

Ethics education in leadership development: Adopting multiple ethical paradigms

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Abstract

Attitude development and identity formation in educational leadership are the goals of non-traditional, and in the 21st century also of neo-traditional, development initiatives. Ethics education emerges as one of the linchpins in neo-traditional and non-traditional development initiatives. Yet, despite considerable interest in ethics education in educational leadership development, ethics education has not been examined systematically, and empirical research on its effects is scarce. The present paper aims to address this lacuna by exploring the effects of ethics education based on extended multiple ethical paradigms in the context of educational leadership programme. Moreover, the study follows a systematic longitudinal design, based on pre- and post-course measurements that used the Ethical Perspectives Instrument (EPI) in six Israeli cohorts of educational administration graduate students (N=73). The findings indicate that ethics education has a limited effect on the student body as a whole, but when students were separated into those who did and did not change their dominant ethics, differences emerged. The results suggest that school leadership development focusing on attitude development and identity formation in general and on ethics education in particular lead to different outcomes.

Keywords: adult education; educational leadership development; ethics education; identity formation; multiple ethical paradigms

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1. Introduction

There is widespread agreement that school leaders face multiple decisions daily that have ethical aspects (Arar et al., 2016; Branson and Gross, 2014; Hammersley-Fletcher, 2015; Norberg and Johansson, 2007; Shapiro and Gross, 2013). Scholars are concerned, however, that principals often resolve dilemmas in their work, with little or no conscious consideration of ethics (Young et al., 2010). Scholars also suggest that this issue has to do partly with a lack of ethics education. Many principals' limited or non-existing ethical education prevents them from integrating moral dimensions in their leadership (Starratt, 2004), despite some evidence that principals who apply ethical judgments in their work are more successful in their role (Campbell, 1997).

The present research investigates the effectiveness of ethics education in educational leadership development. The uniqueness of the study lies in its longitudinal design, which tested the effects of ethics education on the ethical judgments of six cohorts of students at pre- and post-course time points in six consecutive years (2011-2016). This design stands out, as educational leadership development is not only underexplored, but is also seldom explored in a systemic manner (Young and Crow, 2016). Although the study focuses on the specific case of ethics education, it can offer much-needed insights into a fundamental issue of identity-related leadership development—an emerging research domain in which there are few theoretical and empirical works (Ibarra et al., 2010). The focus on deep personal change and identity formation in educational leadership development, which dominated the discourse in non-traditional development initiatives (Berkovich, 2017), has become accepted and adopted in the new discourse on traditional development

initiatives (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009). Ethics education serves as the linchpin between the two types of discourse.

Below we provide the background on traditional and non-traditional school leadership development initiatives, and review empirical works on ethics education in educational administration. Next, we present the specific elements of the ethics course that was explored, and outline the methodology. Lastly, we present and discuss the study results. The discussion is framed around the limitations and possibilities of ethics education based on extended multiple ethical paradigms in educational administration. This approach suggests that several philosophical perspectives are relevant in examining and resolving ethical dilemmas related to school management.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Traditional and non-traditional school leadership preparation

The literature suggests four types of school leadership preparation: traditional, attitude development, activist, and neo-traditional training programmes (the latter three types are at times referred to as non-traditional programmes). The literature suggests that there are key differences in student selection processes as well as in the content and the instructional strategies of traditional and non-traditional programmes (Berkovich, 2017; Jackson and Kelley, 2002). Traditional preparation for school leaders focuses on the development of managerial skills (Bush, 2008; Cuban, 1988). The discussion of participants' personal identity in traditional programmes is usually marginal at best. In contrast, attitude development for school leaders focuses on developing reflective awareness and often uses exposure to philosophical perspectives to cultivate a new personal viewpoint on educational work (Brown, 2004; Cambron-McCabe and

McCarthy, 2005; Capper et al., 2006; McClellan and Dominguez, 2006). Activism preparation for school leaders goes further and focuses on acquiring action-oriented skills, which depend on pre-existing value commitment and are needed for activism in school, community, and policy arenas (Berkovich, 2017; Furman, 2012). Attitude and activism development initiatives of school leaders have been associated with value-centred education (e.g., social justice—see Furman, 2012; McKenzie et al., 2008). In the last decade, however, in light of the growing critique of traditional development, specifically of the lack of connection between theory and practice, and of the seemingly non-meaningful effects it produces (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009), we witness the rise of a new, fourth, type of school leadership preparation: the neo-traditional type. Neo-traditional training borrows core elements from non-traditional training to emphasise the role of field expediencies, mentoring and peer learning, and identity formation and development (see, for example, Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Orr and Barber, 2007). Thus, there has been a movement away from behaviourist learning to cognitive and constructivist learning models that engage directly with trainees' influence and the impact of their beliefs, values, and identity-related behaviours (Tucker et al., 2016).

According to Tucker et al. (2016), there has been an ongoing change in educational leadership preparation research and practice from frontal to active and situated learning (178). Active learning is defined as “instructional activities involving students in doing things and thinking about what they are doing” (Bonwell and Eison, 1991: 5); situated learning is defined as “learning knowledge and skills in contexts that reflect the way the knowledge will be useful in real life” (Collins, 1991: 122). Although most educational leadership programmes rely extensively on passive frontal teaching, in which students play little or no role in obtaining information,

scholars noted an increase in the use of cooperative learning methods in new innovative programmes. For example, the literature on innovative educational leadership preparation programmes that are considered to have a lasting effect on students describes the use of case- and problem-based teaching and mentoring as methods that encourage situated learning (Browne-Ferrigno and Muth, 2006; Orr, 2006) and the use of reflective practice, structured dialogue, and creation of learning communities as methods that encourage active learning (Orr, 2006). As a result, claims such as ‘leadership preparation is a developmental process requiring not only professional training, but also personal transformation’ (Browne-Ferrigno and Muth, 2012: 10) are entering mainstream discourse on educational leadership preparation, having been previously marginalised.

Despite the wide prevalence of educational leadership preparation and the ample resources invested in it, our knowledge about its effect is greatly limited. Kottkamp and Rusch (2009) metaphorically described the scholarly knowledge on educational leadership preparation as ‘islands sprinkled across a vast sea’ (80). Two analyses of research on educational leadership preparation found that there is only little empirical research on the effectiveness of training and instruction in improving candidates’ learning outcomes and their capacity to influence staff and students (Taylor et al., 2009; Tucker et al., 2016). As a result, the research on educational leadership preparation ‘lacked coherence and insight from other professional fields’ (Tucker et al., 2016: 173). Young and Crow (2016) restated the pressing need for a more systematic inquiry into educational leadership preparation.

We suggest ethics education as one possible topic to start with when promoting educational leadership preparation research. Ethics education offers well-defined variables that can be assessed as they change over time. At the same time,

ethics education also captures real-life work complexities and allows participants to position themselves with regard to the ethical dilemmas and solutions discussed. Traditionally, ethics education has been aligned with preparations that focus on attitude development. Following the critique of traditional development and the rise of neo-traditional development, ethics education has also become prevalent in mainstream traditional and neo-traditional training.

2.2 Empirical research on the effectiveness of ethics education in educational leadership development

Ethics education is a process of communication that aspires to develop new insights about social life and generate moral obligations (Ryan and Bisson, 2011). Ethics education involves presenting and discussing moral philosophies that outline what is a "good" or "proper" way of life. It has been suggested that ethics education in educational leadership development offers participants an opportunity to "take the time to work through their personal and professional codes and also spend considerable time comparing and contrasting them" (Shapiro and Stefkovich, 1994: 1). Ethics education can be embedded within programme curricula or offered as a standalone module (Ryan and Bisson, 2011). Some scholars argue for integrating ethics discussion into the curriculum, encouraging the real-world application of ethics in all professional aspects (Ritter, 2006). Others propose offering stand-alone academic courses devoted entirely to ethics as an influential message concerning the priority that academia and the field ascribe to the topic, which is transmitted to students (Henderson, 1988).

In the field of educational administration, few studies to date explored the effectiveness of ethics education embedded in the curriculum or offered as a standalone module. Our ability to infer from these findings about the effectiveness of ethics education is therefore limited. First, many of the works focus on the effects of general academic education and not specifically on the effects of ethics education (e.g., Larsen and Derrington, 2012; Rucinski and Bauch, 2006). Second, some works use reports of graduates' attitudes or behaviors, although the connection of these characteristics with the goals and syllabus of a specific training has not been established. This issue is particularly critical when considerable time has elapsed between the training and the measurement (e.g., Larsen and Derrington, 2012; Rucinski and Bauch, 2006). Third, some works use narrative accounts of experience as a proxy for the extent to which one's ethical judgment has changed (e.g., Shapiro and Stefkovich, 1996). This is problematic because social desirability and self-enhancement are likely to play key roles in this type of self-report. Fourth, some works did not pay adequate attention to the students' initial background. The literature suggests that students who are committed to a specific ethical ideal differ in their reactions to ethics education from those who lack such commitment (Young and Laible, 2000). Therefore, more differential exploration of students is warranted, based on their initial background.

In our prior work, we developed an Ethical Perspectives Instrument (EPI) that explores ethical judgment indirectly, based on choosing between multiple ethical paradigms (Eyal et al., 2011; EPI form and SPSS syntaxes are available at www.izhakber.com/EPI). This instrument was used to explore the effects of an ethics academic course based on extended multiple ethical paradigms. Despite a general practice orientation toward ethics education embedded into the curricula of various

programmes (Edmonson and Fisher, 2006), some scholars support the idea of a standalone ethics module in leadership preparation programmes (e.g., Shapiro and Stefkovich, 1996).

3. The ethics course based on extended multiple ethical paradigms

The ethics course was taught in a graduate educational administration programme at a leading university in Israel, located in a large city in the center of the country.

Students are being admitted into the graduate programme each year. Admission requirements include an adequate undergraduate academic record or B.Ed. studies.

The two-year programme includes a range of academic courses on topics related to leadership and policy in education. The ethics course was a mandatory requirement, and students attended the course in the first year of their studies, therefore it was expected that students would start the course with diverse standpoints on ethical matters, and that teachers would have to invest a considerable effort in furnishing basic knowledge (Young and Laible, 2000).

3.1 Rationale of the study

The goal of the present study was to explore the effect of an ethics course for students in a graduate educational administration programme. The course was designed based on contents derived from multiple ethical paradigms, and integrated with matching pedagogies involving group discussion and self-reflection, as recommended in the literature (Reardon, 2013; Shapiro and Hassinger, 2007; Shapiro and Stefkovich, 2016). According to this model, working through ethical dilemmas while exploring

each of the four ethical perspectives (justice, critique, care, and the profession) rationally leads to the best situational solution (Shapiro and Stefkovich, 2016). It has also been suggested that the "best interests of students" act as a meta-organizer that drives principals' ethical decision making (Stefkovich and Begley, 2007). Furman (2004) suggested considering also the ethics of community, which was incorporated under the ethics of profession (Shapiro and Hassinger, 2007). Eyal et al.(2011) work, based on multiple ethical paradigms, reviewed additional ethical perspectives discussed in the educational administration literature, which resulted in extended multiple ethical paradigms that included six perspectives. The work focused also on refining the boundaries between perspectives to maintain their distinctiveness. This extended framework served as the conceptual frame of the Israeli ethics course.

The following ethical perspectives are included in the extended multiple ethical paradigms (see elaboration in Eyal et al., 2011):

- Ethic of fairness, which focuses on just treatment through appropriate procedures and policies.
- Ethic of utilitarianism, which focuses on maximizing utility as measured by its consequences.
- Ethic of care, which focuses on relational loyalty, trust, and empowerment.
- Ethic of critique, which focuses on challenging power structures, the privileges they grant and the oppression they cause.
- Ethic of the profession, which focuses on the application of cutting-edge professional knowledge and experience to promote responsible enactment of ethical principles.

- Ethics of the community, which focuses on the values and interests of the community.

Classical writing about the multiple ethical paradigm framework emphasizes that knowledge about multiple ethical perspectives helps students shape their own ethical codes and promotes students' flexibility in future judgment (Shapiro and Stefkovich, 2016). Ethics education is therefore considered to expand possibilities in decision making. This view contrasts with other moral education frameworks in educational administration (for example, social justice education) that aspire to promote the adoption of one ethical value or of a limited number of closely related ones (Berkovich, 2014).

3.2 Course goals

In light of the lack of a selection process of students based on personal values, and of repeated recommendations in the literature to adopt specific goals in ethics instruction (Sims and Felton, 2005; Ryan and Bisson, 2011), we formulated specific aims. They were based on the multiple ethics paradigm approach (Shapiro and Stefkovich, 2016):

1. Examine the philosophical foundations (i.e., the extended multiple ethics paradigms) of ethical leadership in education.
2. Using the extended multiple ethics paradigms, identify and interpret basic dilemmas involved in the selection of learning materials, activities, and managerial approaches, as well as in interactions between staff, students, parents, and the community.
3. Based on familiarity with the extended multiple ethics paradigms, for participants to formulate a personal ethical code.

3.3 Curricular and instructional elements

The course content included the following topics: (a) basic terminology (morality and moral dilemma) and the philosophical foundations of ethical leadership and professional ethics in education; (b) professional codes; (c) moral leadership; (d) classic theories of moral development; (e) ethical decisions and models of ethical decision-making; (f) ethics of justice (fairness and utilitarianism); (g) ethic of critique; (h) ethic of care; (i) ethic of community; (j) ethics of profession; (k) multiple ethical paradigms; (l) ethical dilemmas in educational administration; (m) ethical risks and pitfalls; (n) personal development of ethical awareness; and (o) neo-liberalism, social justice, and ethical considerations in educational administration. The full course curriculum can be obtained by contacting the authors. The method of instruction included lectures, class discussions, group case analysis, and students' active participation.

3.4 Tasks and student evaluation

The course included two tasks used for student evaluation. The first task was a presentation (15% of the final grade), in which students were required to present the key points of an academic paper that addressed ethics, conduct a class discussion about it, and criticize the paper. The second task was a written case study analysis (85% of the final grade), in which students were required to focus on an ethical educational dilemma they had encountered in their or their peers' work. Students who

did not have field experience could use news reports as a case for exploration.

Students were required to analyze the dilemma using the six ethical perspectives, use their judgment to come up with a solution to the dilemma, and formulate the ethical considerations on which the solution was based.

4. Method

The present research is a quantitative exploration of ethics education based on an extended multiple ethical paradigm approach used in a mandatory graduate academic course. The course, which was part of the graduate programme in educational administration at an Israeli university, was taught by one instructor (the second author) and attended by six cohorts of students in the years, 2011-2016.

4.1 Participants and procedure

The total number of students taking the course in these years was 125. The study includes only students who voluntarily participated in the two measurements.

Participants about whom data were collected in both measurements included 73 graduate students in educational administration from 5 cohorts (response rate of 58%).

Participants' mean age was 35.11 years ($SD = 8.77$), and 78% were female. Fifteen percent of participants were Arab, the rest Jewish. One third of participants were secular, the rest were religious. Sixty four percent of participants reported being active teachers with a mean teaching experience of 7.2 years ($SD = 5.17$); 46% worked in primary schools, 13% in junior high schools, and the remaining 41% in high schools.

Nearly 80% worked in the public system, and only, 19% reported having participated in the past in some sort of ethical training.

Students' ethical judgment was assessed at two time points: the beginning of the course (lesson 1 of 14) and the end of the course (lesson 13 of 14). Students were asked to answer questions about their preferred mode of action in 30 ethical dilemmas related to educational administration. Participation was voluntary, and students were informed that it had two objectives: (a) an instructional goal, for the purpose of which participants received at the end of the course a personal report about their original (pre-course) and their updated (post-course) judgment, and the group received a group description of changes in the cohort between pre- and post-measurements; and (b) a research goal, for the purpose of which the scores would be saved anonymously in a database for future exploration of the effects of the course on students' ethical judgment. Participants were informed that they could withdraw at any time without any repercussions. Informed consent was obtained in writing from all participants.

4.2 Instrument

We used the Ethical Perspectives Instrument (EPI) to measure students' ethical judgment. The EPI includes 30 ethical dilemmas reflecting everyday situations that can arise in the work of school leaders. Many dilemmas involve interactions of principals with other stakeholders such as students, teachers, parents, communities, and the system. The EPI is based on the extended multiple ethical paradigm approach (inspired by Shapiro, Stefkovich and Starratt), which outlines six ethical perspectives relevant to educational leaders' work: fairness, utilitarianism, care, critique, profession, and community. The instrument is constructed in a manner that each

dilemma involves two action paths based on different ethical perspectives. Participants are asked to select their preferred path of action of the two. The assessment of validity and reliability of the EPI can be found in Eyal et al. (2011). Typically, the instrument is used to calculate two scores: an *ethical perspective preference index* for each ethic, based on percentages of choices made for each ethical dilemma (allowing us to explore participants' ethical reasoning as manifested by the interconnections between various ethical perspectives), and a *personal modal ethical preference*, indicating the dominant ethics of each participant (allowing us to explore the participants' dominant ethical disposition). Both aspects are key elements in ethics education based on multiple ethical paradigms. The interrelations between various ethical perspective preference indices shed light on what can be termed 'ethical logic', i.e., the tradeoffs between competing moral values (Bartels et al., 2014).

4.3 Purpose and research questions

We extended the multiple ethical paradigms to investigate the effect of the ethics course on students' ethical judgment, manifested in the differences between the pre- and post-course measurements. We posed two research questions:

(Q1) What are the effects of the ethics course, based on the multiple ethical paradigms, on students' ethical judgment, as reflected in the differences between pre- and post-course measurements?

(Q2) What are the effects of the ethics course, based on the multiple ethical paradigms, when comparing two subgroups of students, those who changed their dominant ethical preference and those who did not?

5. Results

With regard to Q1, dependent correlation difference tests and a series of one-sample t-tests of students' modal ethical preferences in pre- and post-measurements showed no significant effects of the influence of the ethics course on the entire sample.¹ We therefore turned our attention to Q2.

To understand what characterizes students who changed their dominant ethical preference in the post-course measurement, we separated the students whose dominant ethics *did* and did not change. Preliminary independent t-tests revealed no differences between the groups in gender, national affiliation, religiosity, age, teaching seniority, and prior ethical training ($ps > .05$). To answer the research question, we examined the differences in the occurrences of particular dominant ethics among the two groups, and explored whether the percentages in dominant ethical preferences differ significantly between them using a series of two-sample t-tests between percentages.

¹Full description of the non-significant results may be obtained by contacting the authors.

Table 1. Two-sample t-test between percentages of personal modal ethical preferences by students who did change and those who did not change dominant ethics in the pre-course measurement.

	Students whose dominant ethics <i>did not</i> change (N=32)		Students whose dominant ethics <i>did</i> change (N=41)		<i>t</i> (<i>df</i> =71)
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	
1. Fairness	3	9.4	3	7.3	0.324
2. Utilitarianism	1	3.1	3	7.3	0.784
3. Care	6	18.8	6	14.6	0.480
4. Critique	18	56.3	14	34.1	1.897 [†]
5. Profession	2	6.15	2	4.9	0.233
6. Community	2	6.15	3	7.3	0.194
Indecisive	0	0	10	24.4	3.008**

Note. [†] $p < .10$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Table 1 shows that the percentage of students who were indecisive about their dominant ethical preference was significantly higher in the group of students whose dominant ethics *did* change (24.4%) than in the group of students whose dominant ethics *did not* change (0%). The analyses also indicated that the percentage of students whose dominant ethical preference was critique was marginally significantly higher in the group of students whose dominant ethics *did not* change (56.3%) than in that whose dominant ethics *did* change (34.1%).

To better understand whether the course affected the tradeoffs between complementing or contrasting ethical considerations in the two groups (i.e., ethical logic), we also tested the differences in the intercorrelations using a series of dependent correlation difference tests based on Steiger's (1980) Z-bar2* formula. The

Pearson correlations of ethical preference scores measured pre-course are shown above the diagonal, and those measured post-course below the diagonal in Tables 2 and 3.

Table 2. Correlations between pre- and post-course measurements among students who did not change their dominant ethics (N=32).

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Fairness	.708**	.251	-.577**	-.127	-.526**	-.070
2. Utilitarianism	.124	.531**	-.403*	-.284	-.283	-.386*
3. Care	-.554**	-.431*	.703**	-.236	.071	.120
4. Critique	-.258	-.297 [†]	-.095	.721**	.104	-.440*
5. Profession	-.300 [†]	-.120	-.164	.167	.226	-.185
6. Community	-.048	-.268	.097	-.563**	-.207	.599**

Note. Pearson correlations for pre-course measurement are presented above the diagonal, and those for post-course measurement below the diagonal. Scores in bold are paired correlations between pre- and post-course measurements, calculated per each ethic. [†] $p < .10$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Table 3. Correlations between pre- and post-course measurements among students who did change their dominant ethics (N=41).

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Fairness	.358*	-.065	-.482**	-.061	.014	-.021
2. Utilitarianism	-.097	.562**	-.418*	-.386*	-.173	.043
3. Care	-.334 [†]	-.318 [†]	.579**	.204	-.342 [†]	-.331 [†]
4. Critique	-.414*	-.216	.337 [†]	.275	-.259	-.715**
5. Profession	.032	-.183	-.338 [†]	-.292	.267	.170
6. Community	-.175	-.126	-.384*	-.397*	-.070	.513**

Note. Pearson correlations for pre-course measurement are presented above the diagonal, and those for post-course measurement are presented below the diagonal. Scores in bold are paired correlations between pre- and post-course measurements, calculated per each ethics. [†] $p < .10$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Among students who *did not* change their dominant ethics all dependent correlation difference tests were non-significant, but among those who *did* change their dominant ethics we found differences in two dependent correlations. There was a significant difference in the paired correlation between critique and community in the pre-course ($r = -.71, p < .01$) and post-course measurements ($r = -.39, p < .05$) ($Z\text{-bar}2^* = 2.07, p < .05$). We also found a marginally significant difference in the paired correlation between critique and fairness in the pre-course measurement ($r = -.06, n.s.$) and post-course measurements ($r = -.41, p < .05$) ($Z\text{-bar}2^* = 1.65, p < .10$).

Table 2 shows that among students who *did not* change their dominant ethics, paired correlations of fairness and critique ethics with themselves (marked in bold) demonstrated high stability in convergence between pre- and post-course scores (ranging .70-.72). By contrast, Table 3 shows that among students who *did* change their dominant ethics, paired correlations of fairness and critique ethics with themselves (marked in bold) demonstrated low stability in convergence between pre- and post-course scores (ranging .35-.27).

To break down further the types of changes occurring in students' dominant ethics, we mapped the combinations of ethical transitions at the individual level. The distribution of the types of changes is presented in Figure 1.

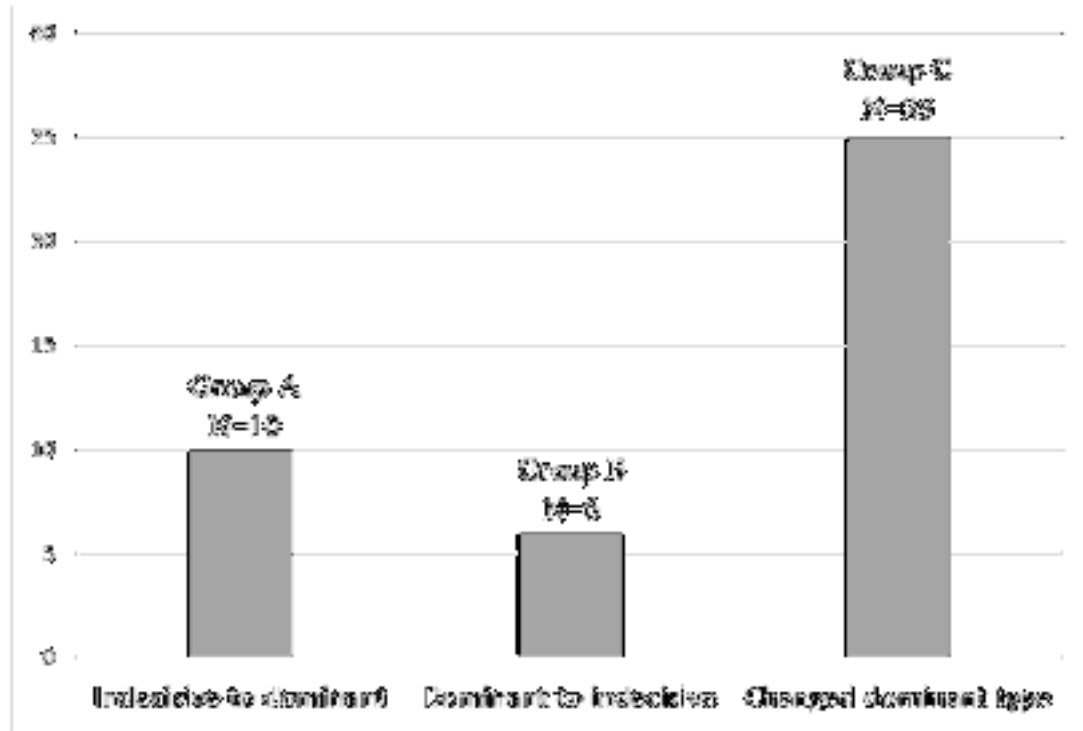


Figure 1. Breakdown of changes in the transitory group of students who *did* change their dominant ethics between pre- and post-course measurement (N=41).

The analysis indicated that different types of changes occurred in students who *did* change their dominant ethics. In Group A (N=10), students moved from indecisive position, which valued several ethics similarly at the beginning of the course, to having one dominant ethics in its end. An opposite change occurred in Group B (N=6), where students moved from having one dominant ethic at the beginning of the course to an indecisive position in the end. Last, in Group C (N=25) students replaced one dominant ethic with another in the two measurements.

6. Discussion

Scholarship points to the dearth of empirical knowledge about the effectiveness of school leadership preparation. This is true specifically in ethics education. In filling

this scholarly void, the present exploratory research is unique thanks to its systematic investigation of the effect of ethics education on students' ethical judgment, both at the entry and the exit points. Thus, the study can be seen as a response to calls in the field of educational leadership development, such as that of Browne-Ferrigno and Muth (2012), who argued that '[w]ithout evidence-based information collected regularly from candidates at multiple intervals from their entry to their exit of formal preparation, the field is without a foundation for understanding programme influences on candidates' leadership development and their eventual career choices' (15).

The study offers several contributions to school leadership preparation. First, although many neo-traditional and attitude formation initiatives for school leader development aim to promote the candidates' 'personal transformation' (Browne-Ferrigno and Muth, 2012: 10) and to cultivate their 'identity formation' (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009: 17), the findings indicate that the effect of such initiatives on the entire cohort could not be demonstrated. The present study which conducted ethical development of school leaders using extended multiple ethical paradigms as a descriptive framework for investigating the phenomenon, found that students' ethical reasoning remained largely unchanged between pre- and post-course.

Second, the findings indicate that the effect of ethical development on attitudes related to identity is linked with differential effects reflected in students' commitment to values and in their engagement in value exploration during development. Our findings, which include information collected from students at entry and exit points, suggest that various groups of students differ in education effects (Figure 2).²

² To label the groups found, we drew metaphorically on terminology taken from Marcia's (1980) four identity formation ways: (a) foreclosure, when a commitment to a value is made without exploration; (b) identity achievement, when commitment follows exploration; (c) moratorium, when commitment is

		Value Commitment	
		No	Yes
Active Value Exploration	No	Diffused Ethical Formation	Foreclosure Ethical Formation Persistent group
	Yes	Moratorium Ethical Formation Transitory group B	Achieved Ethical Formation (Narrowing Considerations) Transitory group C Achieved Ethical Formation (Expanding Considerations) Transitory group A

Figure 2. Ethical identity formation during educational leadership development.

Note. The identity diffusion quadrant is empty because no participants were identified with these characteristics, therefore the empirical relevance of this group is unclear.

One notable finding that emerged is that it is individuals with highly crystallised identity as school leaders (Foreclosure Ethical Formation group) participate in leadership development programmes. This group (N=32) (see Figure 2) carried over their original dominant ethics (critique, care, and fairness) and demonstrated high stability in students' preference for it, exhibiting no value exploration because the ethical reasoning of the group did not change between the two

absent or ambiguously framed, but active exploration is undertaken; and (d) identity diffusion, when individuals avoid exploration despite an amorphous identity, and seem to be less invested in committing.

measurements. Critique and care role are perceived to be associated with the view of the role of education leadership based on ethical activism (i.e., understanding that students are nested within a social structure and that ethical solutions reflect a desire to break down existing structures while caring for students' needs) (Eyal et al., 2011). The evidence regarding this group reinforces previous claims that students' pre-existing values hinder transformative effects of higher education on students' attitudes beliefs, and values in leadership programmes (Arieli et al., 2016), particularly when there is no pre-selection of candidates by programmes (Young and Laible, 2000). Thus, the students' initial consolidated value standpoint is a moderator of the effect and outcomes of leadership preparation programmes that focus on attitude development and identity formation.

Another important insight that emerged from the present study is that some students indeed experience personal transition during leadership development programmes; various changes may occur, however. Among the transitional groups, Groups A and C (in Figure 1) Achieved Ethical Formation during the course, as the inter-correlations between the different ethical considerations changed between pre- and post-course measurements (about 87% of the students *did* change their dominant ethics). This demonstrates a shift in tradeoffs between competing moral values (i.e., ethical logic) (Bartels et al., 2014). Although these two groups demonstrated commitment to a dominant ethic after the course, they differed both at their initial and end points. Whereas the first sub-group (Group C in Figure 1) changed its dominant ethical type, its counterpart (Group A in Figure 1) abandoned its indecisive position for a decisive one. In general, identity achievers are said to demonstrate greater cognitive sophistication and firmer personal responsibility (Berzonsky and Kuk, 2000) than individuals who still search for their self-definition. The third sub-group

(Group B in Figure 1), which was the smallest group (N=6), demonstrated a Moratorium Ethical Formation (Figure 2). Although this group exhibited value exploration, it made no commitment to a certain dominant value during the course. These distinctions between participants may be seen as extending the new developmental approach to transformative adult leadership development in education (Drago-Severson, 2012, 2016), as they offer a more nuanced perspective on development effects and can be integrated in existing models to explain and offer developmental paths for the future professional growth of leaders in education.

6.1 Practical implications

Our results have significant implications for the development of educational leaders. First, they provide empirical support to the assumption that university-based programmes can affect students' moral judgments through the exploration of multiple ethical perspectives. Carefully designed ethics education can promote ethics-related effects among a significant portion (more than half) of the students. Second, the results suggest that the initial selection of students participating in ethics education greatly affects the effectiveness of the training. Deciphering the candidates' openness to value exploration is crucial before any initiative is taken. Third, our findings have policy implications as well. State and local agencies often attempt to promote professional codes that embody the attitudes they consider desirable by partnering with academic programmes. Such initiatives may not only create conflict (Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2016), but also further limit educational administration students to carrying out value explorations.

6.2 Limitations and future research

The study has several limitations. One has to do with the possibility that some of the effects (or lack thereof) were influenced by other intervening factors related to other courses or contents that were part of the programme in the semesters under study. It is possible that students' ethical judgment becomes confounded at the end of the course as a result of broader exposure to academic studies. This issue requires further exploration, perhaps by a quasi-experimental design. A second limitation concerns the generalizability of the results. The training and the study were conducted in a concrete socio-political climate. Israel has been part of the global wave of social justice protests of 2011, which may be partially responsible for the emphasis on critique. Further research is needed in other national contexts. A third limitation is the result of the fact that the study examined only the short-term effects of ethics education. Studies examining its long-term effects on students' judgments could make an important contribution. Moreover, we advise exploring post-graduate contexts by more extensive use of qualitative, case-led studies. A fourth limitation stems from the ethics course having been characterised by mostly traditional instructional features; therefore, additional research on the effects of ethics courses with high student-centred features (e.g., peer workshops, etc.) is recommended. Despite these issues, the present work is unique in its exploration of the effects of ethics education, in the coherence it displays between programme features and goals, and in the systemic manner in which it evaluates these outcomes.

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