

**Values, Conflicts & Value Conflict Resolution:
An Investigation of the Experiences of Educational Administrators**

By

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation reports on a study of educational administrators and the value conflicts experienced within their schools. The extensive review of literature on values in educational administration has determined very little consensus regarding the influence of values on the practice of educational administrators. A lack of common understanding about the definition of the term *values* exists along with variations and inconsistencies regarding the pervasiveness of values in educational administration. School leaders frequently encounter value conflicts and their resolution involves considerable degrees of decision making.

Participants in this study include members of the cohort of the Ed.D. Program in the Department of Theory and Policy Studies at the University of Toronto, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) as well as practising educational administrators with extensive experience in school leadership. As the researcher works within the Catholic school system, the majority of study participants are Catholic administrators who were accessible to the researcher for participation. A qualitative research methodology was employed and fourteen semi-structured interviews were conducted which focused on the three main research questions. The following research questions were addressed in the study:

1. How do educational administrators see the role of values in their work?
2. What types of value conflicts do educational administrators experience?

3. How do educational administrators resolve conflicts that stem from values issues?

The findings herein indicate that administrators view values as extremely important and relevant in their work. The influence of values on administrator behavior is evident in how leaders define the term *value*: as a code/set of rules and fundamental beliefs that guide daily interactions; and a basis for decision making. In terms of conflicts, administrators experience interpersonal conflicts frequently and attribute this type of conflict to differences in stakeholder values. Educational administrators resolve conflicts that stem from values issues by taking a moral stand which allows them to remain committed to their values.

The results of this study acknowledge and contribute to the existing field of studies relating to values and value conflict resolution within educational administration while simultaneously suggesting further implications for future research. The adoption of a values-based leadership model and its associated values clarification process is recommended for school leaders as a framework to deal with the existing realities of their complex role. This model has tremendous potential to transform the existing face of educational administration provided it is seamlessly integrated within educational organizations and becomes the new standard of leadership practice.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My quest for life-long learning was instilled in me at an early age from my parents, Rose Marie & Stan, both of whom always encouraged the pursuit of higher education. My mother, Rose Marie, has been my rock throughout this experience as with all other experiences in my life. Her endless patience, enthusiasm, encouragement, time and support that she provided me with throughout this journey (not to mention her eloquent turn of phrase and the red pen!) is unparalleled and I constantly strive to reach her standards for excellence which she demonstrates in everything that she does. I wish to thank her for everything that she has done, and continues to do, for me. As a lawyer, my father always had an insatiable thirst for knowledge which I inherited and I only wish he was here today to share in my accomplishments. My sister, Marla, is completing her own doctoral degree, and has been a source of support throughout with her encouraging messages and perceptive and insightful humor (Listen...). I know she will be successful in her own educational pursuit very soon. The best word that I can use to describe my husband Chris is patient and he has demonstrated this patience many times, over time, as I completed this degree. The final year of this degree was our first year of marriage so I would like to thank him for his on-going understanding, support, humor, help and use of “the wireless cans” as I endeavored to persevere to complete this degree.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Rationale for the Study

Educational leadership in today's pluralistic society has become increasingly complex and challenging. Due to the increase in diverse demands, specific needs and value orientations of competing educational stakeholders, an increase in the frequency of value conflicts has resulted within secondary schools (Begley, 1999a). In fact, empirical data confirms that educational administrators experience ethical dilemmas on a daily basis while performing their duties and (it also) identifies an increase in conflict due to interpersonal interactions and/or incompatibility between personal, professional or organizational values (Begley, 1999a, 2003a; Brown, 1995; Greenfield, 1993 as cited in Armstrong, 2004, p. 2). School administration places a unique set of demands on leaders who, as moral agents, have a special responsibility "to take actions and make decisions in a distinctly moral manner" (Greenfield, 1987, p. 4). Educational administrators must rely so extensively upon leadership to administer the school (Greenfield, 1987) and make decisions where "it is not clear what is right or wrong, or what one ought to do, or which perspective is right in moral terms" (Greenfield, 1991, p. 8). Consequently, educational leaders are faced with the unenviable task of determining "which and whose (particular values) beliefs, knowledge and understanding are to prevail" (Roche, 1997, p. 1). The necessity to choose between "a confusing plurality of values" poses moral and ethical dilemmas (Weeks, as cited in Squires, 1993, p. 189) and the "right resolution requires sophistication about the nature of values" (Hodgkinson, 1991, 1996).

Personal and professional values play a fundamental role in educational leadership as "a significant portion of the practice in educational administration requires

rejecting some course of action in favor of a preferred one” (Willower, 1992, p. 369). Understanding the influence of personal and professional values on the decision-making processes of educational administrators is critical as these values predispose leaders to make certain preferred choices (Law, Walker & Dimmock, 2003, p. 521). Greenfield (1995, p. 69) believes that “school administrators have a special responsibility to be deliberately moral in their conduct, that is, to consider the value premises underlying their actions and decisions”. It is important that educational administrators define and comprehend their own value systems in order to disseminate good organizational values to others (Anderson, 1997; Bennis, 1989; Kouzes & Posner, 1995; Malphurs, 1996 as cited in Russell, 2001). Begley (1999b, p. 63) believes that “educational administrators must become reflective practitioners in the sense that Barth (1990), Hodgkinson (1991), Schon (1983) and Sergiovanni (1992) have advocated for some time”. Hodgkinson (1995, p. 80) states that “leadership is a function of self-knowledge and of values” and posits that a values audit is necessary as “a stocktaking of one’s own values” (1991, p. 136). As the educational leader in the school community, the administrator has the responsibility to exemplify and embody appropriate values. As such, the administrator’s role within the school community is unique as they are a “representative ... and an entrepreneur for its values” (Greenfield & Ribbins, 1993, p. 222). As English (1994, p. 231) asserts, “leadership without morality is simply bureaucratic technique”.

Within every organization, there are unavoidable sources of conflict (Cooze, 1989). Conflict can stem from many sources including: socio-economic status; school budgets; accountability issues; policy; higher administration; and working parents. Begley (2000) discusses how the increasing social and cultural diversity found within

today's society can also cause conflict situations. Ryan (1999) concurs and states that "administrators of schools face many challenges these days, perhaps the most pressing of which involve responding to increasing levels and quality of diversity". Johnson & Evans (1997, p. 41) posit that as "the ills of society have permeated our classrooms, (the) time devoted to conflict management has increased". Perhaps one of the most challenging tests of educational administration is the management of conflict situations (Cooze, 1989). Educational administrators need to view the phenomenon of conflict as a natural and inevitable process associated with interpersonal relationships (Deutsch, 2000) since conflict is an inevitable and pervasive element of our society (Cooze, 1989).

Problem Statement

The purpose of this study is to investigate how educational administrators deal with personal and professional value conflicts that arise within schools in today's diverse society.

The following research questions are proposed:

1. How do educational administrators see the role of values in their work?
2. What types of value conflicts do educational administrators experience?
3. How do educational administrators resolve conflicts that stem from values issues?

Significance of the Study

This study has meaningful implications for theory, practice and research. The participants in this study, while all school and community leaders, include candidates in the Ed.D. program in Educational Administration in the Theory and Policy Department at the University of Toronto, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) as well as practising educational administrators with extensive experience in school leadership.

The Ed.D cohort members possess different value sets and varying academic and administrative experiences that range from elementary and secondary schools to post-secondary education and other educational institutions. The focus of the Ed.D. program is complex and theory-based and the courses are sequenced and focus on reflective practice. Reflecting this approach, the discussions in course TPS 3025: Personal and Professional Values of Educational Leadership suggested the topic of values and value conflict. This mandatory core course examined the personal and professional values and ethics of educational decision making and candidates in this course engaged fully in course discussions surrounding: various conceptions of values; the alignment between personal, professional and organizational values; value conflicts; and value conflict resolution strategies.

The remaining participants are practising educational administrators who work primarily within the Catholic school system and possess extensive school leadership experience. They bring the perspective of the Separate school context to this research study. While the first group may bring more theory to the discussion, both sets have varied experiences as educational leaders.

This study has benefits for educational administrators in that it presents the experiences of these leaders from a values perspective and sheds light on how they have used their concept of values to solve daily problems and resolve difficulties.

Limitations of the Study

In this qualitative research study, semi-structured interviews are utilized as a means of collecting data in order to answer the research problem and research questions.

Guba & Lincoln (1994, p. 107) posit that all research is informed and guided by the researcher's paradigm or worldview that "defines for its holder, the nature of the 'world'" so the possibility of researcher bias needs to be acknowledged. Merriam (1998, p. 7) concurs and states that the researcher as "the primary instrument of data collection and analysis...is responsive to the context". Stake (1994, p. 240) believes that it is the "researcher who (ultimately) decides on what and how to report and who will interpret and analyze data through a lens undoubtedly influenced by personal values, meanings and experiences".

The number of participants in this research study create a relatively small sample size which, according to Miles & Huberman (1994, p. 15) "may or may not be a reasonable sample of the larger universe". Furthermore, a significant number of the interviewed participants are leaders in the Catholic Separate school system which actively emphasizes Catholic values within leadership while the remaining participants in the cohort group reflect universal and secular value systems.

Next, accessibility of participants has meant that not all members of the cohort-based Doctoral program were able to participate in the study. Also, there are few secondary principals in the data set. As a result, the data on secondary, Superintendency and community leadership represents a limited set.

The researcher also acknowledges the limitations of this study in terms of generalizability and relating the findings of this study to other research.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter presents a summary review of the key concepts related to values and value conflict which are critical to the proposed study. A survey of existing practices and frameworks are presented which provide the basis for the conceptual framework for this research. The first section focuses on values (definitions and classifications of values, sources of value conflicts and administrators' response to value conflict) while the second section focuses on conflict (definitions and perspectives of conflict, types of conflict and conflict resolution strategies). Beck's (1993) values conception, Gay's (1981) classification of conflict and Roche's (1997) value response classification framework are presented in the literature review and will be used as a means to classify and categorize responses from educational administrators with regard to the three research questions for this study.

Values

The topic of values has received a great deal of attention in educational administration over the past several decades and numerous attempts have been made to describe the nature and influence of values on administrative action (Begley, 1996; Leonard, 1996; Willower, 1999 as cited in Richmon, 2004, p. 342). The literature written on values has been extensively informed by a broad scope of beliefs and suppositions. However, researchers have had difficulty agreeing as to "what values are and how we can best understand them" (Richmon, 2005, p. 25). Rescher (1969, p. 2) highlights this disparity with his non-comprehensive list of "nearly a dozen distinct and at times, contradictory descriptions of values". Similarly, Campbell (1992, p. 3) notes the inherent problems of "innumerable varying and often competing definitions" that pervade

value inquiry while Hambrick & Brandon (1988, p. 30) state that “to study ..values is to delve into the murkiest of organizational phenomena”. Additional descriptions include Hodgkinson’s (1991) belief that values “are concepts of the desirable” and Feather’s (1975) idea that values “serve as standards that guide thought and action”. Frankena (1967, p. 229) also highlights this lack of consistency in his definition of how “the terms *value* and *valuation* and their cognates and compounds are used in a confused and confusing but widespread way in our contemporary culture”. The scholarly study of values defined over a long period of time and through the lens of many different disciplines has, not surprisingly, resulted in dissimilar, or at times contradictory, definitions of values (Richmon, 2005, p. 23). As a result of this disparity in value definitions, a problematic classification of both theoretical and methodological approaches for studying values has occurred (Richmon, 2003). Greenfield & Ribbins (1993, p. 169) offer an explanation and state:

The fundamental problem in knowing and understanding social reality is of the place (that) values shall play in inquiry...this question has troubled the theory and knowledge promulgated in the field of educational administration.

Value Classifications

Perhaps the most influential, widely recognizable and best known conceptual framework for relating values to educational leadership is the one proposed by Hodgkinson in his book entitled *Educational Leadership: The Moral Art* (1991). His framework allows for the classification of values and the establishment of “some bases for the resolution of value conflicts” (1991, p. 96). Hodgkinson’s analytical model presented in his book entitled *Towards a Philosophy of Administration* (1978) suggests that values can be held at three basic motivational levels (see Table 1). Considered in

reverse order, Type III values are grounded in preference and are considered to be sub-rational values: “Type III values are self-justifying since they are grounded in individual affect and constitute the individual’s preference structure” (Hodgkinson, 1991, p. 98). Type II values are grounded in either consequences (Type IIa) or consensus (Type IIb) and are considered to be rational values. Values of consequence involve “a reasonable analysis of the consequences entailed by the pending value judgment [directed at] some future resultant state of affairs” (Hodgkinson, 1991, p. 98) while values of consensus concur “with the will of the majority in a given collectivity” (Hodgkinson, 1991, p. 98). Type I values are grounded in more metaphysical principles and are considered to be transrational values. These values “take the form of ethical codes, injunctions or commandments” (Hodgkinson, 1991, p. 99) and are not scientifically verifiable and cannot be justified by logical argument. Based on will rather than reason, Hodgkinson believes that the adoption of transrational values implies some act of faith, belief or commitment (Hodgkinson, 1978, p. 112).

Table 1: Hodgkinson’s Typology of Values (1978)

Types	Grounded in	Bases	Begley (2003a)
Type I	Metaphysical principles	Trans-rational (ethical codes, commandments)	Ethical principles
Type IIa	Consequence	Rational	Consequence
Type IIb	Consensus	Rational	Consensus
Type III	Preference	Sub-rational	Self-interest

For the practising educational administrator, there will always be decisions that require their utmost attention. Not only is the administrator required to make decisions but he/she is also expected to make the right decision. Hodgkinson (1991, p. 93) states:

To govern is to choose. One can accept or not accept the value dictates imposed by the particular organizational culture in which one works...One can allow, or not allow, one's leadership to be swayed by values deriving from ...or by.... ...affinities one has for colleagues and peers. Each day and each hour provides the occasion for value judgments, and each choice has a determining effect on the value options for the future.

Hodgkinson's values typology (1978) can be helpful to educational administrators in terms of being a values audit. Administrators can use the technique of personal reflection which is particularly helpful when one alternative is selected while others are rejected. This art of reflective thinking and its relationship to theory is known as praxis. Praxis has always been a hallmark of the effective administrator (Begley, 2000).

As previously stated, personal and professional values influence the decisions made by educational administrators. In order to understand the nature and extent of this influence, it is important to consider how these values are integrated within the individual and how they interact with the other facets of the individual's being. Begley utilizes an adaptation of an onion figure from Hodgkinson (1991) to illustrate a "syntax of values terminology" (Begley, 2003a, p. 5) as it relates to one individual.

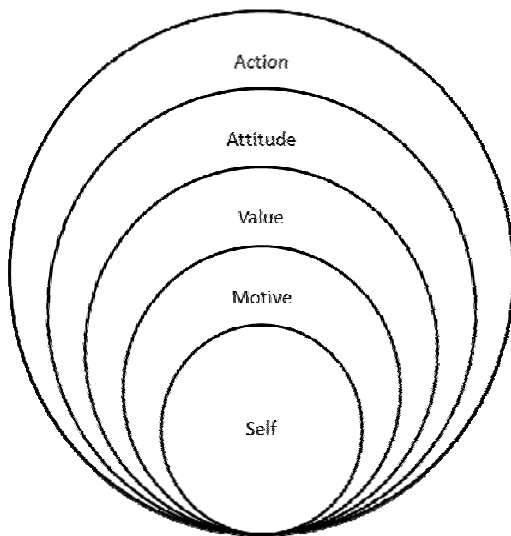


Figure 1: Begley's (2003a) Syntax of Values Terminology

In the onion figure, the outermost circle represents the “observable actions and speech of the individual” which permits “empirical attributions of the value orientations of (others)” (Begley, 2003a, p. 5). It is important to note that the above has limitations as it is possible for “individuals (to) articulate or posture certain values while actually being committed to others” (Begley, 2003a, p. 5). Moving inwards, the next circle represents attitudes which Begley (2003a, p. 6) defines as “outward and visible signs of inward and invisible inclinations”. He further describes attitudes as “the thin membrane between values and the observable actions or speech of an individual” (Begley, 2003a, p. 6). The next circle in the onion figure represents “the actual values held or manifested by an individual” (Begley, 2003a, p. 6). Begley (2003a, p. 6) states that “these values are held in response to one or more in a range of potential motivations” and that “understanding the motives of others becomes complicated (as they can) articulate one value while actually being committed to another”. The following layer inward deals with the individual’s knowledge and understandings. Begley (2003a, p. 7) explains that “based on life experiences, training and reflection”, this layer provides “the linkage between the basic motivational bases and the specific values adopted and manifested by the individual”. As a result of the aforementioned, “the individual responds to (these) basic motivations by adopting particular value positions that will support the fulfillment of those basic motivations in a specific way and (will) be operationalized through actions or speech selected by (an) individual to achieve (the) valued objective” (Begley, 2003a, p. 7). Moving further inwards, the next layer represents the motives of the individual which Begley (2003a, p. 7) states is “the key to understanding the nature and function of values” as this “is the motivating force dimension behind the adoption of a particular

value which, working outwards through the layers of the figure will shape attitudes and potentially the subsequent actions” . The innermost circle of the onion figure represents “the self, the essence of the individual (the soul) - the biological self as well as the existential or transcendent self” (Begley, 2003a, p. 8).

Begley identifies four basic motivational bases which align with Hodgkinson’s original value framework (1978, see Figure 1) and these include: personal preference or self-interest (Hodgkinson’s Type III); an inclination towards consensus (Hodgkinson’s Type IIb); an inclination towards or concern for consequences (Hodgkinson’s Type IIa); and an inclination to respond to ethics or principles (Hodgkinson’s Type I).

In his work, Branson (2004) also considers the relationship between personal values and behavior. His conceptual framework outlines the various components of the Self (self-concept, self-esteem, motives, values, beliefs and behaviors) and it suggests a pathway for learning more about the relationship between behavior and the subliminal components of the Self (2005a, p. 25). Branson states that the components are “not discrete entities but, rather, inter-related and inter-active with each other” (2005a, p. 25).

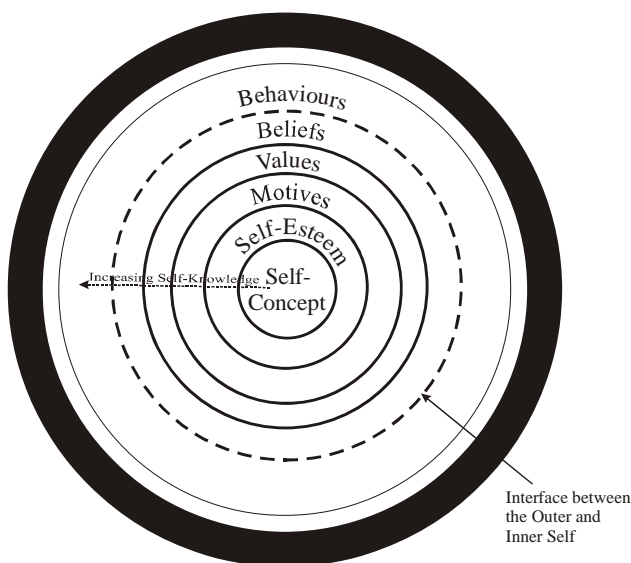


Figure 2: Branson’s (2004) Components of the Self

Branson's (2004) framework is a useful model for educational administrators to gain understanding about their behavior and how it is influenced by the various components of the Self, at the heart of which is self-concept (2007, p. 229). He suggests working from the "inside-out", starting with the self-concept and working sequentially through the other components of the Self (self-esteem, motives, values, beliefs and behaviors) (2007, p. 231). By engaging in this deeply structured self reflective activity, Branson posits that administrators will: gain self-knowledge regarding the formation of their personal values; understand how their values influence their leadership behavior; be more attuned to how some of their values have the potential to cause undesirable leadership behaviors; and be able to suppress the influences of those values that can cause undesirable behavioral outcomes so as to enhance the positive effect of their leadership on their followers (Branson, 2007, p. 233).

Various conceptions and classifications of value models exist within the literature on values and value conflicts. For example, Ashbaugh & Kasten (1984) who were substantially influenced by Hodgkinson's (1978) work herein created their own values model derived from his vision (Begley, 1999a, p. 250). Their typology was "grounded in (educational administrators') descriptions of the conscious values utilized when making difficult decisions" (Ashbaugh & Kasten, 1984, p. 202). Their framework describes three main categories of values including personalistic, organizational and transcendent values (Richmon, 2005, p. 38).

Beck (1993) proposes his values conception which includes five categories of values namely: basic values, spiritual values, moral values, social and political values, intermediate range and specific values. Basic values relate to fundamental areas of

human needs and include “survival, health, happiness, friendship ...(and) freedom” (Beck, 1993, p. 24). Spiritual values embody more ethereal, affective qualities such as “awareness, breadth of outlook, integration, wonder, gratitude, hope, detachment, humility, love (and) gentleness” (Beck 1993, p. 24). Moral values relate to ethical sensibilities such as honesty, reliability and fairness (Beck, 1993, p. 24). Social and political values refer to sensibilities dealing with general social functioning, such as justice, participation, and citizenship (Beck, 1993, p. 24). Intermediate range values reflect personalized sensibilities in a broad sense (shelter, entertainment, fitness) while specific values relate personal sensibilities surrounding almost any personal thing (Beck, 1993, p. 24).

In the context of the proposed study, Beck’s (1993) values conception will be used as a means to classify and categorize responses from educational administrators with regard to the first research question which seeks to understand how educationists see the role of values in their work. Beck’s (1993) conception was chosen because it is based on the premise that a fairly common set of universal values exists. He emphasizes that “there are no absolute values but rather values (which) are in a constant state of negotiation and (hence) are difficult to relate directly to action” (Beck, 1993 as cited in Richmon, 2003, p. 40).

Modifying Beck’s framework, Leithwood, Begley & Cousins (1994) proposed “three similar categories of values including basic human values, general moral values, and social and political values” (Richmon, 2003, p. 40) and also “added professional values, which embed the roles and responsibilities of educators into the framework” (Leithwood, Begley & Cousins, 1994).

In addition to academic inquiry in which researchers have centered on 1) the nature of values, 2) differing conceptions of values models, 3) multitudinous sources of value conflicts, and 4) the influence of personal, professional and society values, they have also further focused upon other topics within the field of values. For example, Maxcy (1993) and Sergiovanni (2000) studied the “valuing dimensions of leadership to varying degrees” (Richmon, 2005, p. 42) while Leithwood, Jantzi & Steinbach (1999) “considered the function of values in problem-solving processes of administrators” (Richmon, 2005, p. 41). All of the above have contributed to the literature within the field of values. Despite “universal agreement that values play a key role in (educational) administration...there is only a limited amount of relevant scholarship” (Willower, 1994, p. 23) and “(the notion of) values still remains largely absent from a great deal of the scholarship in educational administration and leadership” (Richmon, 2005, p. 42). In fact, many administrator training programs emphasize “the technical, social and conceptual dimensions of administration” and “usually neglect questions of values” (Marshall, 1992, p. 369). Richmon (2005, p. 43) states that “values research carries an intrinsically greater burden” and Greenfield & Ribbins (1993, p. 162) explain that to consider values:

...is to consider questions for which there are no easy answers ... it is to think hard thoughts and to look at things painful to bear. The strong and the compassionate, however, will see the relevance of this work, the truth of the realities described, and their force in everyday administrative affairs.

Begley (1996, pgs. 405-406) argues that the nature and function of values warrants study because: educational leadership involves decision making in which preferred alternatives are selected and others rejected; value conflicts are increasingly common in the postmodern environment; in administration, articulated values may differ

from the values to which individuals and groups are actually committed; educational administrators need to be aware of the incompatibility that can exist between their fixed core values and those of the organization or community; administrative effectiveness is enhanced when administrators understand the actions of others and the sources and causes of value conflicts; and in the mediation of value conflicts, administrators need to distinguish between personal, professional, organizational and social values in particular situations.

Sources of Value Conflicts

As is evident throughout the literature on values, many research studies have focused upon the personal, professional and societal values of educational administrators. Specifically, these research studies are concerned with the influence and impact of these values in particular situations of value conflicts. In an attempt to analyze the various sources of educational administrators' values as well as the sources of value conflicts, Begley (2003a) utilizes a second onion figure to illustrate the above.

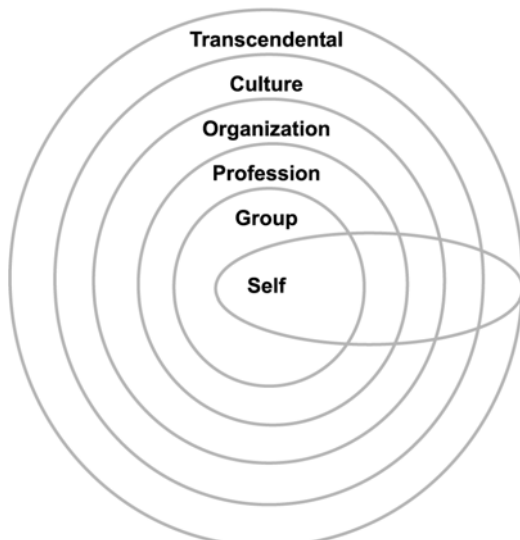


Figure 3: Begley's (2003a) Arenas of Valuation: Sources of Value & Value Conflicts

Begley's (2003a, p. 9) model includes seven arenas of valuation which "highlight the multiple domains and functions of administration" each which "(have) potentially competing or incompatible values" (Begley, 2003a, p. 9). The innermost ring of the onion figure represents the individual who possesses a distinct influence in the role of educational administrator. Moving outwards, the second ring represents "the arena of groups (and) collective entities of various types... such as family, peers, friends and acquaintances" (Begley, 2003a, p. 10). The next ring represents the profession which is "a more formal arena of administration that is closely related to the second ring, but is given special emphasis because of its relevance to school administration" (Begley, 2003a, p. 10). The following ring moving outwards represents the organization which is subsequently layered by the arenas representing community and culture. Research maintains the importance of valuing the community as a "relevant administrative arena and source of influence on school leadership" (Leithwood, Begley, & Cousins, 1994). Similarly, today's diverse society celebrates the importance of culture as "relevant arenas of administrative activity" (Begley, 2003a, p. 10). Represented lastly in the onion figure is "the transcendental -God, faith, spirituality" (Begley, 2003a, p. 10). This is an arena of considerable importance and can be a significant influence on the valuation processes for many individuals. Educational administrators would be remiss not to consider the transcendental as both a source of infinite values and value conflict.

Begley's model (2003a) denotes the numerous sources of value conflicts and illustrates how value conflicts can arise both within and throughout the different layers in his model. For example, "personal values (can) conflict with those of the community (and) professional values (can) conflict with organizational values" (Begley, 2003a,

p. 11). Hodgkinson (1991) also addresses the issue of value conflicts with his (1978) model and states that “the most profound value conflicts occur when two or more principles are in conflict. Because they and personal preferences are non rational (either transrational or sub rational), conflicts occurring at these levels are extremely difficult to resolve” (Hodgkinson, 1991, p. 150).

Administrator Response to Value Conflicts

Ashbaugh & Kasten’s (1984) study on value conflicts experienced by educational administrators discovered:

When the meta values of the organization conflicted with (educational administrators’) transcendent values, there were three possible responses: (administrators) complied with the values of the organization even if they personally believed them to be unjust; (administrators) compromised their own integrity in order to improve their career prospects; or (administrators) chose to leave the role (Begley, 1999a, p. 256).

Table 2: Studies of Potential Administrator Value Response to Conflict

Roche (1997)	Avoidance	Suspending Morality	Creative insubordination	Personal morality
Campbell (1992)	Rational responses	Related to consequences	Related to consensus	
Ashbaugh & Kasten (1984)	Choice of compliance	Choice of compromise	Decision to leave situation	
Hodgkinson (1978)	Rational responses	Consequences	Consensus	Little acknowledgement of non-rational motivations

Campbell’s (1992) study of the conflict in the moral and ethical values of educational administrators revealed that the adoption of “a rationalist, technocratic, and bureaucratic approach (was appropriate) in order to avoid or resolve transrational value conflicts in a consequential, utilitarian, and morally neutral manner” (Begley, 1999a, p. 256). This thought aligns with the results of other studies conducted on the issue of value conflicts

by Begley (1988), Campbell-Evans (1988), Leithwood & Stager (1989) and Leithwood & Steinbach (1995) which suggest that educational administrators “usually select from a range of essentially rational responses” (Begley, 1999a, p. 256). As a whole, Hodgkinson’s (1978) value model has been used in various academic studies that are concerned with studying administrators’ values, such as those conducted by Campbell-Evans (1991), Moorhead & Nediger (1991), Begley & Johansson, (1998) (as cited in Richmon, 2004, p. 344) and “there seems to be a remarkable degree of concurrence that administrators do tend to articulate the motivational base which underpin their values in rational terms that are concerned with consequences (Hodgkinson’s Type IIa) and consensus (Hodgkinson’s Type IIb)” (Richmon, 2004, p. 345).

Roche (1997, p. 63) developed a value response classification framework from a synthesis of the literature relating to the actual response of educational administrators to value conflicts arising from within their professional role. This framework will be used as a means to classify and categorize responses to the third research question which seeks to understand how educational administrators resolve conflicts that stem from values issues. Roche’s (1997) framework consists of four elements or responses: avoidance; suspending morality; creative insubordination; and personal morality.

Avoidance, the first response, can either be cognizant or non-cognizant. Cognizant avoidance occurs when administrators possess full knowledge of a conflict and knowingly choose to avoid dealing with it whereas with non-cognizant avoidance, leaders fail to understand the depth and breadth of the conflict and as a result, rely on formal and established procedures to deal with the conflict from a distance (Roche, 1997, p. 63). The second response, suspending morality, occurs when leaders believe it is their

'professional' obligation and responsibility to adhere to the official policies and procedures of the school board and/or the school community (Roche, 1997, p. 68). Creative insubordination, the third response, involves adapting the school board's mandate in such a way that "fits the principal's values, philosophy, goals and situation" (Haynes & Licata, 1995, p. 21 as cited in Roche, 1997, p. 69). Superficially, it may appear that educational administrators are supporting the school board's goals but in reality, they are seeking to change, challenge or even subvert the process of implementation. The fourth response, personal morality, involves taking a moral stand which involves an "undaunted, unmovable, enduring commitment to a personal moral principle in the face of any and all consequences" (Roche, 1997, p. 72). Educational administrators who adopt this response will endure the consequences of confronting the conflict or leave the conflict situation entirely either through resignation or transfer (Roche, 1997, p. 73).

Educational administrators frequently encounter value conflicts within their schools as a result of many reasons including the increasing diversification of society and cultural pluralism. School leaders must resolve these value conflicts and they have to make many value decisions which require choosing one alternative from a host of possible alternatives. In this case, the literature suggests that administrators will attempt to reach a rational decision based on consensus or consequence before making a decision based on either ethical principle or personal preferences (non-rational).

Conflict: Definitions of Conflict

The review of literature suggests that conflict is difficult to define as many different conceptions of conflict exist in education. The term *conflict* conjures up either

positive or negative associations and these are both reflected in various definitions. For example: Brickman (1974, p. 10) defines conflict as “behavior by one party that injures or damages the interest of another party, regardless of whether either party is aware of conflict or has any hostile feelings toward the other”; Coser (1967, p. 8) states that conflict is “a struggle over values and claims to scarce status, power, and resources in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, injure or eliminate the rivals”; Deutsch (1973, p. 156) states that conflict is an “action which is incompatible with another action that prevents, obstructs, interferes with, injures, or in some way makes it less likely or less effective”; Isherwood & Achoka (1990) define conflict as “when people engaged in a social situation are unable to work together in an amicable manner”(Isherwood & Achoka, 1990 as cited in Terry, 1996, p. 4); and Katz & Lawyer (1993, p. 7) define conflict as “one of the ‘engines of evolution’ that enable (us to) learn, progress and grow”. Content (1986) posits that conflict has many positive functions and can: prevent stagnation; stimulate interest and curiosity; provide a source of personal and social changes; and foster internal cohesiveness. Deutsch (1973) contends that one of the creative functions of conflict is its ability to create motivation to solve problems that may normally be ignored and Cooze (1989) suggests that conflict is not necessarily good or bad. Despite which of these conceptions of conflict is adopted, the stark reality of conflict is seemingly unavoidable in school settings as there is potential for conflict in practically every decision the administrator must make (Fleetwood, 1987, p. 2), including conflicts with the larger system and administration as well as teachers, parents and students. Coping efficiently and effectively with potential and bona fide conflicts is possibly one of the most important aspects of the administrator’s position (Nebgen, 1978

as cited in Fleetwood, 1987, p. 2). It is extremely important that educational administrators develop a keen awareness of conflict, both its constructive and destructive nature, as well as how to manage conflict and apply conflict management strategies in an effective and efficient manner.

Conflict Theory Perspective

Conflict theory posits that schools promote inequality and perpetuate class distinction. Critical theorists are concerned primarily with how schools serve interests of the dominant groups by replicating the existing social class structure and maintaining the division of labor necessary for society stratified by class, ethnicity and gender (DeMarrais & LeCompte, 1999, p. 20). Economic reproduction, cultural reproduction and hegemonic state reproduction are three models employed by conflict theorists to discuss the above.

Economic reproduction is influenced by the work of Bowles & Gintis (1976). Informed by Marxism, this model states that power rests with those who control wealth and capital and who maintain traditional class, ethnic and gender inequalities (DeMarrais & LeCompte, 1999, p. 13). Schools are held accountable for the promotion of social inequality through streaming and evaluation processes. Students are inculcated with the skills, values and attitudes considered necessary for their later roles in the occupational hierarchy (DeMarrais & LeCompte, 1999, p. 13)

The model of cultural reproduction examines how class-based differences are expressed in the political nature of the curriculum content which glorifies the practices and activities of the upper class (DeMarrais & LeCompte, 1999, p. 14). Schools contribute by embodying the cultural capital of the upper and middle classes and by

providing academic programs to students based upon class-based cultural and linguistic practices in which students engage (DeMarrais & LeCompte, 1999, p. 15)

Hegemonic state reproduction examines the controlling influence of the government on systems of education and their curricula. Hegemony is created because schools reflect ideologies advocated by the very same agencies that regulate the schooling process (DeMarrais & LeCompte, 1999, p. 17). This model identifies two functions of the state in regarding to schooling: the role of state and federal agencies in the actual production of knowledge taught in schools; and state regulations of schools through certification requirements, length of compulsory schooling and curriculum requirements (DeMarrais & LeCompte, 1999, p. 18).

Types of Conflict in Education

Gay (1981) defines three types of conflict which include procedural, substantive and interpersonal conflicts.

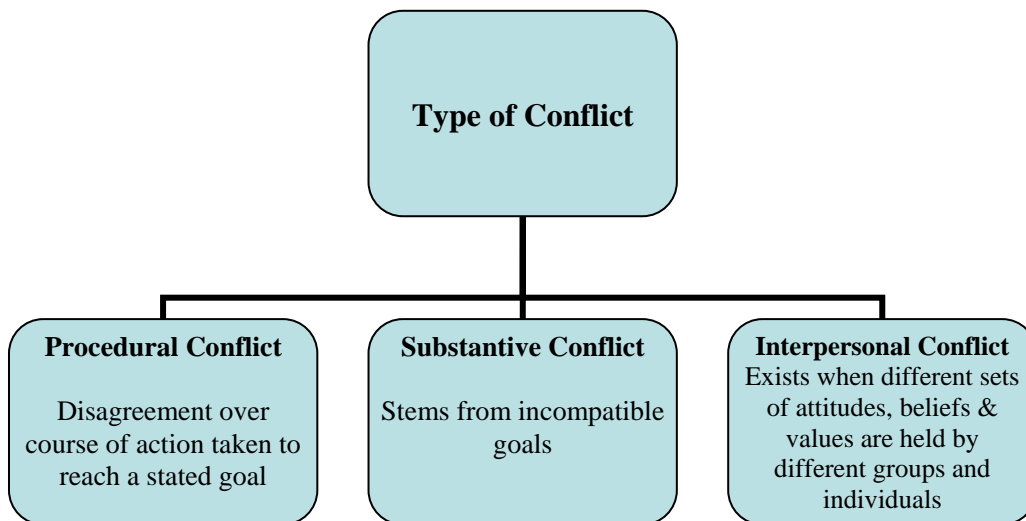


Figure 4: Gay's (1981) Conflict Typology

The researcher proposes that each of Gay's conflict types can occur as a result of differences in values. Gay's (1981) classification will be used as a means to classify and

categorize responses to the second research problem which seeks to determine the types of value conflicts educational administrators most frequently experience.

Conflict in education can stem from several different sources. Fris (1992) suggests three causes for the majority of conflicts within schools namely: differences in values and goals; incongruent roles and expectations; and disagreement over the distribution of limited resources. Differences in attitudes, beliefs and values held by different groups and individuals within a school are a cause for conflict (Robinson, 2000) and educational administrators need to be “sensitive to issues and seek solutions (from conflict) through informed decision making process that is guided by research, training as well as experience” (Robinson, 2000, p. 8). Educational administrators must be cognizant of how their personal value systems influence the manner in which they deal with value conflicts. Fiedler (1967) posits that leaders cannot be expected to adopt a particular leadership style if it is contrary to their value orientation. Thus, it is important for leaders to be aware of the relationship between their values, specific leadership style and resulting conflict management strategies.

Conflict Resolution

Conflict resolution is a central part of an administrator’s job and the manner in which administrators respond to conflict reveals their attitudes and values, and also helps to determine the future of their schools. Many attempts have been made to explain the nature of conflict, and the literature in this field is replete with numerous theories that attempt to explain the phenomena (Deutsch, 1973, 2000; Brickman, 1974; Himes, 1980; Johnson & Johnson, 1989; Fisher & Ury, 1991). Similarly, many research studies have

focused upon conflict resolution and resulting strategies that educational administrators can employ.

Content's (1986) study examined the conflict management style of principals and utilized the Thomas Kilmann Conflict Mode instrument which is based on five methods of handling conflict. These include: competing (being assertive and uncooperative), accommodating (being unassertive & cooperative), avoiding (unassertive & uncooperative), collaborating (assertive & cooperative) and compromising (moderate in both assertiveness and cooperativeness). Content (1986) notes that individuals are capable of using all five methods of handling conflict and that conflict behavior is determined as a result of personal predispositions and the requirements of the given situation. Kriesberg's (1982, p. 230) study revealed that conflict can result in one of three possible outcomes: dominance or imposition; withdrawal or avoidance; and compromise or resolution. Katz & Lawyer (1993) contend that the above outcomes are a consequence of the strategy used to address the conflict situation and base their conflict resolution strategies on Thomas & Kilmann's (1974) earlier work which include: collaboration; compromise; accommodation; controlling; and avoiding. Katz & Lawyer (1993) further suggest that the selected conflict strategy is influenced by contextual factors such as personal preferences and context of the situation.

A number of other models are available in the literature and include: Corwin (1969), Sexton & Bowerman (1979) and Abdennur (1987). Corwin (1969, p. 507) studied contributing factors of organizational conflict (size, specialization, hierarchy, complexity, staff additions and hierarchy); Sexton & Bowerman (1979, p. 8) analyzed conflict management styles and strategies and found that there is no correct answer to

handling conflict but rather “the secret...it to use an appropriate style and to intervene at the appropriate time”; and Abdennur (1987, p. 73) examined seven personality traits identified as “the Conflict Resolution Syndrome” which indicate the potential for conflict avoidance.

The finding that administrators’ values and ethics influence their decision making has been supported by other researchers such as: Begley (1988); Marshall (1992); Campbell (1992); and Beck (1993), among others. Begley (1988) reports that there is a relationship between administrators’ orientation to their role and values which they use in decision making. Leithwood & Steinbach (1995, p. 172) acknowledge “for administrators...that values are a critical aspect of thinking and problem solving”. Thus, administrators should be aware of the influence of their values on conflict resolution and try to be as objective as possible.

Chapter Summary:

This section has reviewed the literature related to the central concepts involved in the study namely values and value conflict and the following chapter introduces the conceptual framework utilized in this research study.

CHAPTER THREE: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK & METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to investigate how educational administrators deal with personal and professional value conflicts that arise within schools. The theory influencing the research is that leaders' values affect and create the type of conflict they experience and the strategies which they use to resolve them. The researcher is cognizant that value conflicts occur frequently within schools and is interested in examining how these conflicts are resolved by school leaders.

This chapter presents information concerning the conceptual framework and the methodology used to conduct this study, along with the details regarding procedures for participant selection and confidentiality, data collection and data analysis.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework is based on the discussion presented in the literature review and the reality of issues facing leaders in today's society. The conceptual framework is comprised of three main areas: values classification; type of conflict; and value conflict resolution. A cyclical diagram (see Figure 5) is used to graphically represent the relationship among the above. Research and interview questions are in part based on this conceptual framework.

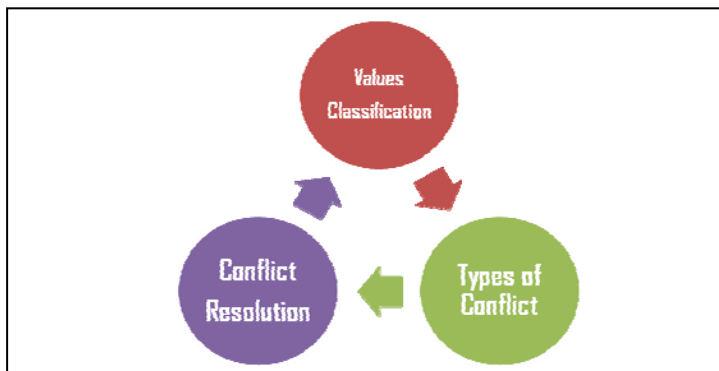


Figure 5: Conceptual Framework

The definition of the three main concept areas are as follows:

Values Classification:

Many studies contributed to the researcher's understanding of the classification of values and the resulting conflicts (Hodgkinson, 1978, 1991; Ashbaugh & Kasten, 1984; Marshall, 1992; Greenfield & Ribbins, 1993; Maxcy, 1993; Leithwood, Begley & Cousins, 1994; Willower, 1994; Begley, 1996, 1999a, 2003a; Leithwood, Jantzi & Steinbach, 1999; Sergiovanni, 2000; Richmon, 2005). However, Beck's (1993) values classification forms the primary basis for this study and includes the following five categories of values: basic, spiritual, moral, social and political, intermediate-range and specific values. Beck's (1993) classification of values is used as a means to present the data in Chapters 4 and 5.

Type of Conflict:

For this study, Gay's (1981) conflict typology is used to define the most frequent type of conflict related to values issues experienced by educational administrators within their school settings. The three types of conflict in Gay's (1981) typology include procedural, substantive and interpersonal conflicts and these categories are used to present the data for this study. Gay's (1981) ideas are supported by other studies that contributed to the researcher's understanding of conflict and its different inceptions (Fiedler, 1967; Deutsch, 1973, 2000; Brickman, 1974; Himes, 1980; Johnson & Johnson, 1989; Fisher & Ury, 1991; Fris, 1992).

Value Conflict Response:

Roche's (1997) study provides the basis for considering administrators' response to value conflicts for this study. Roche (1997) indicates that there are four different

responses to value conflicts: avoidance; suspending morality; creative insubordination; and personal morality. Each of these responses is used to classify data collected in this research study. Other studies that contributed to the researcher's understanding of response to conflict resolution include those of Corwin (1969), Thomas & Kilman (1974), Sexton & Bowerman (1979), Kriesberg (1982), Content (1986), Abdennur (1987), Begley (1988), Hodgkinson (1991), Campbell (1992), Marshall (1992), and Katz & Lawyer (1993).

The purpose of the conceptual framework for this study is to look at the relationships between the three areas in terms of how participants see values and define, resolve and learn from conflicts. The use of the cyclical diagram (see Figure 5) shows the relationship between the three focal areas. The first area, values classification, includes how educational administrators see the role of values in their work. Beck's (1993) values classification is used herein as a means for educational administrators to rank their values in order of importance using a measure of scale. School leaders' values affect and create the type of conflict situation they experience. Gay's (1981) conflict typology is utilized in order to determine the specific type of conflict related to values issues most commonly experienced by administrators. How the conflict situation is resolved is determined according to Roche's (1997) conflict response framework.

The researcher's hypothesis is that educational administrators experience conflict situations that are related to their value orientation. The type of conflict situation experienced is dependent upon administrators' conception of values as well as the context of the conflict situation itself. The resolution of the conflict situation is directly

influenced by administrators' values because their values influence both their actions and reactions.

The following section presents the methodology for this study, the process for the collection of data as well as an explanation of how the data will be analyzed.

Theoretical Framework

In 2008, I participated in the graduate course TPS3025: Personal and Professional Values of Educational Administrators. I was aware that the issue of “values” was causing heated discussions across the group, especially around issues of conflict with school personnel, students, and upper administration, and I became interested in why this was. In my personal work environment, as a Vice Principal in a Catholic school, values are part of everyday life and are expressed in the Catholic Social Teachings which are part of the mandate for all Catholic schools. I began to wonder what values really meant in action; for example, do values really guide what administrators do as leaders? Are administrators aware of their values? Can they talk about how those values influence what they do, especially when faced with situations and conflicts that may arise out of values? Begley (2003b) provides a broad definition of leadership as a deliberate transmission of values to inform action. If so, how does this happen, and does it really inform action? With these questions in mind, I began to formulate an approach to answer.

Given that values issues and leadership are always influenced by context, and that individuals might have very different perceptions and responses to issues of values, I recognized that the best way to initially approach this issue was to talk to people in person. This meant that a design for research would be most likely qualitative rather than

quantitative. By its inherent nature, qualitative research offers an awareness of participants' thoughts, ideas, and understandings from data which is gathered generally and which is analyzed specifically (Creswell, 2005; Merriam, 1998). Anderson (1998, p. 110) notes that qualitative research is "a form of inquiry (that) explores phenomena in their natural setting & uses methods to interpret, understand and bring meaning to them". Wiersma (1995, pgs. 211-212) summarizes some underlying assumptions and perspectives regarding qualitative research which include: phenomena are viewed in their entirety or holistically; researchers study subjects in 'nature' and record observations and data in this environment; researchers record subjects' 'reality' as seen through the eyes of the subjects; and post hoc conclusions emerge from the data. Hakim (1987, p. 26) states that qualitative research is:

Concerned with individuals' own accounts of their attitudes, motivations and behavior. It offers richly descriptive reports of individuals' perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, views and feelings, the meaning and interpretations given to events and things, as well as their behavior; displays how these are put together more or less coherently and consciously into frameworks which make sense of their experiences; and illuminates the motivations which connect attitudes & behavior, the discontinuities, or even contradictions, between attitudes and behavior or how conflicting attitudes and motivations are resolved in particular choices made.

Since this research study is based on educational administrators' concept of values, the types of conflicts experienced related to values issues, and value conflict resolution strategies, a qualitative research methodology with participant interviews is appropriate as a means for respondents to share their experiences. Insight into the phenomenon of values and conflict is gained through the understanding of participant perspectives. Qualitative research implies a direct concern with experience as it is "lived" or "undergone" (Sherman & Webb, 1988 as cited in Merriam, 1998). Merriam (1998,

p. 6) states that qualitative research is interested in “understanding the meanings people have constructed (and) how they make sense of their world and their experiences of it”. As an inductive form, it builds on concepts and ideas from the analysis of the data (Merriam, 1998). McMillan & Schumacher (1993, p. 479) posit that qualitative research is “primarily an inductive process of organizing data into categories and identifying patterns (relationships) among categories”. As the primary instrument of data collection and analysis, Merriam (1998, p. 7) notes that the researcher “moves towards theory from observations & intuitive understandings gained” from interviews.

A developing research framework

I decided that the best way for the research to be conducted was through a series of interviews with selected participant volunteers. As much of the information had the potential to be personal, participants were reassured regarding confidentiality and care of the above. Taylor & Bogdan (1984, pgs. 87-88) list five important issues which should be addressed at the outset of every interview:

1. The researcher’s motives and intentions and the research study’s purpose;
2. The use of pseudonyms to protect the anonymity of participants;
3. The decision as to who has the final say over the study’s content;
4. Payment (if any);
5. The logistics with regard to time, place, and number of interviews to be scheduled

As the purpose of this research study is to understand how educational administrators deal with personal and professional value conflicts that arise within schools in today’s diverse society, the selection of a research design depends “upon the

questions that are asked, and the questions depend on their context” (Nelson et al., 1992 as cited in Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). A qualitative research design was selected as the methodology for this study, and interviews were conducted within the administrators’ school context. Miles & Huberman (1994) posit that one of the salient features about qualitative research is its use of natural settings as the source of data. Maykut & Morehouse (1994, p. 25) state that the researcher adopts “a posture of ‘indwelling’ or ‘being at one with the persons under investigation’”. By conducting the interviews in the natural setting, the researcher also had the benefit of viewing the data in context.

Participant Selection Process

The participants in this study were selected using purposeful sampling. This type of sampling is “based on the assumption that the (researcher) wants to discover, understand and gain insight (and therefore) selects a sample from which the most can be learned” (Merriam, 2009, p. 77). According to Patton (2002, p. 230):

The logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting information-rich cases for study in depth. These cases are those from which (the researcher) can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the study.

Purposeful sampling includes the selection of criteria which are essential in the participants who are to be interviewed. For this research study, the main criterion for participants consisted of experience working as an educational administrator.

Convenience sampling helped the researcher to select participants based upon location and the availability of respondents.

To begin, the researcher first contacted members of the cohort based program of the Ed.D. in the Department of Theory and Policy Studies at the University of Toronto, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE). Only five members of this cohort

indicated their availability or interest to participate in this research study. These five professional educational leaders are characterized by diverse value sets and varied academic and administrative experiences that range from elementary and secondary schools, to post-secondary education and other educational institutions. As part of the cohort-based Doctoral program, these participants studied “advanced theory and research” in the areas of “policy, leadership, change and social diversity” (Ed. D Cohort, Theory & Policy Studies, University of Toronto, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 2012). Along with their depth and breadth of knowledge, they are able to effectively combine both theory and practice.

In order to secure more participants, the researcher broached the topic of the study with administrator colleagues. As a result, nine additional educational leaders agreed to participate in the research. These participants also possess significant leadership experiences within the field of education and work in many different roles and capacities. These include the elementary, secondary, system and post-secondary levels as well as in provincial secondments. This group of administrators is also able to draw on their wealth of administrative experiences in order to speak about values and value conflicts they have experienced. They also share their Catholicity with the researcher who also works within the Catholic Separate School System.

The participants were contacted through email with details surrounding this research study and asked if they would like to volunteer to participate (see letters: Appendix B & C). Following their response, an informed consent form was forwarded which contained details including: the title and nature of the study; the reason for the study; details for participation; a confidentiality statement; and the significance of the

administrator's participation to the study. In addition, the administrators were informed that their responses to the interview questions and any information gathered throughout the interview process would be held in the strictest confidence. Participants were also informed that their involvement in this study was strictly voluntary and that they could withdraw from participating at any point in time.

Data Collection

The research was conducted over a period of one year beginning in June 2010 to August 2011. Prior to the interviews, the purpose of the study and the parameters of the participation expectations were discussed with participants. These included the anticipated length of the interview and the use of a taping device.

For this research study, data was collected through the use of participant interviews. Defined as a "conversation with a purpose" (Dexter, 1970, p. 136), interviews are used to determine what is "in and on someone else's mind" (Merriam, 1998, p. 71). A semi-structured interview format was employed which consisted of "a mix of more-and-less structured questions" (Merriam, 1998, p. 73). In this type of interview either "all or most of the questions are more flexibly worded" (Merriam, 1998, p. 74). The researcher used an interview guide which moved questions from the general to the more specific (see Appendix D). This allowed interview participants to "relax, open up and think deeply" (Morgan & Krueger, 1998). The sessions were tape recorded and transcribed and the researcher analyzed patterns and themes in the conversation and also noted tone of voice, body language and any silences that occurred.

Data Analysis

Once complete, the interviews were transcribed and saved electronically in a word document file. The interview data was also supplemented with any personal notes taken during each interview as a record of the researcher's annotations and comments throughout the discussion. Participants were given the opportunity to review the transcript of their interview in order to ensure that their thoughts were correctly captured. Only one administrator returned the transcript with further comments that he felt needed to be clarified and included as part of the interview.

The analysis of data is a critical part of any research study. Miles & Huberman (1994, p. 429) state that it "contains three linked sub processes ... data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing". The process of data reduction involves the use of emergent coding where categories were established based on the research questions and conceptual framework of this study. The transcripts were coded for common patterns or themes that emerged relating to how administrators see the role of values in their work, the type of value conflicts leaders experience, and how educational administrators resolve conflicts that stem from values issues. It is important to note that common participant responses were also coded and recorded so that participant voice was included as part of the analysis. Beck's (1993) classification of values was employed to determine administrators' conception of values and participants ranked Beck's (1993) value types in order of importance. Data analysis involved the in-depth analysis of interview transcripts which were read first as a whole, and secondly, as a group with each one of Beck's (1993) five value types as a guiding focus for each analysis. Interview data was also analyzed for the frequency and type of administrator statements that reflected any one of

Beck's (1993) value types. Gay's (1981) conflict typology was used to determine the type of conflict related to values issues most frequently experienced by administrators while Roche's (1997) conflict resolution framework provided the basis for consideration of administrator responses to value conflict situations. Emergent coding allowed the researcher flexibility in terms of grouping and regrouping data which happened frequently as the transcripts were read and reread. The coding schemes were not static but rather, continually changing as the research study progressed and new data was added. Computerized data analysis software was not used as part of the analysis as the researcher preferred to deal with the data directly.

Data display "assembles and organizes information in an immediately accessible, compact form" (Miles & Huberman, 1984, p. 21). For this study, the researcher organized data in numerous tables, charts and graphical figures in "such a way that permitted conclusions to be drawn" (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Confidentiality

In addition to the informed consent form (see letters: Appendices B & C) provided to participants prior to their interview, educational administrators were also advised that: information gathered from the interviews will be stored in a secure location that only the researcher and thesis supervisor will have access to; and all data collected will be used for the purpose of the Ed.D. thesis and will be destroyed five years after the completion of the study. The researcher also emphasized that great care will be taken to ensure that data will be reported in such a way that any defining characteristics of participants will not be identifiable. Letter codes and pseudonyms will be assigned to each administrator which will further minimize the possibility of identification.

It is important to note that this research study was approved by the Educational Research Ethics Board (EREB) at the University of Toronto. Ethical considerations were noted to safeguard research participants as well as the researcher herself.

Chapter Summary:

This chapter discussed the conceptual framework and methodology used for the research study. The qualitative research method was discussed and information was provided concerning the participant selection process, method of data collection and process for data analysis. The measures taken to ensure participant confidentiality were also outlined. The researcher does not believe that participants experienced any risks during the course of the study; also, their responses were neither judged nor evaluated at any point in time. The following chapters will present, analyze and discuss the results of the study as well as consider the findings and discuss implications for future study.

CHAPTER FOUR: CASE STUDIES

This chapter presents the interviews for each of the fourteen educational administrators who participated in the research study. From this sample, three work as system leaders, seven are employed as elementary school leaders and four hold the position of secondary school leaders. The administrators represent six different school boards situated across the Province of Ontario of which two school boards are Catholic and four are public school boards. The intent of this chapter is to present the participants' understanding of values, conflict, and strategies for conflict resolution. By so doing, the researcher seeks to recognize and identify developing trends in data.

The chapter begins with a summary of biographical data including: gender, age, leadership role, years of teaching experience, years of experience in educational administration and type of educational training. The data was collected from administrators as a component of the interview protocol. Table 3 presents a summary of this biographical information. Following this, individual case studies are introduced. Findings from the data as related to the core research questions and conceptual framework will be presented in Chapter Five.

Biographical Information

Table 3 presents a summary of biographical data for each participating administrator in this research study.

Table 3: Biographical Data for Participants

Code Name	Gender	Age	Leadership Role	Years of Teaching Experience	Years of Experience in Educational Administration	Type of Educational Training
A, Adam	M	59	System Leader	29	21	B.A. M.A. B.Ed Ed.D
B, Betty	F	50	System Leader	30	22	MBA
C, Carol	F	40	System Leader	6	12	B.A. B.Ed. M.A.
D, Dina	F	50	Elementary School Leader	17	12	B.Mus M.A.
E, Eric	M	40	Elementary School Leader	17	12	B.A. M.Ed.
F, Frank	M	40	Elementary School Leader	6	10	B.A. M.A.
G, Grant	M	42	Elementary School Leader	21	5	B.A. M.Ed
H, Helen	F	51	Elementary School Leader	16	14	B.A.
I, Irene	F	58	Elementary School Leader	33	6	B.A. B.Ed
J, Jill	F	63	Elementary School Leader	41	15	B.A. M.Sc.
K, Karen	F	50	Secondary School Leader	10	2	B.F.A. B.Ed
L, Larry	M	36	Secondary School Leader	10	2	B.A. B.Ed MBA
M, Mike	M	37	Secondary School Leader	13	4	B.A. B.Ed. M.A.
N, Nancy	F	58	Secondary School Leader	35	2	B.A. B.Ed. M.A.

Of the fourteen participants who were interviewed, eight are female (two system leaders, four elementary school leaders, two secondary school leaders) and six are male (one system leader, three elementary school leaders, two secondary school leaders). More than half of the participants possess greater than fifteen years of teaching experience with the system, with the elementary school leaders having approximately twice the teaching experience of the secondary school leaders. One elementary school leader has forty-one years of teaching experience, with fifteen of those years in a leadership role. Another system leader has thirty years of teaching experience with twenty-two years in a leadership role. In terms of the least time of teaching experience, two of the secondary school leaders have ten years, with both having two years each of experience in a leadership role.

As administrators, over one-half of the group possess more than ten years of experience in leadership, with the system leaders at twenty years of experience. More than half of the elementary school leaders have ten years of experience; but only one secondary school leader is at more than four years experience of administrative practice. The administrative experience of participants varies by the type of the leadership role.

Eleven of the fourteen administrators have earned graduate degrees in school leadership and administration. The age range of participants varies from thirty-six to sixty-three years of age. Female administrators tend to be slightly older than males, from fifty to sixty-three; male administrators range in age from thirty-six to fifty-nine.

The next section will present individual case study descriptions of each administrator. Each case is divided into the following sections: a general introduction to the participant, their values classification as described in the methodology section, their

description of the types of conflict which they have experienced, and a description of how they resolve conflict. Subsequent chapters will describe the findings from the data as they relate to the core research questions and conceptual framework and provide an overall summary for the study and identify future research implications.

The Cases: Educational Administrators

1. Karen

Background:

Karen works as a secondary school leader in a large Catholic school with over one thousand students and one hundred staff members who comprise the population of the school. The student population is culturally diverse with the majority of students identified as English as a Second Language learners. Karen works with three other school leaders who together form the administrative team for this school.

Prior to her appointment as a secondary school leader, Karen worked in the education field for ten years. She has taught at both the elementary and secondary panels and has also worked as a Guidance counselor. These varied experiences afforded her the greater opportunity to gain a more global understanding in terms of student needs and thus better enabled her for her role as an educational administrator.

Values Classification:

Karen defines values as those “ideas and principles that guide (her) conduct” in both personal and professional matters. She states that her values “determine (her) actions based on what (she) perceives to be right and wrong”. As such, Karen considers values to be “extremely relevant” in her role as secondary school leader.

Karen attributes her values to “many sources including life experiences and familial upbringing”. Her values “hinge on certain non-negotiables such as equity for all, access to education and the ability to learn”. Karen recognizes that Catholic values greatly influence her beliefs and actions. She believes her administrative role is “servant

based” and that her job is to “make teachers’ jobs easier depending on what they need to do to facilitate student learning”.

Karen believes that over time, her core values have remained constant but recognizes that her experiences have undoubtedly influenced her value system. She believes that “working with students, teachers and parents” is a key responsibility in her role and she strives to “hone (her) communication skills” because the way that she “interacts with people reflects (her) value system”. Karen particularly values active listening and strives to understand other perspectives instead of “defaulting to what (she) believes to be right”.

Types of Conflict:

As a secondary school leader, Karen states that conflict situations occur “all of the time”. She recognizes that conflicts frequently arise as a result of misunderstandings and/or miscommunications. Karen attributes this to the fact that “stakeholders have vested interests” but she feels that given time, they “will realize their actions were poor” and perhaps the result of “a lack of experience or misalignment of value system”. She cites that students, teachers, administrators, parents, Superintendents and Board personnel are all common stakeholders who have been involved in various conflict situations.

Karen states that she has “never deliberately incited a conflict situation” but recognizes that this may have occurred inadvertently. For example, the perceived tone of email messages can often be misinterpreted which can lead to the development of a conflict situation from a non-conflict center. As a result, Karen values “direct communication” with stakeholders in order to convey and ensure true intentions and meanings.

Interpersonal conflicts are the type of conflict situation most commonly experienced by Karen in her leadership role. For example, she has experienced a conflict situation involving a teacher who was “quite critical of a situation” in which they felt they “were not being adequately supported” by administration. The discussion became quite heated and was not resolved appropriately at the time so a follow-up meeting was necessary. This meeting was very important to ensure that “all perspectives were heard in order for each member to understand the other’s perspective”. Despite having common values, at that moment in time, the teacher was “only thinking of (his) immediate needs instead of the greater good which led to the conflict situation”. Karen believes that when stakeholders are involved in conflict situations, it is “difficult for them to see the bigger picture or overview of the conflict”. As a result, each reacts in such a manner that reflects only their “immediate needs and wants”.

Value Conflict Resolution:

When dealing with conflicts that stem from values issues, Karen uses the training provided by the school board, namely the restorative justice practices and mediation strategies. She believes that the above courses have been very effective. Karen states that she takes “time to work through the issue to find common ground from which a resolution can possibly develop”. She feels it is “very important to do a case history” in order to “understand the context of the whole conflict situation”.

Karen believes that the school leader has the final and ultimate authority when dealing with the resolution of conflict situations. If restorative justice practice and mediation strategies are not successful and the stakeholders cannot resolve the issue, then

Karen believes the “power differential” will prevail and the highest administrative authority will ultimately determine the final outcome.

Karen also believes her values “strongly influence” the resolution of a conflict situation “in a huge way”. She recognizes that her “faith influences (her) values which are aligned with (her) actions”. Karen states that “(we) are all sinners and make mistakes” and firmly believes in reconciliation because “the only person who was perfect was crucified”. She believes her role as leader is to “help students learn from their mistakes and re-enter into the school community with a clean slate”.

When resolving conflicts that stem from values issues, Karen states that she is creatively insubordinate. She recognizes that she has an obligation to act professionally but states that she must “also remain true and honor (her) value system”. Adopting the stance of creative insubordination allows Karen the opportunity to achieve both of these goals.

In her role as leader, Karen feels that she is able to exercise her personal values. She attributes this to “the unspoken support that exists among administrators” who have chosen to work in a leadership capacity within a Catholic school”. Karen acknowledges that there is a “basic understanding and support for shared common values, faith and mission” along with the belief that “(our) job is a vocation”.

2. Eric

Background:

Eric works as an elementary school leader in a mid-sized school which consists of five hundred students and thirty five staff members. A large majority of these students are recent immigrants to Canada who are learning English as their second language. Eric works with one other school leader and they form the administrative team for the school.

Eric has worked in the education field for seventeen years and was an educational administrator for over twelve years. This is his fifth school placement as an elementary leader. Eric has extensive experience working at both the school and school board levels on system initiatives that focus on leadership development and special education issues. He possesses a depth and breadth of knowledge about school leadership garnered from his many professional experiences which “assist (him) greatly” in his role as leader.

Values Classification:

Eric defines values as those “core characteristics that are used to get through the day”. He believes that values are “extremely relevant” in his leadership role because values “frame each and every decision that is made”. Eric feels that he is “defined as a leader through (his) values” because his values “are reflected in (his) actions”. He believes an alignment must exist between administrators’ values and their practice because “who (you) are as a person should be consistent with who (you) are as an educator”. If staff members cannot articulate what their leader stands for, then in Eric’s opinion, “the leader has failed because real leadership has not been demonstrated”.

Eric greatly values honesty and respect and strives to make “every interaction respectful and non-judgmental”. He believes “there should be no surprises in leadership”

and that “staff should always know where their leader is coming from”. As a leader, Eric feels it is his “mission to help everyone to grow and develop” and he accomplishes this by “being humble and open to alternatives”.

Over time, Eric believes his foundational values have remained the same but he recognizes that certain values have “developed and are intensified in terms of importance”. For example, Eric states that he has become “more receptive and appreciative of other cultures that have different foundational values”. He attributes this change to his many different leadership experiences with many different stakeholders.

Types of Conflict:

As an elementary school leader, Eric encounters daily conflict situations. Despite the frequency, Eric views conflict as a “positive force” which can result in new understandings and relationships so he always tries to frame conflict in this regard. He concurs that many stakeholders have been involved with conflict situations including “students, teachers, parents, administrators, Superintendents, trustees and members of the school community”. He attributes the frequency of conflict situations to “incongruent values between stakeholders” which he finds inevitable since “everyone has different values”.

Eric admits that he has deliberately incited a conflict situation when it was “necessary in order to effect change”. He shares the example when he proposed a change in the school’s day schedule to his Superintendent. The Superintendent agreed to the change. However, in the fall, he phoned Eric and told him “to return to the original day schedule”. Eric reminded him of their previous discussion however, but the Superintendent “issued an edict to return to last year’s schedule”. Many new changes

had already been put in place which would affect many stakeholders within the school community. As a result, Eric “refused to comply” with the Superintendent’s direction . The Superintendent then warned Eric “there would be consequences” and shortly thereafter, Eric was transferred to a “larger school halfway across town”. To this day, Eric does not regret his decision because he could not “comply with the Superintendent’s direction because of the incongruency between (his) personal and professional values”.

Eric frequently encounters substantive conflicts in his role as elementary school leader. As defined by Gay (1981), substantive conflicts stem from incompatible goals. He feels that in his role as an employee of the Board, his “professional goals are incongruent with the professional growth opportunities provided” by his employer which has led to other conflict situations.

Value Conflict Resolution:

Eric believes in the use of open dialogue and on-going communication as strategies when dealing with conflict situations that stem from values issues. He believes if you “spend enough time listening and talking with stakeholders”, a common values element will be discovered from which a resolution can be developed. Eric discusses the example of a situation which he experienced after he had suspended a student. The student’s mother met with Eric and stated that she felt he had been “quite condescending” to her. She “started to work through a conflict response sequence” which Eric recognized and “immediately stopped (her)”. He told her that “(he) had read the same book” and “knew the steps (she) was working through”. Eric insisted instead that they “just have an honest discussion and put the issues on the table”. This broke the existing tension and as a result, the situation was able to be resolved. He feels that his conflict resolution

strategy of “direct, open and honest communication” has been quite successful and effective throughout his career.

Eric believes that when dealing with the resolution of value conflicts, the final and ultimate authority rests with the school leader. If the issue goes “beyond the school level, then the highest administrative position of responsibility” would make the final determination. Eric believes that administrators must “always remain true to themselves” and states that his personal morality dictates his value conflict response and therefore he has “no problem taking a moral stand”. He acknowledges that public education is “very hierarchical in terms of leadership” and has experienced some frustration with regard to the above. Eric is currently discovering that his values are not in alignment with the new direction of his school board and as a result, has “made the very difficult decision to leave the board” at the end of the school year. He states that this is “a perfect example of making a decision based upon personal morality”.

Eric cannot imagine his values “not influencing the resolution of a conflict situation”. He recognizes that his values “drive what (he) does” and explains that he “physically experiences a bad sensation when (his) values are not in alignment”. Eric feels that he is able to exercise his personal value system in his leadership role because he “can not go through the day without behaving in a way that is congruent with (his) values”.

3. Larry

Background:

Larry works as a secondary school leader in a large Catholic school. The school's population consists of 1600 students and 120 staff members. The student population is multiculturally diverse while the teaching and administrative staff is primarily Caucasian. There are three other school leaders in the school's administrative team. Prior to his appointment as an educational administrator, Larry worked for ten years as a secondary school teacher. During this time, he also gained experience working as a Senior teacher and resource teacher at the school board level.

Values Classification:

As a secondary school leader, Larry believes "values have to do with who (you) are as a person" and he tries to "portray them" in his daily life. Larry's values are based upon his Catholic faith and he credits the "solid Catholic foundation" he received while growing up. He believes his role as a leader is a "true vocation" and feels that he has a "moral responsibility" to uphold the values of the Catholic Church and to "do right by (his) students". Over time, Larry believes his core Catholic values have remained constant while he has developed as a leader. He feels that his experiences have added greater depth to his values and as a result, certain values have become more important.

Types of Conflict:

Conflict situations occur daily in Larry's role as secondary school leader. He states there are "always conflicts between students and teachers and between teachers and administration". A large part of Larry's role is to "work with these conflict situations in order to restore order and move forward". He believes conflict situations are generally

caused by miscommunications between stakeholders and in his experience, the miscommunication usually stems from differences in personal values. The stakeholders involved in these conflict situations have included students, parents, teachers, administrators, Superintendents and community members.

Larry states that he “does not have enough time during the day” to deliberately incite a conflict situation. He does admit to “getting upset” and “raising (his) voice” with teachers and students however this has “never escalated to a conflict situation”.

Larry primarily experiences procedural conflicts in his role as secondary school leader. He describes an example when a student brought a butcher knife to school in his knapsack which was inadvertently discovered by Larry. The student’s parents were very defensive and protective towards their son whom they felt had done nothing wrong. Larry questioned the parents’ values but could not determine if the family was making excuses for their son by protecting him, or if they really did not believe this to be a serious issue. The student however did not get expelled from school because it was deemed by the Superintendent and the Board’s lawyer that his privacy had been invaded when the knife had been discovered. This incident still resonates strongly with Larry to this day as he believes that even though the student’s action was “so egregious and counter to any values and principles”, due to a procedural technicality he was “not punished to the full letter of the law”.

Value Conflict Resolution:

When dealing with conflict situations that stem from values issues, Larry seeks to “get to the root of the issue in order to resolve it and move forward”. He accomplishes this through restorative justice practices and mediation strategies which involve students

in the resolution process. Larry firmly believes in the “education piece” that accompanies these strategies so that students “can learn from the experience and move forward in a positive manner”.

Larry recognizes that the school leader has “the final say and ultimate authority” when dealing with the resolution of conflict situations. He does however understand that the “power differential will prevail” should the situation go beyond the school level due to the hierarchical structure of leadership. This has not been an issue for Larry because he works in a Catholic school system where “everyone is on the same page regarding values issues”.

Larry acknowledges that his values “absolutely influence the resolution of conflict situations”. He finds “strength and security” in the fact that he is able to exercise his personal values system in his role as leader. As a practising Catholic administrator, Larry’s values are aligned with those of the school and the school board; as such, he finds resolving value conflicts “very straightforward” because of the “common value structure that the school community shares”. Students are well aware of “what values need to be respected, upheld and modeled” because these are the “core values and beliefs of the Catholic school community”.

When resolving conflict situations that stem from values issues, Larry states that his personal morality dictates his response and that he would “not hesitate to take a moral stand”. Fortunately, this has not yet occurred in his experiences because as a Catholic school community “a shared mission in Christ exists that serves as a guide which always brings everyone together on the same page for the benefit of the school community”.

4. **Adam**

Background:

Adam works as a system leader for a mid-sized Catholic school board which serves approximately twenty-six thousand students in thirty-nine elementary and seven secondary schools. His portfolio consists of faith formation, new teacher and administrator induction programs along with his responsibilities for EQAO (Education Quality and Accountability Office) and data collection. Adam also oversees any issues that occur within his family of schools which consists of one secondary school and seven elementary feeder schools.

Prior to his appointment as a system leader, Adam worked in educational administration for twenty-one years and in the field of education for a total of twenty-nine years. His various roles in education include experiences as: teacher; Department Head; Vice-Principal; Principal; University lecturer; and Education Officer for the Ministry of Education.

Values Classification:

Adam believes his values define how he “lives (his) life personally and professionally”. He views his values as being “absolutely critical” in his role as system leader especially as he acquires “more responsibility in leadership”. Adam emphasizes that administrators need to “walk the talk” and “live their values” and strongly recommends that school leaders “align their values with their actions”.

Adam’s values are based on the Catholic faith principally and the principles of Catholic social teachings specifically. He believes that the Catholic social teachings are

“a succinct collection of the values (he) embraces”. Adam’s Catholic faith deeply influences his values and he attributes this to his strong Catholic upbringing.

Over time, Adam feels that his foundational values have remained the same but acknowledges that “some have become more prominent than others”. For example, he states “the principles of Catholic social teaching involving the dignity of the individual and the preferential option for the poor and the marginalized have emerged more strongly in recent years”. As Adam has gained more leadership experience, he has become more aware that “those with power look after themselves” so as a result, he feels a “moral obligation and responsibility to advocate for the poor and marginalized” and to “treat them with dignity and respect”.

Types of Conflict:

Adam sees “an interesting connection between the frequency of conflict situations and the specific type of leadership role” he has held. For example, he compares being a secondary school leader to “being on the front line” and states that “conflict situations occur daily” in this particular role. However, as a system leader, he “does not encounter conflict situations very frequently” and estimates that he deals with “fewer than five conflicts per month” in this position. Now the conflict situations that Adam does encounter “typically stem from differences in stakeholders’ values” whereby their “personal values supercede those of the organization”.

Adam states that there are “innumerable stakeholders involved in conflict situations”. He explains that the “normal trajectory is to first speak with the Vice-Principal then the Principal at the school level before contacting the system leader”

however “issues often arise where parents believe they can short circuit the whole system and go directly to the school board and/or school trustee”.

Adam has “never had to deliberately incite a conflict situation in order to gain a desired solution”. He does admit that at times he can “be ornery” and is more likely to “be sarcastic but not in an offensive way”. Adam states that he is more likely to “mock a behavior to correct it rather than go head to head with it”.

As a system leader, Adam encounters mainly substantive conflicts. He believes this is the most common type of conflict because “personal values take precedence over the common good”. The resolution of these situations calls for stakeholders to “re-evaluate their values and reflect upon their motivations therein”.

Value Conflict Resolution:

When responding to conflict situations that stem from values issues, Adam describes his strategy as “to listen and be fair so that people will feel validated and leave feeling as though they were heard, even if they disagree with the resolution”. He tries to be a “good listener and treat people in a manner congruent with the Catholic social teaching principles”. Adam prides himself on not operating from a sense of hierarchy and he firmly believes in “treating people with dignity and fairness at all times”. If a resolution does not prove to be possible, he states that “after a certain point (you) have to agree to disagree” especially if the person has been treated with “a sense of justice, dignity and equity”. He does not believe in using the power differential yet he notes realistically that “if no resolution can be reached for the conflict situation despite best attempts and efforts” then the “power differential will prevail” for resolution.

Adam believes that his values “strongly influence” the resolution of conflict situations. He states that “as long as Catholic values and the Catholic social teachings are at the core of the conflict resolution process, solutions can be reached”.

Adam states that his personal morality dictates his conflict response when resolving conflicts that stem from values issues. He states he would “have no problem enduring the consequences” of his actions as long as “people were treated with justice”. Adam believes leaders should “confront issues head-on” and let “justice guide their leadership actions” despite “existing conventions or prevailing prejudices that may lead people to punish or ostracize (you)”.

Adam discusses an example of a critical incident in which he experienced conflict in his role as system leader. This situation greatly “called (his) values into question”. At one of his schools, a student was suspended and an expulsion was pending. During the suspension period, the student “skipped out and went to register at a school in another school board”. Since the expulsion was still in progress, technically, the student could enroll and attend school in another school board. When this was discovered, the general consensus at Adam’s school board was to “let it go”. Adam did not agree with this recommendation and believed that as administrators they had a “moral obligation and responsibility to the other community to let them know what they are in for”. As a result, Adam exercised his personal morality and took a stand; he informed the other school community and they in turn were “very thankful and appreciated the information”. He describes this time as “very difficult” as he “stood alone on this issue as a new Superintendent” however he felt “morally obliged to act upon (his) values and what (he) believed to be true”. He explains that “if (you) know what (you) stand for and (you’ve)

thought it out well, (you) have to be prepared to stand alone on a particular issue at certain times in (your) career”.

5. Betty

Background:

Betty works as a system leader for a community-based organization which provides settlement and employment services to different stakeholder groups. The majority of Betty's work focuses on education and as such, many similarities exist between the management of the organization and the administration of a school.

Betty possesses thirty years of experience working in the corporate world with over twenty-two of those years in a leadership capacity.

Values Classification:

Betty describes her values as "those principles by which (she) leads (her) life on a daily basis" and how she "carries this out in both personal and professional environments". She believes leaders must "have a good sense of their values" because their values should be "transparent to all and aligned with those of the organization".

Betty feels that her values have evolved over time as she has "grown and developed" as a leader. She acknowledges that she is "more tolerant, understanding and appreciative of value differences that exist among staff". Betty believes that her "organization is stronger when everyone works together collectively towards shared common goals". She always strives to "appreciate employees and value different perspectives".

Types of Conflict:

As a system leader, Betty states that she does not personally experience conflict on a daily basis. She attributes this to her leadership position as well as her style of management which "engages and embraces each member". Betty admits that she spends

a lot of time discussing “what is good within the organization rather than what is not working”. She does acknowledge that conflict situations occur “at the lower levels within the organization” and these “are primarily related to labor issues and stress”. Stakeholders involved in these conflict situations generally include government funders. Betty believes that “conflict is multi-faceted, with different pushes and pulls” and attributes conflict situations to “differing value sets and expectations”. As a result, she spends a lot of time “listening and addressing individual concerns” in order to prevent conflict situations from occurring.

In terms of deliberately inciting a conflict situation, Betty acknowledges that she has done so on occasion when her “values dictated such an action”. She shares a situation where she “stood up to a Board of Directors” who were being “insensitive to the work that was ongoing within the organization”. She explained that their “thought process and actions did not align with the principles and purpose of the organization” and demanded that they “reconsider their position immediately”. Her actions resulted in a conflict situation however, she felt “it was the right thing to do because (her) values demanded it”.

Interpersonal conflicts are the most common type of conflict situation experienced by Betty in her role as system leader. She attributes this to the “large amount of people (she) comes into contact with during the course of the day”. Betty shares the example of a conflict situation involving her executive assistant whom Betty embraced and “trusted fully, not only as a work employee but also as a friend”. For unknown reasons, the woman “took confidential documents from the organization and sent them to the federal government” which resulted in five government audits in one year. As a result, Betty’s

“office was taken over, the organization shut down and all financial records were reviewed.” In the end, the allegations were refuted however Betty to this day “still does not understand what caused (her) executive assistant to do so”. Despite being found innocent of the allegations, her organization “lost funding that year and had to slowly rebuild”. Betty acknowledges that it can be difficult to resolve conflicts when “different values and beliefs shape our actions and behavior”.

Value Conflict Resolution:

When value conflict situations occur, Betty primarily uses the strategy of active listening. She believes resolutions “are only possible when both parties listen to each other and understand the other’s perspective”. Betty recognizes that resolutions “may not always be possible but as long as learning takes place (then) the possibility still exists”.

Betty firmly believes that “leaders should model (their) principles and values” so that “employees know exactly what is expected of them” which in turn “will minimize the frequency of conflict situations”. Betty has found this approach to be “very effective and successful” in terms of value conflict resolution.

Betty believes that her values “greatly influence the resolution of a conflict situation”. She strongly values “shared dialogue” and states that she “never dictates to another person what they should do”. She believes that “every conflict situation has its own resolution”. Betty acknowledges that this “may include putting different supports and resources in place to assist with a performance matter” or having to use “mentoring and coaching”.

If a value conflict resolution is not possible, Betty believes that the “power differential will prevail”. She feels that “in the end, no matter how hard (you) try to

create a sense of equality”, there is always someone who has “power over (you)”. Betty believes that the “hierarchical structure of leadership leads to the unequal distribution of power”. However, she is quick to note that “although this power differential exists, there does not have to be an abuse of this power”.

When resolving value conflicts that stem from values issues, Betty states that her personal morality dictates her response. She feels that she would have “no problem enduring the consequences of (her) decision” provided it was “in the best interest of the organization”.

Betty feels as though she is able to exercise her personal value system in her role as system leader. She states that “in life we have to operate within our own conscience” and every day, she “has the intention to not cause anyone any harm”. She operates from the perspective that “when (you) enter a situation, (you) can either leave it as it is or (you) make it better”. Betty understands that “there will always be challenges, conflicts and disagreements in life” but as long as she “does not compromise (her) own values, (she) will be okay”.

6. Frank

Background:

Frank works as an elementary school leader in a large French Immersion school which has a population of six hundred students and eighty staff members. This is his third year at this school and prior to this he worked at a large, multi-cultural school which had a significant English as a Second language population. Frank possesses extensive experience in the field of Special Education and has worked as a resource teacher for the school board in this area.

Prior to his experiences in educational administration, Frank worked as an elementary teacher for six years and has also operated his own small business. He feels that his varied life experiences “have helped shape who (he) is today” and “have provided (him) with the necessary knowledge and understanding to deal with the many stakeholders” who he encounters.

Values Classification:

Frank defines values as “the source of (his) decision making”. He recognizes that his personal values “impact upon decisions” which he makes but he “strives to ensure that every voice is heard in the decision making process”.

Frank states that he values “justice and personal responsibility”. As a school leader, he feels he is “not just accountable for (his) actions” but also “responsible for them”. Frank feels quite strongly about “ensuring fairness and promoting equity” within his school and he “always considers how decisions will impact students’ self-esteem”. He always “advocates for students’ needs in order to ensure their collective participation”.

Frank states that over time his core values “have not changed” but he recognizes that he is “more cognizant of the actions that need to be taken” in order to ensure the “realization of (his) values”. Throughout his administrative experiences, Frank’s “eyes have been opened” to the “plights of others in difficult situations” and as a result, he “really empathizes with the struggles that some people endure”. As a leader, he has the “power and authority” to effect change and explains how he “uses every opportunity to engage the school community in outreach activities” so that “students can understand the importance of caring for each other and their community”.

Types of Conflict:

As an elementary school leader, Frank encounters conflict situations “on an on-going, daily basis”. These situations usually involve any combination of “students, teachers, support staff, parents and administration”. Frank regards conflict as “a positive learning experience” and feels that “many benefits can arise from a conflict situation”. He also emphasizes that “effective conflict management is critical to resolving conflict situations”.

Frank primarily experiences interpersonal conflicts in his role as leader. He identifies two types of interpersonal conflict situations: conflicts between students and conflicts with parents. Student conflicts tend to center around issues involving “impulsive behavior, lack of emotional control and self regulation, physical and verbal incidents and bullying” whereas conflict situations with parents tend to be “defined by their emotions which are driving their actions”. Frank recognizes that parental conflicts often stem from “incongruent values and present themselves differently”; thus, “much time is spent siphoning through the conflict situation to determine the real issue”.

Frank admits that he has deliberately incited conflict situations in his role as leader. He “likes to push the envelope and challenge people” especially when they make “negative comments about the school community”. Frank feels that it is his job to “promote public education in a positive light” and if he “turns a blind eye or ear” then people will “continue saying what they are saying”. He states that he would rather “confront the person and clarify the facts and information in order for them to make an informed decision”.

Frank shares an incident in which he deliberately incited a conflict situation. The situation developed following “reorganization day in September” when he was told that his school would be “taking other students from a neighboring school which had recently closed”. As a result, an extra kindergarten class was added in the afternoon. The existing kindergarten class in the morning “already had transportation provided for those students who required it”; thus, Frank had to re-assign students into the morning and afternoon kindergarten classes based on their transportation needs. In an attempt to be proactive, Frank sent a letter home asking for “any parents to volunteer to switch classes” but he did not receive any responses. As a result, he made the decision that “those students who did not require transportation would attend in the afternoon” and those students who required transportation “would attend in the morning”. The parents of those students who were affected complained that they “were being disadvantaged and victimized”. Frank experienced a great deal of conflict over this situation. He explained to the parents that “public education is all about access to education” and “those students who required transportation were going to receive it”. Unfortunately, parents became very angry and frustrated because they “did not get what they wanted and were unapologetic in

advocating for their perceived needs”. Frank recognized that this conflict “stemmed from differences in values” and states that he had “little sympathy for the parents”. While he could understand “the impact of switching from the morning to the afternoon class” he recognized that “transporting students to and from school and providing access to education” was more important than “pleasing parents for their own selfish motives”.

Value Conflict Resolution:

When dealing with conflict situations that stem from values differences, Frank’s strategy is to “gather information and then speak to all involved parties”. His process is “all about understanding the problem, determining who is involved, discovering what resources are available, finding a solution, learning from the solution and moving forward”. Frank also discusses the “importance of context” when dealing with the resolution of conflict situations and states that “context is everything”. When necessary, he is “not afraid to have courageous conversations and call people on their behavior”. He discusses an example where one of the school’s custodians “threw away student work when cleaning teachers’ classrooms on a consistent basis”. Frank “dealt with this situation head-on” and spoke with the custodian “stating first what (he) valued about the custodian’s work and then noting what needed to be changed along with next steps for improvement”. By appealing to his rapport with the custodian, Frank was able to engage the custodian in discussion and resolve the value conflict.

Frank recognizes that at times, “conflict resolutions are not possible”. When this occurs, he acknowledges that “the power differential always wins out”. Frank feels that an important aspect of his role as Principal is “to make decisions that are equitable and just for all”. If the issue remained at the school level then “the school leader would have

the final and ultimate authority” but if the conflict went to the school board level, then “the highest position of administrative responsibility would make the final determination and resolution”.

Frank feels that he is able to exercise his personal value system in his role as leader because he “is supported by the Board’s policies surrounding equity and inclusion”. When resolving conflicts that stem from values issues, Frank’s “personal morality” dictates his response. He has “not yet had to take a moral stand” because his “values are aligned with those of the Board” and he feels “fortunate to be supported by the collective stakeholders” within his school community because “(we) are all headed in the same direction”. Frank is also very happy to work in a “positive school climate with a huge parental involvement where the school goals are supported by the school council”.

7. Irene

Background:

Irene works as an elementary school leader in a small Catholic school. The school's population consists of over four hundred students and twenty-five staff members. Irene has worked in this role for two years. Prior to this, she held the position of secondary school leader in an inner-city school. Irene feels her experience at both panels as an educational administrator affords her "a unique perspective that (she) brings to (her) role as leader".

Values Classification:

Irene defines her values as "what (she) believes". As a leader, she believes she has a "moral responsibility to provide (her) school community with the necessary opportunities and supports" in order to be successful. Irene believes that "all students should receive a quality education" because "through education, opportunities arise".

Values are "extremely important" to Irene in her role as leader. As a practising Catholic who works in a Catholic school board, Irene feels "very fortunate indeed". She states that she is "extremely lucky because (she) can talk about (her) faith at work" and explains how she "threads Catholic values into discussions with both staff and students"

Irene greatly values collaboration and always strives to treat people with respect. She believes that "every person within the school should feel as though they have something to contribute to the community as a whole". As a result, Irene spends "a lot of time working with teachers and parents to develop a Catholic learning community" which "is founded on the principles of the Catholic social teachings". Irene states that "the Catholic social teachings have greatly influenced and shaped (her) values".

Over time, Irene believes that her foundational values have remained constant however she recognizes that her experiences have influenced her values. She now fully embraces the philosophy of progressive discipline and believes in the “power of discussion”. Irene notes that she has changed from a “firm, black and white disciplinarian” to a leader who “embraces many different shades of grey”.

Types of Conflict:

As an elementary leader, Irene states that she “does not deal with conflict situations very frequently”. Instead, she admits to “passing these along to teachers to deal with their own issues”. Irene recounts that when she worked as a Vice-Principal, conflict situations occurred “all the time” and “the majority of the day was spent resolving conflicts”.

Irene attributes miscommunications as the primary factor in the development of conflict situations. She shares the example of a conflict situation “involving a very damaging rumor about a female student that escalated to the point where it was discussed by the entire school community”. This caused “incredible pain” for the student because the rumor was “believed even by teachers”. Irene believes the basis of the issue involved “a miscommunication”.

Many different stakeholders have been involved in conflict situations and they include “students, teachers and parents”. In Irene’s experience, the majority of student conflicts involve social altercations such as “snowball throwing, gossiping, bullying and playground incidents”. She describes parental conflict situations as “incidental” because “the parent community is very supportive and appreciative of teachers”. Irene also states that conflicts among staff members are “extremely rare”. She admits that she has never

deliberately incited a conflict situation and could “never imagine wanting to do so” because “there is not enough time in (her) day”.

Procedural conflicts are the most frequent type of conflict situation Irene experiences in her role as leader. For example, Irene discussed how staff members “often disagree with implementing new school board or Ministry initiatives to support student learning”. This occurs “not because they do not agree with the end goal” but rather, they take issue with “implementing yet another initiative which will probably be discontinued the following year”.

Value Conflict Resolution:

When dealing with conflict situations that stem from values issues, Irene states that she is “very strict, very strict”. She claims that when “people see (her) in the halls, they are respectful and fearful” because she sets “clear rules and consequences”. Irene explains that when conflict situations arise, she employs the strategies of “on-going dialogue, open communication and on-going investigation”. She characterizes herself as being both “proactive and active” when resolving conflict situations.

If a conflict situation is not able to be resolved, Irene believes that the “power differential will prevail”. As leader, she feels that it is her “responsibility to restore order and maintain peace” and if a conflict cannot be resolved then both parties will have to “agree to disagree” and “abide by (her) decision”. If the conflict situation goes beyond the school level, then Irene would defer to the “highest administrative power” to determine the final resolution.

Irene believes that her values “greatly influence the resolution of a conflict situation” because her actions are aligned with her values. As a Catholic administrator,

Irene's values are based on her Catholic faith; thus, any decision that she makes "is supported by the policies and procedures of the Catholic system of education".

8. Nancy

Background:

Nancy possesses over thirty-five years of experience in the field of education. Recently retired, she has worked in a variety of roles: classroom teacher; assistant Department Head; Department Head; senior teacher; Board consultant; and secondary school leader. Her experience as a secondary school leader was at a large Catholic school comprised of over one thousand students and eighty staff members. The administrative team was composed of three school leaders. Nancy states that “the needs of the students and staff were so great” that she was “appreciative of all (her) knowledge and experiences” as she felt “sufficiently equipped to service the school community as a result”.

Values Classification:

Nancy defines values as her “system of beliefs which define the importance or worth of things” in life. She states that “these are often intangible” because values are “what is considered to be important for life such as love, integrity, honesty, truth and loyalty”. She believes values are “extremely relevant” in her role as leader because they “impact and influence the decision-making process”. Nancy’s values include “caring, integrity and a sense of justice”.

Nancy believes that her core values have remained constant over time but she acknowledges that certain values have become even more important as a result of her experiences.

Types of Conflict:

In her role as leader, Nancy states that conflict situations “occurred daily”. The stakeholders involved include “students, teachers, parents, school team members, administration and the police”. Nancy believes that “the most frequent type of conflict situation exists between students and teachers”. These conflicts “often escalate in a classroom situation” because “students feel the need to preserve their bravado” while teachers “do not want to lose credibility”. Nancy states that she has “never deliberately incited a conflict” because the “majority of (her) time was spent resolving other people’s conflict situations”.

Interpersonal conflicts are the most frequent type of conflict situation that Nancy experienced in her role as secondary school leader. She believes these types of conflicts occur “as a result of differing values and beliefs of the involved parties”. Nancy shares an example of when she was “forced to expel a student for pulling the fire alarm”. The decision to expel “was made by the Principal who had been absent for extended periods of time and who did not know of the student or the situation”. Although Nancy believed that the consequence was warranted by the student’s actions, she knew the expulsion “would leave the student unsupervised at home with the potential to lead to more destructive behavior”. She suggested “other alternatives to expulsion in order to better meet the student’s needs” however this only resulted in an interpersonal conflict with her Principal. As a result, Nancy was “directed” by her Principal “to complete the paperwork and to expel the student” despite her reservations or concerns.

Value Conflict Resolution:

When dealing with conflict situations that stem from values issues, Nancy feels “it is necessary to strike a balance”. She always strives to act “as a kind and judicious parent” but always considers “the safety and overall well-being of the school community”. Nancy thinks it is “important to weigh the impact for all stakeholders when acting for the common good”. The strategies of “open dialogue, on-going communication and restorative justice practices” are employed by Nancy when dealing with conflict resolution. If a conflict is not able to be easily resolved, Nancy believes the “highest administrative role” determines the final resolution. She notes that “the power differential and chain of command” always prevail.

Nancy believes that her values “greatly influence the resolution of any conflict” because “in order to do what is right, considerable time and effort must be invested into forging equitable and just resolutions”. She feels that she is able to exercise her own personal value system in her role as leader but also recognizes that “the demands of parents, teachers and legislation can often influence decisions”. Nancy feels that in the Catholic system, the “common mission statement and basic belief in the dignity and worth of the individual” help reinforce shared personal values.

When resolving conflict situations that stem from values issues, Nancy states that her personal morality dictates her conflict response. Although she believes it is her “professional obligation and responsibility to adhere to the official policy and procedures of the school board and/or school community”, she would take a personal moral stand “if the well-being of the student and family are at stake”. Nancy states that she “would feel a sense of satisfaction” in knowing that (she) did the right thing even if it went against the

official policies and procedures of the school board because “as an administrator, sometimes (your) moral compass supercedes the rules and regulations”.

9. Mike

Background:

Mike works as a secondary school leader at a mid-sized secondary school. The school population consists of thirteen hundred students and one hundred staff members. The student population is culturally diverse with the majority of students being recent immigrants to Canada or first generation Canadians. This is Mike's fourth year in this role and prior to this, he worked as a teacher for over thirteen years. Mike believes that his personal immigrant experience has led him "to teach at schools which have a large immigrant population" because he can "relate and help the students settle into their new lives" with compassion and understanding.

Values Classification:

Mike states that his values "represent and define (his) experiences growing up". He feels his relationships with "parents, family, friends and colleagues" have "shaped and informed (his) value system". Mike also believes that his experience as a newcomer to Canada has helped him "understand and value those students in similar positions". He admits that he "tries harder to find out what can be done to help new Canadian students" and feels "very fulfilled at the end of the day if those goals are met".

Mike believes that his values are "extremely significant" in his role as secondary school leader because his "value system decides what needs to be done". He feels that a leader's actions should always be consistent with their values so that "teachers and students know what their leader stands for and how conflict situations will be handled."

Over time, Mike believes that his core values have remained the same however, he attributes "any slight variations to life experiences" that he has enjoyed as an adult and

school leader. He explains that he “learns and develops along with new experiences” and states that he enjoys “finding new ways of achieving the same core goals”.

Types of Conflict:

As a secondary school leader, Mike experiences conflict situations “constantly with both staff and students”. He believes that conflict situations can develop “from tone of voice, way of speech and body language” and advocates for “effective communication skills for school leaders”. Mike attributes the frequency of these conflicts to “miscommunications” which can be misconstrued. He shares an example he experienced when “delivering a request that was developed and agreed upon by a school committee” but where “one teacher took great exception”. The teacher believed Mike was “directing (him) to do something that was counter to (his) philosophical beliefs”. Mike explained that “the request was collectively decided upon by a teacher committee and was not a unilateral administrative direction or mandate”. After a “lengthy discussion”, the misunderstanding was eventually resolved and the teacher “complied with the request” but only after he realized that “it was developed by a non-administrative committee”.

Mike states that he has “never deliberately incited a conflict situation” but he acknowledges that “conflicts may have developed indirectly and unintentionally as a result of miscues” on his part.

Procedural conflicts are the type of conflict situation Mike most commonly experiences in his leadership role. He attributes this to the fact that “teachers and administrators both have very similar goals and objectives which are to help students achieve their greatest potential”. However quite often, “the way in which these goals are realized often come into conflict”. For example, both teachers and administrators may

believe that “all students can learn” however they disagree “about which instructional strategy is the most effective to use”.

Value Conflict Resolution:

When responding to conflict situations that stem from values issues, Mike feels it is important for “stakeholders to sit down and discuss their points of view”. He believes this is “necessary to determine the root of the conflict situation and whether or not restorative justice practices and/or mediation strategies can be employed”. Mike advocates for the use of the above because “students are involved in the solution process” and they “learn key values and skills to improve their behavior in the future”.

If a conflict situation is not able to be resolved, Mike believes that the school leader has the final or ultimate authority when resolving a conflict issue. If the issue goes beyond the school level, then he acknowledges that “the power differential will prevail”.

When resolving conflicts that stem from values issues, Mike states that he responds by being creatively insubordinate. He recognizes that he has a professional obligation to follow “procedural guides as dictated by the school board” yet he “adapts them to fit the context of the situation”. This way, Mike feels he is “fulfilling (his) professional duty while remaining true to (his) values”.

Mike believes that his values “do influence” the resolution of conflict situations that stem from values issues. He believes it is “imperative to remain professional when addressing conflict concerns” and states that his methods “reflect (his) values of equity, equality and fairness”. He also strives to refer individuals to “various social and professional supports should there be a need of counseling” and “inform all necessary stakeholders”.

Overall, Mike feels that he is able to exercise his personal value system in his role as secondary school leader. He believes his values are “similar to (his) colleagues’ so when conflict situations are discussed, there is no disagreement”. Mike notes that he tries to “live (his) values through (his) role as leader” and always strives to “be a role model to staff and students”.

10. Dina

Background:

Dina is currently working on a secondment as an administrative resource at the school board office. She has worked as an educational administrator for twelve years and in the field of education for seventeen years. Dina possesses leadership experience in the Catholic, public and private school boards. She has also worked as a school board trustee for eight years. Dina believes that her wealth of knowledge and experiences greatly assist her in the demanding role of leader.

Values Classification:

Dina defines values as her “foundational beliefs” which are “based upon the principles of the Catholic faith”. As a practising Catholic who works in a Catholic school board, Dina feels “very fortunate that (her) values and practice align”. She feels a “responsibility as a leader to be cognizant of (her) values” because they are “hugely important” in her role.

Over time, Dina believes that her core values have remained the same. However, she acknowledges that at different times, “different values have held different weights”. Dina attributes these fluctuations to “the context of each individual conflict situation”.

Types of Conflict:

In her role as elementary school leader, Dina states that she “did not frequently encounter conflict situations”. She attributes this statistic to her “high expectations” for staff to “handle their own conflicts” so as a result, “very few conflicts were brought to (her) attention”. Those that did arise stemmed “from differences in stakeholders values”.

In Dina's experience, "students, teachers, parents and members of the school community are the primary stakeholders in conflict situations".

Dina states that she has never deliberately incited a conflict situation but acknowledges that she is "not afraid of doing so should the need arise". She attributes her "strong mindedness" to her family upbringing where she "had to speak up or no one would listen". Dina views conflict in a positive sense and believes "it can lead to good things if it is handled properly".

Dina identifies substantive conflicts as the type of conflict situation she experiences the most frequently in her leadership role. She attributes this "to the lack of clearly articulated goals for education". Without these, she feels that "subtle and overt agenda wars occur within school boards that negate the synergistic possibilities of achieving anything well". In her experience, this is further exacerbated by "the absence of any form of Strategic Board Plan" which would incorporate all "departments to optimize resources and assist schools and students". Dina believes that in the absence of such direction, there is "much waste and disappointment".

Value Conflict Resolution:

When responding to conflict situations that stem from values issues, Dina primarily uses the strategy of "ongoing dialogue". She believes it is "very important to listen to all perspectives" in order to determine a resolution. Dina has consistently employed on-going dialogue throughout her career and finds it "to be very effective". If a resolution is not possible, then Dina believes it "will be determined by whoever has the most power in the highest administrative role". For example, Dina shares the example when she experienced a problem with a teacher who was not performing her role

responsibilities. Dina spoke with her Superintendent who, bypassing any discussion with Dina, went directly to the Director of Education who then “mandated a non-negotiable resolution to this issue”.

Dina believes that her values “always guide and strongly influence” her decisions in the resolution of conflict situations. As a Catholic administrator, she states that her “personal values mirror the school board’s values” and she finds it “very comforting to draw upon that common value system” which exists within the Catholic system.

When resolving conflict situations that stem from values issues, Dina states that her personal morality dictates her conflict response and that she would have no problem taking a moral stand. For example, she shares an example of a situation involving a staff member who was “harming students on (her) special education caseload by impeding them from succeeding academically therefore damaging their self-esteem”. Dina was prepared to utilize the teacher performance appraisal process to evaluate the teacher with an unsatisfactory review however, she was told to “not create any conflict with the union” from the Director of Education specifically. Dina did not agree with this directive as it went counter to her values so she chose to proceed with the unsatisfactory teacher performance appraisal. As a result, Dina was “left standing alone, unsupported” and was soon “transferred to a position at the Board office as a punishment consequence for (her) actions”.

11. Grant

Background:

Grant works as an elementary school leader at a mid-sized school which has a population of over four hundred students and forty teachers. A large majority of the student population have been identified as English as a second language learners. Grant has worked in this position for five years and possesses over twenty-one years of experience in the field of education in various roles such as teacher, library and Board consultant. He has extensive experience working in the field of Special education and believes this knowledge guides him greatly in his current role as there are many students with special needs and specific programs that are required.

Values Classification:

Grant defines values as “those principles or ideals” that he uses “as a basis for decision making”. He stresses the importance of values and believes that values “drive the decision making process for the school”. Grant recognizes that values are “extremely important” in education because “decisions that are made impact upon many stakeholders within the school community”. He feels that leaders have to “know their values” and “be consistent with their actions” because “even if the staff do not agree”, they “need to know who their leader is and what that individual stands for”.

Grant values the principles of equity and equality. He always considers “every situation from multiple perspectives” when making a decision. Grant strives to be empathetic because he understands that he has “a lot of power” and decisions that he makes “impact the lives of many different people”. His school community is primarily composed of families with “very low socio-economic status” so Grant acknowledges that

he has had to “remove his middle class background lens” when making decisions. He is cognizant of “not doing any harm” and “strives to make decisions that result in the most good for the most people”.

Over time, Grant believes that his core values have remained constant but he recognizes that his experiences have shaped his values. He explains that he is now “more aware of how unintentionally, the education system can marginalize students”. Grant “did not quite understand this at first” but after listening to families in his community who have been affected, he “has a better understanding of what really goes on”. He recognizes that he “sits in a privileged position” and realizes that “there are many who do not” so as a result, he is “very careful about how (he) treats people”.

Types of Conflict:

Grant states that conflict situations occur “too frequently” in his role as leader. These conflict situations have involved students, teachers, parents, administration and community members and generally stem from “differences in value”. For example, when Grant suspended students it was perceived as “not being fair to students or their parents”; similarly, when teachers were held accountable for their actions, this too was perceived as being “unjust” and the teachers union became involved. Grant recognizes that the above reactions stem from “an incongruence in stakeholder values” and states that although he experienced many conflict situations he “does not any have trouble sleeping at night” because his “values are aligned with (his) practice”.

Grant admits that he has deliberately incited conflict situations in his role as leader. For example, he shares an experience involving a teacher performance appraisal (TPA) for a teacher who was “just about to take maternity leave”. Grant acknowledges

that he “could have delayed the TPA but believed the teacher would take advantage of this fact and not do any work”. In his experience, Grant “never saw the teacher directly prepare or teach a lesson” in her role as the special education teacher. He did witness her “helping students with work” they brought to her class however she “never prepared any lessons or completed any marking”. As a result, Grant evaluated the teacher and gave her an unsatisfactory review. The teachers union became involved and Grant clearly explained that he “was not signing a satisfactory report” because he did not have any “observable evidence of satisfactory job performance”. Despite pressure from the teaching union, Grant remained true to his values and the unsatisfactory review was upheld.

In his role as leader, Grant experiences interpersonal conflicts the most frequently. He attributes this to the fact that “conflict situations stem from emotional reactions to the issue in question”. Grant states that involved stakeholders “possess different beliefs and values that come into conflict and that is just human nature”. He believes the “trick is to find the commonalities that exist among stakeholders” because then you “have a basis for the resolution”.

Value Conflict Resolution:

When dealing with conflict situations that stem from values issues, Grant states that he spends “a lot of time speaking with stakeholders and listening to their perspective”. Other strategies that he has found to be successful include “patience, humor and coming back every day”. If conflict situations are not able to be resolved, then the Principal has the final or ultimate authority unless it goes beyond the school level in which case, the power differential will prevail.

Grant believes that his values “greatly influence” the resolution of conflict situations that stem from values issues because Grant’s resolution “stems from what (he) believes to be the best for the school community”. His values are aligned with those of the school board so he is aware that any decision that is made will be supported “by the powers above”.

When resolving conflict situations that stem from values issues, Grant states that his personal morality dictates his conflict response. He explains that if he felt very strongly about a particular issue and that if it “ran counter” to his values, he would “have no problem taking a moral stand and facing the consequences of (his) actions” because “without values, what does a leader have?”

12. Carol

Background:

Carol works as a system leader for a mid-sized school board which provides education to twenty-five thousand students in over forty elementary and nine secondary schools. She has worked in this capacity for three years and prior to this, had many experiences working within the field of education. Carol began her career as an educational assistant before becoming an elementary teacher. After six years of teaching, she was promoted to the position of elementary school leader where she worked for seven years. Following this, she was then promoted to the position of Assistant system leader for one year after which she secured full system leader status. Her current portfolio involves responsibilities for student achievement, board communications as well as a family of schools.

Values Classification:

Carol defines values as “the set of guiding principles and beliefs that govern (her) interactions with the world and decisions” that she makes. She believes that values are “fundamental” to her role because of their “influence in the decisions that are made”. Carol’s values were instilled “from an early age and were both formed and informed within the Catholic Church”. She believes that her core values have remained the same over time but recognizes that certain values take precedence at different points in time depending upon context.

Types of Conflict:

In her role as system leader, Carol states that conflict situations occur “many times throughout the course of a day”. A large portion of her role involves “resolving

stakeholder conflicts” and the primary cause of these conflicts stem from values differences among the involved stakeholders. These stakeholders have included parents, employees of the board, administration and school trustees.

Carol admits to having deliberately incited conflict situations “when warranted, to effect change”. She likes to “push the envelope to stretch teachers’ thought processes in order for them to develop professionally”. Carol advocates engaging in courageous conversations which “can be difficult but are necessary to get the results (you) seek”.

Carol states that procedural conflicts occur the most frequently in her role as system leader. She shares the example when a complaint was brought to her attention from a concerned parent. It became evident that it was “necessary to discuss the issues that were brought forward”. The conflict arose when Carol “had to discipline an educational administrator” and it was perceived that Carol “should not have done so” and should have “acted in the best interests of the administrator”. The complaint dealt with a performance issue that Carol herself could not justify so the discussion and disciplinary process were necessary. She states that what “shocked (her) the most was how the actions of the administrator were so completely out of line with the values of the school board” that it was evident “that there was a discrepancy between the values of the leader and those of the Catholic school system”.

Value Conflict Resolution:

In terms of responding to conflict situations that stem from values issues, Carol engages in “active listening” with involved stakeholders. She strives to “get to the root of the issue in order to determine steps for resolution”. Carol believes that “spending time listening” is the key to conflict resolution because “quick conflict resolutions rarely take,

and people do not feel as though they have been validated”. In terms of resolving conflicts, Carol has had training in non-violent crisis intervention and prevention along with restorative justice strategies. Carol has found these methods to be very effective and notes that there have been “very few conflicts that (she) could not resolve”. When this occurs, Carol believes the “power differential will prevail” and the administrator with the “highest position of authority” would determine the resolution.

Carol believes that her values “very much” influence the resolution of conflict situations. Since conflict situations occur between human beings, she states “it is impossible to separate (your) values from (your) actions”.

When resolving conflict situations that stem from values issues, Carol believes that her personal morality dictates her response and that she would take a moral stand. She attributes this to the fact that “an alignment must exist between (her) personal and professional values”. Carol believes that working in the field of education is “truly a vocation” and cannot imagine being happy in her role without having values alignment.

13. Helen

Background:

Helen works as an elementary school leader in a small school with a population of two hundred students and ten staff members. She has worked in this capacity for fourteen years and prior to this, taught for sixteen years at the elementary level and has experience as a divisional chair and senior teacher.

Values Classification:

Helen defines values as what she “believes in and feels to be important in both (her) personal and professional life”. She believes values are “fundamental” to her leadership role because they “drive the school community and are reflected within the community”. Helen posits that her values are “based on the Catholic faith tradition along with the principles of mutual respect and care for the community”.

Helen believes that her core values have not changed over time but notes that “their importance has shifted”. For example, she states that “what (she) valued twenty years ago is not what (she) values the most today”. Helen attributes this shift to her experiences over time both personally and professionally.

Types of Conflict:

In her role as elementary school leader, Helen states that conflicts occur “often”. She notes that throughout the year “there are certain time periods during which there is an increase in conflict situations due to increased amounts of stress”. These include: the start of the school year; periods when marks are due; and at the end of the school year. The stakeholders identified in these conflict situations include “students, staff and parents”.

In terms of deliberately inciting a conflict situation, Helen states that she has “not deliberately” done so. She queries “who would purposely seek more conflict?” Helen does acknowledge that conflict situations could arise unwittingly as a result of actions or decisions.

Interpersonal conflicts are the most frequent type of conflict situation that Helen experiences in her role as school leader. She attributes this to the “sheer volume of stakeholders and their different values” with which she works. For example, Helen discusses the example of an interpersonal conflict that occurred when a student with special needs (Aspergers Syndrome) hit a teacher when the teacher confronted him regarding some misbehavior. The teacher had dismissed the student’s Educational Assistant because she believed she could “handle the student if (he) acted out”. The incident occurred because the teacher “did not follow the appropriate protocol”. The teacher then demanded “that the student be removed from (her) class”. Helen did not believe this was the correct course of action since the student was “behaving as (he) normally would and the teacher’s decision to dismiss the Educational Assistant was a contributing factor to this incident occurring”. An interpersonal conflict developed between the teacher and Helen and despite the teacher filing a grievance, the student remained in the teacher’s classroom.

Value Conflict Resolution:

In terms of responding to conflict situations that stem from values issues, Helen states that she “listens very carefully and remains objective”. She takes the “necessary time to gather (her) thoughts along with any necessary information in order to make an informed decision”. Helen seeks to find a “resolution that preserves everyone’s dignity

and restores the relationships of those involved”. If a resolution is not able to be determined, then Helen believes the final or ultimate authority rests “with the school leader, who acts in consultation with the Superintendent”.

Helen believes that her values “greatly influence” the resolution of conflict situations because they “influence (her) decision making process”. Her values are “reflective of the Catholic faith tradition” and Helen always strives to treat people with “respect and dignity which are both principles of the Catholic social teachings”.

When resolving conflict situations that stem from values issues, Helen states that she would “suspend (her) morality”. She recognizes that as an employee of the board, she has “a professional duty and obligation to uphold the requirements” of her leadership role. However, she also notes that at the school level there is some “wiggle room” when dealing with conflict situations and the “trick lies in finding a balance between the two”.

Helen feels that she is able to exercise her personal value system in her role as school leader because her values are aligned with the values of the Catholic school board. She takes comfort in the fact that the Catholic system of education has a “shared mission statement and common goals” which strengthen collective personal values.

14. Jill

Background:

Jill works as an elementary school leader in a mid-sized school which has a population of three hundred students and fifteen staff members. She has worked in this role for fifteen years and in the field of education for forty-one years. During this time, she has had experience working as an elementary teacher, board consultant and course director for pre-service teacher education at the university level.

Values Classification:

Jill defines values as “those deeply held beliefs based on family background, religion, culture and personal life experiences”. She believes values to be “extremely important” in her role as school leader particularly concerning issues “dealing with staff, students and parents”. Jill states that her values are based on the principles of “service and job proficiency”. She does not believe that her foundational values have changed over time but rather have been “modified with each new experience”.

Types of Conflict:

In her role as elementary school leader, Jill encounters conflict situations “quite often”. She attributes these conflict situations to issues of “attitude, power, ability and values differences”. Stakeholders involved in these conflict situations have included teachers, parents, custodians and secretarial staff.

Jill states that she has deliberately incited a conflict situation in her role as leader in order to “effect change”. For example, she shares the example when she recognized that her teaching staff was getting “too complacent with respect to their practice” so she incited a conflict situation to “change this behavior immediately”.

Interpersonal conflicts are the most frequent type of conflict situation Jill experiences in her leadership role. She does not necessarily view this type of conflict to be destructive but rather believes “if well managed, can result in benefits for the whole school community”. Jill stresses that “it is imperative for conflict situations be resolved transparently and in a timely fashion”.

Jill shares an example of an interpersonal conflict she experienced involving a teacher who was coaching relays for the track and field team. The teacher left a baton on her desk during lunch hour and one student grabbed it and “knocked out another student’s tooth”. The lack of attention to key safety issues and procedures caused this incident to occur and Jill “documented this with a letter in the teacher’s file”. The teacher grieved the letter but despite involvement by the teachers union, Jill “persisted and the letter remained in the teacher’s file”.

Value Conflict Resolution:

When responding to conflict situations that stem from values issues, Jill strives “to create a level playing field which empowers those involved”. She always treats stakeholders “with fairness and listens to their perspectives” which results in a “win-win situation for all”. Jill states that her process has been quite effective over time because stakeholders “feel validated”. If a conflict situation is not able to be resolved, then Jill believes the final or ultimate authority rests with the school leader because they “can resolve it in such a way that those involved feel that they have each won”. If the conflict issue goes beyond the school level, then Jill acknowledges that the “power differential will prevail for resolution”.

Jill believes that her values “play a significant role” in the resolution of a conflict situation because the process will reflect her values of “trust, respect, belief, integrity and humility”.

When resolving conflict situations, Jill states that her personal morality dictates her response. She feels taking a stand based on morality is “imperative in influencing others to act ethically as well”. Jill believes demonstrating her personal morality “sets an example for the school” and demonstrates her “deep concern for the students in (her) care”. She does feel as though she is able to exercise her personal value system in her role as leader because her values are aligned with those of the school board. Jill realizes that she is “very fortunate to work in a Catholic school system” which allows her personal and professional values to be “in perfect alignment”.

Chapter Summary:

This chapter has presented highlights of the data from the fourteen interviews which were conducted with the participating educational administrators for this research study. Information was provided with respect to their background, values classification, type of conflict most frequently experienced and value conflict resolution strategies.

Chapter Five will describe the findings from the data as they relate to the core research questions and conceptual framework in preparation for the overall summary of the study and the identification of future research implications in Chapter Six.

CHAPTER FIVE: PRESENTATION OF DATA

This chapter describes the findings from the data as they are related to the core research questions and conceptual framework. The goal of this study is to understand the definition and use of the concept of values as presented by a group of fourteen school leaders and the way they apply their personal and professional values to conflicts that occur in their work settings. The structure of the research is grounded in the following research questions as presented in Chapter 1:

1. How do educational administrators see the role of values in their work?
2. What types of value conflicts do educational administrators experience?
3. How do educational administrators resolve conflicts that stem from values issues?

Figure 6 presents these research questions as a graphical representation showing the relationship between each section. The researcher's hypothesis is that values influence the types of conflicts experienced and the resultant corresponding resolution strategies; similarly, experience and resolution of conflicts influences values and the future strategies used to work with conflicts. In this sense, they are all interrelated.

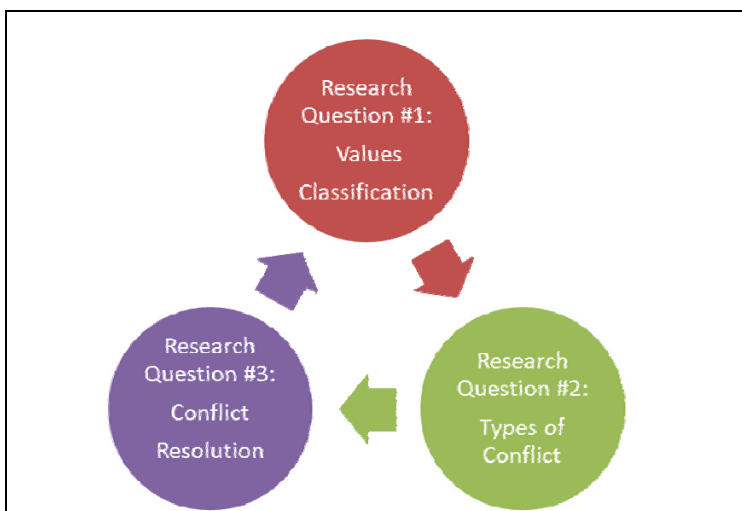


Figure 6: Graphical Representation of Research Questions

The data from participant interviews as related to the research questions will be presented in the following ways:

1. Framed under each research question, according to the interview questions that relate to the individual research question

For example, Research Question # 1: How do educational administrators see the role of values in their work is addressed by Interview Questions One, Two, Three and Four

2. Grouped according to leadership position: system (3 leaders), elementary school (7 leaders), and secondary school (4 leaders)
3. Followed by sub-grouping within each of these leadership positions based on whether leaders work in Catholic or non-Catholic schools
4. Each research question section ends with a summary of the data addressed to that question

This is repeated for each of three main research questions. A summary of the data is provided at the end of the chapter which serves as a transition to Chapter 6, Conclusions and Implications. The Conclusions and Implications chapter will focus on all data presented to answer the research questions and will provide an overall summary for the study and identify future research implications.

How do educational administrators see the role of values in their work?

This section describes the participants' definition of a concept of values, both in their own terms, and with respect to Beck's (1993) framework for a conception of values. Beck's (1993) framework was chosen as a support to participants' responses because it organizes the values they chose into five categories (basic, moral, spiritual, social and political, intermediate range and specific values) and also allows for a comparison of choices through the progression of discussion and data analysis. Along with giving a name to their values, participants were also asked to consider: the relevance of values in their role as leader, the principles upon which their values are based, and the constancy of these values over time (Interview Questions 1 through 4). Data is presented sequentially in response to these questions, with a summary at the end of this section.

How do educational administrators define the term values?

Data analysis suggests that educational administrators describe the term *values* in many different ways. A survey of the literature in the field supports this finding as there appears to be very little consensus regarding a common definition or understanding of values. Rescher (1969, p. 2) highlights this disparity with his non-comprehensive list of "nearly a dozen distinct, and at times, contradictory descriptions of values". He states for example LaPiere's assertion that "values are the obverse of motives...the object, quality, or condition that satisfies the motivation"; and Smelser's belief that "[Values are] the desirable end states which act as a guide to human endeavour or the most general statements of legitimate ends which guide social action" (Rescher, 1969 as cited in Richmon, 2005, p. 24). The interview data suggests that respondents understand the primary meaning of the term *values* to be: a code/set of rules and fundamental beliefs

that guide daily interactions; and a basis for decision making in personal and professional contexts.

Code/set of rules and fundamental beliefs that guide daily interactions

The meaning of values as a code/set of rules and a guide for action was the most common definition clarified in the interviews. This conception of values is supported in the literature by: Feather (1975) who states that values “serve as standards that guide thought and action”; Kluckhohn (1951) who believes that “[a value] is a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the desirable which influences the selection from available means and ends of action”; and in the works of Rokeach (1973), and Hodgkinson (1978, 1983).

Two of the three system leaders define the term *values* in this manner. Adam explains how his values are “the code by which (he) lives (his) life”. He states that his values are “very straightforward” in terms of how he “treats people and operates in the work environment”. Adam feels that his Catholic faith is “intertwined with (his) values” and that “the two cannot be separated”. He feels a responsibility in leadership to be “articulate and genuine with how (he) lives (his) values” and believes that “administrators’ values and action should be aligned”. Greenfield (1986, p. 69) concurs and posits that “administrators are essentially value-carriers in organizations” as they are both “arbiters of values and representatives of them”.

Adam’s counterpart, Betty, states that her values guide her interactions with her “environment and personal and work-related relationships”. She believes that in order to be an effective leader, she needs to be “a role model to motivate, inspire and engage”. As a result, Betty has found that her employees possess “a sense of hope that they too, play

an important role in achieving results”. The work of Greenfield (1986, p. 57) supports this finding as he states that values “bespeak the human condition and serve as springs to action both in everyday life and in administration”.

Four of the seven elementary school leaders also share this conception of values. Similar to Adam, Dina states that her “Catholic faith is inseparable from (her) values”. She understands values to be “the drivers that actualize (her) belief system” and states that this is “always subject to reflection and questioning”. Dina concurs with Adam’s belief in the alignment between administrators’ values and actions. She feels that in order for this to occur, administrators “must first be aware of their own values”. One of the ways this can be achieved is through what Hodgkinson (1991) calls “continuous critical reflection and value auditing”. Hodgkinson (1991, p. 153) posits:

If the blind are not to lead the blind, nor the sleeping to lead those who are even deeper asleep, then the leader must have vision, must become more conscious.

Additionally, the adoption of Branson’s (2007) “inside-out” approach of deeply structured self-reflection which involves the various level components of the Self (self-concept, self-esteem, motives, values, beliefs, behaviors) allows administrators to gain self-knowledge regarding the formation of personal values (2007, p. 233).

Dina states that she is “cognizant” of her values and believes that every school community should be able to “articulate their leader’s values”. She feels that a leader’s values should “always be on display through their actions” because this brings “a sense of consistency, security and calm” to the school community. Cameron (2003, pgs. 187-189) supports this research finding and states that “people want to see particular values in their leaders so they can regain confidence and make sense of a seemingly ...chaotic (school) environment”.

Irene and Helen both strive to model the alignment between their values and actions on a daily basis. Irene's Catholic values form her belief system which is aligned with her actions. She believes in the "equality of opportunity" and "endeavors to provide staff members with whatever support is required so that they can provide the best education possible for all students". Irene reports that by so doing, her school community "knows that (she) puts (her) money where (her) mouth is". Similarly, Helen states that her values are "based on the Catholic faith tradition" which are "visible and reflected within the school environment". As the school leader, Helen believes her "core values and beliefs are the heart of the Catholic school culture". Hitt's (1990) research supports these findings and his work suggests that values serve as guideposts for conduct.

Two of the four secondary school leaders acknowledge the term *values* as a code/set of rules that guide daily interactions. Karen believes it is "critical to have a firm understanding" of her values as an educational administrator. She is aware that her "Catholic faith influences (her) values" and feels "it is important to reassess and question" her values because they "inform (her) conduct and interaction within the school community". Her counterpart Larry concurs and acknowledges that as a Catholic administrator, his faith "lends itself to (his) belief system and ties into (his) values". Dimmock & O'Donoghue (1997) support these findings and agree that on-going "value awareness is a key attribute of contemporary principalship" (Dimmock & O'Donoghue, 1997 as cited in Branson, 2004, p. 31).

A basis for decision-making

The data analysis also suggests that educational administrators associate the term *values* with decision making. Six of the fourteen participants describe the impact of their values on their decision making. The works of Simon (1965) and Hodgkinson (1983) support this finding in the literature: Simon (1965) posits that decisions are guided by intrinsic values learned by decision makers while Hodgkinson (1983, p. 36) believes values to be “part and parcel of the decision making process”. Begley (1999a, p. 4) reports similar findings of the relationship between values and decision making and states that “leadership involves considerable amounts of decision making which involves values to the extent that preferred alternatives are selected and others are rejected”. Likewise, Kluckhohn’s (1951, p. 395) definition of values as:

A conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the desirable which influences the selection from available modes, means, and ends of action

further highlights the critical function of values in making choices and decision making for educational administrators.

Carol, a system leader, believes her values are “integral” in her role because she is “called upon to make decisions that regularly influence the lives of staff and students”. She acknowledges that her values, which are based upon her Catholic faith “play a large role in the decision making process”. Holmes (1985, p. 22) supports this finding and states that “..all important decisions are made within a framework of value”.

Three elementary school leaders contemplate the impact of values upon decision making. Frank states that his values “are the basis upon which (he) makes decisions”. He describes his values as “those things dear to (his) heart which produce a visceral

reaction”. Frank explains that he “experiences a negative physical reaction if something is counter to (his) values” whereas he feels “the opposite, if an alignment exists between (his) values and (his) decision making”. He considers values to be “the things that are right” and characterizes them as “the just (fair) way of doing things”.

Frank also acknowledges that he “needs to be aware of how (his) values influence (his) decision making”. He realizes that his values “inform (his) first reaction” and as a result, “always considers the values of involved stakeholders so that (his) values do not superimpose themselves”. Frank is cognizant that his values “may be contradictory to what is required and may not be the same for others involved”. The work of Leithwood & Stager (1987, p. 2) supports this finding and states that the job of the principal is to:

...make choices that best suit the context in which they find themselves. Alternative courses of action must be weighed against the purposes they are to serve, the beliefs, values, abilities and expectations of those touched by the choice and the like.

Frank shares the example of a proposal brought forth by the parent council to purchase t-shirts for student leaders within the school community. Although in favor of this idea, Frank recognized that “non-student leaders would be excluded” so he arranged to purchase the t-shirts from the school budget and “distributed one to every student so that everyone was included”. Frank fervently advocates for the needs of all students and in this case, his values “strongly influenced” his decision making. He also explains that he “will not support any school excursion” unless he knows that “the school can cover the cost for those students whose parents cannot afford the trip”. As a leader, Frank feels “fortunate that (he) is able to make decisions which reflect and align with (his) values”.

Eric also discusses how his values “frame the decisions that (he) makes”. He recognizes that his values are the “core characteristics used throughout the day” and

“define who (he) is as a leader and the decisions that (he) makes”. Begley (2003a) reports similar findings and believes that leadership should be “values informed”. At the end of the day, Eric believes that “(you) may not be a great leader but (you) should be a moral leader”. Holmes (1986, p. 84) concurs with this finding and states that “educational administration is doubly involved with values because education...is continually fraught with moral choice”.

Grant also considers his values to be “the basis for (his) decision making”. He is aware that his values are “quite relevant” in his role because his decisions “involve more than five hundred households and affect the livelihoods of staff, students and parents within the school community”. The work of Hodgkinson (1978, p. 47) supports this finding as he notes that “decision making is the pivotal function in administration”. Hodgkinson further describes how “the intrusion of values into the decision making process is not merely inevitable (but is rather), the very substance of the decision” (1978, p. 59). Grant understands that his decisions “are examined and questioned and discussed” but since his values are aligned with his decision making, he is able to “comfortably communicate the reasons for...spending money in a certain way or dealing with a particular issue”.

Two of the four secondary school leaders also recognize that their values have an important influence upon decisions that they make. Larry believes his values are “very relevant and important” in his administrative role. He recognizes that he “unconsciously calls upon (his) values which are based upon (his) Catholic faith when making decisions”. As such, his values “strongly influence the decisions” that he makes. Rokeach (1973) reports a similar finding and posits that a person can be influenced by

between thirty to forty values in their value system (Rokeach, 1973 as cited in Branson, 2004, p. 46).

Larry explains that when making decisions, he “goes back to who (he) is as a Catholic with all (his) Catholic values and beliefs”. Hodgkinson (1996) supports this finding and posits that personal values and behavior are not isolated phenomenon but rather, two components of a single entity, the Self. The Self is constituted from the integration of self-concept, self-esteem, motives, values, beliefs and behaviors (Griseri, 1998; Hultmann & Gellerman, 2002; Leary & Tangney, 2003; Osborne, 1996). Mike concurs and describes how he is “reminded of (his) upbringing when making decisions”. He believes that his “lifetime of experiences with family, friends and associates have helped garner (his) present value system”. Branson (2005b, p. 3) reports similar familial findings and states that “the components of the Self that are formed during one’s life experiences become powerful influences of how one experiences, perceives and reacts to reality”. Mike feels that his values “are tremendously important” in terms of his administrative role because “(his) value system decides what needs to be done and how it will be done”.

How are values relevant in your role as leader?

All fourteen educational leaders unanimously agree that values are “very relevant” in their role. As the educational leader in the school community, the administrator has the responsibility to exemplify and embody appropriate values. As such, the administrator’s role within the school community is unique as (they are) “a representative ... and an entrepreneur for its values” (Greenfield & Ribbins, 1993, p. 222).

As system leaders, Adam and Carol state that their values are “absolutely essential” and “integral” to their roles because they “make decisions which influence, motivate and inspire the lives of staff and students within the system”. They both recognize and acknowledge that their decisions “are strongly influenced by Catholic values”.

The elementary school leaders also acknowledge the relevance of values in their administrative role. Helen states that values “are the heart of the Catholic school culture”. She believes that “what (she) values is reflected within the school community and is extremely relevant because it is based upon (her) Catholic faith”. Dina concurs and emphasizes that “the school community needs to be aware of what their leader holds near and dear because this makes them feel secure”. She finds this is “easier in a Catholic school community because of shared, common faith-based values”. Irene describes how she “is in a unique position, working within a Catholic school system because everything is based on (our) common faith”. She explains that “(you) can always discuss what Jesus would have done” and she “embeds this in discussions with students and staff”. Other administrator responses include: Grant, who states that “there is value in everything that (you) do”; and Eric, who believes that as a leader, “(you) have to know (your) values because who (you) are as a person should be consistent with who (you) are as a leader”.

The secondary school leaders also acknowledge the significance of values in their administrative roles. Nancy recognizes that her Catholic values “influence interactions with others” and are “very relevant and important”. Similarly, Karen appreciates the “common value system shared by members of the Catholic school community” which

makes it “easier (for her, as leader) to implement certain solutions and resolutions” while Mike believes his values “define (his) interactions with members of the school community”.

Have your values changed over time?

The data shows that all fourteen educational administrators indicate their core or foundational values “have remained constant over time”. Research participants did note, however, that certain values “have become more and/or less important depending upon experience and context”.

The system leaders state that they feel a “responsibility to advocate for those less fortunate”. As a Catholic leader, Adam strives to “live the Catholic social teaching principles”. With timely experience, he has “come to realize that many people can get left behind” so Adam has developed a “strong sense of justice for those who do not possess the strength or confidence to seek it”. He acknowledges that as a classroom teacher he was “not always aware of this seeming imbalance but as a leader (he) is committed to demonstrate (his) Catholic faith in action”.

Betty believes that her core values have remained consistent over time however she recognizes that her “leadership approach has grown and developed” with her experiences. Twenty-five years ago she acknowledges that she was “not as accepting and tolerant” and “wanted things done differently and immediately”. Today, she is more willing to “accept that things take time” and recognizes that “everyone comes to the table with a different set of competencies”. Betty values collective participation and realizes that as a whole, “a much stronger outcome is produced”. She attributes this change in value perspective to growing “maturity and experience”.

The elementary leaders also agree that their foundational values “have not changed over time”. However, they acknowledge that “different leadership experiences have resulted in certain values becoming more or less prominent in terms of importance”. Frank states that his values have “grown and developed in harmony with administrative experience”. As an elementary school leader, Frank has worked in school communities with very high English as second language (ESL) populations. He has witnessed “many struggles experienced by families in the school community which have really opened (his) eyes”. Frank’s experiences have made him “more aware” and “empathetic” and as leader, he uses his “power and authority to effect change in order to align (his) values and actions”.

Grant believes that his foundational values have remained the same throughout. At the beginning of his career he “thought (he) knew everything” but now realizes that he “knows less today than (he) did twenty-one years ago”. Grant feels that he has become “more tenacious in terms of holding people accountable for their incongruencies” and acknowledges that he “has become more open to appreciating different cultures and their foundational values”. He finds that his leadership experiences have “helped shape (his) values, which have significantly deepened with experience”.

Irene attributes the constancy of her core values to her strong Catholic faith which “greatly influences (her) values”. She believes that her “administrative experiences have shaped (her) values into their current form”. Irene believes that she is “not as black and white” as she was at the start of her career and attributes this change to “experiences in leadership”. Previously she notes that she was “quick to assign consequences and punish

students” whereas today, she values “taking the time in discussion with students” to ensure that they “learn from their mistakes and grow from the experience”.

The secondary school leaders also acknowledge that their core values have remained the same over time. They do, however, identify a difference in their approach to achieving certain values and attribute this change to context and leadership experience. Karen believes the way she acts in relation to her values has “improved over time and with experience”. For example, she has learned “the value of active listening” and now consequently “takes the time to listen more effectively in order to understand other perspectives instead of clinging to (her) own value belief system”. Karen believes that her core values have “not changed because they are reflective of (her) Catholic faith”, to which she is “fully committed”.

Larry believes that his leadership experiences have “added to (his) core beliefs and values”. He states that these experiences have “provided (him) with more insight and have made (him) more understanding”. As a result, certain values have become more imperative. Larry also recognizes that his “Catholic faith and beliefs influence (his) values”.

On what principles are your values based?

Given the number of Catholic administrators in the sample (9 out of 14), it is not unexpected that these individuals primarily list their Catholic faith generally, and the Catholic social teachings specifically. The similarities and differences between the Catholic and non-Catholic leader responses to this question can be discussed in terms of Beck’s (1993) framework.

*Educational Administrators' Values Classification Using Beck's (1993) Values
Framework*

Beck's (1993) Values Classification

The literature review in Chapter Two presents different classifications of value models that exist within the literature on values and value conflicts. For example: Hodgkinson's (1978, 1991) values typology suggests that values can be held at three basic motivational levels; Ashbaugh & Kasten's (1984) three category value model discusses personalistic, organizational and transcendent values; Leithwood, Begley & Cousins (1994) utilize a four category values classification which includes basic human values, general moral values, social and political values and professional values; and Begley's (2003a) syntax of values terminology. Other models were also analyzed including: Marshall (1992); Greenfield & Ribbins (1993); Maxcy (1993); Begley (1996, 1999a); Leithwood, Jantzi & Steinbach (1999); Sergiovanni (2000); and Richmon (2005). However, it is Beck's (1993) values classification that is used as the primary model to categorize administrator responses to the first research question. Table 4 provides examples of the five value types (Beck, 1984a, p. 2)

Table 4: Beck’s (1993) Values Classification

Value Type	Example
Basic	Survival, happiness, companionship, friendship, helping others, participation in community, self-respect, respect from others, knowledge, freedom, a sense of meaning in life etc.
Moral	Carefulness, responsibility, courage, self-control, reliability, truthfulness, honesty, politeness, fairness, unselfishness, etc.
Spiritual	Awareness, breadth of outlook, integration, wonder, gratitude, hope, detachment, humility, love, gentleness etc.
Social & Political	Peace, justice, due process, tolerance, participation, cooperation, sharing, loyalty, solidarity, citizenship, respectability etc.
Intermediate Range & Specific	Food, shelter, entertainment, relaxation, fitness, good family relationships, ability to read, write and calculate, meaningful employment, financial security etc. A car, a telephone, a particular neighbourhood, a particular friendship, a high school diploma, a good tv, a particular sport, a particular political party, a particular job etc.

Beck’s (1993) model is based on the idea that a standard set of universal values exists.

The most significant aspect of Beck’s (1993) framework is his contention that values are objective and that through the distillation of time and changing goals and priorities, certain values will become more important depending upon their relative context (Beck, 1984a, 1984b as cited in Begley & Leithwood, 1990, p. 340).

Catholic and non-Catholic Administrators’ similarities and differences using Beck’s (1993) Classification

Administrators were asked to rank Beck’s (1993) categories of values in order of importance from 1, being the most important value to 5, being the least important value.

The following data displayed in Table 5 was collected:

Table 5: Administrators' Values Classification using Beck's (1993) Framework

Value →	Basic	Moral	Spiritual	Social & Political	Intermediate Range & Specific
Name ↓					
Karen	1	2	5	3	4
Eric	4	3	1	2	5
Larry	1	2	5	3	4
Adam	1	2	4	3	5
Betty	4	3	1	2	5
Frank	2	3	1	5	4
Irene	1	2	4	3	5
Nancy	1	2	4	3	5
Mike	2	3	5	4	1
Dina	1	2	4	3	5
Grant	2	5	1	4	3
Carol	1	2	4	3	5
Helen	1	2	4	5	3
Jill	1	5	4	3	2
Mode	Nine 1's	Eight 2's	Seven 4's	Eight 3's	Seven 5's

Catholic Administrators and Beck's (1993) Values Classification

When classified in the same framework as shown in Table Five, Catholic administrators ranked Beck's (1993) in an identical frequency of mention as the sample as a whole: Basic = 9, Moral = 8, Spiritual = 7, Social & Political = 8, Intermediate Range & Specific = 7. Catholic administrators specifically mentioned Catholic social

teachings and their Catholic faith as influencing their values. Catholic social teachings comprise ten principles developed by the Catholic Church which serve as a guide for Catholic behaviors on matters such as: dignity of the human person; common good and community; option for the poor; rights and responsibilities; role of government and subsidiarity; economic justice; stewardship of God’s creation; promotion of peace and disarmament; participation; and global solidarity and development (Vatican, 2011). In relation to Beck’s (1993) classification of values, examples for each of the ten principles of Catholic social teachings can be found within each of Beck’s (1993) value types. Table 6 shows the number of examples of the principles of Catholic social teachings found within each of Beck’s (1993) value types.

Table 6: Beck’s (1993) Classification & Catholic Social Teaching Principles

Value Type	Example: Catholic Social Teachings Principles in Bold Below	Number of Examples
Basic	Survival, happiness, companionship, friendship, helping others, participation in community, self-respect, respect from others, knowledge, freedom, a sense of meaning in life etc.	10
Moral	Carefulness, responsibility, courage, self-control, reliability, truthfulness, honesty, politeness, fairness, unselfishness, etc.	8
Spiritual	Awareness, breadth of outlook, integration, wonder, gratitude, hope, detachment, humility, love, gentleness etc.	5
Social & Political	Peace, justice, due process, tolerance, participation, cooperation, sharing, loyalty, solidarity, citizenship etc.	8
Intermediate Range & Specific	Food, shelter, entertainment, relaxation, fitness, good family relationships, ability to read, write and calculate; meaningful employment, financial security etc. A car, a telephone, a particular neighbourhood, a particular friendship, a high school diploma, a good tv, a particular job sport, a particular political party, a particular job etc.	5

It is interesting to note herein that the number of examples of principles of Catholic social teachings found within Beck's (1993) value classification aligns with the order in which the nine Catholic administrators ranked Beck's (1993) value categories in terms of importance. For example: basic values are ranked as the most important value and this value type contains the most examples (ten) of the principles of Catholic social teaching. Moral values and social and political values are ranked second and third in terms of importance by administrators and each of these value types contain the second highest number (eight) examples of the principles of Catholic social teaching. Spiritual values and intermediate range and specific values are ranked fourth and fifth respectively in order of importance and both of these value types contain the fewest number of examples (five) of principles of the Catholic social teachings.

In addition to these examples from Beck's (1993) values classification which align with the principles of Catholic social teachings, educational administrators also discuss additional examples for certain value types. For example, friendship is highlighted in the basic values category; truthfulness and self-control are discussed in the category of moral values; and the examples of due process and loyalty are referenced in the social and political values category.

Basic Values

All nine Catholic educational administrators ranked Beck's (1993) basic value category as the most important value in terms of the order of importance. The interview data reveals that for this value category, educational administrators included multiple references to the importance of participation in the community and respect.

Adam, a system leader, attributes his belief that basic values are the most important value in Beck's (1993) value classification to his "varied leadership experiences". Over time, he has "worked in many school communities with very low socio-economic statuses". Many of his students' families "experience marginalization and constantly struggle to survive and enjoy basic rights of freedom". Adam empathizes with their plight and "strives to understand and appreciate their experiences". As a system leader, Adam acknowledges that that he has "a lot of power" and he tries to "use this power very carefully to not do any harm".

Mike, a secondary school leader, also considers basic values to be the most important value in order of importance from Beck's (1993) classification. Both of his parents immigrated to Canada with their families in search of "basic values such as survival and freedom". Consequently, Mike "strives to ensure that members of (his) school community enjoy these very same basic rights and privileges" that his parents did as new immigrants to the country.

Moral Values

Eight of the nine Catholic administrators ranked moral values as second in terms of order of importance from Beck's (1993) values classification. For this value, interview transcripts reveal that school leaders referenced fairness and courage as examples of this value category.

Carol, a system leader, seeks to ensure the development of moral values not only within her family of schools but at the school board level as well. She "strives to be a role model so that others can witness the alignment between (her) values and actions". In her experiences, Carol has observed many incongruencies between "what leaders say and

what they actually do” which she finds very “disheartening”. As a result, she firmly believes in the values of “responsibility, courage, honesty, truthfulness, fairness and reliability”.

Grant, an elementary school leader, discusses the importance of “ensuring fairness” as an administrator. When he first arrived at his school, he discovered that the “school schedule needed a lot of work”. There were six periods in a day and students “switched classes every period”. As a result of “these many transitions”, students “were constantly distracted by moving and shifting classes so frequently” and there were “numerous discipline issues as a result”. Grant discovered that the schedule had been created by teachers for teachers “because it was easier for them in terms of rotary” and “not having to have the same students for extended periods of time”. Grant “could not believe this” and “knew it was not fair for students”. His “first major decision” as leader was to “change the schedule in order to provide students with stability and structure”. Since this change he noted that “the number of discipline incidents has decreased and students seem more settled”.

Social & Political Values

Eight of the nine Catholic administrators, ranked social and political values third in order of order of importance from Beck’s (1993) values classification. The example of due process was referenced most frequently in the interview data collected from the participating educational administrators.

Adam, a system leader, discusses the need for due process when dealing with value conflicts and their resolution. He firmly believes that stakeholders “need to be validated and given the opportunity to share their perspective” in order to fully

understand and be able to mediate and negotiate the conflict situation. Karen, a secondary school leader, concurs and believes that when stakeholders participate in the conflict resolution, “a spirit of cooperation, solidarity and citizenship is created” which leads to “a sense of justice being served” with the conflict resolution.

Spiritual Values

Seven of the nine Catholic respondents ranked spiritual values fourth in terms of importance in Beck’s (1993) values classification. Data analysis reveals that for this value, multiple references were made to the example of awareness in this value category.

Adam, a system leader, explains that his “awareness developed alongside (his) experiences in leadership”. He feels “responsible to advocate for those less fortunate” because he recognizes that “the system can make cynical choices” and “those who do not speak up for themselves will get left behind”. Adam acknowledges that spiritual values have always been an important part of his life however he feels that his “experiences in leadership have helped reinforce their importance in (his) role as leader”.

Irene, an elementary school leader, greatly values “integration and collaboration” and stresses the importance of “working together with students, parents and teachers in the Catholic learning community”. She strives to “nurture responsible and caring students who are filled with a sense of wonder, hope and gratitude”. Irene works very closely with her parish priest “in order to imbue (her) staff and school community with an awareness of the world they live in” as well as “how they can, with love and humility, work together to make it a better place for all”.

Intermediate Range and Specific Values

Over half of the Catholic respondents ranked these values as the least important in Beck's (1993) classification. Interview data reveals multiple references made to three values in this category which include: the ability to read, write and calculate; a high school diploma; and meaningful employment. Administrators note that the above examples "align with several of the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations" (CGEs) (Institute for Catholic Education, 2011):

- Students are effective communicators who read, understand and use written materials effectively (CGE2b)
- Students are self-directed, responsible, life long learners who set appropriate goals and priorities in school (CGE4e); participate in leisure and fitness activities for a balanced and healthy lifestyle (CGE4g)
- Students are collaborative contributors who develops one's God-given potential and make a meaningful contribution to society (CGE5c)
- Students are responsible citizens who contribute to the common good (CGE7j)

Non-Catholic Administrators and Beck's (1993) Values Classification

The five non-Catholic administrators ranked Beck's (1993) values otherwise than their Catholic counterparts. Spiritual values were considered to be the most important value followed by basic values, moral values, social and political values and intermediate range and specific values. Table 7 displays the results of non-Catholic administrators ranking Beck's (1993) values classification.

Table 7: Non-Catholic Classification of Values using Beck’s (1993) Framework

Value →	Basic	Moral	Spiritual	Social & Political	Intermediate Range & Specific
Name ↓					
Eric	4	3	1	2	5
Grant	2	5	1	4	3
Betty	4	3	1	2	5
Frank	2	3	1	5	4
Mike	2	3	5	4	1
Mode	Three 2’s	Four 3’s	Four 1’s	Two 4’s	Two 5’s

Spiritual Values

Four of the five non-Catholic administrators ranked spiritual values primary in terms of importance in Beck’s (1993) value classification. Multiple references in the interviews were made to the examples of wonder and gratitude for this value category.

Examples from the data, referred to as “spiritual”, include those focused on improving life for students. Mike, a secondary school leader, emphasizes the importance of the belief that “all students have the potential and ability to learn and be successful”. Frank, an elementary school leader, describes his leadership role as a “calling”. He finds that it is an extremely challenging role but he “always tries to do (his) very best for (his) students”. Frank seeks to ensure that his students are filled “with hope” and always tries to teach them “gratitude and humility”. He treats all his students with “love and gentleness” because “they may be carrying a large, silent burden”. As an administrator, Frank feels that his job is “never finished and (his) vision for (his) students incomplete”.

Basic Values:

Three of the five non-Catholic administrators ranked basic values second in terms of order of importance for Beck's (1993) value classification. Data analysis reveals multiple references to the examples of participation in community and respect. Frank, an elementary school leader, believes that "all school members should be able to participate fully within the school community". He believes that certain basic values are "non-negotiable and makes it (his) responsibility to ensure that these basic needs are met within (his) school community".

Eric, an elementary school leader, values the example of respect from Beck's (1993) basic value category. He shares a situation which he experienced involving a Superintendent. Eric was asked publically to address an occurrence of disagreement involving the former and he "respectfully did not comment on the matter". However, when the Superintendent was similarly questioned, she behaved in a manner "incongruent with what (her) position demands" and "went public with the facts" which "disrespected" Eric "personally and professionally". Despite personal thoughts and beliefs, Eric states that he "always tries to demonstrate respect for others" because he holds himself to a "greater standard of behavior". Eric defines respect as a basic value which he "believes to be an inalienable right of an individual".

Moral Values:

Four of the five non-Catholic administrators ranked moral values third in terms of order of importance from Beck's (1993) values classification. Interview data reveals frequent references to the example of fairness in this value category.

As a system leader, Betty “strives to embody the principles of fairness, justice and equity so that an alignment exists between (her) personal and professional values”. The very nature of her work, which involves facilitating opportunities for women and youth at risk, newcomers to Canada and individuals trying to find meaningful employment, demands an embodiment of these principles which for Betty, holds great personal and professional significance.

Frank, an elementary school leader, “endeavors to achieve a school community which reflects the principles of inclusion, fairness and justice”. He values the principles of equality and equity and “always strives to do what is right”. In his role, Frank seeks to ensure that his “students’ self esteem is promoted through all decisions that are made for a fair, just school community”.

Social & Political Values:

Two of the five non-Catholic administrators ranked social and political values fourth in terms of order of importance from Beck’s (1993) value classification. Multiple references were made to the examples of justice and participation as found in the interview data.

Irene, an elementary school leader, discusses the importance of “justice and participation” in her experience as an administrator at an inner city high school. She addressed “many families who did not believe in the value of education” and who would “remove their son/daughter from school in order for them to work and contribute financially to the family”. Irene recognized the injustice of this but also was aware that “many of these students had tremendous potential for success”. As a result, she “encouraged them to participate in the co-operative education program” which allows

students the opportunity to “gain school credits while working”. By so doing, students “earned their high school diploma while working” which “greatly increased their life chances”.

Mike, a secondary school leader, firmly believes in “what is right and just”. He shares an example which he experienced involving a teacher who was not fulfilling her professional duties. Students were complaining “about the constant yelling in the class and that they were not learning anything”. After speaking with the teacher, “it became apparent that (she) needed some help however (she) resisted any efforts to this end”. Despite numerous attempts, the teacher “continued to refuse assistance” and believed that “nothing was wrong with (her) methods” despite students’ increasing complaints. In order to render justice to both the teacher and the students, it was proposed that the teacher take a leave of absence in order to “regroup” and a new teacher be brought in who would teach the students. This decision was formed after much deliberation and consideration because it was the “just thing to do for all parties involved”.

Intermediate Range and Specific Values

Two of the five non-Catholic administrators ranked intermediate range and specific values fifth in terms of order of importance from Beck’s (1993) values classification. Data analysis reveals multiple references to: the ability to read, write, and calculate; and to secure meaningful employment and financial security in this value category. Educational administrators note that the above examples “are aligned with the Ministry goals of education which include: high levels of student achievement; reduced gaps in student achievement; and to increase public confidence in publically funded education” (Ministry of Education, Ministry’s Research & Evaluation Strategy, 2010).

Also, these examples are reflective of the goal of schooling “which is for students to successfully earn thirty credits to secure their Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD)” (Ministry of Education, Policy & Program Requirements, 2011).

Summary: How do educational administrators see the role of values in their work?

Educational administrators understand the term *values* as: a code/set of rules and fundamental beliefs that guide daily interaction; and a basis for decision making. The majority of leaders characterize their values as the former and believe that values define leadership and should be aligned with the leaders’ practices. As a basis for decision making, administrators recognize that they have to “know their values” because the decisions they make affect the lives of many stakeholders. As a whole, administrators agree that values are “extremely relevant and important” in their leadership roles. One recurrent theme is the need, and perhaps urgency for, leaders to consistently “assess, reassess and reflect upon their values”.

The data further reveals that participant responses are reflective of the religious affiliation of the school board which employs the leader. The Catholic administrators state their values are based upon their Catholic faith as well as the Catholic social teachings. The non-Catholic leaders discuss their values in more secular terms however, their religious affiliation also directly influences the context of their values in practice. The administrators collectively agree that their core values have remained constant over time but acknowledge that the influence of context and leadership experiences has resulted in certain values becoming accordingly “more or less important”.

What types of value conflicts do educational administrators experience?

This section describes the participants' experience with value conflict, both in their own terms, and with respect to Gay's (1981) conflict typology. Gay's (1981) framework is used as a means to classify and categorize responses to the second research question which seeks to determine the type of value conflict most commonly experienced by educational administrators. The three types of conflict in Gay's (1981) typology include procedural, substantive and interpersonal conflicts and the researcher proposes that each of these conflict types can occur as a result of differences in values. Procedural conflicts involve disagreements over courses of action taken to reach a stated goal; substantive conflicts stem from incompatible goals; and interpersonal conflicts exist when different sets of attitudes, beliefs and values are held by different groups and/or individuals (Gay, 1981). In addition to discussing types of value conflicts experienced, data regarding the frequency of conflict situations, common conflict patterns and involved stakeholders are also presented along with a discussion of specific critical incidents and reasons for inciting conflict (Interview Questions 1 through 5). Data is presented sequentially in response to these questions, with a summary discussion at the end of the section.

Definition of Conflict

The review of literature suggests that a definition of conflict is difficult because many different conceptions exist within the field. The term itself possesses both positive or negative connotations. Ten of the fourteen educational administrators associate conflict with the latter and the works of Brickman (1974), Coser, (1967) and Isherwood & Achoka (1990) support this finding.

From a positive perspective, Content (1986) posits that conflict can: prevent stagnation; stimulate interest and curiosity; provide a source of personal and social changes; and foster internal cohesiveness. Four elementary school leaders believe that “conflict has positive functions” and the works of Deutsch (1973) and Cooze (1989) support this finding.

Frank regards conflict “as a sign of healthy growth” and feels that “how conflict is managed is key”. Eric feels that conflict can be used to “build, foster or repair a relationship”. Grant explains that conflict can “help build relationships because a better understanding of the other side is gained” and Helen believes that conflict “is a necessary evil in order to experience productive growth”. Jill states that as a Catholic administrator, “forgiveness is a critical part of the conflict resolution process” and that “as Catholics (we) are called to forgive each other’s trespasses”.

How frequently do conflict situations occur?

Based on data collected from interviews, it appears that conflict situations “occur regularly within schools”. Data analysis reveals that ten out of fourteen educational administrators experience conflict on a regular basis while the remaining leaders attribute the frequency of conflict situations to the specific type of leadership role held. Carol, a system leader, states that conflict situations “occur daily” and sometimes even “several times a day”. She notes that she is presented more often with “other people’s conflicts” and a large majority of her role involves “dealing with those conflicts”.

Five of the seven elementary school leaders experience conflict frequently in their administrative roles. Frank states that conflict situations are “varied and frequent” while both Eric and Grant experience conflicts “daily”. Similarly, Jill attests to the “regularity

of conflict” and states that “conflict is the one thing (you) can count on happening on any given school day”.

All four secondary school leaders confirm the regularity of conflict in their role as educational administrators. Karen states that “there is a potential for conflict at any given time” while Nancy discusses how she lives “in anticipation, moment by moment, for conflict situations to occur”. Mike admits that conflicts occur “on a daily basis” while Larry notes that “conflict is a constant and chronic occurrence”.

The remaining four administrators attribute the occurrence of conflict situations to the specific type of leadership role held. Adam, a system leader, states that he “does not encounter conflict too frequently because most of the conflicts occur at the school level (and) are handled by Vice-Principals and Principals”. On average he encounters “five conflict situations per month”. His counterpart Betty, discusses how “conflict is not always present” within her role but admits that conflict situations do arise “on the front-lines”.

As an elementary school leader, Dina states that she “does not regularly experience conflict situations” because she “expects staff to solve and resolve any issues before they become conflicts”. She admits that she is “not an easy Principal to work with” because she “expects a certain intellectual standard greater to or equal to (her) own”. Irene concurs and openly admits that she “downloads all conflict situations back where they belong – with the teachers”. Helen discusses how conflict situations “occur at specific times during the school year” and explains that “report card time, periods of class and school re-organization, and the end of the school year often see an increase in the amount of conflict situations”.

Are there any common patterns among conflicts?

Fris (1992) states that the majority of conflicts found within schools are caused by differences in values and goals; incongruent roles and expectations; and disagreement over the distribution of limited resources. Data analysis suggests that the majority of administrators understand conflict situations to stem from a disparity in values while the remaining leaders attribute conflict to personal misunderstandings and/or miscommunication.

All three system leaders believe that values differences lead to the development of conflict situations. Adam describes how his experiences “primarily involve dealing with conflict situations and stakeholders who are very unreasonable in terms of what can realistically be done to solve the situation”. His counterpart, Carol, concurs and explains that conflict situations “almost always involve a discrepancy between the wants and needs of the parents and those of the school”.

Five of the seven elementary school leaders discuss how differing values lead to the creation of conflict issues. Grant states that “all human beings possess different values” and as such, “it is unreasonable to think that conflict situations will not develop—it is the nature of the beast”. Eric concurs and cites “incongruent values between stakeholders” as the major factor in conflict situations in his experience. Frank attributes the intensity of conflict situations to “stakeholders’ emotions (which) run high” and are “the result of a difference in values”.

Two of the secondary school leaders also believe that conflict situations are created by values differences. Larry explains that he has experienced conflict situations caused by “different cultural values” and admits that he struggles “to close the values

gap”. Karen concurs and states that conflict situations are created as a result of “personal values superceding professional values”.

The above findings are supported in the literature by Begley’s (2003a) work on identifying the sources of values conflicts. His onion figure includes seven arenas of valuation which “highlight the multiple domains and functions of administration” (Begley, 2003a, p. 9), each which “(have) potentially competing or incompatible values” (Begley, 2003a, p. 9). Moving outwards, these arenas of valuation include: the individual; arena of groups and collective entities of various types; the profession; the organization; community; culture; and the transcendental (Begley, 2003a). The most commonly cited source of value conflict as stated by educational administrators involves the conflict between the innermost ring, the individual, and the organization. Begley’s model (2003a) denotes the numerous sources of value conflicts and illustrates how value conflicts can arise both within and throughout the different layers in his model. For example, “personal values (can) conflict with those of the community (and) professional values (can) conflict with organizational values” (Begley, 2003a, p. 11).

Data analysis also suggests that educational administrators attribute conflict situations to personal misunderstandings and/or miscommunication. Two elementary and two secondary school leaders discuss their experiences herein.

As an elementary school leader, Frank describes how both student and parent conflicts “often stem from misunderstandings”. For example, he states that “most students react first and think later”. Frank explains how parent conflicts “are often caused by misinformation”. He explains how much of his time is spent “wading through miscommunications and misunderstandings in order to determine the real conflict issue at

hand”. His counterpart, Grant states that “more time is required for discussion with students” to teach them “how to listen and understand one another” in order to avoid miscommunication, and the resulting conflict situation, from taking place.

Two secondary school leaders, Mike and Larry, both stress how miscommunication in the form of a “poorly delivered message” can often lead to conflict situations. They emphasize the importance of “effective communication” as an effective strategy in order to avoid this situation. Larry believes that at the heart of miscommunication “lies the values issue”. He believes that administrators should always “get to the root of the miscommunication” because when this occurs “the true source of the conflict emerges, which is typically steeped in values issues”.

What stakeholders have been involved in conflicts?

All fourteen administrators identify similar groups of stakeholders involved in conflict situations. These groups include “students, teachers, parents, Superintendents, trustees, the Director and community members”. Adam, a system leader, states that stakeholders can “run the gamut” while Eric, an elementary school leader, acknowledges that “in the service of public education, many different interest groups are represented and any of these groups at any given time can become involved in a conflict situation”. Karen, a secondary school leader, feels that “everyone (you) encounter is a potential stakeholder in a conflict situation”.

Have you ever deliberately incited a conflict?

Half of the respondents acknowledge that they have deliberately incited a conflict situation. Two system leaders and five elementary school leaders admit to having done so in order “to effect change to align personal and professional values”.

At the system level, Carol has incited conflict situations “on occasion and when necessary in order to move teachers to think beyond where they are”. She firmly believes that “conflict causes cognitive dissonance which helps people grow and learn”. Carol states that conflict situations “can arise indirectly as a result of the discussion of certain issues”. For example, she believes that “no matter how much diplomacy is employed, when discussing issues related to issues involving job performance, conflict situations will always develop”. Her counterpart, Betty, also admits to deliberately inciting a conflict situation. She explains how she “stood up to a Board of directors that was being insensitive to the work that was taking place within the organization”. She believed the Board “did not understand the work that was being done” and instead of having a discussion, “they complained to the government funders”. As a result, Betty “purposely caused a scene” and told them they “were not upholding the principles and purpose of the organization” and that their thinking “was not in alignment with the organization’s mission”. She explains that she felt she “had to deliberately incite this conflict” because their actions “ran counter to (her) values” and she “wanted to effect change within the organization”.

The elementary school leaders also shared specific examples of conflict situations which were deliberately incited in order to effect change to create an alignment between personal and professional values. For example, Jill incited a conflict situation in order “to effect change with teachers’ professional growth in the area of curriculum”. The lack of teacher collaboration and teamwork on her staff “needed to be shaken up” in order to “prevent staff from feeling too comfortable in their practice”. Similarly, Grant incited a conflict with a member of his teaching staff who, in his opinion, was not fulfilling the

responsibilities of her role. As a result, he changed her timetable and in essence “forced (her) to learn something new”.

Frank explains that he is “not at all hesitant” to incite a conflict situation if he feels that “someone is not performing up to par”. For example, one of his support staff members “took a week off school and did not call in nor leave any school work for (her) students”. The staff member “works with the most vulnerable students” and through her actions, or lack thereof, “placed (her) students at risk”. Upon her return, Frank discussed the situation with her but she was not open to the conversation and instead lodged a grievance with the union. He felt justified in inciting this conflict because her actions “were not aligned with Frank’s personal and professional values” which center around “commitment to student learning and student safety”.

Eric also admits to inciting conflict situations “when warranted”. For example, seventeen of his Grade 7 and 8 students were caught stealing off school property. The police arrived at the school to serve trespass notices to the students and instead of informing the students’ parents, Eric allowed the police interviews to take place. He asked the officer to “really scare the students” because he believed his students “were headed down a dangerous path” and that “their behavior and actions were incongruent with the school values”. Eric states that he “took a stand to reclaim the school village” and that he did this “on purpose”. Needless to say, the parents were extremely upset as was his Superintendent and much negative press was generated regarding this issue. In the end, the students “learned their lesson and did not get into trouble for the remainder of the Grade 7 or Grade 8 year”. Eric was able to repair all of the relationships with the parents and felt that his actions, although deliberate by design, “put all the cards on the

table”. He strongly believes he “was acting in the best interest of the students” and “helped to save them from a place where they could have been headed”.

The remaining seven educational administrators state that they “have not deliberately incited a conflict situation”. At the system level, Adam describes that he “is more likely to continue to witness a practice until a certain point and then get fed up”. He describes his form of incitement as “behavior modification by sarcasm”.

As an elementary leader, Dina admits that at times, the very essence of who she is “causes conflicts to develop”. She attributes this to the fact that she has “very strongly held values and opinions” which she is not afraid to show and as a result, “people either like (her) or do not”. Her counterparts Irene and Helen state that they “do not have enough time during the day to even imagine inciting a conflict situation” and both wonder “who intentionally seeks more conflict?”

All four secondary school leaders “cannot recall ever deliberately inciting a conflict situation”. However, Karen does believe that “people can unwittingly incite one unintentionally, through email” while Mike admits to “experiencing conflict as a result of (his) indirect and unintentional actions”.

What is the most commonly experienced type of conflict related to values issues?

Educational administrators were asked to identify the type of conflict most commonly experienced related to values issues from Gay’s (1981) conflict typology which defines three types of conflict namely, procedural, substantive and interpersonal. Data analysis suggests that interpersonal conflicts are the most frequently experienced type of conflict situation followed by procedural and substantive conflicts.

Seven educational administrators identified interpersonal conflicts as the most commonly experienced type of conflict related to values issues. Of these, one is a system leader, four are elementary school leaders and two are secondary school leaders.

As a system leader, Betty recognizes that interpersonal conflicts are “difficult to resolve” because “everyone comes to the table with different attitudes, beliefs and cultural values” which “shape (our) way of knowing and often guides (our) behavior”.

Jill, an elementary school leader, states that interpersonal conflicts “are inevitable given the sheer volume of people” she deals with on a daily basis. Her counterpart Frank believes that interpersonal conflicts arise because “most individuals bring an individual world view to conflict” and “want to advocate to achieve a goal that is consistent with only their way of seeing the world”. He states that “embedded within their perspective lies only their attitudes, beliefs and values” and thus, conflict situations undoubtedly arise. Eric believes that “on any given day, different groups of people within the school community may disagree on various issues” and this occurs “all too frequently” in his experience.

Two secondary school leaders also experience interpersonal conflicts the most frequently in their administrative roles. Karen states that when stakeholders are in crisis or conflict, they “cannot face reality” and as a result, they “react based upon their immediate needs”. Nancy concurs and acknowledges the “huge impact that different attitudes and belief” have in the development and creation of this type of conflict situation.

The above findings are supported in the literature in the works of Begley (1999a, 2003a); Brown (1995); and Greenfield (1993), who identify an increase in conflict due to

interpersonal interactions and/or incompatibility between personal, professional or organizational values.

Data analysis suggests that procedural and substantive conflicts are experienced less frequently by educational administrators. Four administrators (two secondary school leaders, one system leader and one elementary school leader) identified procedural conflicts as the most frequently experienced type of conflict related to values issues while three administrators (two elementary school leaders and one system leader) identified substantive conflicts in a similar manner.

Procedural conflicts are the most commonly experienced conflict for Carol, a system leader. She states that these conflicts occur the most frequently mainly due to the “elevated nature of (her) leadership role”. She finds that conflict situations which are brought to her level “always stem from value disagreements regarding the process involved to reach an end goal”.

Irene, an elementary school leader, experiences procedural conflicts quite frequently within her school community. She attributes this conflict “primarily to (her) teaching staff who do not value new ideas or advanced teaching strategies despite proclaiming to share the common goal of student success”. Most of Irene’s time is spent discussing “the value of implementing new practices with staff”.

As a secondary school leader Larry has experienced procedural conflicts. He describes himself as a very “black and white, right and wrong type of school administrator”. Conflict situations arise when his core values are “often in disagreement with the course of action taken” as a result of due process in the procedures dictated by the school board. His counterpart Mike concurs and attributes the frequency of

procedural conflicts to the fact that “although as educators (we) have very similar goals and objectives” conflicts can arise with respect to the “paths taken to reach such goals”.

As a system leader, Adam, states that he frequently encounters substantive conflicts. He feels that “conflicts occur more frequently when unfair advantage is attempted and processes have not been done justly”. Often this “unfair advantage is the result of personal values taking precedence over all else”. Resolution of these conflicts “demands justice and inevitably provokes conflict from those individuals who have benefited by such previous privileged treatment”.

Eric, an elementary school leader, also experiences substantive conflicts in his administrative role. His goal for his staff is “to demonstrate exemplary, differentiated instructional excellence for all students” regardless of their “value orientation and deficit perception of student ability”. Unfortunately, conflict situations arise because “some teachers do not share (Eric’s value) of instructional excellence to raise the bar for student achievement” nor do they wish to “try to rise to the occasion”.

Summary: What types of value conflicts do educational administrators experience?

The majority of administrators experience conflict situations which occur “frequently/daily” while other leaders attribute the occurrence of conflicts to a specific type of leadership role held. The development of conflict situations is attributed to differences in values as well as miscommunications and/or misunderstandings. Some administrators believe “conflict is inevitable because all human beings possess values which, at different times, will conflict with others”. Students, parents, teachers, Superintendents, trustees, the Director and even community members comprise the stakeholder groups identified by administrators as being involved in various conflict

situations. Half of the administrators admit to a deliberate inciting of conflict situations in order to “effect change” while the remaining leaders state they “cannot imagine ever wanting to look for even more trouble”. The leaders contend that conflict situations can occur “unwittingly, unintentionally and even by accidental incidence” as a result of “direct, indirect or misdirected actions”. Interpersonal conflicts are identified as the most frequent type of conflict situation experienced by administrators with “Everyman” and this can be attributed to “the sheer number of different people and personalities” which school leaders encounter on a daily basis. These situations of an individual’s “personal wants and needs overshadowing the common good” is a further example of interpersonal conflict of varying proportions with often difficult resolutions.

How do Administrators resolve conflicts that stem from values issues?

This section describes the participants’ experience with resolving value conflict situations, both in their own terms, and with respect to Roche’s (1997) value conflict response framework which is used as a means to classify and categorize responses to the third research question. Roche (1997) developed a value response classification framework from a synthesis of the literature relating to the actual response of administrators to value conflicts arising from within their professional role. His framework consists of four responses namely: avoidance; suspending morality; creative insubordination; and personal morality. In addition to the discussion of value conflict resolution, data is presented regarding: the strategies employed by administrators when responding to conflict situations; the effectiveness of these strategies; the influence of values on conflict resolution; and the determination of who or what has the final say or ultimate authority when dealing with conflicts (Interview Questions 1 through 5). Also,

data is presented sequentially in response to these questions, with a summary discussion at the end of the section.

What strategies do administrators use when responding to value conflicts?

Data analysis of participant interviews reveals that educational administrators employ three main strategies when responding to values conflicts. These strategies include: active listening; open dialogue and on-going communication; and restorative justice and mediation practices. In this research study, system leaders primarily use the strategy of active listening while elementary school leaders principally engage in open dialogue and on-going communication. Secondary school leaders generally employ the use of restorative justice and mediation practices in their practice.

As a system leader, Adam strives to “be a good listener” when dealing with value conflict situations. Active listening affords him “the opportunity to get a sense of the conflict issue at hand” which helps determine “the direction of the resolution”. In Adam’s experience, value conflicts occur as a result of “stakeholders placing personal values ahead of the values of the organization”. When this occurs, he acknowledges that he does “not pull any punches” and “gives back twice as much as is dished out”. In these cases, stakeholders frequently “agree to disagree” on the conflict issue at hand in lieu of a firm resolution. In other cases when stakeholders “have a genuine case against what is being put forward”, Adam feels a “sense of responsibility” to ensure that his Catholic values are reflected in his actions and that “equity and justice, along with the dignity of the individual, is upheld and preserved”. He has found active listening to be a successful strategy “because even in cases where conflicts are not resolved, both parties have left the situation feeling as though they were treated fairly” and that “justice was served”.

Adam's counterpart Betty also stresses the importance of active listening as a conflict resolution strategy. She believes that resolution can only occur "when both parties listen, hear, learn and share with each other". Betty recognizes that "as part of a diverse society, (we) all come to the table with different bases of orientation". She believes that value conflict resolution is a "two-way street" and "models the expected values and principles with (her) staff in a transparent fashion" so that "stakeholders are aware of what is expected of them and what values and principles are embraced within the organization". Betty understands that stakeholders will "not always agree but should leave little nuggets for each other that they can return to over time".

In her role as system leader, Carol "spends a great deal of time actively listening" to involved stakeholders when negotiating conflict situations. She believes this "helps get to the heart of the conflict" which allows her to discover "common ground for both parties".

Elementary leaders primarily employ strategies involving on-going communication and open dialogue. Eric believes that "everything begins with a conversation". He feels that if you "speak long enough with most people, (you) can find a common element in their values which can lead to a resolution". When working with value conflict situations, Eric "communicates with both parties" in order to "understand the problem, collect relevant data, and co-construct a conflict resolution". He feels very strongly that administrators should "remain impartial and not get involved emotionally" in any conflict situation.

His counterpart, Irene, uses dialogue to "investigate the issue at hand" in order to understand the perspectives of both parties. This allows her the opportunity "to

determine whether or not restorative justice and mediation strategies” can be used in order to resolve the conflict issue. Similarly, Jill finds that communication strategies “engage involved parties to own their particular role in the conflict situation” and finds that this “levels the playing field” and “empowers both parties” which helps to create a “win-win situation for those involved”.

Secondary school leaders frequently use restorative justice and mediation strategies when dealing with value conflict situations. Larry finds these strategies provide stakeholders “with the opportunity to say what they need to say in order to get to the root of the conflict issue”. He believes these methods are the most effective when stakeholders “have open hearts and minds” to understand “where the other is coming from” in order to “find reconciliation within the safety of the school”. In his experience, he has found that stakeholders “almost always share some common values” which can be used “as the basis to begin the conflict resolution process”.

Larry’s counterpart Karen employs the use of mediation as a strategy when responding to conflict situations that stem from values issues. She believes “it is important to take some time to do a case history” in order to determine the root of the conflict situation. By engaging in this process, Karen comes to an “understanding of the values and issues at hand in order to determine whether the conflict is able to be mediated”. In addition to formal mediation, she also employs the use of “Rogerian counselling which allows (stakeholders) the opportunity to discuss (individual) perspectives concerning the conflict issue”. Coupled with Karen’s carefully guided prompts and questions, stakeholders “are able to work together to resolve the conflict situation themselves”.

Was the resolution effective enough to be repeated in similar circumstances?

The data for this study suggests that participating educational administrators unanimously believe in the effectiveness of active listening, on-going dialogue and open communication, and restorative justice and mediation as strategies which are employed to respond to value conflict situations. For example: Betty, a system leader, states that she has resolved value conflict situations “in a similar manner using these strategies for the past twenty years”; Mike, a secondary school leader, states that these strategies “have been successful one hundred percent of the time”; and Carol, a system leader, is “generally surprised if (she) cannot resolve a conflict using these strategies”.

In dealing with conflicts, who or what has the final say or ultimate authority?

When dealing with value conflict resolution situations, the data suggests that all fourteen educational administrators concur that the final and ultimate authority is determined traditionally by “the highest educational administrative role”.

As a system leader, Betty believes that “no matter how hard (you) try to create a sense of equality, an unequal power balance always exists” due to the hierarchical nature of roles and responsibilities. When a value conflict is not able to be resolved, she believes that “the power differential always wins out”.

Grant, an elementary school leader, states that “at the end of the day, it is not really a democracy”. At the school level, he has been entrusted to do his job and as such, “(his) is the final or ultimate authority”. If the decision went beyond the school level, then Grant would “defer to the highest authority, be it the Superintendent or the Director of Education”. He firmly believes that in the end, the “power differential prevails” because “everyone has a specific role to play”. Frank concurs with the hierarchical

power differential structure and posits “why else place administrators in positions of responsibility or authority?”

As a group, the secondary school leaders acknowledge that the power differential “always wins out in the end”. Karen also recognizes that in certain cases “school leaders are mandated to comply with educational legislation and/or policies and procedures which could determine the final resolution of a conflict”.

To what extent do values influence the resolution of the conflict?

Data analysis of participant interviews suggests that all fourteen educational administrators believe that their values “strongly influence” the resolution of a conflict situation.

Adam, a system leader, states that his values are “absolutely essential” in the conflict resolution process because they “go back to the Catholic social teachings with justice and dignity at the core of it all”. Carol concurs and believes that her values “very much” influence the resolution of a conflict situation due to the fact that conflict situations “occur between people who find it very difficult to separate their values from their actions”. In fact, she notes that it is “very difficult (for her) to separate (her) Catholic values from (her) actions”.

As a group, the elementary school leaders recognize the “tremendous impact” that values have on the resolution of conflict situations. Eric states that he “cannot imagine values not influencing the resolution of a conflict” because they “drive what (you) do”. Helen agrees and states that her values play a “huge part in the conflict resolution process” because her values “determine how the conflict gets resolved in terms of the strategies used and the process itself”.

The secondary school leaders also acknowledge the “significant influence of values” and their role in the conflict resolution process. Karen states that her values “influence the resolution of conflict situations in a huge way” and attributes this to her Catholic faith. She feels that “(her) faith influences and aligns with (her) values”. As a Catholic administrator, she believes “(we) are all sinners and make mistakes” and considers it her role to “teach students how to not make the same mistakes and sin in the same way”. She states that the “only perfect person they crucified” so her conflict resolution process is “greatly influenced by (her) faith” and the value of forgiveness. Nancy concurs with Karen and believes that her values “influence the resolution of a conflict to a great extent” because “in order to do what (you) think is right”, considerable time and effort will be invested into “forging equitable and just resolutions” that are “aligned with (your) values”.

The above findings regarding the influence of administrators’ values on the resolution of conflict situations are supported within the literature on conflict resolution. For example, researchers such as Begley (1988), Marshall (1992), Campbell (1992) and Beck (1993) have conducted studies which support this claim. Hodgkinson (1991) contends that administrators, in an attempt to manage the value conflicts they encounter on a daily basis, draw upon their own value system which influences the decisions that are made while Katz & Lawyer (1993) suggest that the selected conflict resolution strategy is influenced by contextual influences such as administrators’ personal preferences. Thus, administrators need to be cognizant of the influence of their values on conflict resolution and strive to be as objective as possible for resolution.

How do Administrators respond to conflicts that stem from values issues?

The data analysis suggests that the majority of educational administrators adopt the final response in Roche's (1997) value classification response framework, personal morality, when responding to conflict situations. Eleven of the fourteen educational administrators state that they take a moral stand while negotiating conflict situations regardless of the consequences. Of the remaining administrators, two secondary school leaders use creative insubordination to resolve value conflicts and one elementary school leader suspends her morality.

Adam, a system leader, states that his personal morality dictates his response to value conflict situations and this typically involves "taking a moral stand". He feels that it "takes a strong character to do so" and discusses how "(you) have to be prepared to be ostracized for the right reasons" but in the long run, "people respect (you) for it". For example, he discusses when he was a young Principal and the provincial teachers strike had just occurred. Adam received directions from his Superintendent and Director "not to walk the picket line with teachers" however this "did not sit well" with Adam. He had recently been promoted to the school as Principal and did not feel as though he could "abandon the teachers in the school community". As a result he "blatantly disobeyed what was asked of (him), walked the picket line and brought coffee, food and wood out to (his) teachers". Adam "never once doubted whether crossing the picket line was the right thing to do" but rather, he just knew "that it had to be done". He feels very strongly that his "personal and professional values are in alignment" and regardless of the consequences, will always "do what (he) believes is right". Adam states that "values alignment occurs when (his) Catholic values are reflected in (his) leadership practice".

Adam's counterpart Betty also states that she "stands up for what (she) believes in" because without doing so, she "would not be able to look at herself in the mirror".

As Catholic elementary school leaders, both Frank and Jill feel they have "a moral obligation to take a stand for what is right and just". Frank strives to be "an authentic human being whose personal and professional values are in alignment". Jill believes that her "personal Catholic integrity is imperative in influencing others to act ethically" and believes that through her actions, she sets "an example for (her) school community".

Frank, an elementary school leader, states that he "frequently voices (his) opinion" and "stands up for what (he) believes in when something is totally contrary to (his) values in (his) role as school leader". He feels that "how conflict is handled is extremely important" because the school community "looks to their administrator for direction and leadership". He shares the example of how his school goal has centered around literacy initiatives for the past school year. The release of the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) data revealed that his school's numeracy scores declined from the previous year. As a result, Frank's Superintendent suggested that the "school focus change from literacy to numeracy in order to target this area of concern". Frank did not agree with this change because his staff "had really bought into the literacy professional development" and were working hard to improve "reading and writing across the curriculum". He decided that the school's focus "would remain literacy for the remainder of the year". Frank's Superintendent disagreed with this decision but could appreciate Frank's reasons for wanting to remain focused on literacy. As a result, the Superintendent arranged for numeracy consultants to work specifically with Frank's

school because he understood that Frank “was not going to budge, regardless of any consequences”.

As a secondary school leader, Nancy explains that she “takes a moral stand” and “stands up for what (she) believes in” when she feels strongly about the issues at hand. She states that this response is “generally not well received” however “when the well-being of the student and family are at stake, the action warrants the consequence”. Nancy believes that “(you) feel a sense of satisfaction in knowing (you) did the right thing” because “as an administrator, sometimes (your) Catholic moral compass needs to supercede the rules and regulations”.

Two secondary school leaders state that they would use creative insubordination when resolving conflicts related to values issues. Karen recognizes that she has “an obligation to act professionally” but must also “remain true and honor (her) value system” and she feels this response “allows (her) to achieve both goals”. Mike also recognizes his professional responsibility to follow school board policies and procedures however he feels that he “would adapt them to fit the context of the situation”. By so doing, he believes he is “fulfilling (his) professional duties while remaining true to (his) values”.

One elementary school leader states that she would suspend her morality when resolving value conflicts. Helen believes that since she “works for the school board” she has a “responsibility to adhere to their official policies and procedures”. She states that unless she receives direction otherwise, she will always “comply with the mandate of the school board” because she is a “faithful employee of the organization (who) follows its mandate explicitly”.

Summary:

How do educational administrators resolve conflicts that stem from values issues?

When dealing with conflict situations that arise from values issues, administrators generally use three strategies namely: active listening; open dialogue and on-going communication; and restorative justice and mediation practices. These strategies have proven to be “very successful” for administrators who say that they would be “shocked if a conflict could not be resolved (using one of the above strategies)”. In terms of the final or ultimate authority, leaders emphasize that this will be determined by “whoever has the highest administrative authority in the leadership hierarchy”. Collectively, administrators recognize that their values influence the resolution of conflict situations because their decision making skills are shaped by their values and vice-versa. In terms of resolving value conflicts, the majority of leaders state their personal morality would dictate their conflict resolution response and further, that they would “take a stand” irrespective of the consequences if they believed the resolution was counter to their personal values.

Chapter Summary:

This chapter affords the descriptive findings from the data in relation to the core research questions and conceptual framework for this study. The research questions seek to determine: how educational administrators see the role of values in their work; the types of value conflicts educational administrators experience; and how educational administrators resolve conflicts that stem from values issues. The next chapter, Chapter 6, will use the data as presented to answer the research questions in order to provide an overall summary for the study and identify future research implications.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS & IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this study was to investigate how educational administrators deal with personal and professional value conflicts that arise within schools in today's diverse society. Specifically, the researcher sought to understand how administrators identify and classify their values as well as to determine the constancy and relevance of values in their role as leader. In terms of value conflicts, discussions were centered around the type and frequency of conflict situations, the involved stakeholders, finding common patterns in conflict and the reasons for the incitement of conflict situations. With respect to value conflict resolution, the researcher pursued information concerning conflict resolution strategies and their effectiveness; influence of values on conflict resolution; and the determination of who has the final say or ultimate authority in terms of value conflict resolution.

Fourteen educational administrators who work at three different levels (system, elementary and secondary) were interviewed for this study. Six different school boards, both public and Catholic, across the Province of Ontario were represented in this study. The participants, all school and community leaders, include candidates in the Ed.D. program in Educational Administration in the Theory and Policy Department at the University of Toronto, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) as well as practising educational administrators with extensive experience in school leadership. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with administrators at their schools to ensure a natural setting.

The conceptual framework for this study is based on the discussion presented in Chapter Two, the literature review, and consists of three main areas: values classification; type of conflict; and value conflict resolution. A cyclical diagram (see

Figure 5) is used to graphically represent the relationship between the three interrelated areas. The purpose of the conceptual framework for this study is to look at the relationships between the three areas in terms of how participants see values, define, resolve and learn from conflict situations.

The first area, values classification, includes how educational administrators see the role of values in their work. Beck's (1993) values classification is used herein as a means for educational administrators to rank their values in order of importance using a measure of scale. Based upon their value orientation, school leaders can experience different conflict situations. Gay's (1981) conflict typology is utilized in order to determine the specific type of value conflict most frequently experienced by administrators. How the conflict situation is resolved is determined according to Roche's (1997) conflict response framework which includes avoidance, suspending morality, creative insubordination and personal morality as administrator responses to conflict.

To understand how educational administrators deal with personal and professional value conflicts that arise within schools in today's society, three research questions were addressed. They include:

1. How do educational administrators see the role of values in their work?
2. What types of value conflicts do educational administrators experience?
3. How do educational administrators resolve conflicts that stem from values issues?

Chapter Six presents a summary discussion of the research findings. The research questions for the study are employed as a structure for these findings. This chapter concludes with implications for leadership, practice and further research.

How do Educational Administrators see the role of values in their work?

The research study suggests that educational administrators understand the term *values* to be: a code/set of rules and fundamental beliefs that guide daily interaction; and a basis for decision-making. The majority of respondents describe their values as the former and believe that values “define who (you) are as a leader” and “should be aligned with (your) actions”. Other researchers have found similar findings on administrators’ role within the school community with respect to values (Greenfield & Ribbins, 1993; English, 1994). As a basis for decision-making, participants state that administrators have to be “cognizant of their own values” and mindful of the “influence values have on decisions that are made”. This finding is reflected in the literature in the study of values and decision making (Hodgkinson, 1983, 1991; Greenfield, 1986; Begley, 2003a). Begley & Johansson (1998, p. 1) suggest that “most administrators will (readily) acknowledge the impact of values on their personal affairs and professional practices”. Decisions impact and affect many stakeholders within the school community so it is imperative that school leaders ensure an influence that is in the best interest for all. Several administrators note that “it is impossible to separate personal values from professional values”. One participant states that values “are not specific to education” and are in fact “relevant in anything that (you) do”.

All fourteen educational administrators unanimously agree that values are “very relevant” in their role as leader. As the educational leader in the school community, the administrator “has the responsibility to exemplify and embody appropriate values”. A recurring theme in participant responses suggests that administrators “should be willing to reassess and reflect upon their values”. This finding is supported by: Hodgkinson’s

values typology (1978) which can serve as a values audit for educational administrators; and Begley's (2003a, p. 5) syntax of values terminology which can also assist school leaders to understand how their values are integrated and interact with other facets within their being.

Although the data suggests that administrators can define their values and recognize their importance in leadership, it does not address the depth of understanding as suggested by Branson's (2004, p. 5) conceptual framework of the Self. This framework outlines the various level components of the Self (self-concept, self-esteem, motives, values, beliefs, behaviors) and "suggests a pathway" (Branson, 2005a, p. 24) for gaining self-knowledge regarding the formation of personal values through an "inside-out" approach of deeply structured self-reflection (Branson, 2007, p. 231). Personal values originate within one's core which is the self-concept and they are formed within one's self-esteem and then motives (Hultmann & Gellerman, 2002; Osborne, 1996). As such, administrators have very little working self-knowledge regarding their values and require guidance in order to clarify personal values by looking into their Self and becoming more self-reflective (Cashman, 1998; McGraw, 2001). By examining their core, self-concept, and thus moving sequentially outwards through the other component levels, administrators will gain a deeper insight into the level of consciousness and degree of knowledge regarding each impending component (Branson, 2005b, pgs. 4, 10). This progression of self-reflection will allow leaders to know and truly understand their values and the resulting influence which they have on leadership behavior (Branson, 2005a, p. 11).

In terms of the principles upon which administrators' values are based, data analysis suggests that the participant responses are reflective of the type of school board, Catholic or public, which employs the participant. The nine Catholic educational administrators state that their values are based on "Catholic social teachings, Catholic graduate expectations and the Catholic faith". The common mission and vision of the Catholic Separate School system is echoed in the collective Catholic values which are shared by all Catholic leaders. As a result, there is a strong alignment between "administrators' values and practice" in the Catholic system due to the institutionalized values that directly affect their work. For example, the Catholic respondents acknowledge that their "Catholic faith is intertwined and woven" in their values and each discusses, in some regard, the integration of Catholic principles, values and the principles of the Catholic social teachings and action into their daily practice. Interestingly, the number of examples of principles of Catholic social teachings found within Beck's (1993) value classification aligns with the order in which the nine Catholic administrators ranked Beck's (1993) value categories in terms of importance. For example, basic values are ranked first in terms of importance and this value type contains the most examples (ten) of the principles of Catholic social teaching. Moral values and social & political values, which are ranked second and third respectively in terms of order of importance, each contain eight examples of the principles of Catholic social teaching. Spiritual values and intermediate range and specific values are ranked fourth and fifth in terms of order of importance and both contain the least amount of examples (five) of principles of the Catholic social teachings. This alignment in ranking speaks to the collective strength of

administrators in terms of shared mission, values and common understandings in the Catholic system of education.

It is compelling to note that spiritual values are not ranked as the most important value in Beck's (1993) values classification for this group of Catholic administrators. Possible suggestions for this result is that administrators state that their values and actions "are driven by their Catholic faith as well as the Catholic social teachings" which are "the common denominator of their value system". This aligns with their selection of basic values as the most important value type as this category contains the most examples (ten) of the principles of Catholic social teaching. The above indicates that Catholic administrators' values are aligned with the teachings of their Catholic faith, namely the Catholic social teachings.

The Ministry of Education also recognizes the important influence of the Catholic faith and states in its June 2008 document *Finding Common Ground: Character Development in Ontario Schools, K-12* that "Catholic education is founded on the basis of inculcating Catholic values" (Ministry of Education, Finding Common Ground, 2008, p. 14). The Ministry defines character education as "a process of engagement in which communities come together to build consensus on the values they hold in common" (Ministry of Education, Finding Common Ground, 2008, p. 7). This document, which is for use by all Ontario publicly-funded boards (English, and French, Catholic and public), also acknowledges that the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations, developed by The Institute for Catholic Education (2011), describe the life roles, knowledge, skills and attitudes the Catholic community holds for its students (Ministry of Education, Finding Common Ground, 2008, p. 15). Specifically, the Catholic graduate is expected to be: "a

discerning believer formed in the Catholic Faith community who develops attitudes and values founded on Catholic social teaching” as well as “a responsible citizen who gives witness to Catholic social teaching “(Institute for Catholic Education, 2011).

The Ministry of Education introduced the Ontario Leadership Strategy (OLS) in 2006 which was developed to “attract the appropriate people to the principalship” and to “help administrators develop into the best possible instructional leaders” (Ministry of Education, Ontario Leadership Strategy, 2006). A central component of this strategy is the Ontario Leadership Framework (OLF) which outlines a set of core leadership competencies and effective practices for administrators (Ministry of Education, Ontario Leadership Framework, 2007). Recognizing the distinct nature of the Catholic faith community, the Ministry created a Catholic leadership framework based upon input from various stakeholder groups within the Catholic community which reflects key Catholic beliefs and values (Catholic Principals’ Council of Ontario, Catholic Leadership Framework, 2007). This framework also helps in developing the strong alignment between administrators’ values in the Catholic system as its purpose is to: promote a common language and understanding of leadership at the school and system level; to guide the design and implementation of professional development for Vice-Principals, Principals and Supervisory Officers; and to provide a framework for administrator growth (Ministry of Education, Ontario Leadership Framework, 2007).

The Catholic Leadership Framework (CLF) is organized into six domains for administrators which include Catholic faith, community and culture; setting directions, building relationships and developing people; developing the organization; leading the instructional program; and securing accountability (Ministry of Education, Catholic

Leadership Framework, 2007). The practices and competencies (which include skills, knowledge and attitudes) for each domain outline and reflect key principles, values and beliefs of the Catholic faith, such as the Catholic social teachings and the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations, which are infused and integrated within Catholic leadership (Ministry of Education, Catholic Leadership Framework, 2007). The alignment between Catholic administrators' values, practices and competencies is made stronger by the Catholic Leadership Framework as it provides a Catholic system standard for educational administration. The data also reflects this alignment as Catholic administrators recognize and acknowledge the strong influence of Catholic values, the Catholic social teachings as well as the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations.

The four public school administrators discussed their values in more universal, secular terms and ranked Beck's (1993) values classification differently from their Catholic counterparts. Spiritual values were ranked the most important value with the non-Catholic leaders who ranked this value higher than their Catholic counterparts. When questioned regarding this ranking, participants stated that this category "had the most examples of what (they) considered to be universal values". Mike, a secondary school leader, believes one of the most important aspects of education is "teaching students what is the right thing to do". Several administrators cited the Ministry document entitled *Finding Common Ground: Character Development in Ontario Schools, K-12* in their interviews. Frank, an elementary school leader, describes character development as "the public school's answer to values education". He believes character development involves making students "aware of universal values such as love, for example, that are required not only for the definition of a good person but also for a

good citizen who can function effectively in society”. Frank describes how “character development is strongly emphasized” in his board and “is integrated into all aspects of (his) school’s life”. The remaining two non-Catholic administrators also spoke of character development and “its teaching of values” and they used the terms interchangeably during their interviews. Thus, the ranking of spiritual values as the most important value in Beck’s (1993) classification for this group of non-Catholic leaders can be understood as this category is viewed as containing the most examples of universal values which aligns with character development and which is how public schools teach (their) students values.

The Ministry of Education also developed a leadership framework for Principals and Vice-Principals who work within the public system of education (Ministry of Education, Ontario Leadership Framework, 2007). Notwithstanding the Catholic faith, community and culture domain, this framework consists of the same domains (setting directions, building relationships and developing people, developing the organization, leading the instructional program, and securing accountability) along with the related practices and competencies therein. The framework references “core values” which aligns with how this group of administrators ranked Beck’s (1993) value classification and also their thoughts concerning character development.

It seems that all participating educational administrators collectively agree that their core and/or foundational values have remained constant over time. A common pattern in responses included the belief that leadership experiences have resulted in certain values becoming “more or less important ” depending upon certain factors. For example, the context and circumstances of one situation could result in one value being

held in higher regard than others. Administrators believe that this does not diminish the overall significance of the value but further state that “it is relative depending upon the context and issue that is addressed”.

This finding that core and/or foundational values have remained constant over time is supported in the literature by Branson (2005a). Branson states (2005a, pgs. 31-32) that personal values are “part of the principal’s holistic understanding of their Self” and “apply to all aspects of one’s life”. Changing personal values “is a very complex and complicated activity” because it “requires intimate understanding about one’s Self” (Branson, 2005a, p. 31). Branson (2005a, p. 31) posits that the changing of values “requires more than the mere promotion of a preferred value as its adoption would also have to negate an understanding of one’s Self that had been developed and nurtured over time”. Furthermore, the newly promoted value would “have to compete not only with existing values but also their accompanying historical importance before they become adopted” (Branson, 2005a, p. 32). Administrators would have to engage in deeply structured self-reflection activities from the “inside-out” in order to change their values (Branson, 2007, p. 227; 2005a, p. 31). The data suggests that participants in the study comprehend the constancy of core and/or foundational values but there is no indication in the analysis that they understand the difficulties associated with changing values nor the role of the Self in this process.

What types of value conflicts do educational administrators experience?

The term *conflict* engenders both positive or negative connotations. Ten of the fourteen educational administrators associate conflict with the latter and the works of Coser (1967), Deutsch (1973), Isherwood & Achoka (1990) support this conclusion.

Coser (1967, p. 8) states that conflict is “a struggle over values...in which aims of opponents are to ..injure or eliminate the rivals”; and Deutsch (1973, p. 145) defines conflict as “an action incompatible with another...that injures (and makes) it less likely or effective”. Only four administrators believe there is a “positive aspect to conflict” in which it is a “sign of healthy growth”. These leaders try to frame conflict “positively” so that “lessons can be learned” in order to “come back with a better understanding of the other side”. This perspective is supported in the literature on conflict in the works of Content (1986) and Deutsch (1973). For example, Content (1986) lists the many positive functions of conflict while Deutsch (1973) believes conflict has a creative function in that it “creates motivation to solve problems that may normally be ignored”.

Interview data concerning the frequency of conflict situations suggests that conflict situations occur regularly for the majority of administrators. Data analysis reveals that ten out of fourteen educational administrators experience conflict on a “constant” basis. This finding is supported in the literature by: Martin & Willower (1981) who state that “school leaders encounter conflict on a frequent basis”; Cooze (1989) who acknowledges there are “unavoidable sources of conflict” within schools; and Begley (2000) who discusses how the “increasing social and cultural diversity found within today’s society” causes conflict situations. The remaining four leaders attribute the frequency of conflict situations to the specific type of leadership role held. For example, one system leader discussed how the conflict situations he encounters are “not that frequent” because “most of the conflicts occur at the school level on the front lines”. His counterpart discusses how “conflict is not always present” within her role but admits that conflict situations do arise “at lower levels in the leadership hierarchy”.

Coping efficiently and effectively with conflicts is possibly one of the most important aspects of the administrator's position (Nebgen, 1978 as cited in Fleetwood, 1987, p. 2).

In terms of common patterns among conflict situations, the majority of respondents feel that conflicts "stem from differences in values and miscommunications and/or misunderstandings". The work of Fris (1992) supports this finding and states that the majority of conflicts found within schools are caused by: differences in values and goals; incongruent roles and expectations; and disagreement over the distribution of limited resources.

Ten of the fourteen participating administrators attribute differences in values to the development of conflict situations. Common patterns in participant responses include: conflict is inevitable because "all human beings possess values"; it is "unreasonable to think that conflict situations will not develop between individuals"; conflict is "the nature of the beast"; and conflict situations are created as a result of "personal values overshadowing professional values".

The above findings are supported in the literature by Begley's (2003a) work on the identification of the sources of value conflicts. He attributes value conflicts to be the result of incompatibility between arenas which include: culture, community, organization, profession, group, and self. Begley's model (2003a) illustrates how value conflicts can arise both from within and throughout the different layers in his model.

Data analysis suggests that educational administrators attribute conflict situations to personal misunderstandings and/or miscommunication. Common patterns in responses include that conflict: often stems from misunderstandings; where people react emotionally first and think rationally later; and result from a "poorly delivered message".

The study's findings reveal that participating educational administrators describe similar stakeholder groups who are involved in conflict situations. These include: students, teachers, parents, Superintendents, trustees, the Director and community members. Administrators feel that conflict situations can arise between any of the above at any given time because "every stakeholder possesses their own set of values which are influenced by their racial, ethnic and religious backgrounds".

The analysis of data suggests that half of the respondents acknowledge they have deliberately incited a conflict situation in order to "effect change". This finding is supported in the literature in the works of Content (1986) and Deutsch (1973) who view conflict as a positive, motivating, creative and transforming force. Alternately, the responses for those administrators who have not deliberately incited a conflict situation include "not having time nor the inclination to do so". Administrators also acknowledged that conflict situations could be "unwittingly or unintentionally" caused as a result of "direct or indirect actions".

The results of this study proffer that educational administrators identify interpersonal conflicts as the most common type of conflict situation experienced as related to the values issues. Procedural and substantive conflicts are ranked as the second and third type of conflict situations experienced by educational administrators.

Seven of the fourteen participating administrators encounter interpersonal conflicts frequently in their role as leader. Gay (1981) states the interpersonal conflicts exist when different sets of attitudes, beliefs, and values are held by different groups and individuals. The influence of values on the development of this type of conflict was discussed along with the acknowledgement that interpersonal conflicts are "inevitable

given the sheer volume of different people that leaders encounter on a daily basis”.

Respondents attribute interpersonal conflicts to the disparity between “individual wants and needs versus the common good”. These findings are supported in the literature in the work of Fris (1992) who states that differences in goals and values is a primary cause for conflict situations.

Data analysis suggests that the remaining administrators experience procedural conflicts more frequently than substantive situations. According to Gay (1981), procedural conflicts involve disagreements over the courses of action taken to reach a stated goal and substantive conflicts, which stem from incompatible goals. Common patterns in responses for procedural conflicts include: value disagreements with articulated policies and procedures with which to achieve the end results; and for substantive conflicts, differing values, expectations and objectives.

How do Administrators resolve conflicts that stem from values issues?

Data analysis of participant interviews suggests that educational administrators generally use three common strategies to respond to conflicts that stem from values issues. The system leaders primarily employ the strategy of active listening while the elementary school leaders use open dialogue and on-going communication and the secondary school leaders utilize restorative justice and mediation practices. Respondents believe that active listening is “extremely important” in order to understand the perspectives of involved stakeholders and feel that open dialogue and on-going communication is necessary to gain clarification and understanding of the issue at hand. Restorative justice and mediation practices are considered to give both parties the opportunity to share their thoughts and feelings regarding the conflict issue with the

intention of finding common ground for a solution. Other conflict resolution strategies which were discussed include: being patient; using humor; modeling appropriate behavior; reading body language; and using intuition.

All of the participating administrators believe in the effectiveness of the above strategies for the resolution of conflict situations. In fact, many stated that they had “been using the strategies successfully for a number of years”; and “would be shocked if a conflict could not be resolved using these approaches”.

The data suggests that administrators concur that the final or ultimate authority is determined by “the highest leadership role within the hierarchical structure of educational leadership”. Common patterns in participant responses include: the “unequal balance of power” that exists in leadership due to assigned roles and responsibilities; the resulting “power differential which will always prevail”; and the belief that “leadership is not a democracy”. The researcher attributes this finding in part to the reality of the hierarchical nature of leadership within an educational organization. However, there is also something to be said for the fact that the highest administrative role is perceived to have the higher value set. The researcher posits that a values clarification and alignment is required at all levels within the organization; this way, regardless of who has the final say or ultimate authority, the resolution will be one that is appropriate to the organization since the system is aligned collectively at all levels within the hierarchy.

The respondents unanimously agree that their values strongly influence the resolution of a conflict situation. The Catholic administrators state that their faith/beliefs shape their values, which in turn influences their decision making actions for the resolution of the conflict. Several leaders outlined how their Catholic values influence

conflict resolutions because of their belief in redemptive forgiveness and that “(we) are all sinners and make mistakes”. The Catholic administrators believe that “what (you) learn from (your) mistakes” is the critical piece because “(we) are all not perfect and the only person who was, they crucified”. Non-Catholic leaders responded in more secular terms regarding the influence of values on conflict resolution. Common patterns and practice in responses include that they “cannot imagine their values not influencing value conflict resolution” because values “drive what (you) do”. The influence of values on decision making and conflict resolution is supported in the literature in the works of: Hodgkinson (1978); Ashbaugh & Kasten (1984); and Campbell (1992) [see Table 1]. Leithwood, Jantzi & Steinbach (1999) “consider the function of values in problem solving processes of administrators” while Begley (1988) reports the existence of a relationship between administrators’ orientation to their role and the values they use in decision making solutions.

Based on the data from participant interviews, the majority of educational administrators state that they would adopt the final response in Roche’s (1997) value classification response framework, personal morality, when resolving conflicts that stem from values issues. Eleven of the fourteen educational administrators state that they would take a moral stand while negotiating conflict situations regardless of the consequences while two secondary school leaders state that they would be creatively insubordinate. Only one elementary school leader contends that she would suspend her morality and comply with the regulations of school board wisdom. Administrators believe that taking a stand based on personal morality is necessary for a number of reasons including: doing what is “morally right”; standing up for “personal and

professional beliefs”; upholding a “moral obligation” to protect what is just; being “faithful in maintaining Catholic integrity”; and setting an example of “faith in action”.

Two administrators state that they would be creatively insubordinate when resolving conflicts that stem from values issues. Reasons for this outcome were driven by behavior and the “feeling of professional obligation and responsibility” to uphold policies and procedures of the school board “while remaining true to (your) values”. Only one elementary school leader feels that she would suspend her morality because she “felt a professional responsibility to adhere to official policies and procedures while also upholding school board’s rules and regulations”.

Implications for Leadership

The findings from the research study confirm that educational leadership in today’s society is extremely complex and challenging. The participating educational administrators who encounter value conflicts on an on-going basis acknowledge the importance and relevance of values in their leadership roles. As previously stated, although the data suggests that administrators can define their values and recognize their importance in leadership, it does not address the depth of understanding as suggested by Branson’s (2004) conceptual framework of the Self. The researcher posits that results of the study suggest the need for educational administrators to adopt a values-based leadership model. Adapted from Day et al. (2000) and Fitzpatrick (2007), this model consists of three dimensions: knowing and understanding values; aligning values and actions; and using values alignment as a proactive approach to conflict management. Considered as a whole, this model addresses the research questions from the study which include: how administrators see the role of values in their work; types of value conflicts

administrators experience; and how administrators resolve conflicts that stem from values issues. Hodgkinson (1996, p. 109) states that “an administrator, any administrator is constantly faced with value choices” and Sergiovanni et al. (2004, p. 203) comments that leaders are often located “at the vortex of powerful influences that enable and inhibit their ability to perform successfully”. The adoption of a values-based leadership model will assist educational administrators to navigate through “the kinds of conflicts and dilemmas that appear in most human triangles” (Fullan, 2003, p. 137).

The first dimension, knowing and understanding values, is extremely important for administrators given the demands of their role. The results of the study suggest that administrators recognize the importance of knowing their values and discuss the relevance and influence of values in their role as leader. They discuss the importance of being open and willing to “reassess and reflect upon their values”. The values-based leadership model proposes that administrators adopt Branson’s (2007, p. 231) “inside out approach” of deeply structured self reflection. This process provides administrators with a comprehensive set of guiding self-inquiry questions that commence with the innermost component of the Self, self-concept, and progress sequentially outwards through the other components (self-esteem, motives, values, beliefs, behaviors) (Branson, 2007, p. 231). The purpose of this activity is to isolate and analyze a key image held in the administrators’ self-concept and sequentially trace its impact sequentially through the various other Self components (Branson, 2007, p. 231). It is important to note that the key images contained within the self-concept are formed during a unique life experience and the image is created from the administrator’s interpretation of the experience and is entirely subjective (Branson, 2007, p. 231). When the administrator interprets another

life experience with similar characteristics, the same physical and emotional response to the original experience is reproduced (Branson, 2007, p. 231). Thus, by reflecting on the original life experience and its associate images and emotions, the former helps to clarify current behavior responses to situations perceived as having similarly defined characteristics (Branson, 2007, p. 231).

Branson (2007) also developed a visual display instrument (Appendix A) to help summarize the outcomes from this self reflection process as well as to illustrate how administrators' behavior is affected by the interconnectedness of all the components of the Self (2007, p. 232). Beginning with the core, self-concept, and moving outwards, the display shows how the self-concept image has influenced the development of each component of the Self (Branson, 2007, p. 232). It is interesting to note how specific self-concepts images which can be formed at different times and stages in life, can later influence the administrators' leadership behavior and influence the adoption of certain personal values (Branson, 2007, p. 232). The "inside-out" approach is an invaluable tool in helping administrators know and comprehend their values as well as critically reflect on their leadership behaviors so that they may always remain true to their Self while comprehending the root of their values (Branson, 2007, p. 232).

Furthermore, educational administrators can also conduct a values audit which Hodgkinson (1991, p. 136) states:

..is a stock-taking of one's own values; it is a reflective and contemplative effort which seeks to bring into the light of consciousness the range, depth and breadth of one's preferences, conditioning and beliefs.

Similarly, Goleman et al. (2002, p. 49) comment that "self-aware leaders understand their values, goals and dreams. They know where they're headed and why". Thus, the use of

Branson's (2007) deeply structured process of self-reflection coupled with Hodgkinson's (1991) values audit is suggested for administrators' practice. Educational organizations should integrate both practices within their system so that shared and collective values can be determined to ensure that the system as a whole is working in harmony towards common goals.

The second dimension in the values-based leadership model emphasizes the need for administrators to align their values with their actions and "live their values" through values role modeling. Notman (2005, p. 281) posits that this can occur through internal values congruency; where interdependent links are suggested between origins of leaders' values, personal and professional values, and specific leadership behaviors; as well as external values modeling. Results from the research study suggest that administrators strive to achieve both internal and external values integrity and that their personal and professional values are grounded in three areas: religious background; family upbringing; and experiences in administration. Branson (2007, p. 229) reports similar findings and states that "the components of the Self that are formed during one's life experiences become powerful influences of how one experiences, perceives and reacts to reality".

In order to gain alignment between values and actions, the values-based leadership model proposes that administrators develop what Notman (2005, p. 315) calls "a personal philosophy of leadership which considers the links that exist between personal and professional values and leadership behaviors". To develop this philosophy, leaders first need to know and better understand their values, which is made possible through the use of Branson's (2007, p. 231) "inside out" approach to deeply structured

self-reflection coupled with Hodgkinson's (1991) values audit. Notman (2005, p. 319) also discusses a model by Sergiovanni & Starratt (1993) which can be helpful to administrators in developing this philosophy. This framework includes ten key elements, each of which focuses on a generic educational theme: the aims of education; the major achievement of students this year; the social significance of the students' learning; the administrator's image of the learner; the value of the curriculum; the administrator's image of the teacher; the preferred kind of pedagogy; the primary language of discourse in learning situations; the preferred kind of teacher-student relationships; the preferred kind of school climate (Notman, 2005, p. 319). Engaging in this process will help administrators "reflect critically on values within their personal paradigm" (Notman, 2005, p. 320). This process will help leaders "recognize and develop their philosophical understanding of leadership" (Thew, 2001, p. 256) which is imperative given the highly value-charged nature of educational administration.

The findings from the research study also discuss the important impact of the power differential. Educational administrators unanimously agree that the final and ultimate authority when dealing with conflict resolutions is determined by the "highest administrative role". Leaders believe that the power differential "will always prevail" because "an unequal power balance exists due to the hierarchical structure of educational administration". They also state that "at the end of the day, it is not a democracy because everyone has a specific role to play". These findings are supported in the literature in the work of Wright (2001, p. 280) who states:

Leadership as the moral and value underpinning for the direction of schools is being removed from those who work there. It is now substantially located at the political level where it is not available for contestation, modification or adjustment to local variations.

The adoption of a values-based leadership model can help minimize the impact of the power differential. This leadership model urges educational organizations to engage in deeply structured self-reflection activities as well as a values audit with leaders at all levels within the system so that shared and collective values can be determined for values and actions to be aligned. If this perspective is adopted then regardless of who has the final say or ultimate authority, the resolution will be one that is acceptable to the organization as a whole since the system is aligned collectively at all levels within the hierarchy.

The third dimension of the model considers Fitzpatrick's (2007) research on values alignment as a proactive approach to conflict management. Values alignment exists when common values are shared collectively within an organization and are reflected in practice. According to Henderson & Thompson (2003, p. 105):

The more a value is believed to be important by the people in the organization, the more motivated they will be to behave in a manner that is congruent with that value.

Collaboration is fostered through values alignment because individuals work together towards common ends and goals (Fitzpatrick, 2007, p. 202). As a result, the occurrence of conflict situations is minimized as individuals are "willing to subordinate individual goals and related actions to collective goals and actions" (Leana & Van Buren, 1993). Common and shared understandings and goals allow collaboration to thrive. If values alignment does not exist within an organization, conflict situations can develop as a result of uncertain values and goals. Stakeholders will pursue what they believe to be of value and this can vary greatly between individuals since every stakeholder possesses their own set of values which are influenced by various contextual factors (Fritz, 1999, p. 210).

The findings from the research study propose that educational administrators generally use three common strategies when responding to conflicts that stem from values issues: active listening; open dialogue and on-going communication; and restorative justice and mediation practices. An observant note is that these strategies focus on resolving value conflicts after their occurrence. The values-based leadership model proposes that instead of the above strategies what is required rather is to strive for the creation of values alignment within the organization so that stakeholders can collaboratively work together towards common goals and solutions. Thus, values alignment is viewed as the proactive approach to conflict management.

The results of the research study also suggest that half of the educational administrators acknowledge that they have deliberately incited a conflict situation in order to “effect change (in order) to align personal and professional values towards resolution”. This research finding supports the adoption of a leadership-based values model to determine that conflict would not have to be incited if values were aligned. This model stresses the significance of values alignment which fosters collaboration within the organization which in turn reduces the frequency of conflict situations and works effectively as a proactive approach to conflict management.

Implications for Practice

The adoption of a values-based leadership model involves the collaboration and partnership between various educational institutions, organizations and stakeholders. These include but are not limited to: the Ministry of Education; Universities who offer graduate/post-graduate degrees in educational administration; organizations who offer the Principal Qualification Program (PQP); systems of education; Councils who represent

educational administrators namely OPC (Ontario Principals' Council) and CPCO (Catholic Principals' Council of Ontario); and practising educational administrators. All the former should work together in alignment in order to ensure consistency of information for the adoption of this values-based leadership model.

The Ontario Ministry of Education launched the Ontario Leadership Strategy (OLS) in the fall of 2006. This strategy “was developed to foster leadership of the highest possible quality in schools and school boards” because administrators “play a critical role in creating the conditions of success” (Ministry of Education, Ontario Leadership Strategy, 2006). Initially designed as a three-year plan of action, the OLS has two main goals: to attract the appropriate people to leadership; and to help system leaders develop into the best possible administrators (Ministry of Education, Ontario Leadership Strategy, 2006). An evaluation of the strategy along with its ten major OLS initiatives and key facts and findings was completed in September 2011. The term *values* was not mentioned or referenced at any point in any of these ten leadership initiatives. Still, the researcher did discover one article on values-driven leadership dated September 2009 on a resource page of the Ministry website, however, the article was simplistic in both content and meaning and did not delve into the specifics associated with values-based leadership. Several references to the term *values* were also found in the Ontario Leadership Framework (OLF) and the Self-Assessment Tools for Aspiring Catholic Leaders and for Catholic Vice-Principals and Principals however these again were brief and generic in nature. The researcher posits that more research and specific focus be provided by the Ministry of Education on the topic of values-based leadership because it warrants greater attention than it has yielded to date. The essence of values and

leadership are common to all leaders within the system of education across the Province of Ontario and as such, values-based resources and support for administrators should be a priority concern for the Ministry. Taken that the Ministry is committed to achieving their educational goals of improved levels and reducing the gaps in student achievement with increased levels of public confidence in education, then it behooves the Ministry to actively focus specific attention on support for administrators to adopt the values-based leadership model.

Universities that offer graduate or post-graduate degrees in educational administration need to stimulate, construct and create specific courses that focus or relate with values issues. At this time, only few courses of study addressing values issues are offered, however, given the nature and situation of educational administration in present society, the growing need for discussion of the adoption of a values-based model is imperative to the educational system.

Organizations which proffer the Principal Qualification Program (PQP) also need to revisit the important role of values and values-based leadership in their study content. The discussion of values is more generally accepted than specifically studied however the placement of a values-based leadership model is infrequently referenced or actively entertained for on-going discussion. Given the nature of values and the necessary influence it holds on leadership, further examination and in-depth analysis is required for improvement in values-based leadership performance and resolutions.

To attract system leaders, school boards characteristically offer leadership preparation courses for interested stakeholders. These courses focus on the operational issues and bureaucratic elements of educational leadership, but the practice of values-

based leadership is not explicitly discussed despite the majority of conflicts in administration which stem from these same values-based issues. The adoption of a values-based leadership practice for administrators is advisable in order to fulfill the lapse of on-going professional development for leaders.

Councils which represent educational administrators include OPC (Ontario Principals' Council) and CPCO (Catholic Principals' Council of Ontario) have a responsibility to provide their members with such professional development and those resources necessary for important leadership issues. However, information regarding the topic of values-based leadership for learning is prominently absent on the two Councils' websites. Therefore, informed learning is left to individual ambition of the educational administrator.

Additionally, educational administrators also bear a responsibility to advocate for even greater information on these important values issues if the Councils are not so forthcoming. The reality is that administrators work frequently with complex values-based issues and imminent conflict and their needs on how to effectively handle value conflicts to conclusive resolution is valid. The hand of unsteady alliance of opposing value systems requires responsible recognition of the immediacy of the problems and the appropriate resolution of the conflicts for the general good of educational society.

Implications for Further Research

The intent of this research study was to investigate how educational administrators deal with personal and professional value conflicts that arise within their schools in today's diverse society. The participants in this study, while all school and community leaders, include candidates in the Ed.D. program in Educational

Administration in the Theory and Policy Department at the University of Toronto, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) as well as practising educational administrators with extensive experience in school leadership. The researcher anticipated that the former group would bring more theory to the discussion, however, the findings displayed many similarities across both groups of leaders which can be attributed to the practical nature of the research study.

For future research implications a study of different groups of administrators could be categorized according to: years of experience; gender; and specific leadership role (for example: Vice-principal, Principal and Superintendent). Also, a larger sample size of participants could be interviewed regarding values and resulting conflicts that arise from various religious denominations, races and cultures. Furthermore, a comparison and contrast study could be developed involving private school administrators with the present findings of this research. Additionally, another research study could compare and contrast individual school board systems within the Province of Ontario including but not limited to rural, urban, Aboriginal, and English as a Second Language in a survey of school boards.

The results herein are based solely on qualitative research that was conducted from semi-structured interviews with fourteen educational administrators but future research could include quantitative measures along with the inclusion of further case studies and focus groups.

The findings from the Catholic administrators suggest a significant religious affiliation alignment in terms of their values and practice. The non-Catholic

administrators consisted of a smaller sample size so further research could yield a larger number for comparison and contrast with this study's results.

This study's specific conceptual framework is based upon: Beck's (1993) values classification; Gay's (1981) conflict typology; and Roche's (1997) conflict response framework. Further models can be found in the literature which also provide other avenues of research and findings for similarity, comparison or contrast with this study's results.

The researcher posits that any study conducted regarding educational administration and the values issues is contributory to the existing knowledge base by supporting the practice of school leaders. Irrefutably, values and conflict will continue to remain contentious issues of challenge for administrators but the adoption of a values-based leadership model could assist school leaders to succinctly define the realities of their very complex role despite the challenges. The values-based model has tremendous potential and possibilities to transform the existing face of educational administration provided it is seamlessly integrated within educational organizations to become the new standard of successful and meaningful leadership practice.

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Appendix A: Branson's (2007) Visual Display Instrument

Life Experience	Impact on Self Esteem	Resultant Motives	Preferred Values	Beliefs Formed	Behavior Enacted
<p>Briefly describe a particular significant personal life experience:</p> <p>About aged 3, I was able to build complete 3D homes from a 2D picture using small building blocks. This greatly impressed my mother. She openly affirmed my patience and capability to achieve this on my own. She told everyone how 'clever' I was.</p> <p>The image I have recorded in my self-concept as a result of this life experience can be described in the following way: I am very capable of being able to achieve solutions on my own particularly if I am interested in what I am doing</p>	<p>As a result of this life experience I have:</p> <p>HIGH SELF-ESTEEM</p> <p>In situations in which:</p> <p>I am interested in what I am doing</p> <p>I want to find a solution</p> <p>I can be left to work independently</p> <p>I feel I have access to sufficient resources</p>	<p>This experience mainly affected my Core Needs as follows:</p> <p>Increased sense of Respect</p> <p>Acceptance</p> <p>Belonging</p> <p>Success</p> <p>Control</p> <p>As a consequence, I created the following motives (rules for life) to guide my life whenever I came across a similar situation:</p> <p>Success builds respect</p> <p>Achievement comes from perseverance and patience</p> <p>Independence creates freedom to achieve</p>	<p>From these Motives, I have a preference for the following Values:</p> <p>Dignity</p> <p>Integrity</p> <p>Independence</p> <p>Responsibility</p> <p>Patience</p> <p>Perseverance</p> <p>Self-control</p> <p>Control</p> <p>Credibility</p> <p>Achievement</p> <p>Now circle those values that would always be helpful to you in your leadership role and underline those values that have the potential to be unhelpful in guiding your leadership in certain situations</p>	<p>As a result of these Motives and Values I have created the following Beliefs:</p> <p>I am more likely to find a solution to a problem if I work by myself</p> <p>If I can work by myself I will be more interested, committed, and successful in what I am doing</p> <p>If I am not interrupted by the thoughts or actions of others, I have an abundance of patience and perseverance</p> <p>I am very capable and can be successful</p> <p>If I can solve a difficult problem, I will gain dignity, integrity and respect</p> <p>People who do not show responsibility and perseverance do not deserve respect</p>	<p>As a consequence of this life experience & its affect on my self-concept, self-esteem, motives, values & beliefs, I have adopted the following leadership behaviors:</p> <p>I feel most successful when I can work by myself on major issues</p> <p>This means that I need to be aware that having to work with stakeholder groups can create frustration & a sense of lower achievement</p> <p>While I am very friendly & amiable, when it comes to working cooperatively, I lack sincerity & commitment</p> <p>I do not give my full commitment to a task if I have limited interest or feel that I do not have the resources to complete the task properly</p>

Appendix B: Informed Consent Form for Ed.D. Cohort (Background Information)

Title and Researchers

The title of this research is Values, Conflicts & Value Conflict Resolution: An Investigation of the Experiences of Educational Administrators. Krista Zupan will be the lead researcher with support from Dr. Suzanne Stiegelbauer as Academic Chair.

Reason for the research

For her dissertation, Krista Zupan is examining how educational administrators deal with value conflicts that arise within schools in today's diverse society. This research interest stemmed from the course TPS3025: Personal and Professional Values of Educational Administrators.

Details of participation

Participants in this research project are members of the cohort-based Ed.D Program in Educational Administration in the Department of Theory and Policy Studies at the University of Toronto, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE). Semi-structured interviews will be conducted and participants will be asked a series of questions about: principles of value; types of experienced conflict; and conflict resolution responses. It is anticipated that all interviews will be approximately 1 to 1.5 hours in duration.

Prior to being interviewed, participants will be well informed about the nature of the study, details of participation, and the fact that they may withdraw at any time. At no time will participants be judged, evaluated or at risk.

The information gathered from the interviews will be held in **strict confidence** and will be stored in a secure location. Only the researcher and thesis supervisor will have access to this information. Data will be reported in such a way that any defining characteristics will not be identifiable. All data collected will be used for the purpose of an Ed. D. thesis and will be destroyed five years after the completion of the study.

CONSENT STATEMENT

1. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw my consent from the research at any time, without giving any reason.
2. I am aware of what my participation will involve.
3. I understand that there are no risks involved in the participation of this study and that my anonymity will be protected and guaranteed.
4. All questions that I have about the research have been satisfactorily answered.

I agree to participate.

Participant's signature: _____

Participant's name (please print): _____

Indicate below if you would like to receive a summary of the results by e-mail.

E-mail: _____ Include in further review: _____

Date: _____

**Appendix C: Informed Consent Form for Practising Administrators
(Background Information)**

Title and Researchers

The title of this research is Values, Conflicts & Value Conflict Resolution: An Investigation of the Experiences of Educational Administrators. Krista Zupan will be the lead researcher with support from Dr. Suzanne Stiegelbauer as Academic Chair.

Reason for the research

For her dissertation, Krista Zupan is examining how educational administrators deal with value conflicts that arise within schools in today's diverse society. This research interest stemmed from a course entitled "Personal and Professional Values of Educational Administrators" that is part of the Ed.D. Program in Educational Administration in the Department of Theory and Policy Studies at the University of Toronto, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE).

Details of participation

Participants in this research project have extensive experience as educational administrators. Semi-structured interviews will be conducted and participants will be asked a series of questions about: principles of value; types of experienced conflict; and conflict resolution responses. It is anticipated that all interviews will be approximately 1 to 1.5 hours in duration.

Prior to being interviewed, participants will be well informed about the nature of the study, details of participation, and the fact that they may withdraw at any time. At no time will participants be judged, evaluated or at risk.

The information gathered from the interviews will be held in **strict confidence** and will be stored in a secure location. Only the researcher and thesis supervisor will have access to this information. Data will be reported in such a way that any defining characteristics will not be identifiable. All data collected will be used for the purpose of an Ed. D. thesis and will be destroyed five years after the completion of the study.

CONSENT STATEMENT

1. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw my consent from the research at any time, without giving any reason.
2. I am aware of what my participation will involve.
3. I understand that there are no risks involved in the participation of this study and that my anonymity will be protected and guaranteed.
4. All questions that I have about the research have been satisfactorily answered.

I agree to participate.

Participant's signature: _____

Participant's name (please print): _____

Indicate below if you would like to receive a summary of the results by e-mail.

E-mail: _____ Include in further review: _____

Date: _____

Appendix D: Educational Administrator Interview Guide	
Interview Date	
Time	
Location	
Demographics	
Name	
Gender	
Age	
Current Position	
Number of years in current position	
(School) Population	
Type of Educational Institution	
Years of Experience in Teaching	
Years of Experience in Administration	
Graduate/Post Graduate Degrees	
Other Additional Information	

Research Questions

1. How do educational administrators see the role of values in their work?
2. What types of value conflicts do educational administrators experience?
3. How do educational administrators resolve conflicts that stem from values issues?

Appendix E: Interview Questions

Background

- Please provide some background regarding your educational career (leadership positions held, length of roles, assigned duties)
- What is your current role and workplace?

Values Classification

- What does the term values mean to you?
- How do you see values as being relevant in your role as leader?
- On what principles are your values based?
- Have your values changed over time? Please explain your answer.
- Keeping in mind how you define your values, please read Beck's (1993) value classification and rank the values in order of importance to you. Please use the rating scale between 1 and 5 with 1 being the most important value to you and 5 as being the least important.

Basic values

- Relate to fundamental areas of human needs and include survival, health, happiness, friendship ... (and) freedom

Spiritual values

- Embody more ethereal, affective qualities such as awareness, breadth of outlook, integration, wonder, gratitude, hope, detachment, humility, love (and) gentleness

Moral values

- Relate to ethical sensibilities such as honesty, reliability and fairness

Social and political values

- Refer to sensibilities dealing with general social functioning, such as justice, participation, and citizenship

Intermediate range values & specific values

- Intermediate range values reflect personalized sensibilities in a broad sense (shelter, entertainment, fitness)
- Specific values relate personal sensibilities surrounding almost any personal thing

Your Ranking:

Basic Values _____

Spiritual Values _____

Moral Values _____

Social & Political Values _____

Intermediate Range & Specific Values _____

Types of Conflict

- Describe a critical incident in which you have experienced conflict in your role as educational administrator. In your opinion, what caused this critical incident?
 - How frequently do conflict situations occur in your role as leader?
 - Are there any common patterns among these conflicts?
 - What stakeholders have been involved in these conflicts?
 - Have you ever deliberately incited a conflict? If so, what caused you to do so? Please explain.
 - In terms of the types of conflicts you've experienced as an educational administrator, please read Gay's (1981) conflict typology and indicate which of the following **three** conflict types you experience the most frequently and explain why you believe this to be true.
1. **Procedural conflicts** exist when there are disagreements over courses of action to be taken to reach a stated goal
 2. **Substantive conflicts** stem from incompatible goals
 3. **Interpersonal conflicts** exist when different sets of attitudes, beliefs and values are held by different groups and individuals

Value Conflict resolution

- How have you responded to conflicts stemming from values issues?
- What strategies do you use to resolve these value conflicts?
- In retrospect, was the resolution effective enough to be repeated in similar circumstances; were you able to resolve the conflicts to your satisfaction?
- Describe the process or method you use when dealing with conflicts in your role as leader
- Are you aware of any problem solving methods that would assist your decision making?
- In dealing with conflicts, what or who do you recognize as having the final or ultimate authority?
- To what extent do your values influence the resolution of the conflict?
- When responding to conflict, please read Roche's (1997) value conflict response framework and indicate which of the following **four** conflict responses you adopt the most frequently and explain why you think you do so.

1. **Avoidance** (cognizant or non-cognizant)

Cognizant avoidance occurs when administrators possess full knowledge of a conflict and knowingly choose to avoid dealing with it

Non-cognizant avoidance occurs when leaders fail to understand the depth and breadth of the conflict and as a result, rely on formal and established procedures to deal with the conflict from a distance

2. **Suspending morality**

Occurs when leaders believe it is their 'professional' obligation and responsibility to adhere to the official policies and procedures of the school board and/or the school community

3. **Creative insubordination**

Involves adapting the school board's mandate in such a way that "fits the principal's values, philosophy, goals and situation". Superficially, it may appear that educational administrators are supporting the school board's goals but in reality, they are seeking to change, challenge or even subvert the process of implementation.

4. Personal morality

Involves taking a moral stand which involves an “undaunted, unmoving, enduring commitment to a personal moral principle in the face of any and all consequences”. Educational administrators who adopt this response will endure the consequences of confronting the conflict or leave the conflict situation entirely either through resignation or transfer.

Summary:

- Given our discussion does this change anything related to your ideas about values?
- Are you able to exercise your personal value system in your role as an educational administrator? Why or why not? What impediments are there to this; what supports to your values are present?
- Do you have any further thoughts on this topic you'd like to offer?