (2)
 - Influential (3)
 - Not too influential (4)
 - Not influential at all (5)
-

Q3 Following your personal moral values regardless of other people's opinions.

- Extremely influential (1)
 - Very influential (2)
 - Influential (3)
 - Not too influential (4)
 - Not influential at all (5)
-

Q4 Making a decision independently, and using the information available to you at the time.

- Extremely influential (1)
 - Very influential (2)
 - Influential (3)
 - Not too influential (4)
 - Not influential at all (5)
-

Q5 Making the decision independently but getting more information from collaborators.

- Extremely influential (1)
 - Very influential (2)
 - Influential (3)
 - Not too influential (4)
 - Not influential at all (5)
-

Q6 Making a decision independently but asking for tokenistic consultation from subordinates.

- Extremely influential (1)
 - Very influential (2)
 - Influential (3)
 - Not too influential (4)
 - Not influential at all (5)
-

Q7 Making a decision independently and only informing subordinates.

- Extremely influential (1)
 - Very influential (2)
 - Influential (3)
 - Not too influential (4)
 - Not influential at all (5)
-

Q8 Making a decision collaboratively through facilitation and engagement of subordinates.

- Extremely influential (1)
 - Very influential (2)
 - Influential (3)
 - Not too influential (4)
 - Not influential at all (5)
-

Q9 Relying heavily on your personal values in making decisions.

- Extremely influential (1)
 - Very influential (2)
 - Influential (3)
 - Not too influential (4)
 - Not influential at all (5)
-

Q10 Being guided by your professional experience.

- Extremely influential (1)
 - Very influential (2)
 - Influential (3)
 - Not too influential (4)
 - Not influential at all (5)
-

Q11 Being guided by experts in their fields.

- Extremely influential (1)
 - Very influential (2)
 - Influential (3)
 - Not too influential (4)
 - Not influential at all (5)
-

Page Break

ORGANIZATION FACTORS Please rate the following ORGANIZATION factors in terms of their influence on your decision-making process.

Q12 Being in line with the hospital/district code of ethics/conduct.

- Extremely influential (1)
 - Very influential (2)
 - Influential (3)
 - Not too influential (4)
 - Not influential at all (5)
-

Q13 Following ethical principles learnt during training provided by the organization or from formal studies.

- Extremely influential (1)
 - Very influential (2)
 - Influential (3)
 - Not too influential (4)
 - Not influential at all (5)
-

Q14 Following ethical principles that you have learnt during your formal studies.

- Extremely influential (1)
 - Very influential (2)
 - Influential (3)
 - Not too influential (4)
 - Not influential at all (5)
-

Q15 Following ethical principles that you have learnt in a previous organization.

- Extremely influential (1)
 - Very influential (2)
 - Influential (3)
 - Not too influential (4)
 - Not influential at all (5)
-

Q16 Being in line with the organizational culture.

- Extremely influential (1)
 - Very influential (2)
 - Influential (3)
 - Not too influential (4)
 - Not influential at all (5)
-

Q17 Reaching a decision based by using evidence-based process.

- Extremely influential (1)
 - Very influential (2)
 - Influential (3)
 - Not too influential (4)
 - Not influential at all (5)
-

Q18 Reaching a decision by bargaining with superiors and subordinates.

- Extremely influential (1)
 - Very influential (2)
 - Influential (3)
 - Not too influential (4)
 - Not influential at all (5)
-

Q19 Reaching a decision by inspiring others.

- Extremely influential (1)
 - Very influential (2)
 - Influential (3)
 - Not too influential (4)
 - Not influential at all (5)
-

Q20 Reaching a decision by using personal judgment.

- Extremely influential (1)
 - Very influential (2)
 - Influential (3)
 - Not too influential (4)
 - Not influential at all (5)
-

Q21 Being in line with the mission statement of the company.

- Extremely influential (1)
 - Very influential (2)
 - Influential (3)
 - Not too influential (4)
 - Not influential at all (5)
-

Q22 Respecting your professional code of conduct.

- Extremely influential (1)
 - Very influential (2)
 - Influential (3)
 - Not too influential (4)
 - Not influential at all (5)
-

Q23 Political agendas compared to medical needs.

- Extremely influential (1)
 - Very influential (2)
 - Influential (3)
 - Not too influential (4)
 - Not influential at all (5)
-

Q24 Fulfilling macro economic factors.

- Extremely influential (1)
 - Very influential (2)
 - Influential (3)
 - Not too influential (4)
 - Not influential at all (5)
-

Q25 Covering existing health gaps in community needs.

- Extremely influential (1)
 - Very influential (2)
 - Influential (3)
 - Not too influential (4)
 - Not influential at all (5)
-

Q26 Encouraging the technological advancement in terms of hardware and software where given high preference.

- Extremely influential (1)
 - Very influential (2)
 - Influential (3)
 - Not too influential (4)
 - Not influential at all (5)
-

Q27 Promoting environment protection such as reduction in chemical waste and energy savings.

- Extremely influential (1)
 - Very influential (2)
 - Influential (3)
 - Not too influential (4)
 - Not influential at all (5)
-

Q28 Identify particular gaps between the community health needs, and the current level of satisfaction of those needs by competitors.

- Extremely influential (1)
 - Very influential (2)
 - Influential (3)
 - Not too influential (4)
 - Not influential at all (5)
-

DEMOGRAPHICS Please complete the following demographic questions.

Q1 How many years have you served in the housing and/or residence life field?

- 0-3 years (1)
 - 4-6 years (2)
 - 7-11 years (3)
 - 12-20 years (4)
 - 21 or more years (5)
-

Q2 Your current position in housing and/or residence life can be classified as:

- Graduate Assistant (1)
 - Entry Level Professional (2)
 - Mid Level Professional (e.g. supervising professional staff members) (3)
 - Senior/Executive Professional (e.g. highest housing professional in department) (4)
-

Q3 Which best describes your institution type?

- Private, 2 year (1)
 - Private, 4 year (2)
 - Public, 2 year (3)
 - Public, 4 year (4)
-

Q4 What is your sex assigned at birth?

- Male (1)
 - Female (2)
-

Q5 Which best describes your gender?

- Male (1)
 - Female (2)
 - Transgender Female (3)
 - Transgender Male (4)
 - Gender Variant/Non-Conforming (5)
 - Questioning or Unsure (6)
 - Prefer not to answer (7)
 - Not Listed (8)
-

Q6 Please indicate all races that apply:

- Asian (1)
- Black or African American (2)
- Caucasian (3)
- American Indian or Alaska Native (4)
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (5)
- Prefer not to answer (6)

End of Block: Thank you for being willing to complete the questionnaire.

APPENDIX F

CODE BOOK

Objective of this study is to identify which manager profiles housing and residence life professionals fall into based upon participant responses to the MEP survey. Additionally, the researcher would like to understand whether several factors (independent variables), such as time in the field and position level are predictors or influence certain manager ethical profiles.

Research Question

The guiding research question for the study is how does the professional experience of residence life staff influence the ethical profiles they are likely to use as frameworks for responding to ethical dilemmas in the field?

Hypothesis 1:

The entry level professionals will have higher Knight scores than their counterparts.

Questions in the Survey:

Part A: 3, 6, 9, 24

Organizational Factors section: All questions

Hypothesis 2:

The longer a person has been working in the housing and residence life field, the stronger their relationship will be with the Defend profile.

Questions in Survey:

Part A: 8, 15, 18, 23

Individual Factors section: All questions

Independent Variables

The independent variables will be coded as follows:

- Time in the Field

Answer Code:

0 – 0-3 years

1 – 4-5 years

2 – 7-11 years

3 – 12-20 years

4 – 21 or more years

- Position Level in the Field

Answer Code:

0 - Graduate Assistant Position

1 - Entry-level Professional

2 - Mid-level Professional (e.g. supervising professional staff members)

3 - Senior/Executive Professional (e.g. highest housing professional in department)

Dependent Variable

Managerial Ethical Profiles Survey places each participant into a profile. These profiles will serve as the dependent variable. The dependent variables will be coded as follows:

0 – Duty Follower

1 – The Chameleon

2 – Guardian Angel

3 – The Defender

4 – The Knight

Duty Follower – “do what is right no matter what the costs.” Manager decisions in this profile are guided by rules and duties than by considering the consequences of those actions.

The Chameleon – “when in Rome do as the Romans do.” Managers in this profile assess different ethical viewpoints and decide which is the most appropriate for a particular situation. Compared to other profiles – managers in this one has less independence in ethical decision making because they are strongly affected by significant others and the organizational culture.

Guardian Angel – “following those duties that promote the greatest good.” Managers in this profile feel a duty to consider the consequences of their decisions and to treat others fairly. They obey rules, but at the same time, they use their wisdom as well to consider the impact on others of doing so.

The Defender – “the defender of faith.” Managers in this profile are very loyal to their organization and would make decisions to protect the reputation of the organization. These people are important to a company because they are most loyal and less likely to undermine its goals. Would accept a gift only if that action would benefit their organization.

The Knight – “being the best I can be, doing the best for everyone and doing the right thing in all situations.” Managers in this profile are more consistent in trying to maximize their values, the organization values, keeping economic factors in the picture and considering the impact of decisions on all stakeholders.

Survey Information

The survey has questions that are ordinally represented: (more than two levels): Extremely important, very important, fairly important, not very important, not important at all. The 52-question survey covers several factors influencing managerial decision making, such as ethical factors, individual factors, organizational factors, and external factors. The first 24 questions were developed as a multidimensional ethical scale, representing different principles

from four major schools of moral philosophy: egoism, utilitarianism, virtue ethics and deontology.