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Christian Nonprofit CEOs: Ethical Idealism, Relativism, and Motivation

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CHRISTIAN NONPROFIT CEOS:
ETHICAL IDEALISM, RELATIVISM, AND MOTIVATION

A Dissertation
Presented to
The Faculty of the Educational Leadership Doctoral Program
Western Kentucky University
Bowling Green, Kentucky

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

By
Sharlene Sameon Garces Baragona

May 2016

CHRISTIAN NONPROFIT CEOS:
ETHICAL IDEALISM, RELATIVISM, AND MOTIVATION

Date Recommended 4/20/16



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4/21/16

Date

I humbly dedicate this work to my Creator,

Lord of heaven and earth,

Constant Provider, Ultimate Moral Law Giver,

Loving Savior, and the Great I Am.

Almighty God, You alone are worthy of all honor, glory, and praise.

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CHRISTIAN NONPROFIT CEOS:
ETHICAL IDEALISM, RELATIVISM, AND MOTIVATION

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Strong ethical character and the ability to inspire others form crucial areas for leadership effectiveness, particularly in nonprofits. This study explored the relationship between ethical ideologies (idealism and relativism) and inspirational motivation of Christian nonprofit CEOs affiliated with the Christian Child and Family Services Association. The Ethics Position Questionnaire of Forsyth (1980), the Bass and Avolio (2004) Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire Leader Form (5X Short) – Inspirational Motivation, and a demographic questionnaire comprised the 30-item survey for this study. The participants' responses were collected either online or on paper and were analyzed using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. The response rate was 34 of 45 participants (76%).

The current study found no significant correlation between ethical ideologies and inspirational motivation. The study results suggest that ethical idealism, relativism, and inspirational motivation require careful consideration as separate criteria in succession planning, selection, and training and development of executives. Further, this study adds to the limited amount of research in nonprofits, CEOs, leadership ethics, and inspirational leadership. Future research might employ a mixed method for in-depth understanding of the relationship between ethical ideologies and inspirational motivation of leaders. Finally, confirmatory factor analysis is recommended for larger samples.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

In order to fulfill nonprofit missions, strong ethics and public trust are crucial. Millions of individuals donate their time and money to nonprofit organizations on a yearly basis (Roeger, Blackwood, & Pettijohn, 2012). However, a hint of misconduct in the nonprofit sector can break trust, resulting in a loss of valuable resources and the even more valuable reputation for both innocent and guilty nonprofit organizations (NPOs). Ultimately, the beneficiaries who need the services of nonprofits may suffer from the unethical behavior of those who abuse their power or influence. Therefore, an examination of nonprofit ethics is important, especially of employees in senior executive positions.

Although the high number of nonprofit supporters suggests that the sector has earned an overall reputation for value-based missions, executive scandals have rocked some nonprofits. The Federal Trade Commission (2015) charged four cancer charities and their executives for fraud of over \$187 million. The former nonprofit executives involved in the scandal include James Reynolds Sr. of the Cancer Fund of America; his ex-wife Rose Perkins of Children's Cancer Fund of America Inc.; his son James Reynolds II of the Breast Cancer Society; and Kyle Effler of the Cancer Fund of America (Federal Trade Commission, 2015; Perry & O'Neil, 2015).

Jerry Sandusky, founder of the Second Mile Charity and former assistant football coach at Penn State University, was sentenced in 2012 to 30-60 years in jail for child sexual abuse (Chan & Takagi, 2011; Pearson, 2012). Second Mile Charity was eventually closed and its funds transferred to a Christian children's home (The Second Mile, 2013; Associated Press, 2014). Faith-based nonprofit CEOs generally live a simple

lifestyle (Scheitle, 2009) and are paid below the norms for secular NPOs (Charity Navigator, 2013). Yet, religious NPOs are not immune to misconduct (Fremont-Kosaras, 2003) that plague the for-profit and government sectors alike.

Some claim that the publicized nonprofit scandals are limited to a few NPOs, but studies over the years have shown unreported cases of unethicity in the nonprofit sector (Ethics Resource Center, 2007; Fremont-Kosaras, 2003). The National Nonprofit Ethics Survey indicated that nearly 40%, or two out of five employees, who witnessed misconduct did not report it to authorities due to fear of retaliation or that no corrective action would be taken (Ethics Resource Center, 2007). Barrett (2011) stated that, despite the number of publicized NPO scandals, they cause a decline of charitable donations sector-wide.

Problem Statement

Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) are continuously challenged with recognizing and balancing the various interests and values of multiple stakeholders, including themselves. Frisch and Huppenbauer (2014) noted that leaders vary their devotion to developing their own ethicality. They pointed out that the important question for an executive to ask is not “am I an ethical leader?” but “how much am I an ethical leader?” (p. 39). Nonprofit CEOs require complex ethical reasoning in order to serve effectively (Jurkiewicz & Massey, 1998).

In addition to executives being personally ethical, the ability to inspire others forms a crucial area for leadership effectiveness. The inspirational competency distinguishes the most effective leaders from those with average or below average effectiveness (Zenger & Folkman, 2013). As nonprofits depend upon philanthropy,

working with employees, volunteers, donors, and board members requires that nonprofit CEOs possess inspirational quality. All involved are best served by an inspiring CEO in the midst of uncertainties in resources, economy, technology, and regulations (Crawford, 2010; Miller, 2014).

Although inspirational impact provides a desirable leadership quality, not all inspirational individuals are ethical. Some nonprofit founders or CEOs who have failed to lead with integrity possess the ability to convince and inspire for a good cause. Russell Taylor, the former CEO of Jared Foundation, along with its founder and former Subway spokesperson Jared Fogle, motivated the fight for childhood obesity. However, both Taylor and Fogle were convicted in 2015 of child pornography and sex crimes (US Attorney's Office, 2015). In the 1990s, the once famous William Aramony inspired thousands of NPOs to join with the United Way of America, but he misused its \$1.2 million and engaged in an extramarital affair with a teenager (Charity Watch, 2015). Aramony was convicted of his financial crimes in 1995 (Charity Watch, 2015). Televangelist Jim Bakker of Heritage USA, inspired millions of Christians with his religious ministry in the 1980s, but in 1989 he was indicted of mail and wire fraud (Shepard, 2008; Tidwell, 1993).

Ethical actions and inspiring others form two important competencies of nonprofit CEOs that need further exploration. From the perspective of Christian nonprofit CEOs, studies regarding the relationship between ethical ideologies and inspirational motivation do not appear to exist.

Purpose of the Study

This study examines the relationship between ethical ideologies (*idealism* and *relativism*) and inspirational motivation of the nonprofit CEOs affiliated with the Christian Child and Family Services Association (CCFSA). In addition, the study includes a collection of the demographic information of the participants.

Research Questions

The central research question is: To what degree are ethical ideologies related to the inspirational motivation of Christian CEOs of nonprofits serving children and families?

Specifically, the questions include:

1. To what degree is idealism related to inspirational motivation?
2. To what degree is relativism related to inspirational motivation?

Significance of the Study

In general, this study contributes to the understanding of leadership ethics and transformational leadership (Bass & Avolio, 2004). Specifically, gaps in knowledge are addressed relative to ethical ideologies concerning inspirational motivation of Christian nonprofit CEOs serving children. Further, this research may provide useful information to nonprofit leaders who make decisions on succession planning, hiring, and training and development of CEOs.

Definition of Terms

Chief executive officer (CEO): Nonprofit executive director or president responsible for consistent achievement of a nonprofit's mission; works under the supervision of the board of directors.

Ethical ideology: Personal moral philosophy pertaining to idealism or relativism.

Idealism: Ethical ideology that focuses on consequences of actions that avoid harming individuals (Forsyth, 1980; Forsyth, O'Boyle, & McDaniel, 2008).

Inspirational motivation (IM): Leadership ability to arouse the enthusiasm and team spirit of followers through provision of meaning and challenge to their efforts (Bass & Avolio, 2004).

Nonprofit organization (NPO): Charitable organization classified as 501(c3) in the current study; also called nonprofit or charity. In references cited, NPO may include types of nonprofits other than 501(c3).

Relativism: Ethical ideology that focuses on universal ethical rule rather than consequences of actions as the basis of right and wrong; higher relativism implies stronger rejection of universal moral standards (Forsyth, 1980; Forsyth et al., 2008).

Theoretical Framework

An exploration of ethical ideologies of idealism and relativism and inspirational motivation provides the foundation for this research. The ethics position theory of Forsyth (1980) provides the theoretical framework for the identification and description of ethical ideologies of the CEOs. Forsyth's ethics position theory states that individuals respond to the behaviors of others based on two orthogonal types of moral ideologies: idealism and relativism. Forsyth asserted that idealism focuses on consequences of actions on others, while relativism stresses moral standards. Extreme idealists believe that harming human beings can always be avoided. Forsyth posited that less idealistic individuals feel that harming others is sometimes unavoidable. High relativism refers to

basing decisions on situations and circumstances rather than universal moral standards. Low relativism is adherence to universal moral values.

The theory of transformational leadership (Bass & Avolio, 2004) provides the rationale for inspirational motivation. Bass and Avolio (2004) described inspirational motivation as the leadership factor expressed in behaviors that encourage others to envision a better future for their organization. The optimism and enthusiasm of the CEO motivates staff, volunteers, donors, and even board members, as the leader provides meaning and challenge to their work (Bass & Avolio, 2004).

Research Design

This research utilizes a quantitative correlational design to explore the relationships between the ethical ideologies (idealism and relativism) and inspirational motivation of nonprofit CEOs. For the analysis of the study results, two options are planned: confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. Based on the sample size, the latter will be used in the final analysis.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides an overview of sources related to nonprofit CEOs, ethical idealism, relativism, and inspirational motivation. The references consist of landmark research and most recent studies within the last 10 years. As scholarly works about the ethics of nonprofit CEOs appear scarce, related research from the government and business sectors also is explored (Kim, McCalman, & Fisher, 2012). The literature review begins by defining and relating *worldview* and *ethics*. A brief historical background on Western ethics is presented prior to discussion of the ethical concerns in organizations, ethical leadership, leadership in nonprofits, and ethical theories. Finally, the chapter reviews the research studies in ethical ideologies and inspirational motivation.

Worldview and Ethics

An individual's assessment of ethical or unethical behavior depends upon his or her worldview (Kim, Fisher, & McCalman, 2009). The term *worldview* is derived from the German word *weltanschauung*, which refers to the way in which individuals perceive the world (Pearcey, 2004). Wayne (*n.d.*) asserted that everyone holds a worldview or presuppositions affecting the way an individual looks at life and reality. According to Baldwin (1998):

Your worldview is like an invisible pair of eyeglasses - glasses you put on to help you see reality clearly. If you choose the right pair of glasses, you can see everything vividly, and can behave in sync with the real world ... But if you choose the wrong pair of glasses, you may find yourself in a worse plight than the blind man - thinking you see things clearly when in reality your vision is severely distorted. (p. 29)

Worldview concerns fundamental questions such as the following proposed by Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1973):

- (1) What is the character of innate human nature?...
- (2) What is the relation of man to nature?...
- (3) What is the temporal focus of human life?...
- (4) What is the modality of human activity?...
- (5) What is the modality of man's relationship to other men? (p. 11)

Garofalo (2013) and Kim et al. (2012) asserted that an individual's worldview impacts one's life, including his or her ethical principles.

In defining ethics, Gini (2004) wrote that, "Ethics is about the assessment and evaluation of values, because all of life is value-laden" (p. 34). Resnik (2011) referred to ethics as "norms for conduct that distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable behavior" (para. 1). Ethics often is associated synonymously with *morals*. Both terms concern "knowing what is right, doing what is right and feeling what is right" (Nardo & Francis, 2012, p. 129). Some scholars have made distinctions between ethics and morals by tracing them to their original language. The term ethics evolves from the Greek word *ēthikos* derived from the word *ethos*, which means habit, "custom"; morals from the Latin word *moralis*, derived from the word *mor* (Google, *n.d.*). Morals frequently pertain to society's implicit standard of right or wrong, whereas ethics denotes a philosophical view (Nardo & Francis, 2012). While some authors differentiate the meaning of the two terms, others simply avoid defining them (Miller, Rodgers, & Bingham, 2014). In this current study, ethics and morals are used interchangeably.

Brief Historical Background of Western Ethics

In the Western cultural perspective, debates on ethics date to the ancient period of Greek philosophers. Socrates (c. 469-399 B.C.) maintained that an ethical life contributes to happiness of individuals and that, through education, ethics could be imparted to others (Denault, 2003). Socrates disagreed with the Greek Sophists who spread the concept of ethical relativism (Denault, 2003). The influential Sophist, Protagoras of Abdera (circa 490 - 420 B.C.), taught his followers that it is impossible to obtain objective knowledge such as the existence of God (Garofalo, 2013). Herodotus, (484- 425 B.C.) who possessed a polytheistic worldview, wrote that many gods were involved in historic events (Garofalo, 2013). His writings indicated multiple moral standards or rejection of one Ultimate Standard, thus promoting an ethically relative worldview (Garofalo, 2013). Plato (427-347 B.C.) and Aristotle (384-322 B.C) later advocated character-based ethics or virtue ethics (Hursthouse, 2013). Plato described unjust rulers as tyrants and true leaders as ethical, effective, not self-serving, and just (Ciulla, Uhl-Bien, & Hogue, 2013). Aristotle and Plato taught the primary virtues of prudence, justice, courage, and self-restraint (Johnson, 2005).

In the medieval period (Circa 500 A.D.- 1500), the teachings of Christ gained more influence (Geisler, 2010). To the primary virtues of Aristotle and Plato, the Christians added faith, hope, and love (Johnson, 2005). Conversely, the philosophy of ethical relativism continued in the West. In the 12th century, Abelard asserted his idea of intentionalism that the rightness or wrongness of an act depends upon intent of a person executing the action (Geisler, 2010).

In the modern period to contemporary period, society gradually excluded God in addressing ethical matters (Kim et al., 2009). One of the skeptics, David Hume (1711-1776), questioned God's existence and promoted ethical relativism that led to the saying, "*what is right for you is right for you and what is right for me is right for me*" (Garofalo, 2013, p. 37). Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) and John Stuart Mill (18106-1873) later emphasized utilitarianism, which states that an act is positive if it results in maximum pleasure and minimum pain to those concerned (McQuilkin & Copan, 2014).

As part of the Western worldview, ethical relativism has reached the point to which "no behavior or moral opinion should be categorized as good or bad by the norms of society, unless it is politically correct" (Geisler, 2013, p. xiv). Garofalo (2013) stated that relativism easily leads to atheism, a type of secular humanism that suggests man, rather than God, serves as the measure of all things. Overall, history has shown that Christianity advocates the use of the Bible as the moral guide for all generations, whereas, polytheism, skepticism, and atheism have been linked to ethical relativism.

Ethical Concerns in Organizations

Organizations around the world face the serious problem of unethical behavior in the workplace. Based on the 2014 Global Fraud Study, as a result of fraud a typical organization loses approximately 5% of its revenues annually (Association of Certified Fraud Examiners, 2014). The researchers also reported that this percentage equals \$3.7 trillion of projected international fraud loss when based on the estimated 2013 Gross World Product. The unethical cases in the survey include corruption, financial statement manipulation, and misappropriations of assets. These types of ethical lapses are common across all sectors of business, government, and nonprofit.

Unethicality within organizations has become increasingly rampant and destructive (Chau & Rahman, 2010). Although unethical behavior may have short-term gains, the long-term consequences harm individuals and organizations in more ways than offenders anticipated (Chau & Rahman, 2010). Malfeasance in one sector can, and does, affect other sectors. The Ponzi scheme of Bernie Madoff was a corporate crime (US Attorney's Office, 2009), but it also caused multimillion dollar losses in the nonprofit sector (*The New York Times*, 2009). On a personal level, the consequences of Madoff's scandal include the petition to change the Madoff last name of his grandchildren and daughter-in-law (Gregorian, 2010; Smith, 2010b) and the suicide of his son (Henriques & Baker, 2010; Smith, 2010a).

Ethical Concerns in Nonprofits

Numerous unethical practices exist in the nonprofit sector. In the Boy Scouts of America and the Roman Catholic Church, the identification and conviction of pedophiles has remained a problem for decades (McGreal, 2010). In another issue, the National Nonprofit Ethics Survey indicated that 55% of nonprofit employees reported having observed various forms of misconduct in their workplaces, including but not limited to "conflict of interests, lying to employees, abusive behavior, and misreporting hours" (Ethics Resource Center, 2007, pp. IX, 2-5). According to Rhode and Packel (2009), the ethical concerns in nonprofits include "compensation; conflicts of interest; publications and solicitation; financial integrity; investment policies; and accountability and strategic management" (p. 19).

Ethical Concerns of Executives

Leaders are expected to set the ethical tone of their organizations (Ethics Resource Center, 2014), but some have failed to serve with integrity. In the business sector, the 2014 Global Fraud Study indicated that the higher the leadership position of the offenders, the larger the organization's losses resulting from fraud. The study found that executives/owners were liable for a median loss of \$500,000; middle managers for \$130,000; and employees for \$75,000 (Association of Certified Fraud Examiners, 2014). In the United States of America, the 2013 National Business Ethics Survey showed that those in supervisory positions committed 60% of the workplace misconduct: 24% by senior managers, 19% by middle managers, and 17% by first-line supervisors (Ethics Resource Center, 2014). In the nonprofit sector, one survey showed that 88 presidents/CEOs/executive directors out of 109 NPO officers were implicated in 104 criminal cases involving charity funds totaling \$1,279,039,532 (Fremont-Smith & Kosaras, 2003). Among cases involving breach of fiduciary duty, the same survey indicated that 44 of the 77 officers implicated were presidents/CEOs/executive directors.

The public generally perceives nonprofit employees to work for the sector due to its mission rather than high pay (Ciulla, 2004). Thus, criticisms are not uncommon when nonprofit CEOs have a six- or seven-figure salary (Scheitle, 2009), particularly if their organizations struggle financially to assist their clients (Rhode & Packel, 2009). CEO Christine Spadafor's annual salary of \$300,000, a bonus of \$100,000, and reimbursable travel expenses of nearly \$35,000 caused outrage of some supporters of Saint Jude's Ranch, a charity for abused and abandoned children (Amaro, 2015).

Further, founders/executives have committed fraud in other charities serving children (Fremont-Kosaras, 2003). The Kidogos of Little People's World in California were charged with embezzling over \$460,000 in nonprofit funds that went toward the couple's personal real estate purchases and other expenses (Therolf, 2014). Larry Jones misused the funds of Feed the Children (Charity Watch, 2015). Even in religious NPOs, some CEOs who had built their reputations on competence and passion to help the less fortunate later committed ethical breaches. Joe Wingo, the former leader of Angel Food Ministries and church pastor, was indicted for theft (Charity Watch, 2015). Also, Bruce Ritter, the priest who founded Covenant House for homeless teenagers, was involved in sexual and financial scandals (Charity Watch, 2015; Staller, 2012). These are some examples of reported unethical cases that affect the reputation and mission of nonprofits.

Status differentiation. The CEO position often carries with it power that can be easily abused. According to Galperin, Bennett, and Aquino (2011), status differentiation, or the "degree to which status conferring resources provided by the organization, such as pay, perquisites, and prestige are unequally distributed" (p. 408), can sometimes result in the misconduct of those in high positions. Galperin et al. argued that isolation and deactivation of moral identity resulting from status differentiation can cause executives to become insensitive to the needs of those outside the high echelon group. Status differentiation forms an ethical leadership concern.

Moral disengagement. According to Bandura (1999), moral disengagement can occur in different ways:

Moral justification, sanitizing language, and advantageous comparison; disavowal of a sense of personal agency by diffusion or displacement of responsibility, disregarding or minimizing the injurious effects of one's actions; and attribution of blame to, and dehumanization of, those who are victimized. (p. 193)

Bandura defined moral justification as a process of treating harmful action as acceptable by rationalizing that particular misconduct as having a moral or worthy cause.

In the context of ethical decision making, euphemistic labeling sanitizes a language to make unethical behavior palatable. He cautioned that "Activities can take on very different appearances depending on what they are called" (p. 195). Examples of euphemisms include *right sizing* for cutting off workers' paychecks and healthcare benefits without warning; *a different version of the facts* for lies in the Watergate court hearings; *action and adventure* for violent movies (Bandura, 1999); and *horsing around* for molesting boys (Lucas & Fyke, 2014).

Bandura (1999) stated that advantageous comparison is a mechanism of making a negative act look positive by comparing it to a worse behavior; i.e., stealing a car appears minor compared to shooting someone. He indicated that displacement of responsibility refers to doing something wrong and placing the blame on authorities who instructed or allowed them to engage in the misconduct. To illustrate, a team behaving unethically blames the supervisor who has approved or allowed the action in question (Schwartz, 2015).

Bandura (1999) described diffusion of responsibility as a form of moral disengagement that occurs when individuals dilute their accountability for misconduct. He stated that, in a group's collective decision making, no one would take personal

responsibility for the group's misconduct; when all are accountable, individual responsibility appears to diminish. He added that disregard or distortion of consequences deactivates self-censure. When the perpetrators do not directly observe the suffering of their victims, wrongdoing is more easily justified. He also argued that dehumanization of the harmed party allows offenders to think the heinous act is acceptable. In some situations, leaders with coercive power dehumanize their subordinates. Last, Bandura explained attribution of blame as faulting others or blaming the circumstances instead of taking responsibility for one's unethical behavior. In some instances, the perpetrator accuses the victims as the ones who brought the harm on themselves.

Moral disengagement is a gradual process (Bandura, 1999). The unethicity usually begins from minor ethical lapse and slowly advances to major misconduct. He warned that the person going through the change from bad to worse often becomes insensitive to the increasing severity of one's negative practices. Moral disengagement and more instances of unethical behavior are accelerated by the slippery-slope effect (Welsh, Ordóñez, Snyder, & Christian, 2015).

Unique role of the CEO. A CEO is responsible for special work that only he or she can fulfill. Lafley (2009) argued that, while the work of employees generally is limited to the internal organization, the CEO's unique role is connecting the outside world with the inside. Based on his own experience as CEO and from Peter Drucker's ideas, Lafley noted that the four tasks involved in this CEO-specific role include:

- (a) Defining and interpreting the meaningful outside,
- (b) Answering, time and again, the two-part question, What business are we in and what business are we not in? [*sic*],
- (c) Balancing sufficient yield in the present with necessary investment in the future, and
- (d) Shaping the values and standards of the organization. (p. 56)

Effectively fulfilling the senior executive role requires complex ethical reasoning because the stakeholders, including the CEOs, may have conflicting values and interests. As reviewed in this section, the unique and complex leadership role of CEOs carries with it power that may be abused when status differentiation and moral disengagement occur.

Ethical Leadership

Brown, Treviño, and Harrison (2005) defined ethical leadership as the “demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal action and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making” (p. 120). They associated ethical leadership with trust in the leader, honesty, considerate behavior, interactional fairness, and socialized charismatic leadership.

Ethical leadership has desirable effects on employees and organizations (Resick et al., 2011). Specifically, it is positively related to followers’ job satisfaction (Avey, Wernsing, & Palanski, 2012; Brown et al., 2005; Neubert, Carlson, Kacmar, Roberts, & Chonko, 2009; Tanner, Brügger, Van Schie, & Lebherz, 2010) and to affective organizational commitment (Neubert et al., 2009; Tanner et al., 2010). Further, studies

have suggested that ethical leadership correlates with followers' extra effort (Brown et al., 2005); work engagement (Tanner et al., 2010); "optimism about the future of the organization and their own place within it" (De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008, p. 297); and organizational citizenship behavior (Mayer, Kuenzi, Greenbaum, Bardes, & Salvador, 2009).

In addition, followers more likely perceive ethical leaders as effective (Brown et al., 2005; De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008). Ethical leadership also is negatively related to health complaints; emotional exhaustion; absenteeism (Tanner et al., 2010); unit unethical behavior; and relationship conflict (Mayer, Aquino, Greenbaum, & Kuenzi, 2012). Ethically led followers appear more willing to report problems (Brown et al., 2005). Further, ethical leadership enhances the wellbeing of followers (Avey et al., 2012), customers, owners, governing boards, society, and the executive leaders (Frisch & Huppenbauer, 2014). Finally, ethical leadership is positively related to leader moral identity symbolization and moral identity internalization (Mayer et al., 2012).

Leadership in Nonprofits

Nonprofit executives employ various leadership styles. Two examples include servant leadership and transformational leadership.

Servant Leadership

As stewards of resources to serve others in need, nonprofits usually practice servant leadership. Robert Greenleaf (1970) launched the modern servant leadership movement, an approach in which the "leader is a servant first" (Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership, *n.d.*) This type of leadership attracts workers/volunteers in nonprofits, particularly those in faith-based NPOs, as it more appropriately supports a

mission of caring and serving others (Murphy, 2011). Greenleaf described one difference as the leader's approach to power. He wrote, "While traditional leadership generally involves the accumulation and exercise of power by one at the 'top of the pyramid,' the servant-leader shares power, puts the needs of others first and helps people develop and perform as highly as possible" (Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership, *n.d.*, para. 4). Jesus exemplified servant leadership, "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45, New American Standard Bible).

Researchers have described the qualities of servant leaders in several ways. Based on Greenleaf's writings, Spears (2004) identified 10 characteristics: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment, and building community. To these characteristics, Davenport (2015) suggested adding the virtue of compassion. In distinguishing servant leadership from other leadership constructs, Spears remarked:

Servant-leadership emphasizes increased service to others, a holistic approach to work, promoting a sense of community, and the sharing of power in decision making. The words *servant* and *leader* are usually thought of as being opposites. When two opposites are brought together in a creative and meaningful way, a paradox emerges. So the words servant and leader have been brought together to create the paradoxical idea of servant leadership. (p. 8)

Patterson (2003) asserted that servant leaders demonstrate seven constructs of virtues including *agapao* love, humility, altruism, vision, trust, empowerment, and service. Her servant leadership model follows.

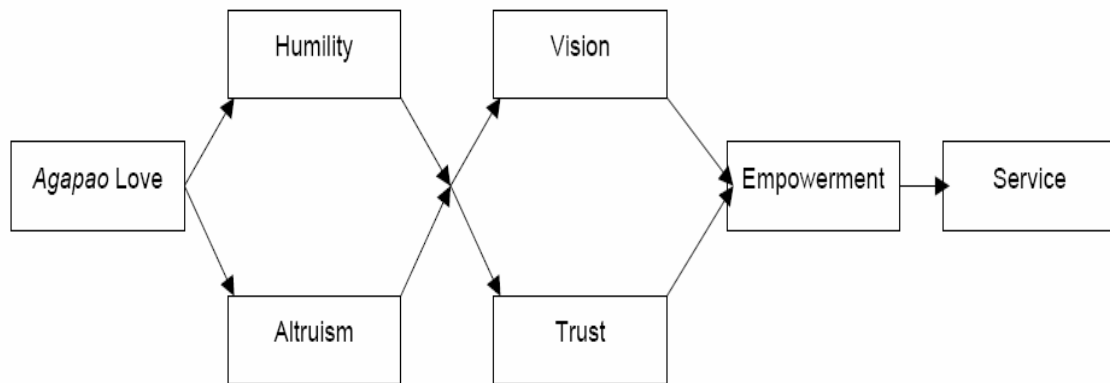


Figure 1. Servant leadership model. Adapted from “Servant Leadership: A Theoretical Model,” by K. Patterson, 2003, ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (305234239).

Van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011) observed that most of the earlier constructs of servant leadership focused primarily on the *servant* aspect. Thus, they also considered the *leader* aspect in developing their multidimensional Servant Leadership Survey. They found support for eight dimensions of servant leadership including standing back, forgiveness, courage, empowerment, accountability, authenticity, humility, and stewardship. To the prior servant leadership instruments, Van Dierendonck and Nuijten added the elements of courage, forgiveness, and accountability. They also stated that servant leadership has gained popularity in recent years; however, it continues to need more exploration.

Transformational Leadership

Another leadership style in the nonprofit sector is transformational leadership (Harmon, 2013; Sarantopoulos, 2013; Sheppard, 2007). Transformational leaders inspire followers to reach higher performance than the ordinary expectations (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 2004; Riggio, 2013). Transformational leadership emphasizes the importance

of ethical values and the development of followers to become leaders themselves (Riggio, 2013).

Downton (1973) first coined the term transformational leadership in contrast to transactional leadership (Bass & Avolio, 2004). However, the transformational theory first gained much recognition when James MacGregor Burns (1978) published his book, *Leadership*. According to Burns, “transforming leadership occurs when one or more persons engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality” (p. 20). Transforming leadership goes beyond transactional leadership, which occurs when an individual initiates dealing with others in order to exchange valued things. He explained that transactional leaders cater to the followers’ lower-level needs such as food and shelter; transformational leaders address the followers’ higher-level needs in terms of competency and self-actualization (Johnson, 2005).

Bass (1985) extended the theory of transforming leadership. He modified the term *transforming* leadership to *transformational* leadership, which suggests character of a leader rather than a process in which a leader participates (Couto, 1993). Bass and Avolio (2004) defined transformational leadership as “a process of influencing in which leaders change their associates’ awareness of what is important, and move them to see themselves and the opportunities and challenges of their environment in a new way” (p. 103). The authors named the key factors of transformational leadership as individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, idealized influence, and inspirational motivation.

According to Bass and Avolio (2004), individualized consideration is the leadership ability to connect with each follower as an individual rather than merely a part

of a group. The purpose of the leader is to understand the individual's needs and strengths and to develop the follower's potentials for higher levels of accomplishment through mentoring and coaching. Bass and Avolio (2004) stated that intellectual stimulation refers to the leader's ability to challenge followers to innovate, think different, examine assumptions, or ask difficult questions when addressing issues and seeking solutions. Transformational leaders welcome new ideas and suggestions from followers. Bass and Avolio (2004) added that idealized influence (including both attributes and behaviors) refers to the ability of the leader to serve as role model of one's followers. The leader gains respect and trust of the followers as he or she places their needs before self-interest. They noted that one way leaders display the idealized attribute is by instilling pride in followers for being associated with them. In terms of idealized behaviors, the leader speaks about one's own deeply held values and beliefs, as well as the significance of the group sense of mission. Idealized influence and inspirational motivation are the charismatic parts of transformational leadership (Riggio, 2013).

Bass and Avolio (2004) described inspirational motivation as the degree to which the leader expresses enthusiasm and optimism about the goals and vision of the organization. Frequently linked with inspirational leadership, inspirational motivation is important for nonprofit CEOs in motivating charity supporters – paid employees and volunteers (Riggio, Bass, & Orr, 2004). However, Bass and Steidlmeier (2004) cautioned that inspirational leaders may be authentic or pseudo-transformational:

The inspirational appeals of the authentic transformational leader tend to focus on the best in people – on harmony, charity, and good works; the inspirational appeals of the pseudo-transformational leader tend to focus on the worst in people – on demonic plots, conspiracies, unreal dangers, excuses, and insecurities. (p. 180)

All the components of transformational leadership have an ethical dimension (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999). Authentic transformational leaders influence their followers to reach higher levels of performance and ethical standards, while pseudo-transformational leaders are self-centered, destructive, and unethical (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999).

Ethical Theories

Conflicting philosophical worldviews include come numerous ethical theories. The three main classifications include: (a) metaethics, (b) normative ethics, and (c) applied ethics (Fieser, *n.d.*). The current study focuses on normative ethics in which idealism and relativism fit within the larger context of ethics, as shown in Figure 2.

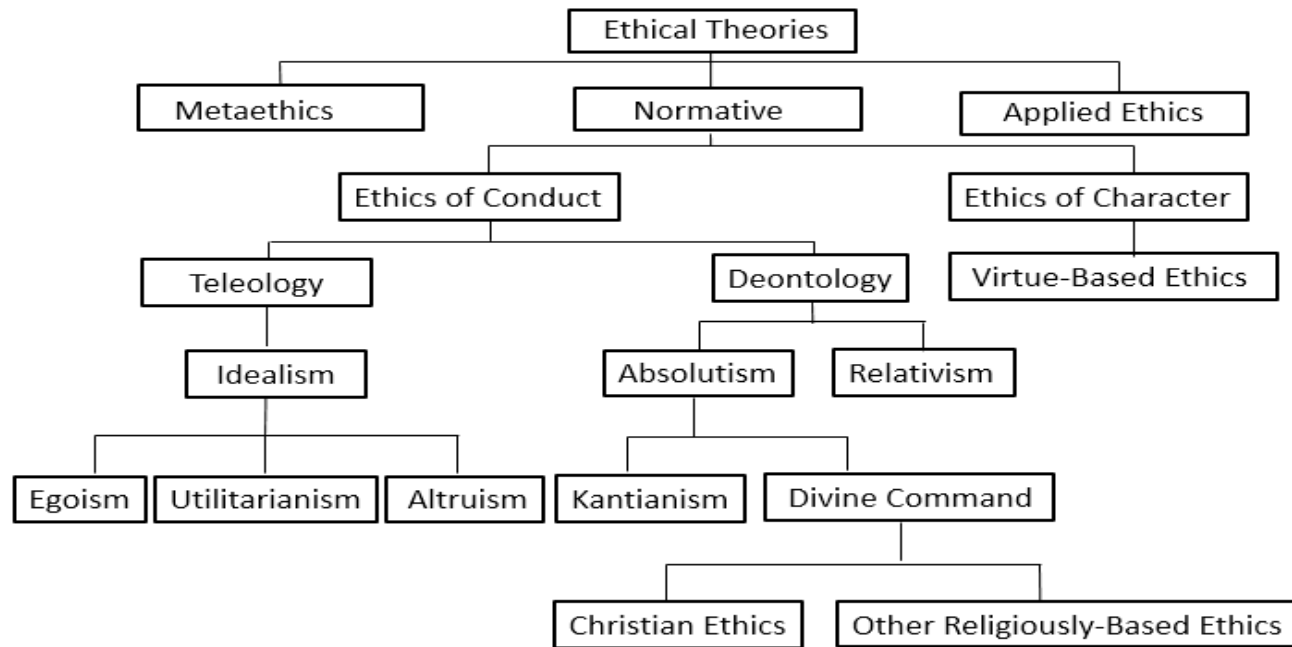


Figure 2. Idealism and relativism in the field of ethics. Adapted from “Classification of Ethical Theories” by C. Brown, 2001.

Metaethics

Metaethics is the study of the origin and meaning of moral principles and pertains to a bird's eye view of moral philosophy (Fieser, *n.d.*). Examples of metaethical questions are: Why be moral? How do we know what is evil and good? Where do ethics come from? Is there an absolute ethical standard? In what ways do ethical attitudes motivate behavior? (DeLapp, *n.d.*). A metaethical viewpoint states that without a moral Law Giver, nothing is ethically right or wrong, but only a matter of preference (Craig, 2009). Without God, nothing is absolute, and relative expressions of personal tastes such as choosing love over sadism are as simple as preferring chocolate over vanilla (Craig, 2009). This view explains God as the author of ethical standards.

Normative Ethics

Normative ethics identifies the basis of the moral choices and prescribes that which individuals “ought ” to do. Fieser (*n.d.*) asserted that the main concern of normative ethicists lies in determining morally right from morally wrong. He cited that the Golden Rule as an example of normative ethics: "Treat others the same way you want them to treat you" (Luke 6:31, New American Standard Bible). The two basic classifications of prescriptive or normative ethical theories include (a) ethics of conduct or qualities of acts, and (b) ethics of character, or qualities of person (Brown, 2001).

Ethics of conduct. This ethical theory focuses on the qualities of actions rather than on virtues. Ethics of conduct addresses the question, “What kind of behaviors should we take?” The ethics of conduct are subdivided into teleology and deontology,

which Forsyth (1980) indicated are parallel to idealism and relativism. Similar to teleology, idealism concerns reducing undesirable consequences and increasing good outcomes for others (Forsyth et al., 2008). Deontology is parallel to relativism as both use a universal ethical standard as basis for choosing between right and wrong.

Teleology/Idealism. The moral theories of teleology or idealism state that the moral rightness of a decision is found in the consequences of the leader's action. The rightness of an act is based on the amount of goodness it brings to humanity (Finken, 2008). Teleological theories include ethical egoism, utilitarianism, and altruism (Fieser, *n.d.*).

Ethical egoism. A prescriptive ethical theory, ethical egoism states that the rightness of a behavior depends solely on the amount of good that the decision maker can receive. This theory is linked to Hobbes, the 17th century British philosopher, who asserted that selfishness prompts many individuals to action (Finken, 2008).

Utilitarianism. This ethical theory states that one's action should provide the greatest benefit to the greatest number of others. According to Johnson (2005), leaders often use utilitarianism in ethical decision making. He also stated that the advantage of the utilitarian approach is that it can be easily understood as weighing all possible outcomes of a decision. Additionally, Johnson (2005) noted that the utilitarian process forces leaders to deliberately explore reasonable choices. Utilitarianism focuses on the fact that moral choices cannot be detached from their consequences. In the words of Jesus, "You will know them by their fruits" (Matthew 7:16, New American Standard Bible).

Utilitarians may be theists or atheists. McQuilkin and Copan (2014) stated that the utilitarian atheist professor of Princeton University, Peter Singer, advocated aborting babies with Down Syndrome and euthanizing disabled children or old folks with dementia. However, Singer declined to euthanize his mother who suffered from dementia (McQuilkin & Copan, 2014).

Johnson (2005) related that the disadvantage of utilitarianism is the leader's difficulty in identifying the possible consequences of action. He claimed that at times unanticipated and unintended consequences occur. Additionally, he wrote that because normally utilitarianism does not consider the inherent goodness or badness of an act, it is uncertain the manner in which a leader would determine if the goal is good or bad. Further, utilitarians focus solely on consequences and disregard the leaders' motives, which can be positive or negative (McQuilkin & Copan, 2014).

Altruism. The opposite of egoism, altruism is an ethical approach in which leaders focus concern for others above themselves (Johnson, 2005). Altruistic leaders treat followers not as means as to an end, but as the end to the means. Altruism serves as a motivating factor of a transformational leader and a driving force of NPOs to address social problems (Johnson, 2005). Altruism and virtue ethics are similar to other-centered virtues such as generosity and compassion. The Bible promotes altruism, as indicated in the command to love our neighbor as ourselves (Matthew 22:39, Mark 12:31, New American Standard Bible). For Christians, Jesus demonstrated the ultimate example of altruism; he lived and died to save mankind, including those who opposed him (Novak, 1992). Altruism attracts and inspires, yet its daily application requires self-denial.

Deontology. The term “ deontology” is derived from the Greek word *deon*, which means “duty” (Fieser, *n.d.*). The deontological approach bases ethics of duties and considers rightness of action as conformity to a universal ethical standard. The deontologists view that certain actions are inherently right or wrong, despite the consequences of those actions; i.e., the ends do not justify the means (Geisler, 2015). Deontological ethics categorize two inversely related approaches: absolutism and relativism.

Absolutism. The philosophical view of ethical absolutism holds individuals to certain ethical standards. Absolutists’ fundamental moral principles remain constant regardless of time and place (Rai & Holyoak, 2013). Child sexual abuse is wrong; absolutists believe that some key definitions remain true or false. Kant’s categorical imperative (Johnson, 2005) and the divine command theory both fit into the category of ethical absolutism (Geisler, 2010).

Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) argued that one should do the ethically right regardless of the consequences (Johnson, 2005). His categorical imperative theory provided no exceptions to ethical rules. According to Kant, right for an individual remains right for everyone (Johnson, 2005). To test whether a decision is right, Kant asserted that individuals should ask themselves if they would want everyone to take the same choice they made. In this view, certain acts are either right or wrong at all times. It is always right to tell the truth or to help the needy and always wrong to tell a lie or commit murder. Reynolds and Dang (2012) claimed that Kantianism parallels to low relativism described by Forsyth (1980).

Johnson (2005) opined that Kantianism is highly motivational as pursuing truth and justice is more appropriate than selfishness. He stated that doing the right thing, no matter the cost, promotes steadfastness and consistency of behavior. A criticism of Kantianism noted that it demands maintaining of universal law under all situations (Johnson, 2005). Kantianism may be difficult to practice, particularly in extremely stressful situations.

As the current study involves the perspective of Christian nonprofit CEOs, the literature review on divine command theory and religiously-based ethics focuses on Biblical Christian ethics. A theistic ethical framework, divine command theory, holds “that morality and moral obligations ultimately depend on God” (Austin, *n.d.*, para. 1). Christian ethics is based on the worldview that God existed before the world began, and He created the universe (Kim et al., 2009). Followers of Jesus, as Geisler (2010) emphasized, “do not find their ethical duties in the standard *of* Christians but in the standard *for* Christians - the Bible” (p. 17).

Geisler (2010) asserted that Christian ethics is prescriptive, absolute, and based on God’s will and revelation. God’s commands remain consistent to His unchanging moral character. For example, in accordance with “God is love” (1 John 4:16) Jesus said, “Love your neighbor as yourself” (Mark 12:31, New International Version). Thus, Christians should not tell because, “it is impossible for God to lie” (Hebrews 6:18, New American Standard Bible). Further, Geisler (2010) stated that Christian ethics also is based on God’s revelation shown both in nature (Psalms 19:1-6; Rom. 1:19-20) and in the Bible (Romans 2:18; 3:2; 2 Timothy 3:16-17). Geisler (2010) noted that a unique element in Christian ethics that sets it apart from other religiously-based ethics is that

God did not only command how people should live, but He also gave a perfect role model in the life of Christ (John 1:1, 14; Hebrews 4:15).

Relativism. According to Schumacher (*n.d.*, para. 1), ethical relativism is a “philosophy that asserts there is no global, absolute moral law that applies to all people, for all time, and in all places.” Kolb (2008) proclaimed that application of ethical relativism may include various levels: individuals, cultures, and moral theories. At the individual level, whatever is right or wrong for a person depends upon that which the individual believes for himself or herself. According to Kolb (2008), this idea illustrated the expression, “What’s right for me is right for me and what’s right for you is right for you” (p. 1808).

Moral relativism at the cultural level argues that one’s culture dictates right and wrong (Kolb, 2008). Johnson (2005) stated that on the surface ethical relativism seems appealing because it may reduce ethnocentrism; in reality, the lack of a common standard of right and wrong causes chaos. He emphasized that without a standard of right and wrong, no basis exists for stopping the cruelty of tyrants.

At the cultural level, Kolb (2008) illustrated ethical relativism by citing that, if in Ireland abortion is wrong, then it is not morally justifiable in the Irish culture. If abortion is a norm in Sweden, killing babies in wombs is morally acceptable in the Swedish culture. This is in contrast to absolutism, i.e., Biblical teachings that God values lives even when they are still in their mothers’ wombs (Psalm 139:13; Jeremiah 1:5; Galatians 1:15). Scientifically, human life begins at conception; the fertilized ovum contains the unique genetic code with all the physical characteristics of a person including one’s gender (Geisler, 2010). Thus, according to this view, abortion is wrong because the

unborn child is a person, and murdering a person is wrong (Turner, *n.d.*). In Biblical terms, murder is a sin.

Moral relativism at the level of moral theory itself suggests that no objective ethical theory exists (Kolb, 2008). Research has shown that those people exposed to ethical relativism compromised their ethical behavior (Rai & Holyoak, 2013). Relativism causes chaos; without common standards, people can rationalize anything they do (Slick, *n.d.*).

Ethics of character. This ethical theory focuses on the importance of virtues rather than on consequences of actions, or duties conforming universal ethical standard (Athanasoulis, *n.d.*; Brown, 2001). Also referred to as virtue ethics, ethics of character is based on the proposition that individuals of strong ethical character make good moral judgments (Johnson, 2005). Ethics of character addresses the question, What kind of people should we be? Aristotle and Plato promoted the primary virtues of self-restraint, courage, prudence, and justice.

Applied Ethics

The philosophy of applied ethics builds on both metaethics and normative ethics. Fieser (*n.d.*) stated that applied ethics focuses on addressing contemporary issues such as abortion, homosexuality, and environmental concerns. Fieser (*n.d.*) also suggested that applied ethics may at times lack clear distinction from metaethics and normative ethics. He asserted that the debate on abortion falls under applied ethics, as the issue concerns controversial conduct. Yet, the abortion issue also lies within the scope of normative ethics because the right to life versus the right of self-rule are prescriptive principles.

Finally, the issue drives the metaethical questions, “where do rights come from?” and “what kind of beings have rights?” (Fieser, *n.d.* para. 2).

Studies in Ethical Idealism, Relativism, and Motivation

Although ethical scandals make news, some scholars have indicated that empirical studies in leadership ethics remain relatively few (Brown & Treviño, 2006; Butler, 2009; Dikeman, 2007; Harmon, 2013). This section examines studies in ethical idealism, relativism, and inspirational motivation.

Research Studies in Ethical Idealism

Forsyth (1980) asserted that individual differences in moral judgment can be explained based on two dimensions of ethical ideology: idealism and relativism. He defined idealism as personal moral value that emphasizes concern for others. High idealism pertains to the belief that harming people is avoidable at all times, while low idealism supports a belief that sometimes harm may be inflicted on others in order to reach a more important goal. Forsyth’s examples of idealism statements include “Risks to another should never be tolerated, irrespective of how small the risks might be” and “The existence of potential harm to others is always wrong, irrespective of the benefits to be gained” (p. 178).

Studies have shown that idealism associates with desirable factors. Valentine and Bateman (2011) indicated that idealism relates to ethical issue recognition. Davis, Andersen, and Curtis (2001) suggested that idealism relates to empathy, and their findings supported Forsyth’s (1980) theory that high idealism emphasizes the avoidance of harming others. Idealism has a strong influence on individual judgments of morality. Barnett, Bass, and Brown (1996) stated that idealism significantly and positively

correlates with judgments that peer reporting was ethical. Barnett et al. asserted that participants who believed in the ethicality to report cheating of peers were likely to state that they would report a peer's cheating.

Research has indicated that idealism has a negative correlation with undesirable factors. Idealism negatively relates to endorsement of lying as a negotiation tactic (Banai, Stefanidis, Shetach, & Özbek, 2014) and the propensity to morally disengage (Moore, Detert, Treviño, Baker, & Mayer, 2012). Kish-Gephart, Harrison, and Treviño (2010) claimed that idealism negatively relates to unethical choice. They suggested that those who believe that *harming others should be avoided* are less likely to make unethical choices.

The relationship between idealism and Kouzes and Posner's (2002) Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) provided varied results. The LPI includes five leadership practices: model the way, challenge the process, encourage the heart, enable others to act, and inspire a shared vision (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). Dikeman's 2007 study of community college presidents found no support for significant relationships between the five leadership practices and idealism. Butler's 2009 research on chief institutional officers and presidents of community colleges indicated that idealism was positively and significantly related to model the way, challenge the process, and encourage the heart. Further, Butler indicated that idealism had no significant correlation with enabling others to act and inspired a shared vision.

Studies on the relationship between idealism and religiosity have shown inconsistent results. Baumsteiger and Chenneville (2013) found that idealism and religiosity are positively related. Conversely, Barnett et al. (1996) and Chen and Liu

(2009) argued that idealism and religiosity or religious orientation do not significantly relate. Although an extent of idealism in Christian managers is stronger than in those who are non-Christian, idealism does not significantly relate to religion, according to Fernando, Dharmage, and Almeida (2008).

Smith (2011) studied young undergraduate marketers' idealism and perceptions of transformational leadership. He stated that idealism of the EPQ (1980) and transformational leadership as measured by the MLQ of Bass and Avolio (2004) are significantly related. Smith's 2011 report, however, excluded the specific correlation of idealism with each transformational leadership component.

Research Studies in Ethical Relativism

Forsyth (1980) described relativism as an ideology associated with skepticism and rejection of universal moral values. High relativism refers to making decisions based on circumstances rather than a universal ethical standard. In contrast, low relativism emphasizes behavior consistent with universal moral principles. Relativism reflected in Forsyth's scale in statements such as, "Whether a lie is judged to be moral or immoral depends upon the circumstances surrounding the action," and "Moral standards should be seen as being individualistic; what one person considers to be moral may be judged to be immoral by another person" (p. 178).

Research studies have indicated that higher relativism associates with less desirable factors. Higher relativism positively correlates with the propensity to disengage morally (Moore et al., 2012) and with unethical choice (Kish-Gephart et al., 2010). In addition, high relativists are more likely to act unethically (Ki, Gonzenbach, Choi, & Lee, 2012; Kish-Gephart et al., 2010). High relativism has negligible influence on individual

judgments of morality (Davis et al., 2001) and a significant and negative correlation with the judgment that peer reporting is ethical (Barnett et al., 1996).

The study by Butler (2009) indicated that higher relativism is significantly and negatively related to model the way and challenge the process, while insignificantly related to enable others to act, encourage the heart, and inspire a shared vision of the LPI by Kouzes and Posner (2002). The study results of Dikeman (2007) showed no significant correlation between higher relativism and any of Kouzes and Posner's (2002) five leadership practices.

Further, higher relativism negatively correlates with religiosity (Barnett et al., 1996) and religious orientation (Chen & Liu, 2009). Barnett et al. (1996) stated that individuals who believe more strongly in universal ethical standards (low relativists) indicate strong commitment to religious belief. The researchers suggested that ethical ideology may be influenced by religious commitment. The study by Smith (2011) showed no significant correlation between relativism and transformational leadership. He examined relativism in relation to the overall correlation of transformational leadership without specifying the MLQ factors, e.g., inspirational motivation.

Research Studies in Inspirational Motivation

Searle and Hanrahan (2011) noted that motivation also may be referred to as inspiration, inspirational motivation, and hope, terms associated with leadership. They asserted that leaders could motivate by proactively creating opportunities for interpersonal connections between leaders and those they inspire. Searle and Hanrahan coined the term *inspiree*. Based on their qualitative phenomenological study, the five key

dimensions of leading to inspire individuals include connecting, leader, inspiree, action, and context. The result of their study is illustrated in Figure 3.

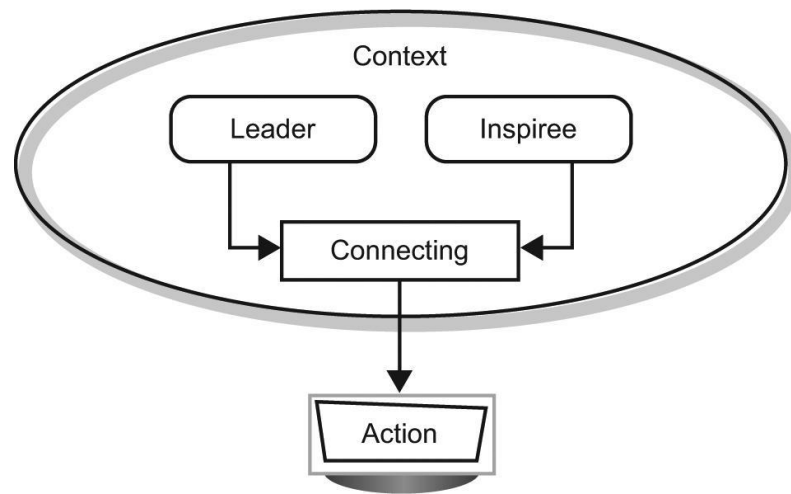


Figure 3. Interrelationship between the five dimensions of leading to inspire others.

Reprinted from “Leading to Inspire Others: Charismatic Influence or Hard Work?” by G. Searle and S. Hanrahan, 2011, *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 32(7), p. 743.

Searle and Hanrahan (2011) described leading to inspire individuals as:

An active process of connecting with others to leverage off a moment that enables others to crystallize visions of new or different possibilities, that would not have been attained alone, energizing them to actualize new possibilities and achieve their potential. (p. 742)

The leadership competency to motivate workers is necessary for organizations. In the observation of Clemens and Mayer (1999), “Leaders will deal with similar issues that have been at the foundation of leadership for more than 3000 years: motivation, inspiration, sensitivity and communication” (as cited in Sheppard, 2007, p. 17). Zenger and Folkman (2013) confirmed the importance of inspiring leadership in their study of

approximately 50,000 leaders. Motivating followers affects their performance and their view of their work. Hughes, Ginnett, and Curphy (1993) indicated that most employees thought they could add or lessen 15 to 20% of their efforts to their current work and no one would notice the change.

Bass and Avolio (2004) posited that inspirational motivation forms a component of transformational leadership. They described inspirational motivation as the degree to which the leader communicates a compelling vision to the followers, encourages them to see their valuable roles in the organization, and inspires them to excel in their performance. An example of an inspirational motivation statement is, "I articulate a compelling vision of the future" (Bass & Avolio, 2004, p. 116). This statement shares similarity with the LPI component of inspire a shared vision, "Describes a compelling image of what our future could be like" (Kouzes & Posner, 2003, p. 6).

The way in which leaders motivate their followers is crucial to organizational performance. In the Panagiotakopoulos 2014 study of CEOs and their subordinates, both *inspirational* motivation and *fear* motivation (threat and punishment) were effective in the short-term performance of workers in the business sector. However, in the long-term, inspirational motivation resulted in better employee performance than fear motivation. Panagiotakopoulos stated that, in companies that apply inspirational motivation as the main motivational technique, the subordinates work with more enthusiasm, job satisfaction, productivity, and high morale. Trust and communication between the subordinates and senior managers also improved. On the other hand, organizations that rely on the use of fear motivation result in decreased employee morale, increased anxiety, and high rates of absenteeism and turnover (Panagiotakopoulos, 2014).

The existing literature of inspirational motivation has included other correlational studies. In studies using the MLQ and Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), inspirational motivation significantly relates to MBTI sensing, but insignificantly correlates with the MBTI feeling scale (Bass & Avolio, 2004). Inspirational motivation also relates to ethical decision making in for-profit business (Banerji & Krishnan, 2000). Finally, Harmon's 2013 study of Christian nonprofits showed that inspirational motivation significantly correlates with leadership effectiveness, followers' satisfaction, and extra effort.

Ethics and Inspirational Motivation

For leading both paid and unpaid workers, the essential attributes of nonprofit CEOs include strong ethics and inspirational motivation (Crawford, 2010; Miller, 2014). These two factors are important in retaining qualified staff, a major challenge of NPOs (Nonprofit Finance Fund, 2015). Further, NPOs thrive primarily on the trust and support of their volunteers, donors, and grant makers. In 2013, volunteers gave approximately 8.1 billion hours, which is the equivalent of \$163 billion (McKeever & Pettijohn, 2014). The Bureau of Labor Statistics (2015) reported that nearly 62.8 million people (25.3% of Americans) over age 16 volunteered through/for NPOs between September 2013 and September 2014. The appearance of ethicality and the inspirational influence from the top organizational tier are both critical for maintaining a volunteer workforce.

Summary

An individual's worldview affects one's ethical beliefs. The historical background of Western ethics shows that various theories of ethics result from opposing worldviews. Christianity is rooted on the Biblical worldview that God created the world

and He is the ultimate source of morality. Based on monotheism, Christian ethics prescribe absolutism, which is in contrast to relativism. Polytheism, skepticism, and atheism have been linked to higher relativism, which stands in contrast to absolutism. While both relativism and absolutism classify as deontological ethics, idealism falls in the category of teleological.

Although individuals generally expect executives to serve as role models of their organizations, ethical scandals often are linked to those holding the top positions. For nonprofit CEOs, the viability of the NPOs necessitates strong ethics and the ability to inspire. However, relatively few studies have focused on the relationship between leadership ethics and inspiration. No study has been found that explored the relationship of idealistic and relativistic attitudes to inspirational Christian nonprofit CEOs. Thus, this current research examines the relationship between ethical ideologies (idealism and relativism) and inspirational motivation of Christian nonprofit CEOs.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

This research sought to examine the relationship between the ethical ideologies and inspirational motivation of Christian nonprofit CEOs affiliated with Christian Child and Family Services Association. This chapter describes the research design, instrumentation, participants, data collection, and analysis.

Research Design

A survey and quantitative correlational design were utilized to examine the degree to which the factors of idealism and relativism are related to inspirational motivation. Inspirational motivation, a desirable leadership factor, may be positively correlated with idealism while negatively correlated with relativism. Figure 4 shows the research model of the factors and the relationships of primary interest in this study.

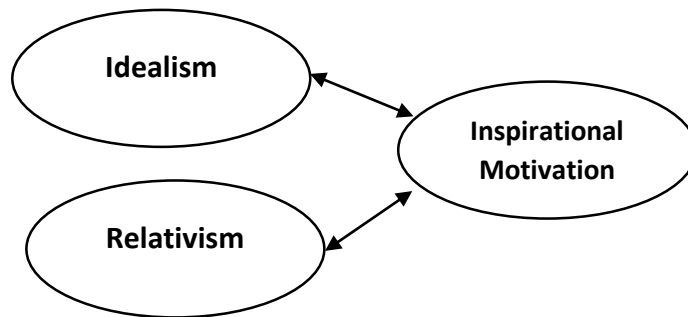


Figure 4. Conceptual Model

Instrumentation

In order to measure the relationships between the variables, two valid and reliable instruments were employed: Forsyth's (1980) EPQ and the MLQ Leader Form (5X Short) - Inspirational Motivation of Bass and Avolio (2004). The third instrument was a demographics questionnaire.

Ethics Position Questionnaire

Forsyth's (1980) EPQ measures differences in individuals' moral viewpoints in terms of idealism and relativism. The scale is based on ethics position theory, which "maintains that individuals' personal moral philosophies influence their judgments, actions, and emotions in ethically intense situations" (Forsyth et al., 2008, p. 813).

Forsyth (1980) described idealism as a personal moral value that emphasizes concern for others. High idealism pertains to the belief that harming individuals should be avoided at all times, while low idealism supports the belief that at times harm can be inflicted in order to reach a goal. Forsyth (1980) defined relativism as an ideology associated with skepticism and rejection of universal moral values. High relativism endorses moral action based on the situation rather than a universal ethical standard. In contrast, low relativism considers universal moral principles as the basis in ethical decision making.

The EPQ attempts to measure constructs that fit well with the purposes of the current study. In making ethical choices, nonprofit executives are expected to consider concern for others, a factor associated with idealism. The executives also may make moral judgments based on universal ethical principles, a factor related to relativism. The EPQ measures both idealism and relativism, thus this instrument is appropriate for examining the ethical ideologies of the nonprofit executives (see permission letter in Appendix A).

Forsyth (1980) constructed the EPQ with 241 psychology students as the participants. EPQ has been used worldwide. In a meta-analysis of 30,230 participants of 139 samples taken from 29 countries, Forsyth et al. (2008) found support for the hypothesis that the "mean levels of idealism and relativism vary across regions of the

world in predictable ways” (p. 826). They hypothesized that there may be morality factors unique to certain countries that were not measured by the EPQ. Further, EPQ has been used in other research populations including, but not limited to, community college executives (Butler, 2009; Dikeman, 2007); consumers (Swaidan, Rawwas, & Vitell, 2008); business managers (Fernando et al., 2008); and medical professionals (MacNab et al., 2011).

Forsyth’s (1980) research indicated that the scores resulting from the idealism and relativism factors of the EPQ have internal consistency at Cronbach’s alpha of .80 and .73, and test-retest reliabilities of .67 and .66, respectively. The EPQ includes 20 items. Adding the responses from items 1 through 10 provides the idealism score, and adding the responses from items 11 through 20 provides the relativism score for each tested individual. Forsyth’s 9-point Likert Scale ranges from 1 for “completely disagree,” to 9 for “completely agree.” The same original scale was used in this research.

In research with a sample of 1,109 physicians from six countries, a confirmatory factor analysis showed that the EPQ consists of the two dimensions of idealism and relativism for all samples other than the Chinese sample (MacNab et al., 2011). The sample of Chinese physicians suggested four ethical dimensions – idealism A, idealism B, relativism A, and relativism B. However, for this current study, a two-factor structure (idealism and relativism) was assumed, as has been found in the majority of samples. Overall, prior scholarly works have indicated EPQ is a reliable and valid instrument that adequately fits the purposes of the current research.

Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire Leader Form (5X Short)

– Inspirational Motivation

Bass and Avolio (1995) developed the MLQ Leader Form (5X Short), a 9-factor scale for measuring transformational, transactional, and laissez faire leadership styles. A key factor of transformational leadership is inspirational motivation, a leadership quality that promotes enthusiasm and optimism in followers to achieve organizational goals (Bass & Avolio, 2004). The inspirational motivation subscale of the MLQ matches that which the current study intends to measure in terms of nonprofit executives' inspiration. The MLQ uses a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 0 for “not at all” to 4 for “frequently, if not always” (Bass & Avolio, 2004). The same 5-point scale of four items was used in this study (see permission letter in Appendix B).

Exploratory factor analyses and confirmatory factor analyses were conducted to explore the factor structure of the MLQ Leader Form (5X Short); e.g., Kyngäs, Kanste, and Miettunen (2007) examined the scale using EFA and CFA based on samples of nurses in Finland. The researchers reported satisfactory internal consistencies of the MLQ subscores. According to Kyngäs et al., IM scores had Cronbach's alphas ranging from .77 to .92 in a cross-sectional study ($N = 604$) and follow-up study ($N = 78$). Examples of types of organizations that used the MLQ are nonprofits (Harmon, 2013); military (Avolio, Bass, Berson, & Jung, 2003); and educational institutions (McGuffin, 2011).

Demographics Questionnaire

The demographics questionnaire asked participants to provide six profile data points as follows: (a) job title, (b) length of service as NPO executive with current and past employers, (c) race/ethnicity, (d) education, (e) gender, and (f) age. The three instruments, i.e., demographics questionnaire, EPQ, and the MLQ Leader Form (5X Short) – inspirational motivation, comprised the survey, which required approximately 5 to 10 minutes in which to answer (see Appendix C).

Participants

A census was conducted on all chief executive officers (CEOs) from the 45 NPOs that are active member agencies of the Christian Child and Family Services Association (CCFSA). These agencies of CCFSA provide services such as residential childcare, pregnancy and adoption services, foster care, educational schools for K-12, and family life enrichment (Mission Finder, *n.d.*). In terms of leading based on Biblical Christian principles, the CEOs of CCFSA member agencies were expected to be similar to the desired population of inference (Christian NPOs) that offer services other than those already listed.

The CEOs of CCFSA were the chosen participants because they are Christians serving the most vulnerable members of society, children (see Appendices D and E for letters of CCFSA President). Further, the researcher has previous work and research experience with two children's homes affiliated with CCFSA. As this study used a non-random convenience sample with unique traits, some limitations may have existed in making inference to all Christian NPOs. The director of public relations of CCFSA, the

association website, and individual members' websites provided the primary sources of email and physical addresses of the respondents.

Data Collection

The collection of data began subsequent to the approval of the application for Exemption Certification from the Institutional Review Board at Western Kentucky University. A pilot study was conducted through a Qualtrics electronic survey sent to four nonprofit leaders who were not among the study population. Three of the four leaders completed the pilot test, and their responses confirmed the adequacy of the procedure and the 5 to 10 minutes estimated length of time to answer the questionnaire. An introductory email was then sent to the participants before the main survey (see Appendix F). The email described the importance of the study, encouraged cooperation, and assured the research findings would be shared with them. Participants were informed that individual responses would remain anonymous and results would be shared only in aggregate.

Three days after the introductory emails were sent, the questionnaires were distributed electronically. A letter of consent approved by the Western Kentucky University Human Subjects Review Board was presented as the cover letter of the questionnaire (see Appendix G). The survey was conducted from October 22, 2015, to November 16, 2015. Within this period, follow-up emails and hard copies of the questionnaire were sent to encourage those who did not respond within the first week of the initial distribution. The final response rate was 76%, with a total of 34 responses of the 45 surveys distributed. Twenty-nine participants completed the survey online, and five submitted the paper questionnaire through the postal service. One participant began

the survey but did not complete it. Codes were assigned per participant for confidentiality purposes, to prevent duplication of efforts, and to reduce unnecessary follow up to responders. Thank you notes were sent to the participants.

Data Analysis

The collected data from Qualtrics were organized and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 23. The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was employed on the mean score for each factor in order to examine the relationships between the ethical ideologies and inspirational motivation. Although the small amount of measurement error suggested by Cronbach's alpha was not considered when using Pearson product-moment correlation, this approach was appropriate for the sample size of this study. The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient measures the linear trend between two variables.

The researcher initially intended to use CFA based on earlier available data about CCFSA membership. However, as time got closer to the conduct of the survey, it became clear that the association's latest data indicated lesser active nonprofit members. Thus, the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient on the mean of the items was used rather than CFA.

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

This quantitative research study was conducted to investigate the relationship between ethical ideologies (idealism and relativism) and inspirational motivation of Christian nonprofit CEOs. This chapter includes demographics of the sample, reliability of the scales used, participants' means scores and standard deviation for Ethics Position Questionnaire (Forsyth, 1980), and the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire Leader Form (5X Short) Inspirational Motivation (Bass & Avolio, 2004). Further, the correlations between ethical ideologies and inspirational motivation, as well as the correlation between idealism and relativism, were analyzed.

Demographics

The demographic data collected from the participants included job title, years of experience as nonprofit chief executive, race/ethnicity, education, gender, and age. All participants held chief executive positions of nonprofits that are active members of the CCFSA. Among the 45 CEOs invited to participate, 34 completed the questionnaire, a response rate of 76%.

The majority of the participants held the executive director title (53.1%), as shown in Figure 5. Those with 20 or more years of nonprofit chief executive experience comprised the largest group (35%), as reported in Figure 6. The majority of the participants were Caucasian (88%), as shown in Figure 7. Most had master's degrees (59%), as shown in Figure 8; and the number of male participants was seven times higher than the female participants, as shown in Figure 9. More than half (53%) were 55-64 years of age, and only one was in the range of 25-34, as shown in Figure 10.

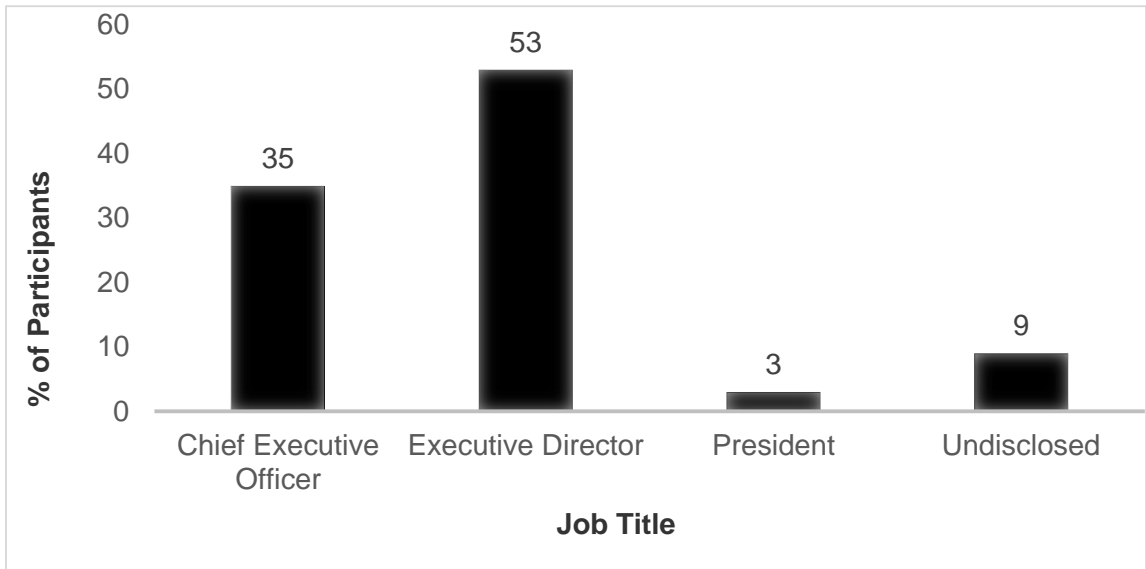


Figure 5. Participants by job title.

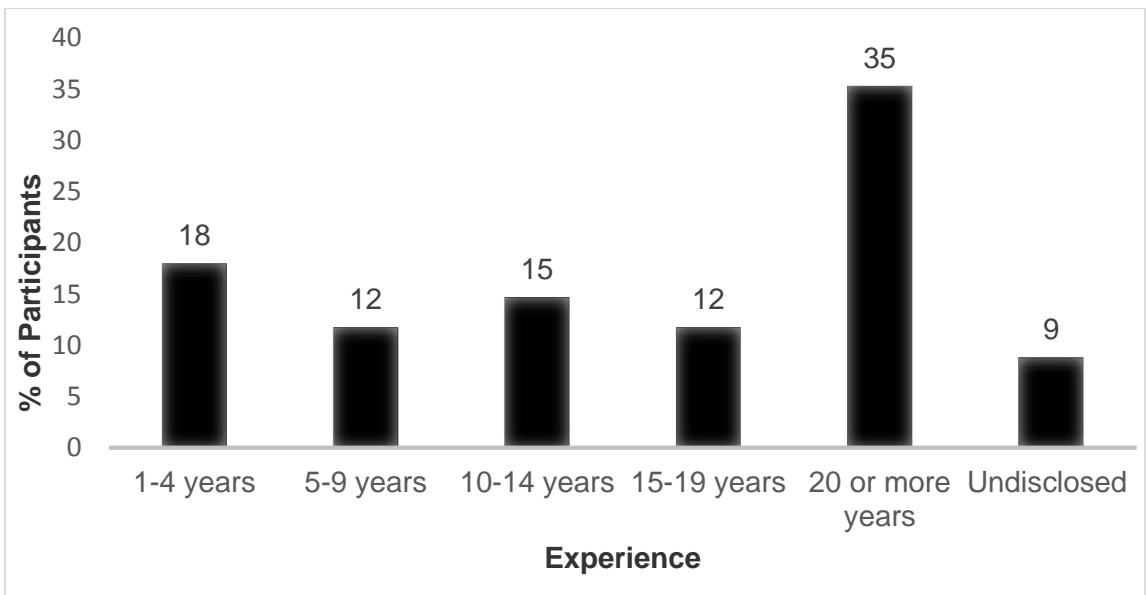


Figure 6. Participants by nonprofit chief executive experience.

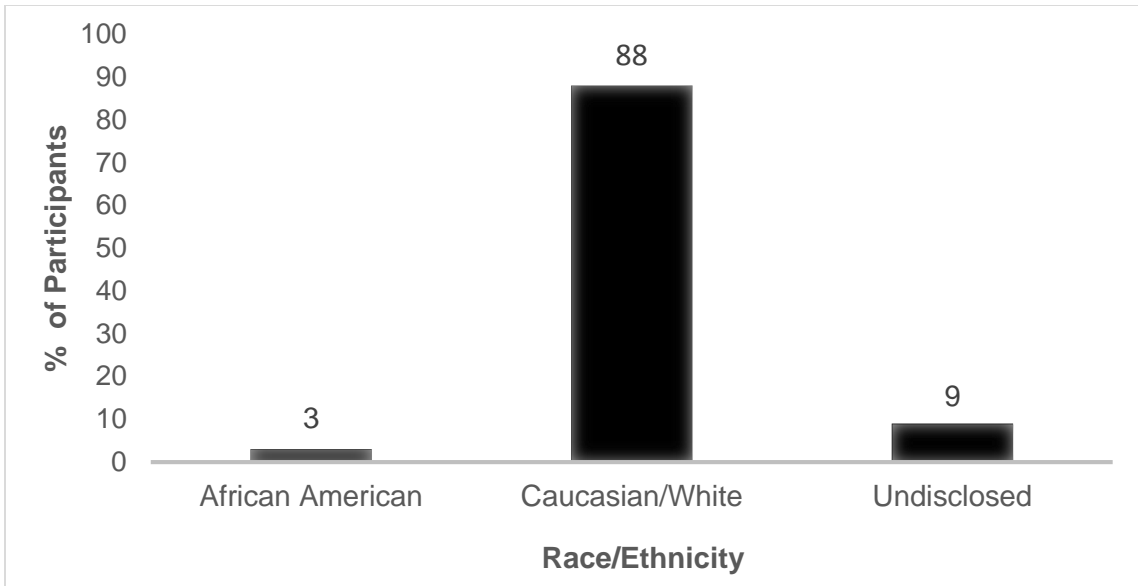


Figure 7. Participants by race/ethnicity.

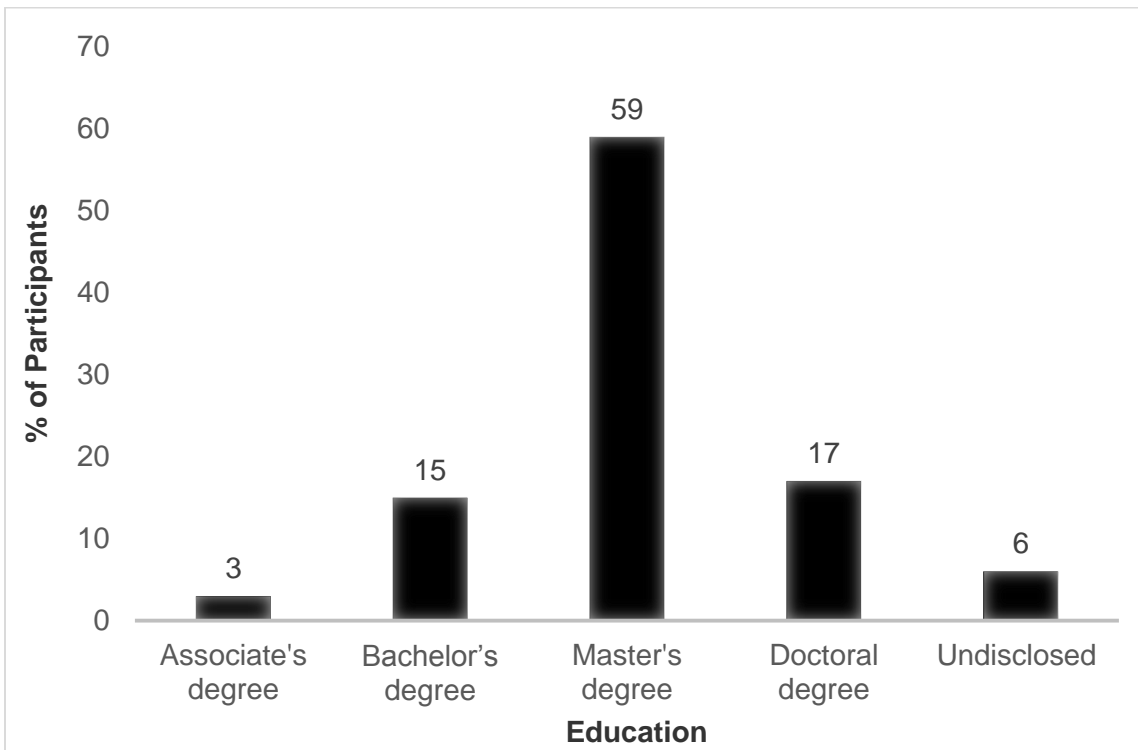


Figure 8. Participants by education.

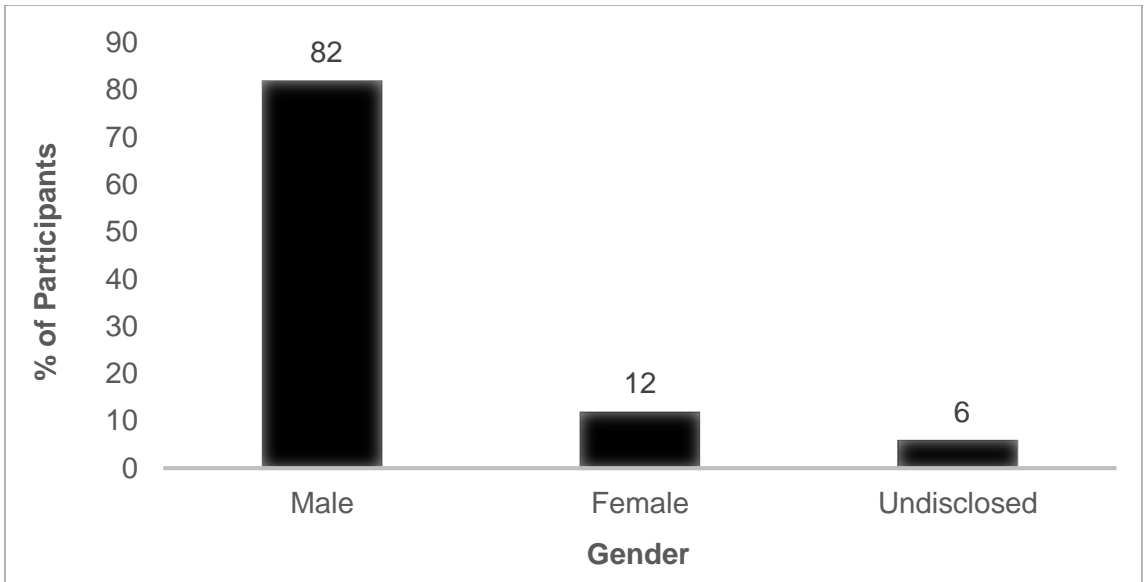


Figure 9. Participants by gender.

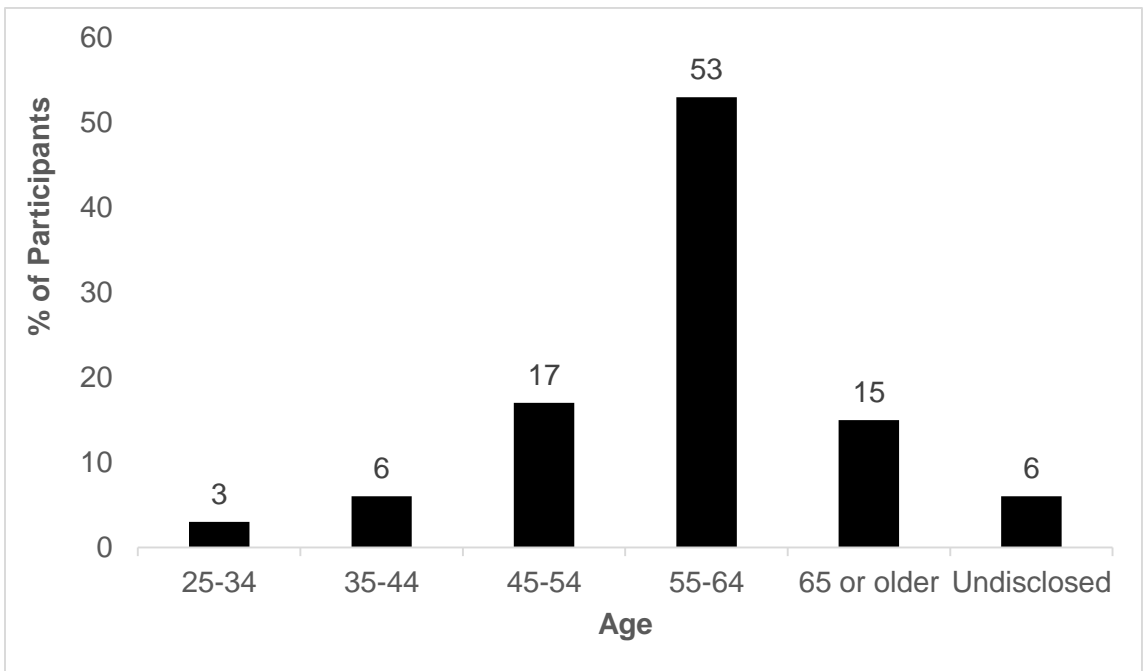


Figure 10. Participants by age.

Findings Related to Research Questions

This section presents the data analysis of the findings for the research questions. It also includes the reliability statistics of the MLQ Leader Form (5X Short) – IM and EPQ and the participants' mean scores and standard deviations. Most important, the relationships of idealism, relativism, and inspirational motivation were analyzed using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. The survey responses indicated that the Cronbach's alpha of MLQ IM was .77, which suggests an internal consistency between acceptable and good. As shown in Table 1, the Cronbach's alpha of idealism and relativism were both good.

Table 1

Reliability of MLQ Inspirational Motivation and EPQ for Participants

Scale	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
MLQ Inspirational Motivation	.77	4
EPQ Idealism	.86	10
EPQ Relativism	.89	10

The MLQ is a 5-point scale with four items. The participants' mean score of 4.24 indicated that these nonprofit CEOs often expressed inspiration to their followers. The EPQ is a 9-point scale and includes 10 items each for idealism and relativism. The high mean score of 7.11 for idealism reflected that the participants' ethical ideology

emphasized the welfare of others. The low mean score of 3.26 for relativism indicated that the participants depend less upon circumstances when making moral judgments. As such, the participants based their judgment more on a universal ethical standard than on circumstances and situations.

Table 2

Participants' Mean Scores and Standard Deviations for MLQ IM and EPQ

Scale	<i>N</i>	Min	Max	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
MLQ Inspirational Motivation	34	2.5	5.0	4.24	0.57
EPQ Idealism	34	4.3	8.9	7.11	1.42
EPQ Relativism	32	1.0	8.5	3.26	1.67

Table 2 shows the participants' overall mean score for each scale, which was computed from average score per construct. Further, calculations included the descriptive statistics of the inspirational motivation items of Bass and Avolio's (2004) MLQ (see Appendix H). Likewise, the descriptive statistics of idealism items (see Appendix I), as well as relativism items of Forsyth's (1980) EPQ (see Appendix J), were computed. Confirmatory factor analysis was initially intended for the analysis, but the final sample size was insufficient to do so. Thus, the researcher found the mean for each scale and used the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient.

Regarding Research Question 1: To what degree is idealism related to inspirational motivation?, analysis using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient indicated that idealism is positively related to inspirational motivation. However, the correlation was weak and statistically insignificant, ($r = .09, p = .597$), as shown in the scatter plot of Figure 11.

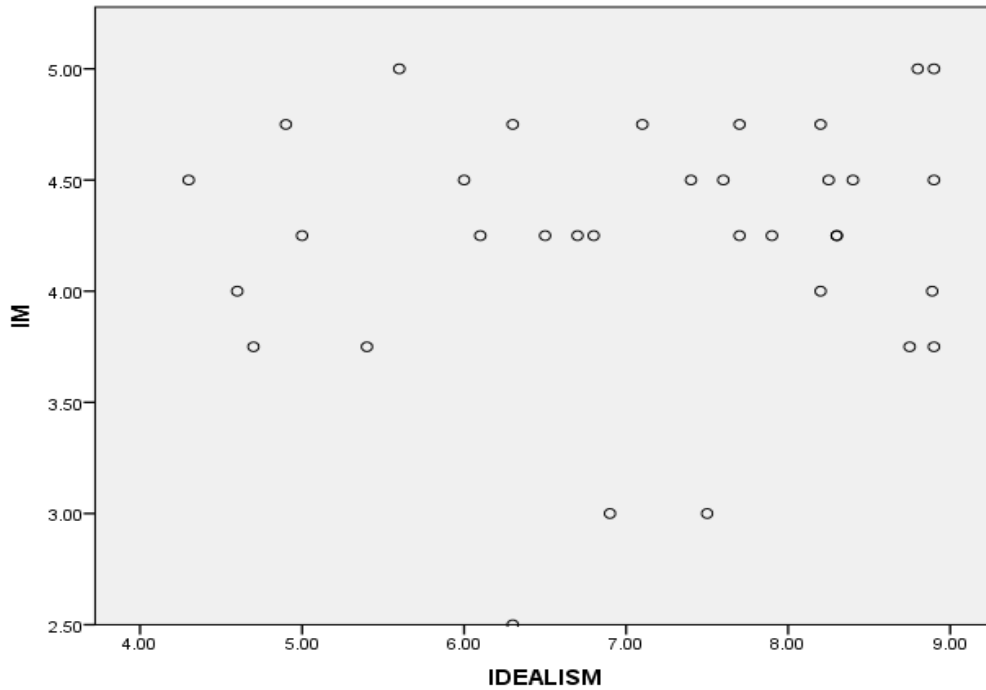


Figure 11. Relationship between inspirational motivation (IM) and idealism.

Regarding Research Question 2: To what degree is relativism related to inspirational motivation?, the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient indicated that relativism is positively related to inspirational motivation, with a weak and statistically insignificant correlation ($r = .23, p = .200$). When excluding the outlier on the upper right hand corner of Figure 12, the correlation between inspirational motivation and relativism would be weaker ($r = .12, p = .519$). Further, the removal of the outlier also would have lowered the correlation between inspirational motivation and

idealism to $r = .04$, $p = .809$. Both Figures 11 and 12 show that no relationship exists between inspirational motivation and ethical ideologies. Concerning the two dimensions of the EPQ, the correlation between idealism and relativism was very weak, negative, and statistically insignificant ($r = -.01$, $p = .960$).

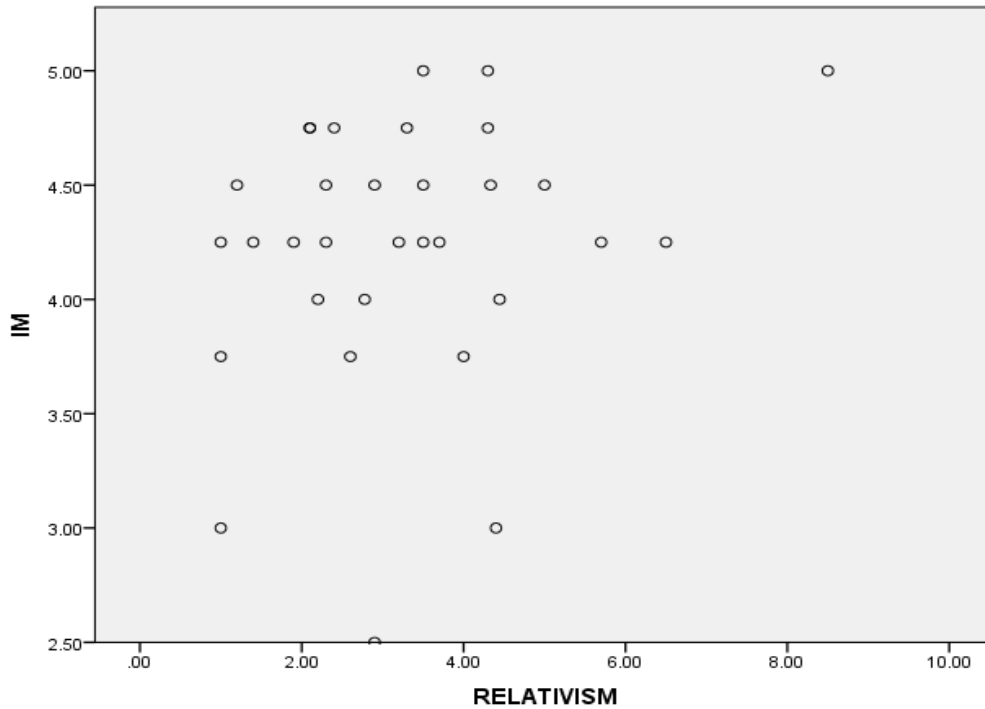


Figure 12. Relationship between inspirational motivation (IM) and relativism.

Summary of Results

The results of this study show that the nonprofit CEOs have a mean score of 4.24 in the 5-point MLQ scale for inspirational motivation. In the 9-point scale EPQ, the participants' mean score was 7.11 for idealism and 3.26 for relativism. Finally, the study results indicate that no significant relationship exists between the ethical ideologies, as measured by the EPQ, and inspirational motivation, as measured by the MLQ Leader Form (5X Short).

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS

This chapter briefly reviews the purpose, literature, and methodology of the research study. Also discussed are the findings on the nonprofit CEOs' participants' demographic information; mean scores; and the correlations of idealism, relativism, and inspirational motivation. The limitations and recommendations for further studies also are presented.

Summary of the Research Study

This research sought to explore the correlation of both ethical idealism and relativism with inspirational motivation of Christian nonprofit CEOs. The results may offer useful insights for succession planning, as well as training and development purposes in nonprofits.

Literature Review

Some scholars have empirically studied ethical leadership in the last few decades (Treviño, Brown, & Hartman, 2003). However, relative to the Western perspective, debates on ethics began with the ancient Greek philosophers. Denault (2003) noted that Socrates (c. 469-399 B.C.) believed that an ethical life contributes to happiness. He also reported that Socrates argued against the Greek Sophists' concept of moral relativism. The Sophists, such as Protagoras of Abdera (circa 490 - 420 B.C.), advocated that gaining objective knowledge was impossible, thus the uncertainty that God truly exists (Garofalo, 2013). Herodotus (484- 425 B.C.) suggested that gods took an active part in history, such as in warfare (Garofalo, 2013). With his polytheistic belief, Herodotus consequently considered ethical relativism (Garofalo, 2013). Plato (427-347 B.C.) and Aristotle (384-322 B.C) promoted virtue ethics (Hursthouse, 2013).

In the medieval period (Circa 500 A.D.- 1500), while Christianity gained dominance, new forms of ethical relativism developed in the West (Geisler, 2010). The 12th century relativist Peter Abelard promoted *intentionalism*, the idea that one's action is right or wrong depending upon the intent (Geisler, 2010). Later, in the 14th century, David Ockham introduced the idea of *nominalism* or the belief that “universals exist only in the mind, not in reality” (Geisler, 2010, p. 24).

In the modern-contemporary period (1501- to present), society has gradually excluded God in addressing ethical matters (Kim et al., 2009). The skeptic David Hume (1711-1776) questioned the existence of a Creator and promoted ethical relativism that led to the saying, “*What is right for you is right for you, what is right for me is right for me.*” Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) later emphasized utilitarianism, which states that an act is positive if it results in maximum benefits and minimum pain to those concerned (McQuilkin & Copan, 2014). Garofalo (2013) asserted that atheism as a type of secular humanism suggests that God is not the measure of all things, but that humans serve this function. Overall, history has shown that Christianity advocates the use of the Bible as the moral guide for all generations, whereas polytheism, skepticism, and atheism are linked to ethical relativism.

According to Geisler (2013, p. xiv), “Moral relativism is a part of a worldview...that over time arrives at the conclusion that no behavior or moral opinion should be categorized as good or bad by the norms of society, unless it is politically correct.” Moral relativism has changed society's ideas concerning such basic social concepts as the definition of the family unit, and marriage versus cohabitation, as well as public issues such as “corporate greed, and government corruption” (Geisler, 2013).

Undeniably, organizations across sectors face serious ethical challenges. Executives are expected to serve as role models as well as managers, yet studies have shown that ethical misconduct often is worst at this top leadership level (Association of Certified Fraud Examiners, 2014; Ethics Resource Center, 2014). Within the nonprofit sector, merely a hint of fraud can grievously harm the organization's valuable reputation that may result in the loss of supporters. The Ethics Resource Center (2007) describes common unethical behaviors within nonprofit organizations including "conflict of interests, lying to employees, abusive behavior, and misreporting hours" (pp. IX, 2-5). As donations of time and funding generally are critical for any nonprofit organization to achieve its mission, strong ethics are a must for executive leaders. Further, the ability to inspire individuals rates as an essential competency for any nonprofit executive (Crawford, 2010; Miller, 2014, para. 1,6). Studies have confirmed that inspirational leaders perform more effectively than those who are not inspirational (Panagiotakopoulos, 2014; Zenger & Folkman, 2013). In addition to with a demonstrated ethical integrity, effective leadership requires the ability to inspire staff, volunteers, and supporters.

Undoubtedly the greatest threat to nonprofit organizations is the executive leader who has inspirational capability and unethical practices. History has shown that inspirational leaders are not necessarily ethical, e.g., Bakker of Heritage USA in the 1980s and Aramony of the United Way of America in the 1990s. The two charismatic executives belong to Christian denominations, but both spent time in jail for fraud.

Specifically, from the perspective of CEOs leading Christian nonprofits that serve children, no research appeared to examine the relationship between ethical ideologies and inspirational motivation. Thus, this study addressed the research gap between inspirational motivation in relation to ethical idealism and relativism of Christian nonprofit CEOs.

Review of Methodology

Forsyth's (1980) ethics position theory and Bass and Avolio's (2004) transformational leadership theory provided the theoretical framework for this research study. The study used a correlational design to examine the relationship between ethical ideologies (idealism and relativism), as measured by Forsyth's (1980) Ethics Position Questionnaire, and inspirational motivation, as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire Leader Form (5X Short) of Bass and Avolio (2004).

The 30-item questionnaire included four items from the inspirational motivation component of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire Leader Form (5X Short) of Bass and Avolio (2004); 20 items from the Ethics Position Questionnaire (Forsyth, 1980); and six items from the demographics questionnaire (see Appendix C). The participants could answer the questionnaire either on paper form or online through Qualtrics software. The survey began on October 22, 2015, and closed on November 16, 2015. For the analysis of results, two options existed based on the sample size obtained: (a) confirmatory factor analysis, and (b) the Pearson moment-product correlation coefficient. Finally, the Pearson moment-product correlation coefficient was used because the sample size was insufficient for a confirmatory factor analysis.

Demographics

All participants held the chief executive position of the nonprofits that are active members of the CCFSA. Of the 45 executives invited to participate, 34 completed the survey. The 76% response rate indicated high representation of CEOs who led the CCFSA member nonprofits. Most participants held master's degrees (59%), and were male (82%), white (88%), and 55-64 years of age (53%). The participants with 20 or more years of nonprofit executive experience comprised the largest group (35%), followed far behind by the group with one to four years of experience (18%). Considering the participants' age, educational attainment, and years of nonprofit executive experience, they appear to be well positioned to select, develop, and mentor the future leaders in the workforce.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this research showed that most participants are inclined toward idealism, as measured by the Ethics Position Questionnaire of Forsyth (1980). On the 9-point idealism scale of the EPQ, the participants' mean score of 7.11 suggests that these nonprofits CEOs are concerned with the welfare of others when making ethical judgments. Their score also confirms the observation of Johnson (2005) that altruism, a strong form of idealism, drives NPOs toward addressing social problems. Further, the average idealism score was expected because they lead faith-based nonprofits that serve as outreach of Biblical Christianity. As such, the CEO respondents have the responsibility to promote loving our neighbor as ourselves (Matthew 22:39, Mark 12:31) and to care for orphans and widows (James 1:27). In regards to caring children and

families, the idealism of these CEOs reflects Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck's (1973) concerns: relationship of an individual to others and appropriate behavior.

On the EPQ relativism scale of 1-9, the participants' mean score of 3.26 indicates low relativism. This score suggests that the participants base their moral judgment more on a universal ethical standard than on circumstances and situations. The low mean relativism score appears to agree with the observation of Barnett et al. (1996) that Christians who believe in the Bible as the ultimate source for morality tend to have an absolutist rather than relativistic perspective. Likewise, the participants' low relativism appears to be in accordance with the absolute form of Christian ethics (Geisler, 2010). The CEOs' relativism connects to the question of Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1973), "What is the relationship of man to nature (supernature)?" The Christian CEOs' low relativism provides an idea of the participants' relationship with the Giver of universal moral code. In regard to inspirational motivation, on the five-point scale of MLQ Leader Form (5X Short) – Inspirational Motivation, the participants' mean score of 4.24 reflects that they often expressed inspiration to their followers.

The central research question of this current study was, "To what degree are ethical ideologies related to inspirational motivation of CEOs of nonprofits serving children and families?"

Research Question 1

To what degree is idealism related to inspirational motivation? The results indicated a positive but negligible and insignificant correlation between idealism and inspirational motivation. The anticipated significant correlation between idealism and inspirational motivation did not materialize. However, on average the participants had

high scores in idealism and inspirational motivation; individual scores were not significantly related to one another.

The works of Dikeman (2007) and Butler (2009) have similarities with the current study. Dikeman (2007) examined the ethical ideologies of community college presidents, and Butler explored the ethical ideologies of chief institutional officers and presidents of community colleges. Results from both studies indicated that idealism was not significantly related to inspire a shared vision of Kouzes and Posner's (2002) Leadership Practices Inventory.

The inspirational motivation component of the MLQ and the practice of inspiring a shared vision of the LPI have overlapping aspects. The MLQ inspirational motivation scale states, "I articulate a compelling vision of the future," while the LPI item states, "Describes a compelling image of what our future could be like." Although both idealism and inspirational motivation are desirable leadership qualities, this study found no support that they predict one another.

Research Question 2

To what degree is relativism related to inspirational motivation? The result of Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient showed that relativism has positive, weak, and insignificant correlation with inspirational motivation. The insignificant relationship between relativism and inspirational motivation may be compared to the study results of Dikeman (2007) and Butler (2009). As discussed earlier, the inspirational motivation of the MLQ (Bass & Avolio, 2004) and inspire a shared vision of the LPI (Kouzes & Posner, 2002) possess overlapping items. Butler (2009) had an adequate sample and detected no significant relationship between relativism and inspired

a shared vision. Likewise, Dikeman (2007) found no significant correlation between relativism and inspire a shared vision.

Although additional studies are needed to examine the relationship between ethical ideologies and inspirational motivation, history suggests that these factors fall into different dimensions of complex leader characteristics; i.e., some Christian nonprofit leaders inspired the beliefs of thousands, but their unethical ways harmed their followers. The results of this study appeared to confirm that leaders' inspirational capabilities and ethicality do not predict one another.

For decision makers on succession planning, and training and development, the results may provide useful insights. As this study did not find support for significant correlation between ethical ideologies and inspirational motivation, these factors require careful consideration as separate criteria in selection and training and development of executives. Assessment of these two important leadership competencies may be determined by conducting the EPQ and MLQ test in the screening process. This study adds knowledge to four areas of research that require further exploration: nonprofits, CEOs, leadership ethics, and inspirational leadership.

Limitations

This study was limited to Christian CEOs of nonprofit organizations that are actively affiliated with the CCFSA. The researcher initially expected a larger sample size based on the number of target participants in earlier available data about CCFSA membership. However, as the conduct of the survey approached, the association's latest data indicated lesser active nonprofit members or fewer CEOs. This decrease in sample size reduced the expected statistical power of the study. Additionally, the

self-reported measures of ethical ideologies and inspirational motivation were limited to the perspectives of the nonprofit CEOs.

Recommendations for Further Study

The wide field of research in nonprofits, CEOs, leadership ethics, and inspirational leadership awaits further exploration. Further studies are recommended on the correlation between ethical ideologies and inspirational motivation of other top nonprofit leaders, such as the board of directors and fundraisers.

Ethical challenges affect individuals in all walks of life, thus an exploration of these leadership factors may be useful to other organizations, including those in the government and business sectors. Additionally, comparative studies are recommended to examine the ethical ideologies and inspirational motivation of theists and atheists, as well as of the multiple generations in the workplace.

In terms of methodology, a confirmatory factor analysis is recommended for future studies when sample size allows. Additionally, future research might employ a mixed method for in-depth understanding of ethical ideologies and inspirational motivation. The combined method could address “what” is the degree of the correlation between these factors, as well as the “how” and “why” behind the relationship of these leadership factors. For a comprehensive assessment of the CEOs’ ethics and inspirational motivation, an evaluation is suggested from those who work directly with them such as their support staff and board of directors.

The researcher recommends further studies on the relationships between ethical ideologies with other transformational components such as Bass and Avolio’s (2004) idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. New

instruments available for measuring ethics and inspiration also may be used for future research. Finally, future studies should examine and develop the combination of ethical and inspirational leadership qualities that have lasting influence, such as those exemplified by Christ.

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APPENDIX A:
ETHICS POSITION QUESTIONNAIRE PERMISSION LETTER

From: Forsyth, Don <dforsyth@richmond.edu>

Sent: Monday, October 5, 2015 1:59 PM

To: Baragona, Sharlene

Subject: RE: EPQ

Hi Sharlene,

Greetings, and thank you for your note. By all means, please feel free to use the EPQ in your research—I've posted some basic details about the scale at this page (<https://donforsyth.wordpress.com/ethics/ethics-position-questionnaire/>) but get in touch if you have any questions.

The EPQ

Ethics Position
Questionnaire | Donelson
R. Forsyth
I developed the Ethics
Position Questionnaire
to measure individual
differences in moral
thought, prompted in
part by curiosity about
the diverse reactions to
one of ...
Read more...

Don Forsyth
University of Richmond
dforsyth@richmond.edu
<http://facultystaff.richmond.edu/~dforsyth/>

APPENDIX B:

MULTIFACTOR LEADERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE PERMISSION LETTER

For use by Sharlene Baragona only. Received from Mind Garden, Inc. on January 8, 2015



www.mindgarden.com

To whom it may concern,

This letter is to grant permission for the above named person to use the following copyright material;

Instrument: *Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire*

Authors: *Bruce Avolio and Bernard Bass*

Copyright: *1995 by Bruce Avolio and Bernard Bass*

for his/her thesis research.

Five sample items from this instrument may be reproduced for inclusion in a proposal, thesis, or dissertation.

The entire instrument may not be included or reproduced at any time in any other published material.

Sincerely,

Robert Most
Mind Garden, Inc.
www.mindgarden.com

APPENDIX C:
NONPROFIT EXECUTIVES SURVEY

Please indicate how frequently each statement fits you.

	Not at all	Once in a while	Sometimes	Fairly often	Frequently, if not always
I talk optimistically about the future.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I talk enthusiastically about what needs to be accomplished.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I articulate a compelling vision of the future.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I express confidence that goals will be achieved.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please indicate if you agree or disagree with the following items.

	Completely disagree	Largely disagree	Moderately disagree	Slightly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Slightly agree	Moderately agree	Largely agree	Completely agree
People should make certain that their actions never intentionally harm another even to a small degree.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Risks to another should never be tolerated, irrespective of how small the risks might be.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The existence of potential harm to others is always wrong, irrespective of the benefits to be gained.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
One should never psychologically or physically harm another person.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please indicate if you agree or disagree with the following items.

	Completely disagree	Largely disagree	Moderately disagree	Slightly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Slightly agree	Moderately agree	Largely agree	Completely agree
One should not perform an action which might in any way threaten the dignity and welfare of another individual.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If an action could harm an innocent other, then it should not be done.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Deciding whether or not to perform an act by balancing the positive consequences of the act against the negative consequences of the act is immoral.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The dignity and welfare of the people should be the most important concern in any society.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please indicate if you agree or disagree with the following items.

	Completely disagree	Largely disagree	Moderately disagree	Slightly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Slightly agree	Moderately agree	Largely agree	Completely agree
It is never necessary to sacrifice the welfare of others.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Moral behaviors are actions that closely match ideals of the most "perfect" action.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There are no ethical principles that are so important that they should be a part of any code of ethics.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
What is ethical varies from one situation and society to another.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please indicate if you agree or disagree with the following items.

	Completely disagree	Largely disagree	Moderately disagree	Slightly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Slightly agree	Moderately agree	Largely agree	Completely agree
Moral standards should be seen as being individualistic; what one person considers to be moral may be judged to be immoral by another person.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Different types of morality cannot be compared as to "rightness."	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Questions of what is ethical for everyone can never be resolved since what is moral or immoral is up to the individual.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Moral standards are simply personal rules that indicate how a person should behave, and are not to be applied in making judgments of others.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please indicate if you agree or disagree with the following items.

	Completely disagree	Largely disagree	Moderately disagree	Slightly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Slightly agree	Moderately agree	Largely agree	Completely agree
Ethical considerations in interpersonal relations are so complex that individuals should be allowed to formulate their own individual codes.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Rigidly codifying an ethical position that prevents certain types of actions could stand in the way of better human relations and adjustment.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
No rule concerning lying can be formulated; whether a lie is permissible or not permissible totally depends upon the situation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Whether a lie is judged to be moral or immoral depends upon the circumstances surrounding the action.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please indicate the category that best describes you.

Job Title/Position

Chief Executive
Officer

Executive Director

President

Superintendent

Administrator

Other, please specify

Total number of years as the chief executive with your current and past nonprofit employers

Less than 1 year

1-4 years

5-9 years

10-14 years

15-19 years

20 or more years

Race/ethnicity

African
American

Asian

Caucasian/White

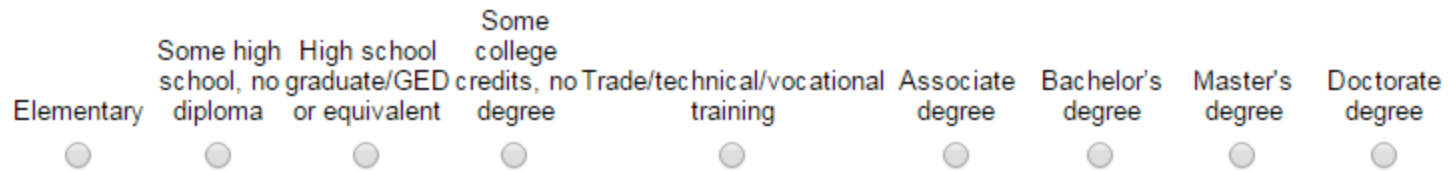
Latino/Hispanic

Native American

Pacific Islander

Other, please specify

Highest level of education



Gender

Female

Male

Age



We thank you for your time spent taking this survey.

APPENDIX D:

LETTER FROM THE CCFSA PRESIDENT TO THE RESEARCHER

From: **Ron Bruner** <wbhdir@aol.com>
Date: Tue, Oct 13, 2015 at 1:44 PM
Subject: RE: Request
To: Sha Baragona <esbaragona@gmail.com>
Cc: "Garmon, Cecile" <cecile.garmon@wku.edu>, Ron Bruner <Ron.bruner@gmail.com>

Dear Ms. Baragona,

This letter serves as a formal letter of support for your research project with the Christian Child and Family Services Association (CCFSA) as more completely described in the email below. Besides my role as executive director of Westview Boys' Home, I also currently serve as the president of CCFSA.

Attached is a letter of support which can be used to let member agencies know that your project has been reviewed and that their participation would be helpful and appreciated. Since CCFSA is a voluntary association, their responses will be voluntary; the percentage of complete responses that you obtain would be difficult to predict accurately.

I am asking that you limit the number of attempts to solicit a response from our association members to three. Please space them carefully so that our members do not feel that they are being harassed for a response, a feeling which might not help your response rate.

On behalf of CCFSA, I extend to you best wishes for the success of your project. We would be interested to hear of the results when complete.

Sincerely,

Ron Bruner
President
Christian Child and Family Services Association

Executive Director
Westview Boys' Home



www.westviewboyshome.com
ron.bruner@gmail.com

APPENDIX E:

LETTER FROM THE CCFSA PRESIDENT TO HIS COLLEAGUES



October 13, 2015

Dear Colleagues:

From time to time, the Christian Child and Family Services Association (CCFSA) participates in research projects designed to increase the amount of knowledge available to those who serve children and families in the United States. CCFSA leadership works to carefully review projects proposed by researchers seeking to study our work so that we can protect your time and recommend to you only that study which has the potential of being substantial and relevant.

In light of those intentions, I recommend to you a research project by Sha Baragona, a doctoral student at Western Kentucky University (WKU). She is conducting research for her dissertation under the supervision of the WKU Director of Center for Leadership Excellence, Dr. Cedile Garmon.

This research will explore the relationship between ethics and inspiration of Christian nonprofit executives. This study may be useful to nonprofit leaders who make decisions concerning succession planning, training, and development in their organizations.

Participants will be requested to answer a questionnaire which will take approximately five to ten minutes to complete. They may skip questions or stop participation at any time.

Could you please extend the utmost courtesy and helpfulness to Ms. Baragona as she goes about collecting this data?

Thank you for your participation.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ron Bruner". The signature is stylized with large, sweeping letters.

Ron Bruner, President
Christian Child and Family Services Association

APPENDIX F:
LETTER TO THE CHRISTIAN NONPROFIT CEOS

October 19, 2015

Dear _____:

Greetings! Your Christian leadership matters. As the top executive of a Christian nonprofit serving children and families, you are one of the 45 leaders invited to participate in an important ten minute survey. I am a doctoral student at Western Kentucky University (WKU) conducting research on nonprofit executives' ethical and inspirational leadership. As the attachment shows, the President of Christian Child and Family Services Association (CCFSA), Dr. Ron Bruner recommends this research project.

After you participate in this research, you will receive the study results which may be useful for succession planning as well as training and development purposes in your organization. Your confidentiality is of utmost importance and will be protected. To maintain your anonymity, you will not be asked to identify yourself in the survey.

In the next few days, I will send you the questionnaire link in an email with the subject heading **CCFSA Executives Survey**. Should you have questions or concerns about this study, please do not hesitate to contact me or the WKU Director of Center for Leadership Excellence, Dr. Cecile Garmon at cecile.garmon@wku.edu.

Thank you in advance for your contribution to the scholarly literature on leadership ethics and inspiration. May the Lord bless your ministry always.

Sincerely,

Sharlene Baragona
esbaragona@gmail.com
[270-535-4126](tel:270-535-4126)

APPENDIX G:

IRB APPROVAL LETTER



*INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
OFFICE OF RESEARCH INTEGRITY*

DATE: October 19, 2015

TO: Shariene Baragona

FROM: Western Kentucky University (WKU) IRB

PROJECT TITLE: [808102-1] Nonprofit CEOs

REFERENCE #: IRB 16-066

SUBMISSION TYPE: New Project

ACTION: APPROVED

APPROVAL DATE: October 19, 2015

EXPIRATION DATE: May 15, 2016

REVIEW TYPE: Expedited Review

Thank you for your submission of New Project materials for this project. The Western Kentucky University (WKU) IRB has APPROVED your submission. This approval is based on an appropriate risk/benefit ratio and a project design wherein the risks have been minimized. All research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission.

This submission has received Expedited Review based on the applicable federal regulation.

Please remember that informed consent is a process beginning with a description of the project and insurance of participant understanding followed by an implied consent form. Informed consent must continue throughout the project via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Federal regulations require each participant receive a copy of the consent document.

Please note that any revision to previously approved materials must be approved by this office prior to initiation. Please use the appropriate revision forms for this procedure.

All UNANTICIPATED PROBLEMS involving risks to subjects or others and SERIOUS and UNEXPECTED adverse events must be reported promptly to this office. Please use the appropriate reporting forms for this procedure. All FDA and sponsor reporting requirements should also be followed.

All NON-COMPLIANCE issues or COMPLAINTS regarding this project must be reported promptly to this office.

This project has been determined to be a Minimal Risk project. Based on the risks, this project requires continuing review by this committee on an annual basis. Please use the appropriate forms for this procedure. Your documentation for continuing review must be received with sufficient time for review and continued approval before the expiration date of May 15, 2016.

Please note that all research records must be retained for a minimum of three years after the completion of the project.

If you have any questions, please contact Paul Mooney at (270) 745-2129 or irb@wku.edu. Please include your project title and reference number in all correspondence with this committee.

This letter has been electronically signed in accordance with all applicable regulations, and a copy is retained within Western Kentucky University (WKU) IRB records.

APPENDIX H:

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE INSPIRATIONAL MOTIVATION ITEMS IN THE MLQ

Item	<i>N</i>	Min	Max	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1. I talk optimistically about the future.	34	3	5	4.44	0.746
2. I talk enthusiastically about what needs to be accomplished.	34	3	5	4.26	0.567
3. I articulate a compelling vision of the future.	34	2	5	3.97	0.834
4. I express confidence that goals will be achieved.	34	2	5	4.26	0.79

APPENDIX I:
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE IDEALISM ITEMS IN FORSYTH'S EPQ

Item	<i>N</i>	Min	Max	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1. People should make certain that their actions never intentionally harm another even to a small degree.	34	5	9	8.26	0.994
2. Risks to another should never be tolerated, irrespective of how small the risks might be.	34	1	9	6.82	2.367
3. The existence of potential harm to others is always wrong, irrespective of the benefits to be gained.	34	1	9	6.76	2.45
4. One should never psychologically or physically harm another person.	34	1	9	8.18	1.714
5. One should not perform an action which might in any way threaten the dignity and welfare of another individual.	32	3	9	8.06	1.318
6. If an action could harm an innocent other, then it should not be done.	32	2	9	7.5	2.14
7. Deciding whether or not to perform an act by balancing the positive consequences of the act against the negative consequences of the act is immoral.	31	1	9	4.16	2.734

Item	<i>N</i>	Min	Max	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
8. The dignity and welfare of the people should be the most important concern in any society.	32	3	9	7.31	1.839
9. It is never necessary to sacrifice the welfare of others.	32	1	9	6.19	2.669
10. Moral behaviors are actions that closely match ideals of the most "perfect" action.	32	2	9	7.09	1.748

APPENDIX J:

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE RELATIVISM ITEMS IN FORSYTH'S EPQ

Item	<i>N</i>	Min	Max	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1. There are no ethical principles that are so important that they should be a part of any code of ethics.	32	1	9	2.81	2.681
2. What is ethical varies from one situation and society to another.	32	1	9	5.12	2.624
3. Moral standards should be seen as being individualistic; what one person considers to be moral may be judged to be immoral by another person.	32	1	9	3.06	2.564
4. Different types of morality cannot be compared as to "rightness."	32	1	8	3.31	2.533
5. Questions of what is ethical for everyone can never be resolved since what is moral or immoral is up to the individual.	32	1	9	2.87	2.366
6. Moral standards are simply personal rules that indicate how a person should behave, and are not to be applied in making judgments of others.	31	1	9	2.55	2.321

Item	<i>N</i>	Min	Max	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
7. Ethical considerations in interpersonal relations are so complex that individuals should be allowed to formulate their own individual codes.	31	1	8	2.65	2.026
8. Rigidly codifying an ethical position that prevents certain types of actions could stand in the way of better human relations and adjustment.	30	1	9	4.37	2.593
9. No rule concerning lying can be formulated; whether a lie is permissible or not permissible totally depends upon the situation.	31	1	8	2.32	2.006
10. Whether a lie is judged to be moral or immoral depends upon the circumstances surrounding the action.	31	1	9	3.35	2.69
