The relationship between intensity of involvement and community service engagement in the moral development of student members of Greek organizations

Franklin Hadley Phillips
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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INTENSITY OF INVOLVEMENT
AND COMMUNITY SERVICE ENGAGEMENT IN THE MORAL DEVELOPMENT
OF STUDENT MEMBERS OF GREEK ORGANIZATIONS

A Dissertation
Presented to
The Faculty of the School of Education
The College of William and Mary

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirement for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

by
Franklin Hadley Phillips, III
September 2009
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INTENSITY OF INVOLVEMENT
AND COMMUNITY SERVICE ENGAGEMENT IN THE MORAL DEVELOPMENT
OF STUDENT MEMBERS OF GREEK ORGANIZATIONS

by

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This work is dedicated to my family, my friends, and all of the educators who have tirelessly supported me throughout this incredible journey.
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ABSTRACT

Many students will choose to join a fraternity or sorority in college, yet much is still unknown about how these organizations impact student moral development. Using a correlational research design, the purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between the intensity of involvement of undergraduate students in social Greek organizations with the duration of time spent engaged in community service activities on their moral reasoning abilities. Greek student involvement level was assessed using an abbreviated version of the Extracurricular Involvement Inventory. For the service measure, students were asked to estimate the amount of community service they had performed during the previous semester. Moral development served as the dependent variable and was determined using the Defining Issues Test. Sophomore Greek students (N = 98) from a large public university in the southeastern United States completed three research instruments and a demographic questionnaire. Pearson correlation analyses revealed that there was not a significant (p = .354) relationship between involvement intensity and moral reasoning development. There was also no significant (p = .720) relationship found between community service participation and moral reasoning development. Stepwise multiple regression analysis indicated that involvement intensity, service participation, gender, and parents' highest level of education did not predict moral reasoning development. Importance of the study and implications for future research and policy are also discussed.

FRANKLIN HADLEY PHILLIPS

EDUCATIONAL POLICY, PLANNING, AND LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY
Chapter I

Introduction

American higher education plays an important role in the moral development of young men and women (Colby et al., 2003; Dalton, 1999). One can argue that institutions of higher education have a responsibility to society to produce students who are not only experts in a particular academic discipline, but who are also morally astute citizens of the world (Kelly, 2006; Rost, 1995). Indeed, many researchers have characterized institutional practices within higher education as being models for learned ethical behavior (Stewart, 2007; Sullivan & Cunningham, 2006; Procario-Foley & Bean, 2002). Faculty-student mentor relationships, respected codes of honor and conduct, and institutional missions for the public good exemplify many such customs. Additionally, colleges and universities provide an atmosphere that facilitates moral development in students due to the ample opportunities available to them for diverse group discussion and interaction, moral education, and general intellectual stimulation (Finger, Borduin, & Baumstark, 1992; Ikenberry, 1997). Many of society’s future leaders and thinkers will come from a university background that includes consequential experiences in this setting.

There are numerous facets to the moral and ethical developmental process of undergraduate college students. The many different types of experiences, conversations, and decisions that students make can have a potentially influential effect on how their cognitive moral development might proceed. There are bountiful academic and extracurricular opportunities available to college students throughout their undergraduate experience, at most institutions. The types of activities with which students choose to affiliate as well as their level
of engagement in these endeavors can play a significant role in their psychological development (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; King & Mayhew, 2002; Astin, 1999).

Statement of the Problem

In recent years, scandals of ethical malfeasance have permeated business, political, and religious organizations (Hakim & Rashbaum, 2008; Eichenwald, 2005; Goodstein, & Stanley, 2002). In the wake of these transgressions, colleges and universities have been called upon to further engage their students in discussions and experiences that explore issues of moral and ethical character development (Armstrong, et al., 2003; Colby et al., 2003; Mangan, 2003). One of the most important and potentially influential factors in a student’s moral development is the extracurricular activities in which he or she becomes involved (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; King & Mayhew, 2002). Students’ sustained high level of participation in social-extracurricular activities outside of the classroom has been shown to have a significant positive relationship with their moral reasoning abilities (Lind, 1997; Finger, Borduin, & Baumstark, 1992). The specific types of experiences as well as the level of involvement in extracurricular activities could potentially determine the extent to which the development of moral reasoning occurs (Rest & Narvaez, 1991).

One prevalent extracurricular experience that could have an impact on students’ moral development is their participation in a fraternity or sorority (Mathaisen, 2003; Tripp, 1997; Rhoads, 1995; Baier & Whipple, 1990). About one in ten undergraduates affiliates with a Greek letter social organization while they are in college (DeSantis, 2007). Historically, these student run societies have proclaimed a duty to shape men and women into responsible adults, model citizens, and ethical leaders (Earley, 1998). However, there appear to be disparities between Greek letter organizations’ stated values and their members’ current behaviors as educators have
found scant evidence that involvement in these groups contribute to the positive moral and ethical development of their members (Mathaisen, 2003; McCabe & Trevino, 1997; Tripp, 1997). Research has shown that traditional collegiate Greek fraternities support and perpetuate racist, genderist, and abusive behaviors, are vehemently anti-intellectual, and exhibit behaviors that are contradictory to the goals and development of community within educational institutions (Foubert, Newberry, & Tatum, 2007; Storch & Storch, 2002; Kuh, Pascarella, & Wechsler, 1996; Rhoads, 1995; Maisel, 1990).

Numerous studies of undergraduate moral reasoning development have concluded that participation in Greek life has an overall negative or null effect, however there has been no research examining whether the level of involvement makes a significant difference (Mathaisen, 2003, Tripp, 1997). Participation in a fraternity or sorority at a superficial level (i.e. attending the Greek organization’s meeting once a week, not spending much time with other group members) might lead to different developmental outcomes than a more intense level of involvement. Highly active members’ level of involvement would be exemplified by their holding a leadership position in the Greek organization, participating in many of the group’s activities, or spending time promoting the group to others.

The amount of time and commitment students make to a Greek society may impact their moral development. Thoma & Ladewig (1993) found that students’ principled moral reasoning levels were inversely related to the density of their friendship networks in college. They described friendship density as the presence or absence of relationships between friends. A highly dense network would be made up of a group of friends in which each person knows each of the others. A low density network consists of multiple independent friendship groups. A low density network is exemplified by college students’ having different friends from their residence
hall, their major, or from a student organization that does not typically interact with one another. Greek organizations exemplify more dense friendship networks. Students who make Greek life an all encompassing extracurricular milieu may develop moral judgment capabilities differently than those that are not so heavily invested in a single organization because they maintain a denser network of friends (Derryberry & Thoma, 2000).

Another area of student extracurricular life that can potentially have a significant effect on the development of principled moral reasoning abilities is participation in community service activities. Involvement with community service creates a real world context that can promote moral development as participants are afforded an opportunity to explore moral questions, engage in moral discourse, perform moral actions, and reflect on complicated moral issues (Hart, Atkins, & Donnelly, 2006). Although the research in this area of inquiry is limited primarily to studies on the effects of service learning participation, many studies suggest that serving one’s community can have a beneficial effect on moral reasoning ability (Mathiasen, 2005; Myer-Lipton, 1998; Boss, 1994).

Most Greek organizations actively sponsor philanthropic activities and encourage members to engage in service to the community (National Panhellenic Conference, 2007; North-American Interfraternity Conference, 2007). Some social Greek organizations even go so far as to require their members to be extremely active in community service activities. Pierson (2002) found that being affiliated with a social Greek organization increased the likelihood that a student will be involved in volunteer work while in college even after controlling for secondary school volunteerism, individual background traits, and other academic and nonacademic experiences during college. Greek organizations clearly promote active volunteer service among their members; however research shows that the participants’ moral reasoning development still
seems to be stymied when compared to non-Greek students. Thus far, the research literature lacks studies that have examined how the extent of community service participation by fraternity and sorority members may be impacting their cognitive moral reasoning development.

During their time in college, students who affiliate with social Greek organizations typically show no or some decreased development in their moral reasoning abilities compared to their peers who are not affiliated members (Tripp, 1987; Mathaisen, 2003). Some research also suggests that college students who are engaged in community service activities have the potential to increase their moral judgment capacities (Hart, Atkins, & Donnelly, 2006). Greek students historically have been and continue to be active to various degrees in community service activities. Could there be a correlation between the intensity of involvement by Greek members in their organization and the level of engagement in community service activities on their moral judgment capacities? The relationship between involvement in a Greek organization and taking part in service as it relates to moral reasoning development has been unexplored.

**Purpose of Study**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between the intensity of involvement of undergraduate college students in social Greek organizations with the duration of time spent engaged in community service activities on their moral reasoning abilities. Using the Defining Issues Test Version-1 (Rest, 1993), the Extracurricular Involvement Inventory (Winston & Massaro, 1987), and a community service measure the researcher assessed the relationship between intensity of involvement in a social Greek organization and the amount of time engaged in community service activities on the moral reasoning ability of undergraduate college students participating in Greek societies. The demographic variables of age, gender, race, and parents' highest level of education were also examined. The relationship between
intensity of involvement and moral development was analyzed through a Pearson correlation coefficient. Correlation analysis of whether there is a significant relationship between community service hours and moral development was also conducted. Multiple linear regression was used to determine the extent to which intensity of involvement, volunteer services hours, and demographic variables predicted moral development levels.

The researcher hopes to provide student affairs practitioners with new and useful information about how the level of involvement in a fraternity or sorority predicts the moral reasoning abilities of its members. Furthermore, the study explores the relationship between intensity of Greek involvement with the number of hours that students spend taking part in community service. Many students choose to affiliate themselves with fraternities and sororities. Gaining valuable information about the impact of these types of extracurricular organizations may allow practitioners to intentionally design Greek life programs that can work to enhance the moral judgment abilities of students who take part.

Research Questions

Several research questions and hypotheses guided the inquiry into how intensity of involvement and time spent performing community service are interrelated with the moral reasoning development of student members of Greek organizations.

1. Is there a relationship between intensity of involvement of college sophomore students in a Greek organization and their moral reasoning abilities?

2. Is there a relationship between the amount of time Greek sophomore students spend participating in community service and their moral reasoning abilities?
3. To what extent do intensity of involvement of college sophomore students in a Greek organization, amount of time spent performing community service, gender, race, and parents’ highest level of education predict moral reasoning abilities?

Definition of Terms

**Moral Development** – A cognitive developmental theory developed by Kohlberg (1976) and built upon by Rest and his colleagues (Rest et al., 1999) that describes the means through which individuals think about congruent issues of social justice, ethics and fairness.

**Involvement Intensity** – Quantity and quality of the physical and psychological energy that students devote to any aspect of their college experience (Astin, 1993). For the purposes of this study, involvement intensity will be assessed for students’ participation in a fraternity or sorority.

**Greek Letter Society** – Any nationally recognized college fraternal organization that is primarily social and/or service oriented in nature and principle (Anson & Marchesani, 1991). For the purposes of this study, a Greek organization must also be formally recognized by one of the university’s Greek student governing bodies. These bodies include: Greek Alliance Council (GAC), Interfraternity Council (IFC), National Pan-hellenic Council (NPHC), and Panhellenic Council.

**Community Service** – Serow & Dreyden (1990, p. 554) define community service as “a particular form of voluntary action in which individuals and groups donate time and effort to benefit others.” Service can be performed in a variety of contexts and through different means. For this study, community service will be defined broadly, entailing any type of community service activity performed by students. Examples might include community service done as part of a university sponsored extracurricular activity, academic course, or in affiliation with an organization outside of the institution.
Summary

Social Greek letter organizations have and continue to play a significant role in the extracurricular experience of college students. Consequently, the specific developmental impact that involvement in these societies has on the students that affiliate with them warranted further exploration. This study attempted to understand how students' level of involvement in a Greek organization and their participation in community service may be related to their moral reasoning development. Chapter II will provide an in depth review of moral development theory and related research. In addition, literature pertaining to Greek letter society involvement and community service participation will also be examined. Chapter III presents a framework of the proposed methodological design for the study that will include the proposed research context, procedures, participants, instrumentation, mode of data collection and analysis. Limitations and delimitations as well as ethical safeguards and considerations will be discussed. Chapter IV will provide descriptive data of the study participants as well as statistical analyses and answers to the research questions. Finally, in Chapter V an analysis an interpretation of the findings are discussed. Implications for practice and suggestions for further inquiry are also explored.
Chapter II

Review of the Literature

Introduction

This literature review constitutes three primary areas relevant to the current study. First, Kohlberg’s cognitive-developmental theory of moral reasoning, the Neo-Kohlbergian approach to moral judgment development, and the work of James Rest and his development of and research using the Defining Issues Test will be addressed. Second, a review of the community service literature will be surveyed broadly and then specifically within the context of the collegiate environment and its relationship to moral development. Finally, this review will focus attention on the literature pertaining to students’ involvement in social Greek organizations and its relationship to moral development.

Kohlberg’s Theory of Moral Development

Introduction

Beginning with his dissertation looking at the moral reasoning processes of adolescent boys, Lawrence Kohlberg was one of the first psychological theorists to develop a stage theory and an assessment instrument to describe how people make judgments between right and wrong and how such judgments change throughout one’s lifespan. Although Piaget (1932/1965) pioneered the study of moral judgment in children, Kohlberg’s work galvanized a generation of scholars to pursue the developmental features and connotations implicit in the study of moral reasoning (Lapsley, 2006). Over the course of his career and until his death in 1987, Kohlberg continually refined both his theory and instrumentation primarily as a response to critics and the continual accumulation of new research data (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998). Today, applications of the theory have fallen out of favor by most researchers; however the basic tenets
of his viewpoint continue to serve as an impetus for new directions in theory and research (Lapsley, 2006). According to Gibbs (2003), Kohlberg’s contributions have almost single-handedly helped to progress the field of cognitive moral development in contemporary American psychology.

**Philosophical Assumptions**

Before examining Kohlberg’s theory of moral reasoning, an understanding of the philosophical underpinnings that guided his research and theory must be explored. Kohlberg’s cognitive-developmental approach to moral reasoning is based upon three fundamental assumptions: structuralism, phenomenalism, and constructivism. The first major underlying assumption of Kohlberg’s theory is structuralism. Colby and Kohlberg (1987) describe cognitive structures as organized forms and patterns of moral thoughts. The specific content of thought is not important, but rather the active processing of the relationship between events and actions to each other. Kohlberg (1984) explains that the Cognitive structure refers to rules for processing information or for connecting experienced events. Cognition means putting things together or relating events, and this relating is an active connecting process, not a passive connecting of events through external association and repetition. In part this means that connections are formed by selective and active processes of attention, information gathering strategies, motivated thinking, and so forth. More basically, it means that the process of relating particular events depends upon prior general modes of relating developed by the organism. The most general modes of relating are termed “categories of experience.” (p. 10)

Kohlberg (1984) viewed these categories as modes of relating applicable to any experienced event including the “relations of causality, space, time, quantity, and logic” (p.10). The common
meaning found in the moral reasoning abilities (categories of experience) among various people can be generalized and allows for placement of these individuals at different levels of development. The similar reasoning patterns and structure of cognition ultimately leads to the creation of one’s moral beliefs, opinions, and judgments regardless of the subject matter or type of situation being examined (Gielen, 1991).

Kohlberg also founded his work on the construct of phenomenalism. As Gielen (1991) explains “phenomenalism asserts that a person’s behavior can only be understood within the framework of the person’s conscious experience” (p.22). When examining morality, a person’s own interpretation of the circumstances surrounding a situation are what give it moral meaning rather than some other unexplained occurrence (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987). Kohlberg believed that a phenomenological orientation was important in the study of morality because whether one judges an action to be moral is dependent on understanding the conscious motives of the actor (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987).

The third major assumption that Kohlberg makes about his cognitive-developmental theory is that of constructivism. Constructivism posits that people construct meaning for themselves by thinking and acting on the world (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987). For every event or situation encountered in one’s life, a person constructs new responses based on his or her current developmental level. The current level of functioning is a result of a person’s developmental history or the continual construction of prior experiences. When one experiences a shift to a new stage of development, he or she experiences a complete reorganization in the pattern of thoughts that integrates itself into a broader perspective based on insights gleaned from prior stages (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987). Over the course of development, patterns of thought become more
complex as one becomes better able to differentiate among multiple perspectives based on the adaptation and reintegration of prior experiences (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987).

Theoretical Underpinnings: The Moral Domain

Kohlberg’s conception of moral development comes from his emphasis on the importance of how an individual reasons about moral dilemmas. For Kohlberg, the moral domain includes feelings, thoughts, and actions; however the moral reasoning gives each action a moral quality (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987). He believed that moral reasoning guides one’s decisions or judgments. These moral judgments consist of specific properties. First, they are judgments of value, not descriptive judgments of fact. Second, they are social judgments that involve people, telling us what we should do in situations where the claims of various persons are in conflict with each other. Finally, they contain universally recognized prescriptions about rights, duties, and responsibilities rather than value judgments of liking and preference.

Kohlberg’s ideas about moral development and the development of his theory were greatly influenced by the German philosopher Immanuel Kant (1785/1948) and the Swiss epistemologist Jean Piaget (1932/1965). Much like Kant and Piaget, Kohlberg saw the development of moral reasoning as following a path from which one moves from moral heteronomy to autonomy. Heteronomous moral judgments exemplify respect for tradition, law, power or other forms of authority (Gielen, 1991). A morally autonomous person takes an independent and self-legislative stance when making moral judgments, refusing to rely on specific societal or cultural authority and traditions. Kohlberg’s stage theory posits that as people advance in moral reasoning ability, they cognitively exhibit more universal consideration with respect to the moral domain.
Much like Piaget before him, Kohlberg’s theory is based on a hard stage model that emphasizes the progressive change from simpler cognitive structures and socio-moral perspectives to a more complex and integrated belief system (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987). Stages are essential to the cognitive developmental model and Kohlberg believed them necessary to explain the progression of moral development. Four general and sequential assumptions characterize the hard stage model: stages imply a qualitative difference in structures; these different structures form an invariant sequence, order, or succession in individual development; each of these different and sequential modes of thought forms a “structural whole”; stages are hierarchical integrations (Giclen, 1991). Each of these fundamental grounds is essential to the foundation of the moral development model. As explained by Colby & Kohlberg (1987):

Each new stage of development represents a qualitative reorganization of the individual’s pattern of thought, with each new organization integrating within a broader perspective the insights achieved at prior stages. Thus, as they develop, patterns of thought become more complex, differentiated, and adaptive. Because each stage presupposes the understanding gained at previous stages, development occurs in a predictable sequence of stages. It is assumed that individuals will pass through each stage in order, without skipping any stage in the sequence. (p.5)

Another important concept that underlies the Kohlbergian model is the idea of socio-moral perspective taking. Kohlberg (1984) theorized that the domain of social role-taking is related to moral reasoning. He describes the idea of role-taking as an “awareness that the other is in some way like the self and that the other knows or is responsive to the self in a system of complimentary expectations” (p.9). At each new, more complex stage of moral development,
the self and its relationship to others is reconfigured through a process of cognitive
differentiation and reintegration (Gielen, 1991).

Finally, Kohlberg’s theory of moral reasoning is based on the concept of justice, a
principle that he stated was essential to the development of moral judgment (Kohlberg, 1984).
He believed that moral judgments were driven by a sense of justice derived from a person’s
increasing social and psychological competence about how to balance conflict regarding the
values and equality of humanity. As people are better able to conceptualize the universal
principle of justice, moral growth ensues. As Kohlberg (1976) explains:

The most essential structure of morality is a justice of structure. Moral situations are
ones of conflict of perspectives or interest; justice principles are concepts for resolving
these conflicts, for giving each his due... Justice is the normative logic, the equilibration
of social actions and relations. A person’s sense of justice is what is most distinctively
and fundamentally moral. (p. 40)

Kohlberg also posits that although his stage theory is centered on the development of justice
reasoning, it does not imply that the entire structure, particularly his testing apparatus, is based
exclusively on this domain of moral reasoning (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987).

Kohlberg’s Stages of Moral Reasoning

Kohlberg (1984) originated a stage model describing a moral judgment hierarchy that
consists of three primary levels with two stages at each level which explains how people develop
moral reasoning abilities. At each level, a person has a different relationship with society’s rules
and expectations. Lower levels of moral development and cognition are driven by individual
desires, middle stages are focused on societal norms, and higher stages are based on universal
ethical principles. Within each of the levels, the first stage characterizes a heteronomous
orientation and the second an autonomous. Movement through the stages is gradual and variable through the lifespan.

The first level of Kohlberg’s moral development stage theory is termed the *Preconventional level*. This initial level of development is marked by a morality based solely on self-interest and egotism (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987). Rules and societal expectations are viewed as external to the self. People are viewed primarily as only interested in getting what’s in their own best interests. Moral decision making is rooted in one’s ability to gain some reward and/or avoid punishment (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987). Kohlberg indicated that this first level of moral development is typical of most children under the age of ten, juvenile delinquents, some adolescents, and some adults that may have criminal histories (Kohlberg, 1984).

The preconventional level is comprised of two stages, the first of which is called *Heteronomous Morality*. Individuals in this stage believe that they are compelled by an obedience and concession to comply with those that have power and authority. This desire for compliance is driven by a need to avoid any type of punishment that could be administered by those authority figures (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987). There is little regard for the welfare or rights of others as individuals in this stage make decisions egocentrically. Rules, conventions, and laws are considered literal as authorities define what is right and wrong (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987). There is no awareness of multiple perspectives.

The second stage in the preconventional level is referred to as *Individualistic, Instrumental Morality*. The moral orientation of individuals in this stage is characterized by the belief that morally right behavior means acting in one’s own best interests, allowing others to act in their own best interests, and making fair exchanges with one another so that everyone’s individual specific needs can be met (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987). The justification for doing right
is based on an acknowledgment that everyone has needs that are equally valid and they should be able to fulfill those needs. The reasoning behind the concern for other’s welfare comes out of an egocentric perspective that one might need or want something from another in the future. Individuals can be characterized as pragmatic in that they believe their own needs and wants can be met and possible negative outcomes minimized through fair exchange and interactions (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987).

After passing through the first two stages that make up level one, Kohlberg believed individuals proceed to the second level of moral reasoning development which he called the Conventional level. People at this level are much less motivated by the self and instead guided by a sense of compliance with social norms and rules (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987). Authority figures are respected and seeking approval from these people is paramount. The laws of society are interpreted as being created by the people for the benefit of all of the people (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987). Kohlberg believed that most adolescents and adults display this level of socio-moral reasoning (Kohlberg, 1984).

Within the conventional level are two stages (stage three and stage four overall). Kohlberg referred to stage three as Interpersonally Normative Morality. Moral decisions at this stage are guided by the need to meet the expectations of and maintain relationships with those that are close to the person. An individual in this stage is primarily concerned with maintaining an image of being a “good person” by respecting figures of authority, following prescribed social roles, and enacting those social roles that are expected of them (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987). The egocentric perspective of fulfillment of personal desires and interests that characterized stage two is no longer relevant. Rather, the primary concern in stage three becomes social approval through shared feelings, agreements, and expectations on an individual level. A person in this
stage also does not yet have an awareness of how his or her role fits within the broader social system. Instead, the person is focused solely on the maintenance of relevant interpersonal relationships (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987).

Kohlberg labeled stage four of his theory *Social System Morality*. Individuals in this stage have a primary concern for the rights and welfare of each person who contributes to maintaining the overall social structure (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987). Right in this case is defined by upholding the laws created by society, fulfilling societal duties, and contributing to society and its institutions (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987). Such actions are considered right because they preserve the social structure and do not destabilize it. Unlike in stage three, where interpersonal relationships are seen as merely a way to gain approval, individuals reasoning at stage four see a larger social system and subscribe to expectations and obligations to fulfill one’s role within that system. If individual claims are at odds, individuals in this stage depend on legal, social, or religious entities to resolve the conflict (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987).

*Postconventional* or *Principled* moral reasoning is comprised of two stages and marks the third and highest level of moral reasoning development an individual can attain. Kohlberg characterized this level as a “prior-to-society perspective” because people at this level begin to recognize the broader moral principles upon which social rules, laws and expectations are based (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987, p.19). An individual recognizes that they are a member of society, upholding and accepting its rules. However, that individual is also now able to critically analyze society’s expectations with an understanding that the legal and moral rules that have been set forth by it can be inconsistent (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987). As a result, moral reasoning is based not on societal expectations, but rather the broader moral principles underlying societal rules, conventions, and laws. Judgments of morality are founded upon self-chosen and universal moral
principles positing the ethical and fair treatment of all people. Kohlberg believed that close to 20% of the adult population reaches stage five within the postconventional level (Kohlberg, 1984).

As mentioned previously, two stages (five and six) encompass the third level of principled moral reasoning. Stage five, the Human Rights and Social Welfare Morality, maintains that individuals evaluate the rightness of rules, laws, and social systems on the extent to which they promote the basic rights and welfare of all people (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987). Unlike the wholesale compliance with the law and social systems of those individuals in stage four, there is a new awareness in stage five that everyone is an individual person first, even before he or she obliges membership within society. Additionally, there is a keen awareness that all people ought to be privy to equal rights and protection (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987). A person at this stage will recognize that individuals or groups will have differing internalized values and these should be revered with respect. Such values are typically relevant to all people such as the basic rights of life and liberty (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987). A person entering into the social contract must uphold these values objectively in order to protect the rights and welfare of all people. For instance, individuals in stage five are able to evaluate the laws of society by balancing moral and legal perspectives in order to determine each law’s utility in serving the greatest good for the greatest number of people.

Morality of Universalizable, Reversible, and Perscriptive General Ethical Principles is the sixth and final stage of moral reasoning development posited by Kohlberg. He believed that individuals’ moral reasoning in this stage is defined by an idealistic universal justice orientation applicable to all contexts and situations (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987). People in this stage evaluate moral dilemmas by taking into account equally the perspectives of all points of view. The
importance of general moral principles such as justice, basic human rights, and benevolence take precedence over rules, laws, or social systems that may come into conflict with universal positive prescriptions by which moral decisions should be made. According to Kohlberg, people in stage six are able to impart their moral point of view to uplift individuals, relationships, and society to an increasingly consistent expression of universal justice (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987). Through his research, Kohlberg never found empirical evidence demonstrating the existence of individuals at stage six and suggested that few, if any would ever reach it (Kohlberg, Levine, & Hewer, 1984). However, the theory needed an ultimate endpoint. Through the exploration of the writings of people such a Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr., Kohlberg developed the theoretical tenets that formed the basis of this final stage of moral development (Kohlberg, Levine, & Hewer, 1984).

In Kohlberg’s stage theory, two major factors help to facilitate moral development: exposure to higher stage thinking and cognitive disequilibrium (Walker, 1988). Individuals who interact with those who are more developed in their moral reasoning ability gain exposure to higher stage thinking, which leads to a cognitive reorganization of how moral judgments are made. This reorganization of thought processes is based on Kohlberg’s constructivist view that individuals make meaning out of the world based on their experiences with others, particularly in the domain of social perspective taking. Cognitive disequilibrium occurs when individuals face situations that arouse internal contradictions in their moral reasoning structures or when they find that their reasoning is different from that of significant others (Kohlberg, 1976). Kohlberg’s adherence to the philosophical assumption of structuralism makes cognitive disequilibrium important as individuals are always integrating every new aspect of the world they encounter leading to changes in how thought patterns are structured.
Criticisms of the Kohlbergian Approach

Kohlberg's ideas and theoretical orientation have been extraordinarily influential in the study of moral development. And while his work has garnered support and spurred further research in the realm of moral cognition, there have also been a number of criticisms lodged against his theory. Rest et al. (1999) summarized several criticisms against Kohlberg's approach to moral development that include (a) the rigidity of the stage model, (b) its assumptions of applicability to all cultures and across gender, (c) its singular focus on reasoning as the only component of morality, and (d) its emphasis on justice as the singular principle in moral philosophy.

First, the hard stage model has been maligned because of the lack of flexibility allowed in types of developmental progress. The various ways an individual can think about certain types of phenomenon is not taken into consideration as the rigidity of the stage model calls for only one type of cognitive process to guide moral reasoning (Rest et al., 1999). Additionally, the stages lack any necessary connection with moral action and are therefore better characterized as stages of general cognitive rather than moral development (Rich & DeVitis, 1985).

The justice-based orientation of his theory has been shunned because it does not take into account other factors on which moral judgments may be based. While Kohlberg believed that outside factors may influence moral judgment, he chose to focus solely on the cognitive milieu of the moral domain (Kohlberg, 1984). For example, Gilligan (1982/1993) has suggested that the justice orientation was inappropriately applied to females. In her view, men and women make meaning of their worlds in fundamentally different ways. Her research demonstrated that females utilize care and responsibility as their moral compass. As a result, she postulated that
females utilize an emphasis on relationships and a care perspective when examining moral issues more often than that of justice.

There have also been questions raised about the universality of the Kohlbergian approach. Many cultures emphasize relationships and responsibility to others, embracing a less independent view of the self. Vine (1985) contends that cultures that do not emphasize the individual will characterize advancement in autonomy as an unsuitable goal. Indeed, there has been little research examining whether justice and autonomy are the primary considerations for non-Western cultures or non-dominant groups within American culture (Mennuti & Creamer, 1991).

In recent years, Kohlberg's moral stage theory has lacked paradigmatic support and has seen more limited use in contemporary textbooks and research presented at professional meetings (Lapsley, 2006). According to Narvaez (2005), the theory has fallen on "hard times" among psychologists due to factors internal to Kohlberg's theory, including its philosophical assumptions and doubts about how to understand fundamental concepts such as stage and structure. However, many aspects of Kohlberg's theory provide a helpful framework for understanding the cognitive processes involved in moral reasoning and have inspired new theories and direction in research, particularly the Neo-Kohlbergian model.

**Neo-Kohlbergian Theory of Moral Development**

*Introduction*

Building on the work of Kohlberg, James Rest and his colleagues have developed what they have termed the neo-Kohlbergian approach to moral development (Rest et al., 1999). Neo-Kohlbergian theory is grounded in the basic tenets of Kohlberg's work, however with significant modifications to Kohlberg's original stage model. Most of these changes have resulted from the
large body of research performed using Rest's instrument, the Defining Issues Test (DIT).

Before presenting the neo-Kohlbergian approach, it is important to understand what limitations Rest found in Kohlberg's position and how he addresses them.

**Neo-Kohlbergian Challenges to Kohlberg's Theory**

While Rest and his colleagues defended many aspects of Kohlberg's theory, they also discovered through their research a number of philosophical and practical flaws to Kohlberg's original approach to moral development. Taking into account the criticisms of other psychologists and scholars, in addition to his own work, Rest et al. (1999) suggested several major flaws with Kohlberg's theory. First, Kohlberg viewed moral judgment as the only component of the many possible psychological processes that determine moral behavior. For Kohlberg, understanding one's moral judgment was the key to understanding a person's motivations, sensitivities, and potential for moral action (Narvaez, 2005). The neo-Kohlbergian approach posits that moral judgment is only one of four possible psychological components that must occur before moral behavior ensues (Rest, et al, 1999). The four elements of the neo-Kohlbergian moral domain model will be discussed in more detail later in the chapter.

A second criticism of Kohlberg is that he does not allow for the use of multiple aspects of moral judgment, adhering instead to a global lifespan stage model of development in which individuals move from stage to stage, one stage at a time. Rest et al. (1991) reformulated Kohlberg's six stages into three basic schemas based on empirical findings from the DIT. These schemas enable one to describe the developmental aspects of moral judgment and will be discussed later in the chapter. The Neo-Kohlbergian model defines development as a gradual shift from simple to more complex conceptions of social cooperation (Thoma, 2006). The model also assumes that at any given time there are multiple conceptions available to the individual.
A third argument presented about Kohlberg’s theory is that it focuses on justice issues as the sole basis of morality. The neo-Kohlbergian approach rejects the sole focus of this one aspect of the moral domain. Rest et al. (1991) argues that the Neo-Kohlbergian perspective emphasizes the primacy of justice issues as a large part of any totally comprehensive set of moral problems; however they do not cover the gamut of moral issues.

The neo-Kohlbergian approach to moral development also redefines post-conventional reasoning (Thoma, 2006). Kohlberg’s view of postconventional reasoning stemmed from the philosophy and writings of Rawls (1971), contending that it was a logical advance over conventional reasoning. The neo-Kohlbergian description of postconventional reasoning is no longer tied to any particular philosophical theory or perspective, but rather a conglomerate of criteria that must be met to qualify it as a postconventional system (Thoma, 2006). As a result, the need to tie the psychological model to a partisan philosophical position is limited.

Additionally, Kohlberg lacked empirical evidence for his final stage of reasoning partly because most of his research involved working with children and adolescents and also due to his assessment method (Rest et al., 1999). Kohlberg’s interview method required production of postconventional thought rather than recognition, possibly explaining why it was rarely seen (Rest et al., 1999).

Finally, the neo-Kohlbergian approach to moral development differs from Kohlberg’s belief that moral stages are universal. Kohlberg firmly believed that all normal functioning individuals in all cultures move through the same developmental sequence (Kohlberg, 1984). The neo-Kohlbergian viewpoint adopts a common morality viewpoint somewhat similar to the notion of common law (Thoma, 2006). Common morality, much like common law, can be “identified across cultures and regions serving similar ends and sharing many
features...however, due to particular circumstances and prototype cases, common law develops noticeable differences across cultures and contexts in both emphases and precedents” (Thoma, 2006, p. 71).

**Neo-Kohlbergian Theory**

As described previously, the neo-Kohlbergian approach to moral development addresses numerous challenges and modifications to Kohlberg’s theory, however there are several core ideas guiding the theory that are directly attributable to Kohlberg. Rest et al. (1991) describe several major ideas that have guided their development and continuation of Kohlberg’s work. First, the neo-Kohlbergian approach stresses an emphasis on cognitive processes from a constructivist viewpoint. Much like Kohlberg, they believe that in order to understand moral behavior, one has to understand how a person makes sense of the social world. Second, the neo-Kohlbergians believe that a person constructs his or her own moral epistemology, actively absorbing historical, environmental, and cultural factors that play a role in the moral developmental process. Like Kohlberg, the basic categories of morality, such as justice reasoning, are completely self-constructed and represent an advance from simpler to more complex ways of constructing morality. Finally, the three developmental neo-Kohlbergian schemas follow closely Kohlberg’s preconventional, conventional, and postconventional levels of development, with particular emphasis on the shift from a conventional view to a postconventional perspective.

The neo-Kohlbergians believe, as did Kohlberg, that moral judgment is not the only aspect of moral development nor does it explain the entire psychology of morality. In order to bring together the multiplicity of approaches, constructs, and phenomenon in moral psychology, Rest (1986) suggested that moral judgment was only one of four inner psychological processes
that must occur for moral behavior to ensue. The other three processes are moral sensitivity, moral motivation, and moral character (Rest, 1986). Rest & Narvaez (1994) suggest that all four components interact constantly and that a failure to act morally could be a result of malfeasance in one or more of the four areas. The four component model helps to heuristically explain the synthesis of the psychology of morality.

The neo-Kohlbergians refined Kohlberg’s hard stage model and theory. They argued that it was too hard and developmentally linear, only allowing individuals to be characterized in one stage at a time. As a result, individuals could not use a combination of reasoning skills from higher or lower levels of development that they may be utilizing. Rest (1979) believed that individuals may use reasoning abilities from multiple levels of development, with the possibility of one area being the dominant cognitive process. He thus re-formulated Kohlberg’s model into a model of moral development based on the advancement of individuals through three cognitive schemas of moral judgment: Personal Interest (lowest level), Maintaining Norms (middle level), and Post-Conventional (highest level). Rest et al. (1999) defined a schema as “a cognitive structure that consists of the mental representation of some stimulus phenomenon, including the relationships among the elements” (p. 136). People may utilize thought processes within any of the three schemas, however as people advance in their cognitive moral reasoning abilities they tend to shift their use of moral judgments increasingly to the higher level schemas (Rest et al., 1999).

Each schema closely resembles aspects of Kohlberg’s stage theory. The first developmental schema, Personal Interest, develops in childhood and incorporates ideas from Kohlberg’s first three developmental stages (Bebeau & Thoma, 2003). A person utilizing the Personal Interest schema bases moral decision-making on the gains and losses that individuals
may experience in a moral dilemma. Narvaez (2005) characterizes decision making in this schema as appealing only to the personal stake that he or she has in a situation, where “prudence and personal advantage are considered virtues” (p. 125). Much like the name implies the Personal Interest schema does not incorporate reasoning based on the broader social system.

The neo-Kohlbergians refer to the next developmental moral schema as Maintaining Norms. This schema closely resembles Kohlberg’s stage four and marks the first entry of a person’s reasoning into a more society-wide moral perspective as people become focused on maintaining the established social order (Thoma, 2006). In the Maintaining Norms schema, the laws and norms of society are the most important aspect of moral decision making. Rest et al. (1999) identified five key elements that characterize this schema. First, people in this schema understand that society has a need for norms, role systems, and established practices so that there is no need to debate the intricacies of every societal decision of morality. By having an established set of rules, conflict is avoided while stability and security are provided. The second element of this schema involves a person’s understanding of the need for society-wide cooperation. One must be able to functionally interact with not only friends and family members, but strangers and competitors. Having an established societal role system allows people to maintain fruitful interactions with others. Third, people in this schema recognize that laws and social norms are established, known by, and apply to everyone in a society. Whether a religious or civil municipal law, everyone is protected by and must obey the law. Fourth, people of this moral disposition understand that laws establish reciprocity among individuals in society. One must obey the law and do his or her duty within their respective position in society with the expectation that others will do the same, thus benefiting society. The final element of the maintaining norms schema involves respect for authority. People in this schema believe that
members of society must adhere to the norms, chains of command, and authority established within a set hierarchical system of society. From their point of view, the orientation to duty and authority helps keep the social system established.

The neo-Kohlbergians labeled their final schema Postconventional. This schema marks a breakthrough in cognitive abilities and usually occurs in late-adolescence. Thinking becomes defined by moral obligations which are based on shared ideals that are open to scrutiny via logical consistency, experience of the community, and coherence with accepted practice (Rest et al. 1999). While very similar to Kohlberg's fifth and sixth stages, the neo-Kohlbergians assert that this schema is broader in nature and less specific than that of Kohlberg (Rest et al., 1999). They also make reference to this schema as being grounded in no specific moral philosophy, but rather encompassing a broad range of modern moral philosophers (Rest et al., 1999).

Rest et al. (1999) characterize four elements as being critical to the postconventional schema. First, individuals in this level focus on the primacy of moral criteria. Laws, codes, and traditions are viewed simply as social contracts whose value is appreciated, however that does not mean that a person should necessarily adhere to these social arrangements. Laws are viewed as the instruments of morality, not the underlying moral principle of which the postconventional thinker deems as most important. The second element of this schema is characterized by individuals appealing to an ideal. What is the best way for individuals in society to relate to one another and how does one persuade society to organize around those ideals? Ideals for society might be exemplified by the concepts such as fair treatment for all, providing for those in need, or doing what's best for the common good. The third element of postconventional thinking postulates that these ideals must be sharable. An ideal should not come from personal intuition or some special ethnocentric preference unique to the individual. Instead, the ideal should be
agreed upon and justifiable to all of the relevant stakeholders subsequently furthering the common good. Sharable ideals also should be left open to scrutiny and debate, allowing for logically based challenges or new experiences to reformulate one’s ideals. The final element characterizing postconventional moral reasoning is full reciprocity, which involves the uniform view and application of social norms. These norms cannot be biased in favor of anyone or at anyone else’s expense. Unlike the cognitive processes in the Maintaining Norms schema that focused on partial reciprocity, Post-Conventional moral reasoning takes cognition a step further in its understanding that laws apply not only to all members of society, but that some laws may be biased to particular individuals. Additionally, there is a major difference in how individuals from each schema work to establish consensus. People utilizing the Maintaining Norms schema look to already established practices and to people in positions of authority while those using the Postconventional schema try to gain consensus through dialogue and logical thinking in line with the ideals of society.

*Rest’s Defining Issues Test*

The major instrument guiding the work of the neo-Kohlbergians is the Defining Issues Test (DIT). The DIT is a measure of moral judgment and serves as the foundation for neo-Kohlbergian research. The DIT was developed in 1974 by James Rest (1979/1986) as a more expedient and quantitative alternative to Kohlberg’s interview styled Moral Judgment Inventory. Since the 1970’s, there have been more than 1,000 studies involving over 100,000 subjects in over 40 countries that have utilized the DIT (Rest et al., 1998). The instrument presents a series of moral dilemmas to subjects followed by 12 issues related to the dilemma. Subjects consider each issue and determine which are most important in deciding how to respond to the
hypothetical dilemma. Subjects’ decisions regarding which issues are most important in making a decision regarding the dilemma informs their score on the test.

**College Student Moral Development**

Since their inception in the seventeenth century, efforts to actively promote student moral development have been considered vital to the mission of American colleges and universities (Whiteley & Yokato, 1988). Pascarella (1997) notes, “it is generally agreed that American higher education has a clearly defined role in developing individuals who can both think and act morally” (p. 47). Moral duties call upon individuals to be honest, fair, and accountable, as well as to avoid harming others or treating them with disrespect (Earley, 1998). Colleges and universities can serve as powerful learning communities that strive to facilitate student ethical development.

Copious research has demonstrated that college students experience significant growth in moral development during the undergraduate years (Evans, et al., 1998). McNeel (1994) conducted a meta-analysis of 13 cross-sectional and 9 longitudinal studies of student moral reasoning that utilized the DIT. Each of the studies concluded that there was a strong association between principled moral reasoning and extent of exposure to postsecondary education. In a review of literature on the effects of college on moral development, Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) suggested that college provides a variety of social, intellectual, and cultural experiences that may positively encourage moral growth.

**Community Service**

**Introduction**

Colleges and universities afford numerous service opportunities through a variety of extracurricular student organizations, faculty taught service learning classes, and campus
religious groups. The emphasis on community service participation and the increased opportunities to volunteer can be partially attributed to a change in college students’ perceptions about the importance and meaning of service participation. A 2005 report from the University of California, Los Angeles Higher Education Research Institute indicated that two thirds of entering college students believed it was important to help others, the highest mark recorded in the past 25 years (Higher Education Research Institute, 2005). The same report also found that over one fourth of entering freshmen believed it essential or very important to personally participate in community action programs, the highest reported number in the past 10 years (Higher Education Research Institute, 2005).

Not only have traditional-aged college student attitudes regarding service changed, but so have their actions. In recent years, an even greater number of students have become involved with service activities in the local communities surrounding their campus. A 2006 federal study released by the Corporation for National and Community Service indicated that between 2002 and 2005, the number of students volunteering their time to service grew by more than 20% to almost 30 million (Dote et al., 2006). The overall percentage of college students who indicated that they participated in some form of community service had also grown to 30% (Dote et al., 2006). The most common types of services performed were youth tutoring, mentoring, and working with the impoverished.

History

Community service participation on American college and university campuses originated in the late 19th century. The writings of John Dewey and William James were instrumental in the development of a new culture of service as well as programming initiatives such as the cooperative education movement, university extension programs, and campus
YMCA based efforts (Pawelski, 2007; Hickman & Alexander, 1998; Foster, Sauser, & Self, 1994). More contemporary history reveals a rapid growth in popularity of college student volunteer programs originating in the 1960's and 1970's as institutions of higher education began to encourage community service through broad campus-based programs (Ellis, 1985). For example, in the 1960's over 80 percent of college students were involved in some type of community service (Loeb, 1994).

After a significant downturn in the 1980's, the past two decades have seen steadily rising numbers of students involved in service pursuits. The interest in service oriented programming can be observed in governmental policy and at the university level with increased attention focused on encouraging undergraduates to take part in some manner of community service (Astin, Sax, & Avalos, 1999). For instance, the National and Community Services Acts of 1990 and 1993 and more recently the Generations Invigorating Volunteering and Education Act of 2007 were authorized to promote and encourage volunteer participation throughout society, but especially among college students. Government programs have also been initiated that focus specifically on providing opportunities for community service. Examples include the Peace Corps, Americorps, and America Serve. Moreover, since the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States, there has been an even greater expansion and interest in service activities among all Americans. Not coincidently many of today's college students, most of who were in middle and high school at the time of the attacks, have shown the strongest increase in volunteer service participation (Dote et al., 2006).

Definitions

Community service can be described in several ways and can encompass many different types of activities. Researchers have given varying definitions to community service based on
the motivation of the actor and the type of service being initiated. For instance, some have broadly characterized community service as any altruistic activity performed by individuals whereby their time is given freely to benefit another person, group, organization, or community (Burns, 1998; Delve, Mintz, & Steward, 1990; Serow & Dreyden, 1990; Hedin, 1989). The service being performed is commonly voluntary and derived from one’s personal beliefs in the cause, mission, or special population for which the service benefits. It has moral underpinnings and is performed without thought of reciprocity. A study by Serow (1991) investigating the motivational factors of college students’ community service involvement found that 80% of the student participants listed “sense of satisfaction from helping other” as a decision factor in their taking part in service (p. 549).

Other researchers have suggested that while community service can be performed with altruistic intentions, any characterization of community service should also include in its definition that participants may also be driven by personal or private reasons (Marks & Jones, 2004; Metz, et al., 2003). For instance, community service may be carried out primarily based on the personal benefits gained by one’s involvement with it or in combination with some form of intrinsic altruistic motivation. Personal or private benefits to someone might include: meeting other people, a desire to correct societal problems, acquiring special career skills or experiences, religious grounds, or simply the attraction of the work itself (Serow, 1991). Participation in an organization, activity, or class may also prompt service involvement. Based on the variation in definitions regarding the discrepancies of the motivations underlying community service, it can be delineated as having a mutuality of benefit for the person performing the service as well as those it is seeking to support (Berger & Milem, 2002; Perreault, 1997).
Community service within the university setting has also been outlined by the federal
government. The Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended by the Higher Education
community service as:

“services which are identified by an institution of higher education, through formal or
informal consultation with local nonprofit, governmental, and community-based
organizations, as designed to improve the quality of life for community residents,
particularly low-income individuals, or to solve particular problems related to their needs,
including:

1. such fields as health care, child care, literacy training, education (including
tutorial services), welfare, social services, transportation, housing and
neighborhood improvement;
2. work in service opportunities or youth corps as defined in the National and
Community Service Act of 1990;
3. support services to students with disabilities; and
4. activities in which a student serves as a mentor for such purposes as tutoring,
supporting educational and recreational activities; and counseling, including
career counseling” (1998, Section 441c).

Community service can also be performed through a variety of contexts and under
differing circumstances. Community outreach programs, extracurricular service projects, or
philanthropic fundraising activities are all examples of voluntary community services that may
be performed by students. These could also take place under a variety of circumstances. For
example, a student might perform community service through an extracurricular organization in
which they participate. A student may seek out volunteer opportunities on his or her own or through a campus sponsored activity or religious organization. As mentioned previously in this section, motivation to perform community service may encompass a broad spectrum of reasons.

Community Service versus Service Learning

As defined previously, community service generally refers to the voluntary activities performed by individuals for the betterment of society. The term “community service” however, should not be used interchangeably with the term “service learning” as the two terms are defined differently within the literature. The term “service learning” refers to community service activities performed in conjunction with a structured and intentional curriculum designed to promote student development through critical reflection of the experience (Jacoby, 1996). Service learning takes place via the formal curriculum of an educational institution and is marked by both structured reflection and reciprocity (Bowley, 2003). Conversely, co-curricular community service experiences take place outside of the formal curriculum and include involvement in service experiences through student organizations, community service-based Federal Work-Study positions, or individual initiative. These do not require any structured elements of reflection.

Service learning classes allow students to earn college credit through participation in a community service project chosen by the instructor that is relevant to the disciplinary course objectives of an academic department while integrating it with structured classroom reflection (Stanton, Giles, & Cruz, 1999). In discussing how college facilitates moral development, Rest (1988) concluded that classes in moral education do not account for development. Instead, he found that “dilemma discussion interventions” such as those found in a service learning curriculum assist students in the active solving of moral problems. Additionally, he believed that
personality development interventions that involved a student in services such as tutoring or volunteering with the elderly in addition to discussing the meaning and relevance of these experiences would provide the impetus for further moral development.

A 2006 report by Campus Compact, a consortium of over 1000 colleges and universities dedicated to promoting service among students and faculty, indicated that approximately 91% of its member institutions offer service learning courses or incorporate service learning into classroom instruction (Campus Compact, 2006). Colleges have even begun to mandate service learning courses as part of a student’s graduation requirements. Examples include Benedict College, Clarkson College, and Tulane University.

Community Service and Moral Development

The increase in college student community service participation has undoubtedly had a positive impact on the institutions of our society to which the service is geared, however the involvement of voluntary service participation may also have influential developmental effects on the students performing it. One area of personal growth that may be positively affected is students’ moral development. Hart, Atkins, and Donnelly (2006) argue that community service provides an excellent opportunity for college students to engage in activities that promote moral development. The research literature purporting the impact of college student volunteerism and service on moral development is not prolific; however a few studies have assessed the impact of community service learning on various facets of moral development. These studies mostly show that service participation can have modest and beneficial effects.

Moral reasoning ability, as measured by Rest’s Defining Issues Test, has been a popular means by which to assess the impact of service participation. Several studies have indicated that students engaged in service learning courses have shown increases in their level of moral
reasoning (Boss, 1994; Gorman, Duffy, & Heffernan, 1994). Boss (1994) evaluated the effectiveness of community service work on the moral reasoning abilities of college students \(N = 71\) taking an ethics course. Two sections of an ethics class utilized the same curricula and were taught by the same instructor. The only difference was that one of the classes was chosen randomly to fulfill a requirement of including 20 hours of community service (working with people who were in need), keeping a journal of the experience, and discussions during class relating back to the service experiences; the students in the other class were required to complete a more traditional essay assignment. Students were administered the DIT to measure their moral reasoning ability before the first class of the semester and at the conclusion of the final class of the semester. Boss found that students in the community service group scored significantly higher (51% at post conventional reasoning level) on the DIT at the conclusion of the semester than those who had not performed service (13% at the post conventional level).

Research by Gorman, Duffy, and Heffernan (1994) evaluated the effectiveness of two different types of college academic courses on the development of moral reasoning. One course consisted of readings, lectures, and a small group reflection about values and moral dilemmas based on contemporary and traditional philosophers. The other course incorporated the same curricular facets of the class with the addition of a community service learning requirement of 10-12 hours per week. Each course required two semesters to complete. Three sections each of the two courses were compared. All students \(N = 70\) were tested before and after completion of the course using the DIT. The students who had participated in the class consisting of community service, reading, and reflection showed significantly higher scores than those students in the class that only focused on a reading and reflection of ethical issues.
There have also been studies that reflect little to no difference in moral reasoning ability for students who participate in service learning (Bernacki & Jaeger, 2008; Cram, 1998; Fenzel & Leary, 1997). Bernacki & Jaeger (2008) compared students who had self-selected into either a service learning section or non-service learning section of introductory English, philosophy, sociology courses. Students in the service learning classes were required to participate in at least 30 hours of community service during the semester in an arena pertinent to the class in which they were enrolled. These students also were required to keep a journal and spent time reflecting on experiences during class time with other students. Non-service learning students were assigned the same readings and participated in similar discussions, but without the service experience. Participants were administered the Defining Issues Test (DIT), Moral Justification Scale (MJS), and the Service Learning Outcomes Scale (Rowe & Chapman, 1999) during the first two weeks of the semester and during the last two weeks of the semester. Based on results obtained from 46 students (25 Service vs. 21 Non-service) the DIT and MJS scores of service learning students did not increase significantly higher than those in the non-service learning section of the course. Service learning students did however report that they felt positive changes in themselves including: greater compassion, a better understanding of and the ability to solve social problems, and possession of a greater efficacy to make the world better.

Cram (1998) employed a quasi-experimental design in which he compared three sections of an introductory ethics course taught by the same professor. All three sections were taught in the same manner with the exception of one section which included a community service learning piece. The community service requirement was 20 total hours for the semester and the students' were required to keep a journal reflecting on their service experiences. The students were administered the Defining Issues Test (DIT) and Self-Esteem Questionnaire (SEQ) before and at
the conclusion of the course. There were 32 students with usable DIT data and 65 students with usable SEQ scores. Cram found no significant increases in principled moral reasoning or self-esteem of students in the experimental service learning course or the non-service learning section.

Fenzel & Leary (1997) assessed the moral reasoning ability development of students \( N = 57 \) who were self-selected into two different sections of an introductory philosophy course. One section of the course contained a service learning component that included 15 total hours of community service, a reflection journal of the experience, and a final paper synthesizing integration of the course materials with the service requirement. The non-service learning section required students to do two extra readings and write a paper integrating the readings with other course material. All students in both sections were administered the DIT and the Social and Personal Responsibility Scale before and at the conclusion of the course. Additionally, students in each section were interviewed briefly about what they gained from the course. Neither the students in the service or non-service learning sections showed significant gains in moral reasoning or attitudes towards personal or social responsibility. Based on the interviews at the conclusion of the two courses, service learning students revealed that they had more compassion toward the disadvantaged, more commitment to community work, and a greater belief that they could make a difference.

Based on the studies to date measuring the impact of service learning on moral reasoning ability, it appears that some tentative conclusions of service’s impact can be derived. There are some differences in each study that could have had an effect on the results. Each of the studies drew upon a fairly small sample size at a single institution. Gorman, Duffy, and Heffernan (1994) and Boss (1994) were able to employ the largest sample sizes at 70 and 71 respectively.
and they also each found that participants obtained statistically significant gains on the DIT after participation in the service learning course. The other three studies employed smaller sample sizes and did not find significant gains in DIT scores indicating that sample size may have been a factor.

There were also variations in the amount of hours that service was being performed. For example, Gorman, Duffy, and Heffernan (1994) utilized two semesters in their study. As a result, students in this study performed significantly more hours of service than any of the other studies previously mentioned, which only measured the service variable over the course of a single semester. This might suggest that service duration was important. For studies that only utilized one semester, Bernacki and Jaeger (2008) had the highest semester service requirement at 30 hours. One semester studies also included Boss (1994) and Cram (1998) who each had mandatory 20 hour requirements while Fenzel and Leary (1997) utilized only a 15 hour service requirement. When the variable of service duration is looked at comprehensively, both Cram (1998) and Bernacki and Jaeger (2008) had much smaller study sample sizes ($N = 32$) and ($N = 46$) than either Gorman, Duffy, and Heffernan (1994) ($N = 70$) or Boss (1994) ($N = 71$) suggesting that with respect to moral reasoning ability, heightened service duration might be important to moral reasoning ability.

The service learning requirement of the course in which the service learning took place also differed among the studies. Three studies (Bernacki & Jaeger, 2008; Gorman, Duffy, and Heffernan, 1994; Boss, 1994) incorporated group discussion about moral issues and the service experiences students were taking part in while the other two took place at the individual level only. Notably, two of the three studies that incorporated group processes of reflection found significant gains in moral reasoning ability. The fact that group processes of reflection were
more likely to be associated with positive changes in moral reasoning abilities may be important in relation to the current study. The members of Greek organizations typically engage in the same community service activities through their organization and often times do this service together. If members of Greek organizations spend a great deal of time performing service and also a lot of time together during or after engaging in the service there might be many more opportunities for some type of group reflection on the service itself and thus a greater potential increase in moral reasoning abilities.

There are also numerous studies that have evaluated the benefits of community service learning to varying components of moral development. A great deal of evidence connects service-learning participation to an increased sense of social responsibility and civic engagement in students (Ehrlich, 2000; Gray et al., 2000; Myers-Lipton, 1998; Eyler & Giles, 1999). Research on service-learning has also demonstrated that participating students have greater racial tolerance, value the role of service in communities, and perceive communities as having the capacity for solving their problems (Gray et al., 1999; Astin & Sax, 1998; Kendrick, 1996; Markus et al., 1993). Engagement in civic concerns might entail participation in public life, advocacy on behalf of others, or joining in common work that promotes the well-being of everyone. Neo-Kohlbergian theory posits that as individuals morally develop they move from more simplistic conceptions of morality grounded in unilateral social authority and individual reciprocity to an appreciation of more complex social systems in which one is capable of evaluating and affecting it in relation to fundamental principles of justice (Colby, et al., 2003). Greater awareness of social issues and participation in civically minded activities symbolizes the types of behaviors congruent with critical recognition of a broader social system.
Most studies on service participation have focused on the various effects of service learning on areas of moral development rather than generic co-curricular service participation. Vogelgesang and Astin (2000) attempted to discern differences in self-reported values and beliefs, academic skills, leadership, and future plans of these two service types. Utilizing a national sample of over 22,000 students from a variety of institutional types, the authors compared three groups of students: those who participated in course-based service-learning, those who participated only in co-curricular community service, and students who did not participate in any service activities. After controlling for entering characteristics of the students and institutional type, the results indicated that students who participated in either service type demonstrated considerable positive gains in all outcomes including the morally relevant affective measures of social concern, promotion of racial understanding, interest in civic engagement, and critical thinking skills.

Research has also indicated that the amount of time that college students devote to service activities can impact various student developmental outcomes related to moral development. Astin and Sax (1998) evaluated longitudinal data from 3,450 college students participating in various forms of service. After controlling for the individual characteristics of students (such as demographic variables and students’ previous tendency to volunteer), the researchers found that service participation was associated with higher levels of these students’ self-reported sense of civic responsibility (commitment to helping other, promoting racial understanding, etc.), life skills development (perceived leadership ability, social self-confidence, etc.), and academic involvement (grade point average, contact with faculty, etc.). There was also a significant relationship between the amount of time that students spent volunteering service hours and positive measures of development.
Long-term effects of service participation were measured by Astin, Sax and Avalos (1999) utilizing data drawn from over 12,000 college student volunteers at four and nine years increments after these students’ graduation. Nine years after leaving college, students who had participated in service while in college continued to demonstrate a commitment to helping others in difficulty, promote racial understanding, and participate in community action programs. There was also evidence that duration of service involvement in both high school and college accounted for higher rates of service participation nine years later.

*Involvement in Greek-Letter Organizations*

Social Greek-letter organizations are a unique institutional product in the development of collegiate student life. Embedded in the history of American higher education and found only in colleges and universities of the United States and Canada, many of these student initiated organizations have been continually active on campuses for almost 200 years. The materialization of these societies was a product of student discontent with the strict control that faculty exerted over students’ lives and the curricular monotony of the academic regimen of early American colleges (Rudolph, 1990). Additionally, students had little in the way of social or emotional outlets as they were often far removed from their families and home communities (Rudolph, 1990). As a result, the Greek letter society grew to be a social outlet as well as an opportunity for students to maintain some control over their collegiate lives.

*History*

The first Greek-letter organization, Phi Beta Kappa, was founded in 1776 at The College of William and Mary. Similar to many of the literary societies that proliferated and flourished on American college campuses at that time, Phi Beta Kappa functioned as an extracurricular student organization allowing opportunities for students to engage in scholarly essays, debate, and
oration. However, this student society differed from its literary society brethren as it also served a paramount social function and placed a great deal of emphasis on the secrecy surrounding one’s membership to the organization (Johnson, 1972). Many characteristics of today’s Greek-letter organizations can be traced back to Phi Beta Kappa including: a secret handshake, rituals, oaths of fidelity, a motto, badges for external display, strong ties of friendship, and a desire to share the values of the organization through nationwide expansion (Anson & Marchesani, 1991).

There were also numerous similarities to Masonic organizations as several of the founding members of the fraternity were Masons (Current, 1990). By 1780 Phi Beta Kappa had expanded to nearly twenty college communities primarily in the southern states and some of the more established colonial colleges of the north including Harvard and Yale. The fraternity published its secret rites and became a strictly honorary society in 1831 as a result of a nationwide distrust of Freemasonry of which the Phi Beta Kappa fraternity had become associated (Current, 1990).

Phi Beta Kappa was only the beginning of what soon became a rapid spread in fraternity development at colleges in the 1820’s and 1830’s. Moving away from its literary origins and as a result of increasing faculty attempts at control, the social fraternity movement began with the establishment of three different Greek letter chapters at Union College in Schenectady, New York (Johnson, 1972). Known as the Union Triad, Kappa Alpha Society (1825), Sigma Phi (1827), and Delta Phi (1827) played a prominent role in setting the pattern for the creation of new fraternities particularly throughout New York and New England. In the South, Kappa Alpha Order was founded at the University of North Carolina in 1812 and soon had chapters at twenty-one colleges across the region. Still shrouded in secrecy and now primarily social in nature, new chapters of already established organizations opened and new fraternities formed at colleges throughout the country up until the Civil War.
The Civil War marked a period of suspended collegiate inactivity and fraternity growth at most colleges, particularly at war-torn Southern institutions as many chapters were disbanded. However, following the war a plethora of new fraternities were founded in addition to the expansion of established fraternities. It was also during this time period that the first women’s Greek fraternities also came into being. The origins of these organizations can be traced back to the coeducational institutions of the Midwest and South. As more women began to attend colleges, they attempted to join the traditionally male societies, however were often rebuked or given peripheral status (Anson & Marchesani, 1991). While there were some instances of women being initiated into men’s fraternities, it became evident that women needed their own organizations (Anson & Marchesani, 1991). As a result, women began to form their societies which would allow them to participate in comparable activities (Johnson, 1972). The first of these was the Adelphean Society, a literary organization, founded in 1851 at Wesleyan College (GA). Later changing its name to Alpha Delta Pi, this is considered to be the first sisterhood (Anson & Marchesani, 1991). Pi Beta Phi, founded in 1867 at Monmouth College (IL) was the first national college fraternity for women and patterned itself after the men’s fraternity movement in both organization and expansion (Johnson, 1972). Gamma Phi Beta was established at Syracuse University in 1874 and is credited as the first organization to use the term “sorority.” The organization had considered itself a “society” however a Latin professor on the faculty suggested the use of the term sorority. The name soon became synonymous with the distinction between male and female Greek societies (Anson & Marchesani, 1991).

The early twentieth century was a period of increased growth in the fraternity movement and for the first time African-American students became involved in the process. In total, five Black fraternities and four Black sororities were founded with six of them coming into existence
between 1906 and 1914. In 1906 a group of African-American students formed Alpha Phi Alpha, Inc. at Cornell University (Anson & Marchesani, 1991). Originally a literally society, the primary purpose of the organization was similar to those of the White fraternities in that it focused on academic study, provided positive role models, and a connected social support network (McKee, 1987). As there were few African-Americans participating in higher education at this point in history, the organization also served as a means of personal solidarity and sanctuary from discrimination (Kimbrough, 1997). Two years later, the first female African-American sorority, Alpha Kappa Alpha, Inc. was established at the historically black Howard University (Anson & Marchesani, 1991). Howard would serve as the birthplace of five of the nine continuously active Black Greek organizations still in existence today.

The early twentieth century saw increased growth in educational institutions and new fraternity chapters with lapses during both World Wars and the Great Depression. It was not until the conclusion of the Second World War that substantial interest in the Greek fraternity movement again exploded (Anson & Marchesani, 1991). The GI Bill allowed copious numbers of returning veterans the opportunity to attend colleges and universities. College enrollment went from 528,000 in 1930 to 1,388,000 by 1950 (Current, 1990). Many of the returning veterans chose to participate in fraternities thus creating the largest single period of growth in the history of Greek life. During the same period, universities were expanding their administrative services for these groups in the form of assistant deans of students and Greek chapter advisors (Anson & Marchesani, 1991).

It was also in the early twentieth century that many college officials and fraternity leaders saw a need for a broader governing body to examine Greek issues. Sororities were the first fraternal group to become organized with the founding of the National Panhellenic Conference in
1902. Currently, this umbrella organization consists of twenty-six sorority chapters located on approximately 620 campuses (National Panhellenic Conference, 2007). The initial suggestion of a national organization for fraternities was made in 1883, but it was not until 1909 that the National Interfraternity Council (now called the North-American Interfraternity Conference) was established. As the umbrella organization for 71 national men’s college fraternities, today the confederation consists of over 5300 chapters on more than 800 campuses in the United States and Canada (North-American Interfraternity Conference, 2007). The historically African-American fraternities and sororities organized the national Pan-Hellenic Council, Inc. (NPHC), in 1929 which today affiliates nine different Greek societies.

Greek Life and Community Service

Virtually all fraternity and sorority national organizations support community causes and associate themselves with various philanthropic foundations. Delta Gamma sorority’s original motto was “Do Good,” thus exhibiting the type of philanthropic direction that membership in the organization would exemplify (Anson & Marchesani, 1991). Most of the historically African-American fraternities and sororities endorse unequivocal dedication to community service endeavors in their founding principles (Anson & Marchesani, 1991). Today, examples of Greek contributions to social welfare causes include Sigma Chi fraternity’s support of the Children’s Miracle Network, Chi Phi’s fraternity’s work with Boys and Girls Club, and Sigma Kappa’s involvement with Alzheimer’s disease awareness and prevention. Many Greek leaders also agree that community involvement should be considered essential to the overall development of student members (Goodale, 1988).

Membership in fraternities and sororities has also been linked to service participation. Even after controlling for secondary school volunteerism, individual background traits, and other
collegiate experiences, Pierson (2002) found that being affiliated with a Greek society increased the likelihood of volunteer work participation in college. Similarly, Hayek et al. (2002) discovered that Greek members were more engaged in community service activities than those who were non-members. These trends also seem to last beyond a student’s time while in college. Thorson (1997) found that in the years after graduation, alumni members of Greek-letter social organizations took part more fully in volunteer organizations, charitable activities, and nonprofits than did non-member alumni.

Greek organizations generally perform service as a group, organizing and planning events supportive of their chosen philanthropy or in conjunction with community causes (National Panhellenic Conference, 2007; North-American Interfraternity Conference, 2007). Blyth, Saito, and Berkas (1997) found evidence that students who take an active role with their peers in the creation, planning, and execution of service projects were more likely to develop a sense of responsibility for civic involvement as well as a sense of responsibility for helping others than those students who participated in but did not plan and design their own service endeavors. Additionally, the active planning students were more likely to express the intent to be civically involved and serve others in the future.

Greek Life and Moral Development

Historically, university Greek organizations have proclaimed a duty to shape men and women into responsible adults, model citizens, and ethical leaders (Earley, 1998). However, most studies examining Greek students’ moral reasoning ability have demonstrated that affiliating with such organizations does not enhance the moral development of students and in some instances may actually impede it (Mathiasen, 2003; Tripp, 1997; Kilgannon & Erwin 1992; Sanders, 1990; Marlowe & Auvenshine, 1982). Many students choose to affiliate with Greek
letter organizations while they are in college. Thus, a student’s decision to join a fraternity or sorority can potentially have a significant impact on his or her moral development.

There have not been many recent studies exploring the impact of Greek affiliation on student moral development. However, there have been several studies performed in the past (e.g., Kilgannon & Erwin 1992; Sanders, 1990; Marlowe & Auvenshine, 1982) comparing non-Greek affiliated students with those that have joined a fraternity or sorority on their moral reasoning development. Kilgannon and Erwin (1992) performed a two-year longitudinal study at a mid-sized comprehensive institution in the mid-Atlantic that examined the impact of Greek affiliation on moral reasoning ability and student identity development. A sample of entering first-year students were administered the Erwin Identity Scale (Erwin & Delworth, 1980) and the DIT (Rest, 1979) during their summer orientation session at the start of their freshmen year. They were then reassessed at the end of their sophomore year. The sample for the Erwin Identity Scale (EIS) consisted of 377 students (209 females, 168 males) and the sample for the DIT was composed of 371 students (209 females, 162 males). Greek affiliation was gathered from university records. Approximately 14 percent of the student body was affiliated with the Greek system.

The authors utilized two sets of analyses to determine if entering freshmen who selected to participate in Greek organizations are different from other entering freshmen in terms of moral development. Using the EIS subscales of Confidence, Genderual Identity, and Conceptions About Body and Appearance as dependent variables, analyses revealed that there was no indication of a significant difference between Greek and non-Greek entering freshmen students. Similarly, using the DIT subscales of Principled Moral Reasoning and Anti-establishment as dependent variables, analyses revealed that there was no difference between the Greek and non-
Greek student groups. All student participants appeared to have started college with similar developmental levels for identity and moral reasoning.

Longitudinal data as well as the main and interaction effects of Greek status and gender for both the EIS and DIT subscales were analyzed. Results from the DIT revealed that two years after their initial test non-Greek women had a significantly higher Principled Moral Reasoning mean score than Greek women, non-Greek men, and Greek men. Kilgannon and Erwin (1992) suggested that the pressure a young Greek participant felt from his or her peers in the Greek organization might result in the new participant's feeling that they must adopt the cultural norms of the organization without being able to challenge them in any capacity.

To study the difference in moral reasoning ability between Greek affiliated and non-affiliated male first-year college students, Sanders (1990) surveyed 103 students from nine randomly selected fraternity houses and 92 students from 13 randomly selected all-male residence hall floors at a large Midwestern university. Each of the students was administered the DIT (Rest, 1979) and a demographic questionnaire in September at the start of their freshmen year. The demographic questionnaire measured the following information: high school grade point average, father's Greek affiliation, mother's Greek affiliation, number of hours working during school, source of financing education, annual family income, and number of high school extracurricular activities. In December, approximately nine weeks later, 44 of the Greek students and 57 of the residence hall students returned and completed the DIT again.

An analysis of the demographic data revealed that the only difference between Greek affiliated and non-affiliated freshmen was that Greeks were significantly more involved in high school extracurricular activities. Based on the analysis of data collected from the DIT, results indicated that freshmen who did not affiliate with a Greek organization had a significantly higher
moral reasoning preference than those who decided to affiliate with a Greek organization on both the pre and post-tests. Although one group did not change significantly more than the other during the pre-test post-test interval, the non-affiliated students demonstrated a higher degree of moral reasoning at both points in time. Sanders concluded that the results may reflect a social orientation continuum in the judgment of moral dilemmas by students ranging from compliance to independence. A more compliant, socially-oriented person may be more likely to affiliate with a Greek organization than an independent person.

Another study on the effects of Greek affiliation on the moral reasoning of college freshmen was performed by Marlowe and Auvenshine (1982). The entering first-year class (190 students) of a small liberal arts college was pre-tested with the DIT (Rest, 1979) at the start of the students’ fall orientation. In May, at the conclusion of the academic year, the DIT was again administered to these students. Over the nine month span, sample attrition reduced the number of participants to 98. Of the 98 students, 48 were Greeks and 50 non-Greek with no significant differences in the proportion of students choosing Greek affiliation. Additionally, the final sample resembled the original sample on variables of personal and family characteristics, high school achievement and affiliation, and reasons for attending college. The results indicated that during the first year of college there was no appreciable difference between Greek affiliated and non-affiliated students on the measure of principled moral reasoning.

Each of the previously discussed analyses assessing the differences between Greek and non-Greek affiliated students conclude that membership in a fraternity of sorority does not significantly advance moral reasoning development and can even be detrimental. However, drawing a firm conclusion is difficult. Each of the studies consisted of relatively small sample sizes at single institutions. The DIT was also designed to be a relatively stable measure. Neo-
Kohlbergian theory posits that the cognitive processes associated with moral development do not necessarily take place over a matter of weeks or even months. Differences in scores may be attributable to the short length of time between testing. There were also few variables assessing specific aspects of one’s involvement in a Greek organization. The type of participation and the activities associated with membership in a fraternity might have influenced development.

**Level of Greek Involvement and Moral Development**

Astin (1984) describes student involvement as the amount of psychological or physical energy that a student invests in his or her academic experience. He posits that the amount of time spent as well as the quality of involvement in various college experiences is proportional to the amount of student learning and personal development associated with them (Astin, 1984). In the area of student moral development, Astin’s views have been supported. Several studies have concluded that students’ sustained high level of involvement in social-extracurricular activities outside of the classroom can have a significant positive relationship with their moral reasoning abilities (Lind, 1997; Finger, Borduin, & Baumstark, 1992; Rest & Narvaez, 1991). Yet, as mentioned earlier, studies examining students’ involvement in Greek societies have shown that participation in these organizations have either a negative or negligent influence on growth in principled moral reasoning (Mathiasen, 2003; Tripp, 1997; Kilgannon & Erwin 1992; Sanders, 1990; Marlowe & Auvenire, 1982).

The level of Greek affiliated involvement as a correlate of moral development has been relatively unexplored. The amount of time spent involved in and type of participation with the activities associated with fraternity or sorority membership could potentially affect this construct. The only study measuring level of involvement and moral development in Greek affiliated students was performed by Cohen (1982). She assessed the moral developmental level of
fraternity and sorority members at a large public institution in the Mid-Atlantic region. Participants were selected based on three levels of membership in Greek life at the university: the 23 members of the Panhellenic and Interfraternity Executive Councils’ Executive Committees, all 111 presidents of fraternity and sorority chapters and pledge classes, and 141 randomly selected individual members from 15 of the 40 Greek organizations maintaining chapter houses. Of the 275 students originally asked to be in the study, 180 agreed to participate. The students were each administered the DIT (Rest, 1979) and a demographic questionnaire for purposes of identification of participants’ level of membership, gender, and year in school.

The results of the study indicated that with respect to distinction in levels of membership, gender, and year in school there were no significant differences in principled reasoning score as measured by the DIT. Cohen (1982) explained the lack of difference in scores amongst leaders and members of Greek organizations as a result of Greek members’ peer influence. This could have lead to students’ similar thought processing in responses to the moral dilemmas presented in the DIT. Additionally, she suggests that Greek members may choose to elect leaders whose moral reasoning is similar to their own and that the leadership positions do not present the types of experiences or cognitive dissonance necessary for furthering moral development.

In discussing the results of their studies on Greek moral development (Kilgannon & Erwin 1992; Sanders, 1990; Marlowe & Auvenshine, 1982; Cohen, 1982) the authors each allude to the potential influence of the peer members of Greek organizations. Thus, the amount of time spent with other Greek members and the commitment a student makes to the activities of a Greek society may impact their moral development. Two studies have highlighted the potential impact of students’ involvement in extracurricular social experiences on moral reasoning development (Thoma & Ladewig, 1993; Finger, Borduin, & Baumstark 1992).
In an exploration of what some of the correlates of moral judgment development in undergraduates might be, Finger, Borduin, and Baumstark (1992) administered the DIT (Rest, 1979) as one of many instruments to a random sample of 159 undergraduate students (67 men, 92 women) ranging from freshmen to seniors. The authors attempted to determine if students' level of principled moral reasoning was significantly linked to a wide range of factors including year in college, age, socioeconomic status (SES), relationship with parents, and frequency of informal social-extracurricular activities. The results concluded that there were two significant predictors of moral judgment development. The number of years in college was the strongest predictor (accounting for 13% of the variance) and the frequency of informal social activities accounted for 5% of the variance. The authors suggest that social activities with friends or other acquaintances may encourage and stimulate role-taking and group problem solving opportunities which may form the basis for more mature moral judgment.

Using a sample of 156 college students, Thoma & Ladewig (1993) found that DIT scores and the number of close college friendships increased for each class level from a student's freshmen to senior years. Furthermore, students' principled moral reasoning levels were inversely related to the density of their friendship networks in college. They described friendship density as the presence or absence of relationships between friends. A highly dense network would be made up of a group of friends where each person knows each of the others. A low density network would consist of multiple independent friendship groups. A low density network would be exemplified by college students' having different friends from their residence hall, their major, or from an extracurricular student organization that do not typically interact with one another.
Greek organizations exemplify the more dense type of friendship networks. Students who make Greek life an all encompassing extracurricular milieu may develop moral judgment capabilities differently than those that are not so heavily invested in a single organization because they maintain a denser network of friends (Derryberry & Thoma, 2000). The social and friendship network that students affiliated with Greek societies enter into may inhibit moral growth by not challenging members to question their views on moral issues (Derryberry & Thoma, 2000). Greek members may lack exposure to the different ideas and activities associated with a more diverse friendship network.

**Summary**

This literature review examined Kohlberg’s theory of cognitive moral development and the subsequent neo-Kohlbergian framework that has since evolved from it. This theoretical framework helps explain how individuals develop the ability to think and reason morally. Numerous studies have linked significant moral reasoning developmental gains to educational attainment, particularly if one attends college. Also explored in this literature review was the topic of community service. Specifically, definitions of community service were examined as well as how participation in service activities may impact a college student’s moral development. Finally, this review analyzed college student involvement in Greek letter societies. The history and structure of Greek student organizations was looked at in addition to studies measuring how a student’s level of involvement in these organizations may influence his or her moral reasoning development. The following chapter identifies specific research questions and methods for assessing the relationship between intensity of involvement in Greek organizations and community service participation on student moral reasoning ability.
Chapter III
Design and Methodology

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between the intensity of involvement of undergraduate college students in social Greek organizations with the duration of time spent engaged in community service activities on their moral reasoning abilities. This project examined these relationships by implementing a correlation research design involving the use of a survey instrument consisting of three different measures as well as various demographic variables to investigate the relationships among these constructs. The sections of this chapter discuss the research design, study variables, questions, context, participants, instrumentation used, the procedural data collection methods and analysis, and ethical considerations.

Research Design and Methodology

Given that it is exploratory in nature, this study utilized a correlational research design. Such a design is useful because it allows for the exploration of the relationships among a large number of variables (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2003). For this study, a correlational methodology was employed in order to identify the relationship between DIT-SF scores, intensity of extracurricular involvement, and community service hours performed. To determine the interrelationship among these variables and participant demographics, a multiple regression analysis was used to identify to what extent involvement intensity and community service duration are related to moral reasoning scores. Furthermore, the correlational design was appropriate to implement as it shows the direction and strength of the relationship among the variables being studied. This will allow for the prediction of the probability of future events (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2003; Graziano & Raulin, 1993).
Dependent and Independent Variables

The dependent variable that was used in this study is level of moral reasoning development. This variable was measured using the Defining Issue Test. The two primary independent variables that were used in this project are (a) Involvement Intensity in the individual’s fraternity or sorority (measured by the Extracurricular Involvement Inventory) and (b) Number of Community Service Participation Hours (measured by a service question). Additional independent variables included (a) age, (b) gender, (c) race, and (d) parents’ highest level of education, which was used as a proxy for socioeconomic status (College Board, 2005).

Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed in order to determine how moral reasoning ability is interrelated with level of involvement in a Greek organization and number of hours involved in community service:

1. Is there a relationship between intensity of involvement of sophomore college students in a Greek organization and their moral reasoning abilities?
2. Is there a relationship between the amount of time Greek sophomore students spend participating in community service and their moral reasoning abilities?
3. To what extent do intensity of involvement of college sophomore students in a Greek organization, amount of time spent performing community service, gender, race, and parents’ highest level of education predict moral reasoning abilities?

Research Context

This study examined the intensity of extracurricular involvement in social Greek organizations, average number of hours of community service participation, and moral reasoning development of all university recognized Greek affiliated sophomore undergraduate students at a
large public university located in the Southeastern region of the United States. According to the most recent Carnegie Classification, the school is classified as a “Doctoral/Research University – Very High Research Activity” (The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2008). For academic year 2008-09, fulltime undergraduate enrollment was approximately 18,000 with about 8,000 of those living on campus. Approximately 16% of undergraduates are members of social fraternities and sororities (University Fact Book, 2009). Nationally, about 10% of total full-time enrolled undergraduates are affiliated with a Greek letter social organization (DeSantis, 2007).

Participants

The participants for this study were selected from the general undergraduate student body at a large public state-supported highly selective university in the Southeastern United States. Inclusion criteria for participation required that all subjects be at least 18 years of age, have a social class standing of sophomore, and be an enrolled member of the university being studied during the Spring 2009 academic semester. The rationale for choosing a single class of students (sophomores) for investigation was to mitigate the potential confounding variables of age and maturation as they relate to moral reasoning development. As evidenced by McNeel (1994), students will often score higher on moral reasoning ability as their level of exposure to post-secondary education increases and as they get older. Analyzing a single class allowed the researcher to help control for these experiential factors.

Sophomore students were chosen as the sample population for several reasons. First, sophomores are most likely to represent the highest percentage of actively affiliated Greek students on campus. Most students will pledge or join their Greek organization during their freshman year. Students may also pledge or join their sophomore year, but usually at a lower
rate. Juniors and seniors typically will not newly affiliate with a Greek organization. Second, students sometimes do not remain actively affiliated with their Greek organization for every year after they join. For example, a student who joins as a freshman may not be a due paying actively affiliated member by the time they are a junior or senior. Attempting to assess the junior or senior class members of Greek organizations could result in fewer participants based on members becoming inactive and unaffiliated with the fraternal group. As a result, based on class standing the most likely time to obtain the greatest sample size for this project was to examine sophomore students during the spring semester.

All sophomore student members officially affiliated with a university recognized social Greek letter society were surveyed (N = 491). To obtain a sample of all sophomore Greek students, the researcher contacted the University’s Dean of Students Office and obtained the email addresses for all students who were sophomore members of university recognized Greek organizations. As an incentive, each student participating in the study was given the option to submit his or her email address which entered them into a random drawing for three different types of cash/debit card awards valued at $25, $50, and $100 apiece.

Instrumentation

The researcher designed a web-based questionnaire which incorporated two already established instruments and a general community service participation question. The three instruments used for this project were: (a) the Defining Issues Test - Short Form (Rest, 1993), (b) the Extracurricular Involvement Inventory (Winston & Massaro, 1987) and (c) a general question asking about the number of community service hours performed in the previous semester. The researcher also gathered demographic information (i.e., age, gender, race, and parents’ highest level of education) via the web questionnaire.
Defining Issues Test - Short Form

Derived from Kohlberg’s (1986) theory of moral development, the Defining Issues Test – Short Form (DIT-SF) was developed by James Rest as an instrument to determine what criteria people use as reasoning when resolving a moral situation (see Appendix A). The DIT-SF consists of 3 hypothetical scenarios presenting some form of an ethical dilemma that subjects read about (i.e., Heinz, Newspaper, and Prisoner dilemmas). In three different ways, participants are then asked to determine what they would do based on each of the dilemmas. First, participants will be asked to make a global recommendation about the situation based on three different choices. After making a recommendation, participants are asked to answer 12 Likert-scale type questions that assess the degree to which each is most important for making a decision. Finally, the subjects are required to rate the 12 questions in rank order from least to most important.

The response preferences indicated by participants are scored on three different scales based on the ranking that participants assign. These three scales are based on the distinctive moral reasoning characteristics of the Preconventional (Personal Interests Schema), the Conventional level (Maintaining Norms Schema), and the Postconventional level (Rest, 1994). The Postconventional rankings translate into a person’s P-Score, which is an indication of the number of times a person chose this schema of thinking when making moral decisions. The score can range from 0-95, with the higher the score indicating higher levels and instances of moral judgment (Rest, 1994).

The DIT-SF is a shorter version of the Defining Issue Test - Long Form (DIT-LF). The only difference in the two tests is that the short form is made of up of three dilemmas whereas the DIT-LF consists of six. This study will utilize the shorter version because it takes
participants about 20-30 minutes to complete as compared to the long form at 35-45 minutes. While reliability measures are slightly reduced with the short form (5-10 points on the tests of correlation including test-retest and Alpha’s for internal reliability), it correlates about 0.90 with the long form. The DIT-SF also will help keep the number of total items filled out by participants at a minimum as to ensure greater total response rates to all survey instruments in this study.

Since its inception, the DIT has been used in more than 1,000 published and unpublished studies on moral judgment and moral development (Rest, 1994). Based on over 400 published articles examining the DIT, Rest & Narvaez (1998) and Rest (1993) have concluded that reliability and validity constructs for the test can been assessed using ten different criteria:

1. **Test-retest Reliability** – Test-retest reliabilities for P scores are usually in the high .70s or .80s. These scores remain consistent even when including subjects from a variety of backgrounds, educational levels, and age. For example, one study utilized a sample of 123 subjects aged 16 to 56 with educational backgrounds ranging from junior high school to graduate school. They were tested twice over a two to three month time period producing a test-retest reliability of .77.

2. **Internal Consistency** - Cronbach’s Alpha index of internal consistency for the DIT has been found to be in the high .70s on average. For instance, a sample of 1,080 participants from one study yielded a Cronbach’s Alpha of .77 for the DIT-Long Form (utilizing 6 stories). The same study resulted in a Cronbach’s Alpha of .76 for the short form (utilizing 3 stories).

3. **Face Validity** – The DIT charges participants with the task of making judgments pertaining to moral problems. Furthermore, the DIT “does not only ask what line of
action the subject favors (i.e., to steal or not steal a drug), but is [also] concerned with a subject’s [moral] reasons behind the choice” (Rest, 1993, p. 25).

4. Differentiation of various age/education groups – A great deal of research has demonstrated that 30% to 50% of the variance of DIT scores is attributable to a person’s level of education.

5. Longitudinal Gains – As a developmental measure, the DIT should be expected to demonstrate general increases in score over time for the same individual. A 10-year longitudinal study of men and women, of college attendees and people who did not attend college, and those who came from various occupational backgrounds showed scores that increased over time ($F = 20.1, p < .001$). College attendance has also been shown to have one of the chronologically largest effect sizes. A review of dozens of studies examining college students from their freshmen to senior year ($N > 500$) showed large effect sizes of ($d = .80$).

6. Correlations with Moral Comprehension – The DIT has been found to be consistently related to cognitive capacity measures of moral comprehension ($r = .60$s), Kohlberg’s interview measure, recall and reconstruction of Postconventional moral arguments, and (to a lesser degree) other cognitive developmental measures.

7. Sensitivity to Moral Education Interventions – Numerous studies have concluded that DIT scores are sensitive to education on morality. A review of over 50 intervention studies reported a moderate effect size ($d = .41$) for dilemma discussion interventions. However, the effect size for the comparison groups was much smaller ($d = .09$).

8. Links to Prosocial Behaviors and Desired Professional Decision-Making – Moral action is a fundamental principle associated with measures of moral judgment.
Studies have reported on average a modest but statistically significant relationship between moral judgment and action (Thoma et al., 1999). For instance, one review of the literature discovered that prosocial behaviors and desired professional decision making were significantly related to DIT scores in 37 of the 47 studies that were examined.

9. Correlations with Political Attitudes and Choices – A variety of political and social policy issue stances and choices have been linked to the DIT. In an examination of several dozen correlates of political attitude, DIT scores were found to correlate in a range from $r = .40$ to $r = .65$. Additionally, when coupled with measures of cultural ideology, the combination predicts up to two-thirds of the variance of controversial public policy issues (such as abortion, religion in the public school, women’s roles, rights of the accused, rights of homogenderuals, and free speech issues).

10. DIT-Short Form Significantly Correlates With DIT-Long Form – Studies have consistently shown that P scores of the DIT-Long Form are strongly correlated with P scores of the short form. For example, one study utilizing a sample size of 1,060 participants found that the long form significantly correlated ($r = .91$) with the short form.

**Extracurricular Involvement Inventory**

The Extracurricular Involvement Inventory (EII) was developed by Winston & Massaro (1987) to assess a student’s quality and quantity of level of involvement in organized student activities and student organizations (see Appendix B). Subjects are required to fill out an Involvement Index for each organized extracurricular activity they have been involved with during the past 4 weeks. Examples might include residence hall council, intramural sports team,
a Greek organization, a student newspaper, etc. Typically, a student would be asked to fill out an Involvement Index for each activity they are involved. For the purpose of this study however, subjects will be required to fill out only one involvement index which will be for participation in a Greek fraternity or sorority. To ensure that participants fully understand the EEI questions they are answering pertain specifically and only to their involvement in their Greek organization, the words “group”, “organization” and “group/organization” were replaced with “your Greek organization” (see Appendix C).

The involvement level assessed by the EEI consists of the following measures: approximate number of total hours spent in involvement with the group and its activities over the previous four weeks, office (if any) held within the organization, and responses to 5 Likert-scale questions. The 5 questions are designed to measure the dimension of quality with additional responses available that allow for failure of the group to meet or to sponsor activities or programs (Winston & Massaro, 1987). The quality of involvement as measured by the 5 questions includes “aspects of physical presence, public affirmation of affiliation, degree of psychological investment in success of the organization, and contribution to goal accomplishment” (p. 171). For example, one of the 5 questions measuring the quality of involvement asks, “During the past four weeks, when I attended meetings, I expressed my opinion and/or took part in the discussions?” Subjects would then indicate a response based on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from “very often” too “the organization held no meetings in the last 4 weeks.” In order to score the instrument, a numerical value is issued for the following: (a) total quantity of time involved, (b) quality of the assessed involvement, and, (c) intensity level of involvement, which is a product (a x b) of the two measurements (Winston & Massaro, 1987).
Reliability and validity measures for this test were performed by the researchers. Two studies were performed by the test developer to determine the reliability of the instrument. In the larger ($N = 95$) and most recent of the two studies, reliability estimates measured by Winston & Massaro (1987) found that short term, test-retest reliability of the EII yielded a level of ($r = .97$) resulting in the conclusion that the test was reliable over a short period of time. Validity measures were sought by correlating the instrument with the Clubs and Organizations Scale (C&O) of the College Student Experiences instrument designed by Pace (1979). Estimates were also determined by contrasting groups. In the first analysis, the C&O and EII were significantly correlated ($p. < .001$). For the second analysis, students initially sampled were divided into three groups based on their EII score. Group 1 consisted of students with an EII score of 0, group 2 was made up of students with EII scores ranging from 1-40, and group 3 contained students who had scored over 40 on the EII. The means and standard deviations were calculated and a one-way analysis of variance was done using the C&O as the dependent variable. Scheffe’s post-hoc comparisons determined that there were statistically significant differences between the group of students who had scored 0 on the EII with both the group of students who scored 1-40 on the EII and the group of students who had scored over 40 on the EII. However, there were no significant differences between the group who had scored 1-40 on the EII and the group who had scored over 40 on the EII. As a result of this finding, Winston & Massaro (1987) concluded that the EII may be more sensitive than the C&O scale at measuring levels of involvement at the higher end of the involvement continuum.

*Community Service Measure*

For the purpose of this study, community service was defined as “a particular form of voluntary action in which individuals and groups donate time and effort to benefit others”
Students were informed of this operational definition prior to their answering the community service question. A continuous variable, students were asked: “During the Spring 2009 semester, estimate the total number of hours you will spend performing community service?” Student participants then indicated the estimated number of hours they spent engaged in service during the previous semester (see Appendix C).

Demographic Variables

Several demographic characteristics of each of the participants will also be obtained in order to have an accurate description of the sample (see Appendix D). These will include age, gender (male or female), and race (Caucasian, Hispanic, African-American, Asian/Pacific Islander, Native American, multiracial). Participants will also be asked to identify which of the 4 Greek Councils their Greek organization is a member of: (a) Greek Alliance Council, (b) Interfraternity Council, (c) National Pan-Hellenic Council, or (d) Panhellenic Council. A final demographic variable that will be gathered is parents’ highest level of education. This will be used as a proxy for assessing socioeconomic status (College Board, 2005).

Instrument Field Test

Before using each of the previously described instruments together in this study, a field test was performed in order to establish that the directions for taking the survey instrument are clearly articulated, the language changes made to the EEI make it understandable that extracurricular involvement refers specifically to one’s Greek organization, the community service inquiry is unambiguous, and that the approximate time required to fill out the survey instrument as indicated by the researcher is accurate. During the spring 2009 semester, the survey instrument was administered at a monthly meeting of all of the fraternity and sorority organization presidents of a mid-sized southeastern comprehensive university. At the beginning
of their meeting, the researcher briefly explained the nature of the project being undertaken and then distributed the survey instrument to all those who were willing to participate in the field test. After the tests were distributed and participants were asked to start, the researcher timed how long it took each person to finish taking the test by recording a time for each test taker after the submit to the researcher their instrument. At the conclusion of the test, students were also asked to provide any feedback about the clarity of the test directions, EII questions, and the community service participation question.

Procedures

Data Collection

Upon final approval of all aspects of this dissertation proposal, the researcher sought approval from the College’s Protection of Human Subjects Committee via an on-line application. Once final authorization was received (see Appendix E), the email addresses for each university recognized Greek affiliated sophomore student was requested from the research study’s university Dean of Students Office. During the last two weeks of the Spring 2009 semester, an email inviting participants to take part in the study was then sent to those provided addresses (see Appendix F). Embedded within the email was a web-link allowing access to a website which contained the on-line instrument designed for this study. Once the web-link was accessed, participants were first provided with a research consent statement (see Appendix G). Following the consent statement, the directions on how to complete the survey questionnaire appeared. It was explained that the survey should be taken in one sitting and that the estimated amount of time to complete it should be approximately 20 minutes. Additionally, two reminder follow-up emails were sent to those participants who did not respond to the initial email before the stated deadline for participation in the study (see Appendix F).
The data was collected in the spring academic term to assure that there would be a greater number of possible participants based on the high number of students who pledge Greek organizations in their freshmen year and during the fall sophomore semester. If research data had been collected in the fall academic term, there would have been fewer student members represented as they must be a member of the organization as a pledge for approximately one academic semester to be considered as active members of the fraternity or sorority’s roster. Students who were currently participating in the new membership pledging process were not sampled. Permission was also sought for the researcher to attend a meeting of each of the Greek Council organizations to explain the project. The Councils consist of the four organizations representing each of the various Greek constituencies: Greek Alliance Council, Interfraternity Council, National Pan-hellenic Council, and the Panhellenic Council. The groups are made up of the presidents (or organizational designee) of every university recognized Greek organization at the university. Attending these meeting and explaining the study was done to garner a potentially greater response rate.

After explaining the project to members of the organization, they were told that within the next week each of the sophomore members of their organizations would receive a survey via email. This email provided a link to the survey that included each of the following: DIT-SF, Extracurricular Involvement Inventory, Community Service measure, and demographic characteristics. The email was sent to each sophomore Greek organization member listed on the active membership roster provided by the study university’s Dean of Students Office. The email briefly recapped what the research project was about and reminded participants about the random drawing for the $25, $50 and $100 gift certificates that were available to win for participants. The email also explained that each person’s identity would remain anonymous and that by
clicking on the provided link they would be taken to the survey which they should fill out in its entirety. If a participant did not proceed to take the survey, they were sent a follow-up email 5 days later with a link to the survey instrument reminding them of the research and again asking if they would participate. A third and final follow-up email was sent to any participant who did not fill out the survey instrument 5 days after the second follow-up attempt.

After receiving a relatively small usable response rate (N = 80) during the initial data collection period, a second solicitation of the sample population was performed two weeks later to try and encourage those who had not previously taken the survey instrument. An email with the survey link, a copy of prior messages that were sent, and a brief message explaining the nature of the study was sent to participants who had not responded during the first data collection attempt (see Appendix F).

Data Analysis

The researcher used SPSS, Version 14.0 software to analyze all collected data (George & Mallery, 2006). The data collected for the DIT-SF was scored by the researcher using the guidelines provided by the DIT-1 scoring manual (Rest, 1993). As required by the test maker, written permission to use the DIT-SF was obtained prior to its distribution (see Appendix E). Data collected from the EII was scored by the researcher using the guidelines established by the EII creators (Winston & Massaro, 1987). Written permission to use the EII was also obtained prior to its distribution (see Appendix E). Community service proclivity was scored by the researcher based on participant response. Demographic data was tallied from participant responses as well.

Before addressing each of the research questions, frequency distributions, means and standard deviations were calculated for the variables of (a) age, (b) gender, (c) race, (d) Greek
Council affiliation, and (e) highest level of education obtained by parents in order to thoroughly describe the characteristics of the sample. An exploratory analysis of demographic characteristics was also examined. One way Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA)s were calculated for (a) race, (b) highest level of education obtained by parents, and (c) gender to compare mean scores of each of the outcome variables (involvement intensity score, hours of service, and P Scores).

Listed below are the three primary research questions followed by an explanation of the specific data analyses that were performed.

**Question 1:** Is there a relationship between intensity of involvement of college sophomore students in a Greek organization and their moral reasoning abilities? A Pearson I correlation was calculated to determine the direction and degree of relationship between a student’s intensity of involvement in Greek organization and his or her moral development level.

**Question 2:** Is there a relationship between the amount of time Greek sophomore students spend participating in community service and their moral reasoning abilities? A Pearson I correlation was calculated to determine the direction and degree of relationship between the average number of hours a Greek student participates in community service activities and his or her moral development level.

**Question 3:** To what extent do intensity of involvement of sophomore college students in a Greek organization, amount of time spent performing community service, gender, race, and parents’ highest level of education predict moral reasoning abilities? Using the measure of moral development as the dependent variable, stepwise multiple regression analyses were carried out to ascertain the distinctive contributions and predictive nature of the
following independent variables: (a) intensity of involvement, (b) community service participation, (c) gender, (d) race, and (e) parents’ highest level of education.

Limitations

This research study had several limitations that make it difficult to generalize. First, the study relied on self-reported data from the participants. The data collected may be representative of the participants’ perceptions rather than their actual beliefs and behaviors. Second, students may have responded to the questions in a manner expected of them by either the researcher or their peers based on the focus of the study. Third, this study relied on a sample provided by a single university’s sophomore Greek student population. Sophomore Greek students on other university campuses may have responded differently to the survey instrument. Fourth, there is the potential that some Greek organizations chose to have their members not to participate in this study thus making the sample more self-selecting. Finally, this study represented only a snapshot of students’ moral reasoning development at one point in time. There is no way to know how students may have progressed developmentally prior to this point.

Delimitations

This study was based entirely on data collected from sophomore undergraduate Greek student members who attend a large highly selective and public research university located in the Southeastern region of the United States. As there was only data collected from students at one university, it is difficult to generalize this inquiry to all college students as these subjects may differ from those at other universities and in other Greek systems. Different types of students in dissimilar college environments who are affiliated with Greek organizations may have different levels of involvement, community service participation, and moral development compared to the university utilized in this analysis. Regardless of the difficulty inherent in generalizing the
study’s results, the exploratory nature of this research could provide the impetus for future work in the area of student involvement in Greek life as it relates to moral reasoning development.

*Ethical Safeguards and Considerations*

Fundamentally ethical research practices are enormously important and were adhered to throughout the duration of this research study. Several measures were taken to ensure that these principled standards were met. First, no participants were contacted nor were any data collected until approval was granted from the university’s Protection of Human Subjects Committee. Second, all members of the available participant population had the opportunity to partake in the study. Participant selection was equitable as all sophomore members of the university’s Greek community were solicited for participation. Third, each email sent to students contained detailed information upfront describing their rights with regard to participation in the study. Students were informed that all information would remain confidential, participation was completely voluntary, and that they could stop taking the survey at any time. In fact, all data was collected electronically in a manner so that it cannot be connected back to identification with the participant. Finally, all participants were given the opportunity to receive a copy of the results of the study upon its completion by contacting the researcher through email.

*Summary*

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between intensity of involvement in social Greek organizations and community service involvement on moral reasoning ability. Using a sample of all university recognized and traditionally aged (18-24) sophomore Greek affiliated students at a large highly selective university in the southeastern United States, the researcher collected and analyzed data to answer the primary research questions stated at the start of this chapter. In addition to a reexamination of the research
questions, this chapter also outlined the research design, context, instrumentation used, independent and dependent variables, data collection methods and analysis, as well as ethical safeguards adhered to throughout the study.
Chapter IV

Results

The purpose of this exploratory study was to investigate the relationship between the intensity of involvement of undergraduate college students in social Greek organizations (as measured by the Extracurricular Involvement Inventory [EEI]) with the duration of time spent engaged in community service activities (as measured by a general service participation question) on their moral reasoning abilities (as measured by the Defining Issues Test [DIT]). An exploratory analysis of how demographic characteristics (a) age, (b) gender, (c) race, and (d) highest level of education obtained by parents interrelate with moral reasoning development was also examined.

This chapter addresses the following three research questions: (a) Is there a relationship between intensity of involvement of sophomore college students in a Greek organization and their moral reasoning abilities (b) Is there a relationship between the amount of time Greek sophomore students spend participating in community service and their moral reasoning abilities and, (c) To what extent do intensity of involvement of college sophomore students in a Greek organization, amount of time spent performing community service, gender, race, and parents’ highest level of education predict moral reasoning abilities? The following sections of this chapter will provide a description of the respondents’ demographic characteristics, statistical analyses positing answers to the proposed research questions, and a summary. For the purposes of this study, statistical significance levels were set a priori to .05.

Descriptive Statistics for Participants

All sophomore Greek students who were listed as active members of their fraternity or sorority were petitioned for this research project. In total, 491 email invitations to complete an
on-line questionnaire were sent to sophomore Greek students at a large southeastern public research university during the last week of the spring 2009 academic semester. Out of the original 491 invitations that were sent out, a total of 203 (41%) participants logged on to the website to complete the questionnaire. Of those 203 who logged on to the website, 98 (48%) instrument protocols were dropped because the respondents failed to answer enough questions to provide significant analysis. For example, participants would log on to the website and only answer a few of the questions before then logging off.

Rest's (1986) DIT scoring guide provides a pre-existing and scoring reliability check that participants must pass in order for their scores on the test to be deemed adequate for use. As a result of these reliability checks, several more protocols were removed. First, 4 (4%) participants were removed as a result of failing the DIT Meaningless Score (M Score) check. Next, 7 (7%) protocols were removed for failing the DIT Consistency Check. Rest (1986) indicates that it is typical to lose between 5 and 15% of a volunteer sample due to the DIT reliability checks. In this case, 11% were removed because of potential reliability error.

Of the 203 respondents who logged on to the website to take the survey instrument, a total of 97 (48%) usable instrument protocols were obtained. Thus, of the 491 sophomore Greek students eligible to participate in this survey, 97 (20%) were included in the data analysis as they answered the survey adequately and passed each of the two DIT reliability checks. General demographic information, including frequencies and percentages for the usable sample, are provided in Table 1.
Table 1

*Frequencies and Percentages for Demographic Variables (N=97)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>55</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race/Ethnicity (a)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African-American/Black</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian/White</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest Parental Education Level</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not a High School Graduate</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Graduate</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College, No Degree</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree Completed</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Degree Completed</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) Given the small number of Non-White/Caucasian respondents, statistical analyses using “Race/ethnicity” as a demographic variable were not performed.

Almost all of the respondents indicated that they were either 19 years of age (42.3%, $n = 41$) or 20 years of age (56.7%, $n = 55$) with one person indicating an age of 21 (1.0%, $n = 1$).

Approximately three quarters (72.2%, $n = 70$) of the respondents were female, while about one quarter were male (27.8%, $n = 27$).

The majority of the respondents indicated a racial/ethnic identification of Caucasian/White (88.7%, $n = 86$). The remainder of participants in the study selected
Asian/Pacific Islander (3.1%, n = 3), African-American/Black (3.1%, n = 3), Hispanic/Latino (2.1%, n = 2), Other (2.1%, n = 2), and Native American (1.0%, n = 1). Further analysis with the race/ethnicity variable was not performed due to a lack of variability in the sample.

An extremely large percentage of students came from homes where at least one parent had graduated with a Bachelor’s degree or Graduate degree. Approximately one-half of respondents indicated that they had a parent who had completed a graduate degree (54.6%, n = 53). An additional one-third indicated a parent had completed a Bachelor’s degree (34.0%, n = 33). A small number of participants stated that they had a parent who completed some college, but did not graduate (10.3%, n = 10). Only one participant acknowledged that they had a parent who only completed a high school degree (1.0%, n = 1). No one from the sample population indicated that they had parent who had not finished high school.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for Continuous Variables, by Whole Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Skewness Statistic</th>
<th>Kurtosis Statistic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age (Years)</td>
<td></td>
<td>19.59</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>-1.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extracurricular Involvement Inventory (a)</td>
<td></td>
<td>46.54</td>
<td>42.03</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>7.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Service (Hours) (b)</td>
<td></td>
<td>30.72</td>
<td>24.21</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>1.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIT “P” Score (c)</td>
<td></td>
<td>37.97</td>
<td>15.57</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>-.60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(a) A slightly modified version of the Extracurricular Involvement Inventory was used to rate the intensity level of participants’ involvement in their fraternity or sorority (Winston & Massaro, 1987).

(b) Respondents provided the estimated number of hours they spent performing community service during the Spring 2009 semester.

(c) The three-story short form of the Defining Issues Test was utilized to measure the respondents’ level of post-conventional moral reasoning (Rest, 1986).

Table 2 contains the means, standard deviations, distribution skewness, and kurtosis statistics descriptive statistics for each of the continuous level variables for the entire sample population utilized in this study. Employing the demographic portion of the questionnaire, participants’ age is the first variable described. The average age of respondents in this study was 19.59 years old ($SD = .52$). The age distribution was negatively skewed (-.13) and platykurtic (-1.45).

There were two primary independent variables this dissertation study employed. The first was the Extracurricular Involvement Inventory (EII) which measured students’ level of involvement with their Greek organization. The average score on the EII was 46.54 ($SD = 42.03$). The EII score distribution was positively skewed (2.46) and leptokurtic (7.66). The second independent variable was the number of hours students spent performing community service during the Spring 2009 semester. The average number of hours students reported they were engaged in service was 30.72 ($SD = 24.21$). The score distribution was positively skewed (1.20) and leptokurtic (1.34).

The dependent variable in this study was calculated using the computed P Score from the short version of the Defining Issues Test (DIT), a developmental measure of moral reasoning ability (Rest, 1986). The average P Score for participants from this sample population was 37.97 ($SD = 15.57$). The P Score distribution was slightly positively skewed (.05) and platykurtic (-.60).
Exploratory Analysis of Demographic Characteristics

Two One-way Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVAs) were calculated for gender and highest level of education to compare mean scores of each of the outcome variables (extracurricular involvement score, hours of service, and P-scores). Stevens (2002) posits that the objective of multivariate analysis is to “determine whether several groups differ on the average on the set of dependent variables” (p. 22). A student’s EII score was used as the dependent variable measuring level of involvement in his or her Greek organization. A student’s community service hour total was used as a dependent variable measuring the total amount of service performed during the spring 2009 semester. The P-score was used as a dependent variable measuring a student’s level of moral reasoning development. A student’s gender and parents’ highest level of education were used as the independent or grouping variables in each of the two MANOVAs. Student’s gender was labeled as either male or female. Five different levels of parents’ highest level of education were evaluated for the factorial MANOVA design (Level 1 = Not a high school graduate; Level 2 = High school graduate; Level 3 = Some college, but no degree; Level 4 = Bachelor’s degree completed; Level 5 = Graduate degree completed. The first MANOVA was conducted to determine if there were significant differences in Greek organization intensity involvement, community service hours participated in, and P Scores by gender. The means and standards deviations of each dependent variable by gender are listed below in Table 3.
Table 3

*Means and Standards Deviations of Subscales by Gender*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ell</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>49.37</td>
<td>41.29</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>41.29</td>
<td>39.16</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS Hours</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>25.33</td>
<td>26.12</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>32.80</td>
<td>23.30</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P-Score</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>34.56</td>
<td>13.81</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>39.28</td>
<td>16.09</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Box’s test of the equality of covariance matrices was not significant ($F = .721, p = .633$), suggesting that the covariance matrices of the dependent variables were equal across the groups. Levene’s Test of Equality of Error Variances was run to check the assumption of equal error variance. Equal error variances could be assumed for all of the items of this construct as no significant values were found (see Table 4). Results of the MANOVA using Pillai’s Trace revealed no significant multivariate differences on the dependent variables by gender, $F(3, 93) = 2.099, p = .106$ (see Table 5). Pillai’s Trace was used in the analysis as it is recommended when examining unequal $n$’s (Tanachnick & Fidell, 2007).
Table 4

*Levene’s Test for the Equality of Error Variances*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>$F$</th>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Error $df$</th>
<th>Sig. $df$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EII</td>
<td>.058</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>.810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS Hours</td>
<td>.011</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>.917</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P-Score</td>
<td>2.526</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>.115</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5

*MANOVA on EII, CS Hours, and P-Score by Gender using Pillai’s Trace*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>$F$</th>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Error $df$</th>
<th>Sig. $df$</th>
<th>Partial Eta Squared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>2.099</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>.106</td>
<td>.063</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second MANOVA was conducted to determine if there were significant differences in Greek organization intensity of involvement, community service hours participated in, and p-scores by parents’ highest level of education. The means and standards deviations of each dependent variable by gender are listed in Table 6.
Table 6

Means and Standards Deviations of Subscales by Parents Highest Level of Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
<th>Parents’ Education</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EII</td>
<td>Grad Completed</td>
<td>35.77</td>
<td>32.76</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bachelors</td>
<td>45.88</td>
<td>37.06</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>79.00</td>
<td>81.83</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High School Grad</td>
<td>56.00</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS Hours</td>
<td>Grad Completed</td>
<td>25.33</td>
<td>26.12</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bachelors</td>
<td>28.17</td>
<td>27.79</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>55.22</td>
<td>34.26</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High School Grad</td>
<td>45.00</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P-Score</td>
<td>Grad Completed</td>
<td>38.80</td>
<td>16.09</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bachelors</td>
<td>38.52</td>
<td>15.03</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>32.96</td>
<td>14.76</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High School Grad</td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Box’s test of the equality of covariance matrices was significant ($F = 1.905, p = .030$), suggesting that the covariance matrices of the dependent variables were unequal across the groups. Levene’s Test of Equality of Error Variances was significant for Extracurricular Involvement Inventory scores (see Table 7), suggesting the groups had unequal error variances on this variable. The MANOVA, however is robust to violations of the homogeneity of error variances and covariance matrices assumptions (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Results of the
MANOVA using Pallai’s Trace revealed no significant multivariate differences on the dependent variables by parents’ highest level of education, \( F (9, 279) = 1.835, p = .062 \) (see Table 8).

Table 7

*Levene’s Test for the Equality of Error Variances*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>( F )</th>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Error</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>df</td>
<td>df</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EII</td>
<td>5.710</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS Hours</td>
<td>1.809</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>.151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P-Score</td>
<td>.921</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>.434</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8

*MANOVA on EII, CS Hours, and P-Score by Parents Level of Education using Pillai’s Trace*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>( F )</th>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Error</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Partial Eta Squared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>df</td>
<td>df</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents Education</td>
<td>1.835</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>.062</td>
<td>.056</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Research Question 1**

**Research Question 1:** Is there a relationship between intensity of involvement of sophomore college students in a Greek organization and their moral reasoning abilities?
A Pearson correlation was calculated and is displayed in Table 9. A two-tailed alpha level was set *a priori* to .05. There was not a significant correlation between scores on the Extracurricular Involvement Inventory and the Defining Issues Test, $r = -0.095, p = .354$; thus, no further analysis was warranted.

Table 9

Correlation Between Extracurricular Involvement Inventory and DIT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extracurricular Involvement Inventory</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>-.095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIT (P Score)</td>
<td>----</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Actual calculated probability value was, $p = .354$ (two-tailed) $p > .05$

Research Question 2

**Research Question 2:** *Is there a relationship between the amount of time Greek sophomore students spend participating in community service and their moral reasoning abilities?*

A Pearson correlation was calculated and is displayed in Table 10. A two-tailed alpha level was set *a priori* to .05. There was not a significant correlation between number of hours spent performing community service and the Defining Issues Test, $r = .037, p = .720$; thus, no further analysis was warranted.
Table 10
Correlation Between Community Service Hours and DIT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Service Hours</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>-.037</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIT (P Score)</td>
<td>----</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents (N = 97)

Note. Actual calculated probability value was, p = .720 (two-tailed) p > .05

Research Question 3: To what extent do intensity of involvement of college sophomore students in a Greek organization, amount of time spent performing community service, gender, race, and parents' highest level of education predict moral reasoning abilities?

According to Gall, Gall, and Borg (2003) multiple regression is an appropriate statistical analysis to utilize when trying to determine the correlation between a criterion variable and a combination of two or more predictors. Such an analysis was thus used in determining an answer to question 3. Furthermore, a stepwise multiple regression method was chosen to help account for the intricacy of correlations as well as the change in variance among certain variables as new variables enter the equation (George & Mallory, 2006; Gall, Gall, and Borg, 2003). As a result, the final model will include only those predictor variables that significantly influence the criterion variable.
Before beginning the multiple regression analysis, the predictor variables were assessed for collinearity. Collinearity is the extent to which two predictor variables correlate with one another (Gall, Gall, and Borg, 2003). If collinearity among multiple predictor variables is found to be high, only some of the predictor variables will enter the multiple regression analysis as predictors. As evidenced by the analyses located in Table 11, three of the six pairs of variables were significantly correlated: Parents’ Highest Level of Education and EII, $r = .265, p < .01$; Parents’ Highest Level of Education and CS Hours, $r = .234, p < .01$; and EII and CS hours, $r = .449, p < .001$. Using the recommended rules set forth by George and Mallory (2006) as indicators of excessive interdependency, none of the correlations were greater than, $r = .5$.

Table 11

*Correlation Matrix Between Gender, Parents’ Highest Level of Education, EII Score, and Community Service Hours*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Parent’s H. Ed.</th>
<th>EII Score</th>
<th>CS Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-.055</td>
<td>-.087</td>
<td>.139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents H. Ed.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>* .265</td>
<td>* .234</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EII Score</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>** .449</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS Hours</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. $N = 97$

** $p < .001$ (1-tailed)
* $p < .01$ (1-tailed)

An investigation of Variance Inflation Factors (VIF) and tolerance levels will also be performed during the regression analysis to test for dependency between predictor variables. VIFs greater
than 5 could signify dependency between the predictor variables (George & Mallory, 2006). Additionally, tolerance levels lower than .2 would denote dependency between the predictor variables (George & Mallory, 2006).

A stepwise multiple regression analysis was used to determine the most sufficient model for explaining how the predictor variables influenced the criterion variable. The criterion variable used was participants’ P-scores while predictor variables included: (a) Extracurricular Involvement Inventory total score (EI), (b) number of community service hours from the spring 09 academic semester, (c) gender, and (d) parents’ highest level of education. Race/ethnicity was removed from this analysis due to the low number of non-Caucasian respondents. Results from the stepwise regression analysis revealed that none of the independent variables significantly predicted a student’s P-score. Thus, no model of prediction was able to be computed by SPSS. As there were no statistically significant predictor variables, a check on dependency (VIFs and tolerance levels) of these variables was not performed. A correlational matrix, however, indicated that there were several statistically significant correlations among some of the predictor variables (see Table 11). There was a significant correlation between parents’ highest level of education and EI score, \( r = .265, p < .01 \), parents’ highest level of education and community service hour duration, \( r = .234, p < .01 \), and between EI score and community service duration, \( r = .449, p < .001 \).

Summary

This chapter discussed the results of statistical analyses performed to determine how moral reasoning development was interrelated with involvement intensity in a Greek organization and number of community service hours performed. The frequencies and percentages of demographic variables, including descriptive statistics for all continuous level
variables, were also incorporated. Exploratory analysis using two one-way MANOVAs assessed whether there were significant differences amongst participants' Ell, community service hours, and p-scores based on the independent variables of gender and parents' highest level of education. No significant differences were found amongst any of the mean scores for the variables.

Also provided in this chapter were the statistical analyses required to answer the three primary research questions. Question one inquired as to whether there was a significant relationship between students' level of involvement in their Greek organization and their moral reasoning development. Analysis from a two-tailed Pearson correlation indicated that these two variables were not significantly related ($r = -.095, p > .05$).

Question two inquired as to whether there was a significant relationship between the number of hours of community service a Greek student performed and his or her level of moral reasoning development. A two-tailed Pearson correlation revealed that there was not a significant relationship between the two variables ($r = -.037, p > .05$).

Utilizing a stepwise multiple regression analysis, the third research question sought to establish how much intensity of involvement in a Greek organization, amount of community service participation, gender, and parents' highest level of education predicted students' level of moral reasoning development. Results of this analysis indicated that no combination of the factors was a significant predictor of moral reasoning development. However, there were significant correlations between parents' highest level of education and Ell score, $r = .265, p < .01$, parents' highest level of education and community service hour duration, $r = .234, p < .01$, and between Ell score and community service duration, $r = .449, p < .001$. 
Chapter V

Conclusions and Interpretations

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between the intensity of involvement of undergraduate college students in social Greek organizations with the duration of time spent engaged in community service activities on their moral reasoning abilities. A synopsis and discussion of the study is described in the sections below. The overview section includes a reminder to the reader of the study’s design, purpose, and sample including a description of participants’ demographic characteristics. This section also includes a summary and interpretation of the major research findings. In the next section of this chapter, the study’s limitations are discussed. Implications for putting the research into practice as well as recommendations and suggestions for future studies make up the subsequent sections. Finally, overall conclusions for the dissertation research study are offered.

Overview

The past decade has been wrought with scandals of ethical indignities that have permeated numerous business, political, and religious organizations (Hakim & Rashbaum, 2008; Eichenwald, 2005; Goodstein, & Stanley, 2002). Seeking a means to prevent future indiscretions, colleges and universities have been called upon to further engage their students in discussions and experiences that explore issues of moral and ethical character development (Armstrong, et al., 2003; Colby et al., 2003; Mangan, 2003). One influential factor affecting a student’s moral development is the extracurricular activities in which he or she becomes involved (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; King & Mayhew, 2002). In fact, students’ sustained high level of participation in social-extracurricular activities has been shown to have a significant positive relationship with their moral reasoning abilities (Lind, 1997; Finger, Borduin, &
On many university campuses, participation in a Greek fraternity or sorority represents a popular example of such an extracurricular activity. About one in ten undergraduates will choose to affiliate with a Greek letter social organization while they are in college (DeSantis, 2007).

Historically, these student organized Greek societies have proclaimed to instill in their members heightened standards of morality and ethics (Earley, 1998). For instance, most Greek organizations actively sponsor philanthropic activities and encourage members to engage in copious volunteer service to the community (National Panhellenic Conference, 2007; North-American Interfraternity Conference, 2007). Service participation, in fact, has been linked to growth in moral reasoning (Mathiasen, 2005; Myer-Lipton, 1998; Boss, 1994). However, there appear to be disparities between Greek letter organizations’ stated values and their members’ current behaviors as numerous studies have demonstrated that involvement in these groups does not enhance one’s moral reasoning ability (Mathaisen, 2003; McCabe & Trevino, 1997; Tripp, 1997; Kilgannon & Erwin 1992; Sanders, 1990; Marlowe & Auvenshine, 1982). These research results demonstrate a definitive need for further consideration of what factors contribute to this negligent or decrease of moral development in members of fraternities and sororities, particularly in light of the fact that so many students choose to participate in these types of student organizations. By exploring variables related to students’ involvement with Greek organizations, this study sought to further the understanding of the moral reasoning development of college students.

A correlational research design was employed in this dissertation study. Such a design is useful because it allows for the exploration of the relationships among a large number of variables as well as indicating the direction and strength of the relationship among the variables.
being studied (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2003). Specifically, this study examined the possible interrelationships between two primary independent variables (extracurricular involvement intensity and community service participation) and the dependent variable (moral development). Gender and parents’ highest level of education were also analyzed as additional independent variables. Race/ethnicity was discarded as an independent variable due to a lack of variability among the sample participants.

As stated earlier, the purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between intensity of involvement in social Greek organizations and community service participation on moral reasoning ability. Moral development served as the dependent variable. This variable was measured using the calculated P-Score from the short version of the DIT (M = 37.97, SD = 15.57) (Rest, 1993). The P-Score represents a measure of the total percentage of post-conventional moral reasoning a person utilizes when he or she is confronted with a moral dilemma (Rest, 1999). The short version of the DIT presents three such dilemmas from which the P-Score is derived.

There were two major independent variables analyzed in this research study. The first independent variable was student participants’ reported level of involvement in their Greek organization. This variable was measured using the Extracurricular Involvement Inventory (EII) (M = 46.54, SD = 42.03) (Winston & Massaro, 1987). The second primary independent variable utilized in this study was total community service participation. This variable was measured using a single question asking the respondents to state the total number of hours of community service they participated in during the previous academic semester (M = 30.72 hours, SD = 24.21).
Data was gathered for several demographic variables in order to obtain a thorough description of the sample population. Following the removal of instrument protocols that were not fully completed or that did not meet instrument reliability standards, a total of 97 (20% of the total 491 eligible sophomore Greeks) usable surveys were collected from sophomore Greek students listed as active members of their fraternity or sorority chapter (M = 19.59, SD = .52). The entire sample population was drawn from a large public university located in the southeast region of the United States.

Summary of Major Findings

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between the intensity of involvement of undergraduate college students in social Greek organizations with the duration of time spent engaged in community service activities on their moral reasoning abilities utilizing a sample of sophomore Greek affiliated students. To address the purpose of this dissertation study, three primary research questions were formulated to assist in guiding the research process.

1. Is there a relationship between intensity of involvement of college sophomore students in a Greek organization and their moral reasoning abilities?

2. Is there a relationship between the amount of time Greek sophomore students spend participating in community service and their moral reasoning abilities?

3. To what extent do intensity of involvement of college sophomore students in a Greek organization, amount of time spent performing community service, gender, race, and parents’ highest level of education predict moral reasoning abilities?

An exploratory analysis of the data using demographic characteristics was also conducted and interpretations are provided. Described in the section below are the results and an exploratory analysis of each of the research questions.
Research Question 1

Is there a relationship between intensity of involvement of college sophomore students in a Greek organization and their moral reasoning abilities?

Data collected to answer this research question indicated that there was not a significant relationship \((r = -0.095, p = 0.354)\) between a student's involvement intensity in his or her Greek organization and moral reasoning abilities for this particular sample. In other words, Greek affiliated students who were highly involved in their organization did not differ significantly in their moral reasoning abilities than Greek affiliated students who were moderately or uninvolved with the group. Although there were no significant findings based on this research question, new information regarding these variables was nonetheless uncovered.

First, prior to the present dissertation study, no known empirical studies have attempted to investigate whether involvement intensity in a Greek organization and moral reasoning development were related in students who were members of fraternities and sororities. The findings from this study help begin to fill a void in the literature by providing evidence of the relationship between these two variables.

Previous research studies have suggested that members of fraternities and sororities typically show similar or stunted levels in moral reasoning development compared to their non-affiliated counterparts, yet there has been very little information indicating what aspects of the involvement experience might be related to this lack of development (Mathiasen, 2003; Tripp, 1997; Kilgannon & Erwin 1992; Sanders, 1990; Marlowe & Auvenshine, 1982). The results of this study indicate that one’s level of involvement in his or her Greek organization, that is the amount of time they spend participating in organizational activities, publicly affirming affiliation, and contributing to accomplishing its goals, is not related to moral reasoning
development. These results are similar to those found by Cohen (1982) who looked at moral reasoning development in Greek affiliated students who held positions of leadership in their organizations versus students who were simply members. Results from her study indicated that students who held positions of leadership in their fraternity or sorority did not score significantly different on levels of moral reasoning ability than other members of their Greek organization. The extra time and degree of psychological investment needed for students to run an organization would suggest a higher level of involvement than non-leaders. The current research study found similar results given that the students who scored highly on an involvement intensity index for their Greek organization did not score significantly different in their level of moral reasoning ability.

The results of this research study also are important because they present new evidence as to the relationship of moral reasoning development and friendship networks. As noted earlier in this study, Greek organizations typify a highly dense network of insular friendships. A highly dense network can be characterized as a group of friends where each person knows each of the other persons in his or her circle of friends. A low density network would consist of multiple independent friendship groups. Derryberry & Thoma (2000) have suggested that the highly dense social and friendship network exemplified by membership in a Greek society may inhibit moral growth by not challenging the members to question their views on moral issues that may arise. Previous research has, in fact, indicated that students' principled moral reasoning levels were inversely related to the density of their friendship networks in college (Thoma & Ladewig, 1993).

The current study, however, revealed that students who were highly involved in their Greek organization did not differ significantly in moral reasoning ability from students who were
not exceedingly involved in their fraternity or sorority. Based on the results of this study, the level of involvement for a student in the dense friendship network characterized by Greek organizations does not correlate with one’s moral reasoning ability. There are several reasons that could explain these findings. Students who affiliate with Greek organizations, even those with a high level of involvement, may also be more likely to be involved with other extracurricular activities and thus have a greater network of friendship groups. Indeed, previous research has demonstrated that when it comes to extra-curricular involvement, fraternity and sorority members report greater interaction with other students, more involvement in extra-curricular activities, and higher levels of involvement with student professional organizations (Pike, 2000, Pike & Askew, 1990). It may be that it is more important for students to simply have engagement in some range of extracurricular activities as opposed to the intensity of that involvement. The variety of experiences and situations that any type of involvement brings with it, regardless of the means through which it is achieved, may allow for questioning of one’s own views thus ultimately leading to the moral ambiguity necessary for moral reasoning development.

Finally, caution should also be exercised in generalizing the results of this research question for the entirety of the Greek student population because of the homogeneity in the sample population utilized for this study. The sample size in this study consisted of students who were primarily female, Caucasian, and came from relatively affluent socio-economic households. It may be possible that the results reported in this study would have been different with a larger and more diverse sample size of Greek affiliated students. Each of these factors or a combination there of may have been related to either the intensity level of Greek participation or students’ level of moral reasoning.
Research Question 2

Is there a relationship between the amount of time Greek sophomore students spend participating in community service and their moral reasoning abilities?

Data collected to answer this research question indicated that there was not a significant relationship ($r = -.037$, $p = .720$) between a Greek affiliated student's community service participation level and his or her moral reasoning abilities for this sample population. Greek affiliated students who participated in a great deal of community service hours did not differ significantly in their moral reasoning abilities than Greek affiliated students who performed little or no community service. Although there were no significant findings based on this research question, new information regarding these variables was nonetheless uncovered. First, prior to the present dissertation study, no known empirical studies have previously attempted to investigate whether duration of community service participation and moral reasoning development were related in students who were members of fraternities and sororities. The findings from this study help begin to fill a void in the literature by providing evidence of the relationship between these two variables.

For the general student population, the results of previous studies looking at the effect of community service participation on moral reasoning development have been somewhat mixed. As mentioned earlier in this dissertation, most research involving community service participation and its impact on moral development has focused specifically on service learning. As a reminder to the reader, service learning refers to community service activities performed in conjunction with a structured and intentional curriculum designed to promote student development through critical reflection on the service experience (Jacoby, 1996). Several studies have indicated that students engaged in service learning courses have shown increases in their
level of moral reasoning (Boss, 1994; Gorman, Duffy, & Heffernan, 1994). There have also been studies that reflect little to no difference in moral reasoning ability for students who participate in service learning (Bernacki & Jaeger, 2008; Cram, 1998; Fenzel & Leary, 1997).

The current study provides further evidence that community service participation may not be associated with higher levels of moral reasoning development, specifically the amount of service performed. For students who performed a high number of community service hours, there was no significant relationship with moral reasoning development. One important factor missing might be the opportunity for critical reflection on the experience. The service learning curriculum intentionally structures time for students to reflect on their experiences and discuss its impact on themselves and society, tenets necessary for moral reasoning development (Kohlberg, 1984). Could these types of conversations after performing service be necessary to facilitate moral reasoning development in Greek affiliated students? Such conversations and critical reflection may not be taking place among fraternity and sorority members who are performing service, regardless of the amount of time they spend engaged in it.

Another possibility that may have lead to findings of an insignificant relationship between community service participation and moral reasoning development is the type of community service that the Greek affiliated students were engaged in. Actively performing community service out in the field directly working in conjunction with those people who the service is helping may bring about an opportunity for moral growth more so than a philanthropic effort such as raising money for a worthwhile charity or cause. Neo-Kohlbergian theory posits that as individuals develop they move from more simplistic conceptions of morality grounded in unilateral social authority and individual reciprocity to an appreciation of more complex social systems in which one is capable of evaluating and affecting it in relation to fundamental
principles of justice (Colby, et al., 2003). Greater awareness of social issues and participation in
civically minded activities symbolizes the types of behaviors congruent with critical recognition
of a broader social system. Could an awareness of social issues be more likely to come from
Greek students’ going out in the community and engaging in service that allows them to see the
social plight of the very situation in which they are working to advance rather than simply raising
money through soliciting funds from their friends or other members of the campus or local
community?

Another potential reason why community service participation did not correlate with
moral reasoning development might have to do with the motivation for performing the service
itself. While students reported the quantity of service they performed in this study, there was no
indication as to whether it was required by their Greek organization, done out of some obligation
to their Greek organization, was a part of a service learning course they were taking, or done
because the student simply and altruistically wanted to perform the service regardless of
expectation. Regardless of the total amount, could the motivation for performing the service
have been an important confounding factor? Students who choose to join a fraternity or sorority
may do so for varying reasons. Some may join with an expectation and/or desire to perform
community service. Other students may join a Greek organization for reasons that have little to
do with community service involvement at all. Might these motivational factors impact a
student’s level of participation in community service and moral reasoning ability?

No studies have looked specifically at motivation to perform service in relation to moral
reasoning development, however Stukas et al. (1999) did find that when college students
perceive that they do not have control over their choose of participation, the agenda of that
student may be placed at odds with the agenda of the entity establishing the service requirement.
This dissonance was found to negatively affect the intention of the student to perform volunteer service in the future. In addition, Leming (1999) reported that when service learning programs force students into prescribed voluntary service activities, students feel alienated as they perceive the programs to be blatant attempts by their schools to make them into particular sorts of people. While this particular study employed a study population of high school students, there are relevant and observable parallels in motivational factors with regard to the effect of service requirements. This is important as often times the type and duration of service requirements are mandated by Greek organizations for their members.

Finally, caution should also be exercised in generalizing the results for this research question for all Greek students because of the homogeneity in the sample population. The sample size utilized in this study consisted of students who were primarily female, Caucasian, and came from relatively affluent socio-economic households. Might it be possible that the results would have been different with a larger and more diverse sample size of Greek affiliated students? Each of these factors or a combination thereof may have been related to either the duration of community service participation or students’ level of moral reasoning.

**Research Question 3**

To what extent do intensity of involvement of college sophomore students in a Greek organization, amount of time spent performing community service, gender, race, and parents’ highest level of education predict moral reasoning abilities?

The third exploratory research question of this study considered how much, if at all, intensity of involvement in a fraternity or sorority, amount of time spent performing community service, gender, race, and parents’ highest level of education predicted a student’s moral reasoning ability. As a reminder, race was eliminated as a variable in the regression because of a
lack of variability in participant responses. The results which are presented in Chapter 4
demonstrate that none of the independent variables (involvement, community service, gender,
and parents’ income) significantly predicted student’s moral reasoning ability. As there was no
correlation between intensity of involvement in a Greek organization and moral reasoning ability
nor community service participation and moral reasoning ability, these multiple regression
statistical results were not surprising. Furthermore, the statistical power needed for the
regression analysis was weakened as a result of the small sample size in this study. Even though
the independent variables accounted for a limited and non-significant portion of the variability in
moral reasoning development, there is nonetheless new knowledge that can be gained from the
results of this outcome.

In addition to the small sample size and subsequent lack of statistical power, there are
several reasons why involvement intensity might not have predicted moral reasoning
development in this research study. First, being heavily involved in a Greek organization may
limit a student’s ability to have other experiences, as well as be exposed to other points of view,
cultures, or ways of thinking. Consequently, extensive exposure to a single group or
organization might inhibit further encounters with other students, their ways of thinking, and
alternative situations. Conversely, membership and high involvement in a Greek organization
may provide a vehicle to promote social engagement and experiences with other people, many of
whom may be from similar backgrounds, but many of whom are not. Rest (1986) concluded that
becoming more aware of the world in general and one’s place in it does more to foster moral
development than specific experiences. The sample population for this study indicated that no
matter what the involvement level with their fraternity or sorority, students were developing
along the same moral continuum.
Another possible explanation for the lack of predictability of the involvement intensity variable in this study could be the type and degree to which Greek affiliated students are involved in other activities on campus. On most university campuses, compared to their unaffiliated peers, members of fraternities or sororities are often more involved in the extracurricular (Pike, 2000, Pike & Askew, 1990). In addition to involvement in their Greek organization, the other types, quantities, and level of involvement of additional extracurricular experiences may be providing different supplementary opportunities for moral reasoning development that went unmeasured in the current study.

Factors that promote moral development are yet another possibility as to why the study variables were not predictive. Rest et al. (2000) and Kohlberg’s (1976) moral development theories both posit that two major factors contribute to moral development: exposure to higher stage thinking and cognitive disequilibrium (Walker, 1988). Higher stage thinking consists of interactions with those who are more developed in their moral reasoning and judgment (Walker, 1988). The additional social interactions that membership in a fraternity or sorority brings may be the impetus for discourse around issues that lead to further moral development. In fact, the earlier that a student chooses to join a fraternity or sorority, the more exposure he or she may have to higher level thinking as he or she will have more interactions with the upperclassmen in his or her chosen Greek organization. These upperclassmen will most likely have higher levels of moral reasoning as education and maturation are two of the strongest predictors of development (Rest et al., 2000). For example, the current study assessed a sample of all sophomore Greek affiliated students at a single university. However there is no indication as to when these students may have joined their Greek organization. For students who joined during their freshman year, there may have been more potential for interaction with upperclassmen and
thus for greater growth in moral development based on more exposure to higher stage thinking. One’s involvement level may be an additional factor in such a situation as highly involved members who joined their freshmen year would have a potential for significantly more exposure to upperclassmen from the Greek organization and likewise their higher stage level of morality than a student with a lower level of involvement in the organization.

As described above, the other major impetus for moral development is cognitive disequilibrium. Disequilibrium occurs when individuals face situations that arouse internal contradictions in their moral reasoning structures or when they find that their reasoning is different from that of significant others (Kohlberg, 1976). For the participants in the current study, an individual’s involvement level in his or her Greek organization was not predictive of the types or quantities of transformative situations described by Kohlberg that can lead to moral development.

As for community service participation, this study found that the number of hours spent engaged in service activities does not predict moral reasoning development for this sample of Greek affiliated students. As mentioned above in the discussion of research question two, the type, quality, predisposition for reflection on the experience, and motivation for performing the service itself all could be factors that impacted whether students were challenged in their beliefs and cognitive processes. For instance, a type of community service that involved a fraternity or sorority member helping to feed the homeless at a local shelter may present a situation that induces the type of cognitive disequilibrium necessary for development more so than picking up litter on the side of the highway. The current study found that the duration of community service Greek affiliated students participate in did not predict moral reasoning development, however
there are other processes related to the amount of time spent performing service that may have helped explain these results.

Several significant correlations were also found between some of the independent variables including: parents' highest level of education and EII ($r = .265, p < .01$), parents' highest level of education and community service hours performed ($r = .234, p < .01$), and EII score and community service hours performed ($r = .449, p < .001$). Interestingly, students' level of involvement with their fraternity or sorority was positively related to their parents' highest level of education, which in this study was used as a proxy for socio-economic (SES) status. While previous research (i.e. Byer, 1997; Pike & Askew 1990) as indicated that student members of Greek organizations often come from households with parents who have higher levels of income and educational attainment than those students who are non-Greek, there has not been previous research exploring whether students' involvement level in their Greek organization was related to their socio-economic status.

The current study also found that Greek students' participation in community service hours was positively related to their socio-economic status. Previous research examining socioeconomic status and community service involvement has shown that college students coming from high SES backgrounds are more likely to participate in community service (Plany & Regnier, 2004). The results of this study reflect previous research with college students and SES while also offering evidence that Greek affiliated students that come from high SES backgrounds are more likely to participate in community service.

An individual's gender was found not to be a predictor of moral development in this sample population of Greek students, thus there were no differences between fraternities and sororities. In most studies utilizing the Defining Issues Test, men and women have demonstrated
no significant differences in level of moral reasoning (Pearson & Bruess, 2001; Rest & Narvaez, 1998). Therefore, the results of this study are consistent with previous studies utilizing the DIT. An indication of socioeconomic status, parents’ highest level of education also proved not to be a significant predictor of moral development in Greek affiliated students.

**Exploratory Data Analysis**

An exploratory data analysis was also performed using the demographic characteristics of participants’ gender and parents’ highest level of education to compare the mean scores on each of the following scales: EII, Community Service Hours, and P Scores. This section discusses a summary of the major findings for each of these demographic characteristics.

**Gender**

This portion of the data analysis attempted to explore if there were differences in mean scores between male and female respondents. A one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted utilizing the scores from the EII, community service participation hours, and P Scores. Results showed that Greek students did not differ significantly (p > .05) in their level of involvement intensity, community service participation, or P Score based on gender.

Whether a member of a fraternity or a sorority, the gender of the student made no difference in how intensely involved that student was in that organization for this particular sample. The fact that students indicated some level of involvement (M = 49.37 for males, M = 41.29 for females) in their Greek organizations bodes well as the various types and volume of peer contacts are likely to be some of the most powerful stimuli spurring development in college students’ lives (Astin, 1993). The all-encompassing pattern of positive effects of frequent
student peer-to-peer interaction has been shown to be an important part of student development and success (Astin, 1993).

Community service participation also was relatively equal for both men ($M = 25.33$ hours spring semester) and ($M = 32.8$ hours spring semester) for women, however it should be noted that for both of the genders the number of community service hours being performed reflects the emphasis that Greek organizations place on service and philanthropic efforts. Previous studies have shown that members of Greek organizations are more engaged in community service activities than those who are non-members (Hayek et al., 2002; Pierson, 2002). Regardless of any student development impact, such service efforts will undoubtedly have a positive effect on the communities for which the service is targeted in terms of fundraising and/or labor.

P-Scores for both men and women also did not differ significantly for this sample population of Greek students. This is not surprising as in most studies utilizing the Defining Issues Test, men and women have demonstrated no significant differences in level of moral reasoning (Pearson & Bruess, 2001; Rest & Narvaez, 1998). It should also be noted that with regard to the variable of gender, the analysis of differences in moral reasoning ability can be viewed from different theoretical perspectives and thus lead to differing conclusions. This study operationalized moral development from one theoretical perspective based on the work of Kohlberg (1984) and Rest et al. (2000) who posited that moral decision making was based on notions of justice. Other researchers have suggested that the idea of justice is only one way to view the multifaceted area of human morality. For example, Gilligan (1977) suggested that moral reasoning development was more complex and did not only engender the idea of justice and rights. For her, moral decisions are also made based on caring, relationships, and
responsibility in the face of ethical dilemmas. She put forward the idea that women, in particular, would typically score lower on tests of morality (i.e. DIT) based solely on the concept of justice as they do not take into account the notion of caring and relationships. Therefore for a study such as this, a different theoretical orientation could arguably lead to different results based on the gender of the student.

**Parental Education Level**

As previously discussed in Chapter 4, research participants who selected the categories of (a) High School Graduate, (b) Some College, (c) Bachelor’s Degree, and (d) Graduate Degree Completed were included in this segment of the data analysis. As a reminder to the reader, parents’ highest level of education was used as a measure of socioeconomic status (SES). A one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) revealed that there were no significant differences \( (p > .05) \) between any of the three variables (EII, community service participation, or P-Score) tested. While no significant differences among the variables were found, there are several aspects of the findings that should be noted.

No research has specifically examined SES and involvement levels in fraternities and sororities, however several studies have examined SES as it relates to Greek membership in general. Previous studies have indicated that members of Greek organizations tend to come from homes where parents are more educated and have higher annual incomes than students who do not join these organizations (Byer, 1997; Pike & Askew 1990). The sample populations in the present study revealed that over half of the students came from homes where at least one of the parents had completed a graduate degree and almost 89% with at least a Bachelor’s degree, reflecting high SES backgrounds. The variable of SES however, did not differentiate level of involvement in one’s Greek organization.
Research examining socioeconomic status and community service involvement has shown that students coming from high SES backgrounds are more likely to participate in community service (Planty & Regnier, 2004). However, the current research study found no differences between socioeconomic status and community service involvement. One possibility may be that the general expectations for service participation that come with being a member of a Greek organization mitigate the influence of an individual’s SES background.

Research studies specifically examining socioeconomic status and moral reasoning development in Greek student populations have not been previously explored. The results of the current research study found no differences between socioeconomic status and moral development level for this sample population of Greek students. Only additional future investigation could help to identify the possible factors as to why these results were uncovered within the present study.

Limitations of Study

This study investigated the relationship between the intensity of involvement of undergraduate college students in social Greek organizations with the duration of time spent engaged in community service activities on their moral reasoning abilities. As is the case with any research study, there were some limitations related to its design. One major constraint of the study was the correlational research design that was employed. While correlational research allows for the quantification of the direction and strength of a relationship between two or more variables, it does not allow a determination of the cause-and-effect relationship among the variables being investigated (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2003). Any relationships that might have been discovered among the variables would simply reflect the degree of relationship among them rather than an implication of causation. In the present study for instance, if any relationship
between moral development and involvement intensity had been discovered, there would be no way to establish which caused the other.

Another limitation of this study was the lack of diversity in sample population and institution. The current study utilized sophomore Greek students from one highly selective public university in the southeastern United States. As there was only data collected from students at one university, it is difficult to generalize this inquiry to all college students as these subjects may differ from those at other universities and in other Greek systems. Different types of students in dissimilar college environments who are affiliated with Greek organizations may have different levels of involvement, community service participation, and moral development compared to the university utilized in this analysis. The results for this study may reflect only patterns exhibited by Greek sophomore students at this particular institution.

A third and major limitation in this study turned out to be the overall user response rate. A large number of research protocols were removed for several reasons. First, of the 203 who logged on to the website to take the research survey, 98 (48%) instrument protocols had to be dropped because the respondents failed to answer enough questions to provide significant analysis. For example, participants would log on to the website and only answer a few of the questions before then logging off. As participants (college students) were solicited two weeks before the end of the spring academic semester, a time when students often are very busy, it may have been that the length of survey precluded them to finish it after they initially started. A second reason instrument protocols were removed was the result of Rest’s (1986) DIT scoring guide, which provides a pre-existing scoring reliability check that participants must pass in order for their scores on the test to be deemed adequate for use. As a result of these reliability checks, several more protocols were removed. Four (4%) participants were removed as a result of failing
the DIT Meaningless Score (M Score) check. Next, 7 (7%) protocols were removed for failing the DIT Consistency Check. As a result of the overall high number of instrument protocols that had to be removed, the ability to detect differences among variables was undoubtedly reduced as statistical power was significantly weakened.

This study relied exclusively on participants’ self reporting of data, which could also be considered a limitation. When participants self report data, there is a potential that they may provide disingenuous or misleading information about themselves (Graziano & Raulin, 1993). For example, when participants make estimates regarding their own behaviors (i.e. number of community service they performed during the previous semester) there is a potential for erroneous reporting. Participants may also attempt to provide answers that they think the researcher wants to hear or that will make him or herself look better in the eyes of the researcher or others. In the case of this study for instance, a participant knowing that he or she was taking a survey related to Greek life might make them want to answer questions that would make his or her fraternity or sorority look superior. Furthermore, there is the potential that some fraternities or sororities chose to have their members not participate in this study thus making the sample more self-selecting.

Implications for Practice

By better understanding how membership in fraternities and sororities impact a students’ moral development, college and university administrators will be able to create guidelines that allow Greek letter organizations to meet the goals of their own groups as well as those of their institution. The findings based on this research study can be important for student affairs practitioners and programmers as they work with Greek organizations and their membership. While there is still some question as to why membership in a fraternity and sorority may not
enhance a student's moral reasoning ability, it appears that the level and intensity of involvement of a student in his or her Greek organization is not a major contributing factor. With that new knowledge, professionals working with Greek organizations should not be as concerned with the involvement level of students in their Greek organization. Whether a student is a highly active member or someone not as engaged in the Greek extracurricular experience, it appears that moral reasoning development is dependent on a host of other possible factors not just one's level of involvement. As previous research has demonstrated that student involvement in extracurricular activities is related to an enhancement of moral reasoning development (see Lind, 1997; Finger, Borduin, & Baumstark, 1992), it may be more important that students simply be actively engaged outside of the classroom in some manner. Thus, for students not highly involved in their Greek organization, it would be important for advisors to work with these members to make sure that they have a high level of involvement in some form of the extracurricular even if it is not their fraternity or sorority.

Information gained from this study about the effect of community service participation on moral reasoning development will also prove fruitful for Greek advisors and student affairs practitioners as they work with fraternity and sorority chapters to establish community service initiatives. As suggested earlier in this chapter, the type of service that Greek students are engaged in as well as their motivation for performing it might have an effect on moral reasoning development. Advisors should be aware that the service focus for Greek organizations could be more beneficial for the students' moral development if the activities were focused more on performing services directly out in the community. Neo-Kohlbergian theory posits that as individuals morally develop they move from more simplistic conceptions of morality grounded in unilateral social authority and individual reciprocity to an appreciation of more complex social
systems in which one is capable of evaluating and affecting it in relation to fundamental principles of justice (Colby, et al., 2003). Greater awareness of social issues and participation in civically minded activities symbolizes the types of behaviors congruent with critical recognition of a broader social system. As a result, students would be holistically exposed to the experience and cause they are volunteering for enabling them to better challenge their own beliefs and societal perceptions, which according to Kohlberg are the antecedents for cognitive dissonance in the subsequent advancement in moral reasoning. Based on the non-significant results found in this study, student affairs practitioners should take into consideration the various types of community service experiences with which their Greek students and organizations become involved. Finally, the motivation for performing community service might also have an impact on how students make meaning out of their experience. Greek advisors should be cognizant of how predetermined requirements for service may be related to moral reasoning development.

Student affairs practitioners and Greek educators should not only take into consideration the type and motivation for community service experience engagement, but also how students are making meaning out of these service experiences. Previous research has shown that both formal and non-formal moral related educational interventions impact college students' use of post-conventional moral reasoning (King & Mayhew, 2002). This study found that participation in community service does not correlate to moral reasoning development, suggesting that practitioners should not simply encourage community service amongst Greek members, but make sure that there are adequate opportunities for reflection on the experience itself. This would at least ensure some potential for growth to take place, as based on the results of this study, the amount of time one engages in service does not appear to be related to an increase in moral reasoning development. Anderson (1998) notes that the importance of reflection on
service experiences comes from the opportunities it affords students to share feelings through connecting those service experiences to their own social values and sense of self. By encouraging these types of reflections, Greek advisors and student affairs practitioners will be engaging students in considering issues of fairness and social inequality that can help foster moral growth (Killen & Horn, 2000).

**Recommendations and Suggestions for Future Research**

Research can often lead investigators to more questions than answers. Results obtained from this study suggest a number of areas to consider for future research. First, this study provided only a snapshot of sophomore Greek students at one university at a single point in time. A longitudinal or cross-sectional study could measure involvement, community service participation, and moral development over a specified period of time. For example, the research variables could be measured from students' freshman to senior year. Data from such a study would provide insight into maturational effects and how these variables might change over the course of time. It would also be informative to perform a longitudinal experimental study comparing Greek affiliated students to non-Greek affiliated students to see if there are differences in moral development levels based on type and intensity of involvement and community service participation.

The current study was also unable to utilize a sample population that was diverse with regard to race/ethnicity. Additional research inquiries using non-Caucasian students should examine how involvement intensity in a fraternity or sorority and community service participation might be related to moral reasoning development. This research study also utilized a sample of Greek sophomore students from a single large public research institution. Similar research with students at universities of varying characteristics might prove beneficial. For
instance, if the students were drawn from a Greek population at a historically black college or university, a community college, a private university, or a different sized university the results may be entirely different.

Future research studies might also be valuable if performed utilizing a qualitative or mixed-methods research methodology. Qualitative research provides an opportunity to explore and understand complex human behavior through interviews, document analysis, and observation (Patton, 2002). For example, a mixed-method design might begin by first administering to Greek affiliated students the EII and the DIT. After identifying unique cases (for example students that score very high on both instruments) from these quantitative results, the students could then be invited to participate in a phenomenological study. This type of qualitative study would then allow the researcher to gain insight into the lived experiences of participants through interviews, allowing a greater understanding and depth of how meaning is constructed through involvement in their fraternity or sorority and how that might inform their moral development (Patton, 2002). It might also be informative to selectively choose students to participate in the phenomenological study who scored high on the EII, but low on the DIT, to understand what lived experiences make their Greek involvement encompass their lower moral reasoning development. Analyzing the contrasting experiences and themes of the two types of Greek students (low versus high scoring on the DIT) might provide new understanding as to why level involvement in a Greek organization effects moral development.

Finally, future studies should also explore what other variables might potentially predict moral development in Greek affiliated students. The current study indicated that community service participation and organizational involvement intensity did not predict such development, however it could be that other combinations of variables in addition to the ones investigated in
this study may have an impact. For instance, it may be important to conduct research investigating a particular combination of involvement in other extracurricular experiences and student organizations in addition to one’s Greek organization impacts moral reasoning development. The variable of community service participation is also multifaceted as it does not only encompass amount of time spent performing service. The amount of community service participation may be only one of several other factors including type of service, location of service and motivation for performing service that could be explored in relation to moral reasoning development.

Conclusion

Greek organizations on college and university campuses have a long and storied history in American higher education. Since their inception, these student run societies have proclaimed a duty to shape men and women into responsible adults, model citizens, and ethical leaders (Earley, 1998). According to Ackerman (1990), “The goals and traditions of the founding brothers and sisters have served Greek organizations well. But the needs of young adults as they move toward maturity are markedly different today than when nineteenth century idealists developed the canons of Greek life” (p. 79). Indeed, much of the recent research assessing moral development in students who are members of fraternities and sororities has demonstrated that members of these organizations exhibit the same or lower levels of moral reasoning than their non-affiliated counterparts (Mathaisen, 2003; McCabe & Trevino, 1997; Tripp, 1997; Kilgannon & Erwin 1992; Sanders, 1990; Marlowe & Auvenshine, 1982). Yet, there have been few reported studies in the literature that have specifically examined what aspects of the Greek experience may be related to moral development in this unique student population.
Exploratory in nature, this study utilized a multiple regression correlation research design in an attempt to determine what possible factors might be interrelated with the moral development of Greek affiliated students. Specifically, two areas of the fraternity and sorority experience were examined: intensity level of involvement in one’s Greek organization and level of community service participation. Data analysis indicated that there was no relationship between one’s level of involvement in his or her Greek organization and moral reasoning development. Nor was there a significant relationship between students’ duration of community service participation and their level of moral reasoning development. In addition to these involvement and service variables, gender and parents’ highest level of education were found not to predict Greek students’ moral development level either.

The non-significant results found in this study are important as they provide some new information about what aspects of the fraternity and sorority experience are not related to moral reasoning development. Some evidence is now available to suggest that neither level of involvement nor community service duration appear to be associated with moral reasoning development in students who are members of fraternities and sororities. While no significant relationships amongst the above mentioned variables in the current study were found, there are a number of new questions that have been generated by this study’s results which can help guide future research on the correlates of moral development in Greek affiliated students. Furthermore, future studies examining this topic would be wise to employ more robust information distribution and participation incentives to garner a greater response rate in this population of students. For example, speaking to each individual fraternity or sorority chapter to discuss the study and encourage participation may aid in securing a greater number of
respondents. Developing an incentive of substantial monetary substance may also help with getting more surveys submitted.

In recent years, it has been reported that almost ten percent of traditional aged college students are involved in Greek life on their respective campuses and the prevalence of student interest in these organizations does not appear to be waning (DeSantis, 2007). Because of the high student interest and prevalence of these types of organizations at colleges and universities across the country, continued research will be needed to assist in the understanding of what types of experiences are being generated by student participation in fraternities and sororities and how such experiences impact development. The current dissertation research project begins this discovery process by helping to identify some of the factors commonly associated with the Greek life experience as they are related to student moral development.
References


technical manual for the Defining Issues Test. Minneapolis, MN: Center for the study of ethical development, University of Minnesota.


Appendix A

Defining Issues Test – Short Form

INSTRUCTIONS: The purpose of this portion of the questionnaire is aimed at helping us understand how people think about social problems. Different people often have different opinions about questions of right and wrong. There are no "right" answers to such problems in the way that math problems have right answers. We would like you to tell us what you think about 3 problem stories. Please read these instructions carefully. After reading each story, you will be asked to complete the following three steps.

First, indicate YOUR recommendation for what a person should do. If you tend to favor one action over another (even if you are not completely sure), indicate which one. If you do not favor either action, mark "can't decide."

Second, read each of the items numbered 1 to 12. Think of the issue that the item was raising. If that issue is important in making a decision, one way or the other, then select "great." If that issue is not important or does not make sense to you, select "no." If the issue is relevant but not critical, select "much," "some," or "little" - depending on how much importance that issue has to your opinion. You may select several items as "great" (or any other level of importance) - there is no fixed number of items that must be selected at any one level.

Third, you will be asked to choose the item that is the MOST important consideration out of these provided items. Pick from among the provided items, even if you think that none of them are of "great" importance. Of the items that are presented, pick one as the most important (relative to the ones provided there), then the second most important, third, and finally, the fourth most important.

THE FOLLOWING STORY AND QUESTIONS SERVE AS AN INSTRUCTIONAL EXAMPLE OF HOW TO TAKE THE TEST. PLEASE READ THROUGH THEM BEFORE BEGINNING.

Frank Jones has been thinking about buying a car. He is married, has two small children, and earns an average income. The car he buys will be his family's only car. It will be used mostly to get to work and drive around town, but sometimes for vacation trips also. In trying to decide what car to buy, Frank Jones realized that there were a lot of questions to consider. Below is a list of some of these questions. If you were Frank Jones, how important would each of these questions be in deciding what car to buy?

1. On the right hand side you will check one of the spaces by each statement of a consideration. (For instance, if you think that statement #1 is not important in making a decision about buying a car, you would check the space on the right labeled No Importance.)
*FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS SAMPLE EXERCISE PLEASE CHOOSE THE DESIGNATED RESPONSE FOR EACH CONSIDERATION.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Great Importance</th>
<th>Much Importance</th>
<th>Some Importance</th>
<th>Little Importance</th>
<th>No Importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Whether the car dealer was in the same block as where Frank lives.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Click &quot;No Importance&quot;. Note that in this example, by choosing &quot;No Importance&quot; you would be saying that this factor was not important in making your decision)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Would a used car be more economical in the long run than a new car.</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Click &quot;Great Importance&quot;. Note that by checking &quot;Great Importance&quot; you would be indicating the opinion that this is an important issue in making a decision about buying a car.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Whether the color was green, Frank's favorite color. Click &quot;Some Importance&quot;.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Whether the cubic inch displacement was at least 200. (Click &quot;No Importance&quot;. Note that if you are unsure about what &quot;cubic inch displacement&quot; means, then you would mark it &quot;No Importance.&quot;)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Would a large, roomy car be better than a compact car. Click &quot;Great Importance&quot;.</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Whether the front connibilies were differential. (Click &quot;No Importance&quot;. Note that if a statement sounds like gibberish or nonsense, you would mark it &quot;No Importance.&quot;)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. From the list of questions above, select the most important statement of the whole group that would factor in making your decision. Click the number of the most important question below. Do likewise for your second, third, and fourth most important choices.

(Note that the top choices in this case will come from the statements that were checked on the far left-hand side. Statements #2 and #5 were thought to be very important in the example above. In deciding what is the most important, a person would re-read #2 and #5, and then pick one of them as the most important, then put the other one as "second most important," and so on.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most Important Item (You would Click #5 for this example)</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. **Heinz and the Drug**
   In Europe a woman was near death from a special kind of cancer. There was one drug that doctors thought might save her. It was a form of radium that a druggist in the same town had recently discovered. The drug was expensive to make, but the druggist was charging ten times what the drug cost to make. He paid $200 for the radium and charged $2000 for a small dose of the drug. The sick woman's husband, Heinz, went to everyone he knew to borrow the money, but he could only get together about $1000, which is half of what it cost. He told the druggist that his wife was dying, and asked him to sell it cheaper or let him pay later. But the druggist said, "No, I discovered the drug and I'm going to make money from it." So Heinz got desperate and began to think about breaking into the man's store to steal the drug for his wife. Should Heinz steal the drug?

1. **First, select YOUR recommendation:**

   - O Heinz Should Steal
   - O Can't Decide
   - O Heinz Should Not Steal

2. **Second, select how important each issue was (remember, this is your opinion and you can select the same level of importance more than once).**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Great Importance</th>
<th>Much Importance</th>
<th>Some Importance</th>
<th>Little Importance</th>
<th>No Importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Whether a community's laws are going to be upheld.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Isn't it only natural for a loving husband to care so much for his wife that he'd steal?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Is Heinz willing to risk getting shot as a burglar or going to jail for the chance that stealing the drug might help?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Whether Heinz is a professional wrestler, or has considerable influence with professional wrestlers.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Whether Heinz is stealing for himself or doing this solely to help someone else.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Whether the druggist's rights to his invention have to be respected.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. Whether the essence of living is more encompassing than termination of dying, socially and individually. | O | O | O | O | O | O

8. What values are going to be the basis for governing how people act towards each other. | O | O | O | O | O | O

9. Whether the druggist is going to be allowed to hide behind a worthless law which only protects the rich anyhow. | O | O | O | O | O | O

10. Whether the law in this case is getting in the way of the most basic claim of any member of society. | O | O | O | O | O | O

11. Whether the druggist deserves to be robbed for being so greedy and cruel. | O | O | O | O | O | O

12. Would stealing in such a case bring about more total good for the whole society or not. | O | O | O | O | O | O

3. Third, pick from among the provided items below, even if you think that none of them are of "great" importance. Pick one as the most important (relative to the ones provided here), then the second most important, third, and fourth most important. (Note: The item numbers correspond to the statements above.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Most Important Item</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Most Important Item</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Most Important Item</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth Most Important Item</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Escaped Prisoner
A man had been sentenced to prison for 10 years. After one year, however, he escaped from prison, moved to a new area of the country, and took on the name of Thompson. For eight years he worked hard, and gradually he saved enough money to buy his own business. He was fair to his customers, gave his employees top wages, and gave most of his profits to charity. Then one day, Mrs. Jones, an old neighbor, recognized him as the man who had escaped from prison eight years before, and whom the police had been looking for. Should Mrs. Jones report Mr. Thompson to the police and have him sent back to prison?

1. First, select YOUR recommendation:

O Should Report Him   O Can't Decide   O Should Not Report Him
2. Second, select how important each issue was (remember, this is your opinion and you can select the same level of importance more than once).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Great Importance</th>
<th>Much Importance</th>
<th>Some Importance</th>
<th>Little Importance</th>
<th>No Importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Hasn't Mr. Thompson been good enough for such a long time to prove he isn't a bad person?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Every time someone escapes punishment for a crime, doesn't that just encourage more crime?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Wouldn't we be better off without prisons and the oppression of our legal system?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Has Mr. Thompson really paid his debt to society?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Would society be failing what Mr. Thompson should fairly expect?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. What benefits would prisons be apart from society, especially a charitable man?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. How could anyone be so cruel and heartless as to send Mr. Thompson to prison?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Would it be fair to all the prisoners who had to serve out their full sentences if Mr. Thompson was let off?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Was Mrs. Jones a good friend of Mr. Thompson?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Wouldn't it be a citizen's duty to report an escaped criminal, regardless of the circumstances?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. How would the will of the people and the public good best be served?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Would going to prison do any good for Mr. Thompson or protect anybody?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Third, pick from among the provided items below, even if you think that none of them are of "great" importance. Pick one as the most important (relative to the ones provided here), then the second most important, third, and fourth most important. (Note: The item numbers correspond to the statements above.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Most Important Item</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Most Important Item</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Most Important Item</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth Most Important Item</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. **Newspaper**

Fred, a senior in high school, wanted to publish a mimeographed newspaper for students so that he could express many of his opinions. He wanted to speak out against the use of the military in international disputes and to speak out against some of the school's rules, like the rule forbidding boys to wear long hair.

When Fred started his newspaper, he asked his principal for permission. The principal said it would be all right if before every publication Fred would turn in all his articles for the principal's approval. Fred agreed and turned in all his articles for the principal's approval. The principal approved all of them and Fred published two issues of the paper in the next two weeks.

But the principal had not expected that Fred's newspaper would receive so much attention. Students were so excited by the paper that they began to organize protests against the hair regulation and other school rules. Angry parents objected Fred's opinions. They phoned the principal telling him that the newspaper was unpatriotic and should not be published. As a result of the rising excitement, the principal ordered Fred to stop publishing. He gave as a reason that Fred's activities were disruptive to the operation of the school. Should the principal stop the newspaper?

1. First, select **YOUR** recommendation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Should Stop It</th>
<th>Can't Decide</th>
<th>Should Not Stop It</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Second, select how important each issue was (remember, this is your opinion and you can select the same level of importance more than once).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Great Importance</th>
<th>Much Importance</th>
<th>Some Importance</th>
<th>Little Importance</th>
<th>No Importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Is the principal more responsible to students or the parents?</td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Did the principal give his word that the newspaper could be published for a long time, or did he just promise to approve the newspaper one issue at a time?</td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Would the students start protesting even more if the principal stopped the newspaper?</td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. When the welfare of the school is threatened, does the principal have the right to give orders to students?</td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Does the principal have the freedom of speech to say &quot;no&quot; in this case?</td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. If the principal stopped the newspaper would he be preventing full discussion of important problems?</td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Whether the principal's order would make Fred lose faith in the principal.</td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8. Whether Fred was really loyal to his school and patriotic to his country.  

9. What effect would stopping the paper have on the student's education in critical thinking and judgments?  

10. Whether Fred was in any way violating the rights of others in publishing his own opinions.  

11. Whether the principal should be influenced by some angry parents when it is the principal that knows best what is going on in the school.  

12. Whether Fred was using the newspaper to stir up hatred and discontent.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>8. Whether Fred was really loyal to his school and patriotic to his country.</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9. What effect would stopping the paper have on the student's education in critical thinking and judgments?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Whether Fred was in any way violating the rights of others in publishing his own opinions.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Whether the principal should be influenced by some angry parents when it is the principal that knows best what is going on in the school.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Whether Fred was using the newspaper to stir up hatred and discontent.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Third, pick from among the provided items below, even if you think that none of them are of "great" importance. Pick one as the most important (relative to the ones provided here), then the second most important, third, and fourth most important. (Note: The item numbers correspond to the statements above.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most Important Item</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Second Most Important Item</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Most Important Item</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth Most Important Item</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B

Extracurricular Involvement Inventory (EII)

The following set of questions will ask about your involvement with your fraternity/sorority over the past four weeks.

1. *In the last four weeks*, for approximately how many hours have you been involved with your fraternity/sorority and its activities or programs?

   Type in Number of Hours: ___

2. *In the last four weeks* have you held an office in your fraternity/sorority or a position equivalent to one of the following offices? (Check one.)

   □ President/Chairperson/Team Captain/Editor  □ Treasurer
   □ Vice President/Vice Chairperson  □ Committee/Task Force/Project Chairperson
   □ Secretary  □ I held no office or leadership position.
   □ Other Office, Please specify:

   ____________________________

Please respond to the following statements about your involvement in your fraternity/sorority. Check the one best response for each statement.

**DURING THE PAST FOUR WEEKS...**

1. When I attended meetings, I expressed my opinions and/or took part in the discussions.

   □ Very Often
   □ Often
   □ Occasionally
   □ Never
   □ I attended no meetings in the past four weeks.
   □ The fraternity/sorority held no meetings in the past four weeks.

2. When I was away from members of the fraternity/sorority, I talked with others about the organization and its activities, or wore a pin, jersey, etc. to let others know about my membership.
3. When the fraternity/sorority sponsored a program or activity, I made an effort to encourage other students and/or members to attend.

4. I volunteered or was assigned responsibility to work on something that the fraternity/sorority needed to have done.

5. I fulfilled my assigned duties or responsibilities to the fraternity/sorority on time.
Appendix C

Community Service Measure

Community Service can be defined as a particular form of voluntary action in which individuals and groups donate time and effort to benefit others.

During the Spring 2009 semester, estimate the TOTAL NUMBER OF HOURS you spent performing community service?

Type in Total Number of Hours: __________
Appendix D

Demographic Questions

1. What is your age?
   Please Type in your Current Age: _____

2. What is your gender?
   a. Male
   b. Female

3. What is your racial or ethnic identification?
   a. Asian/Pacific Islander
   b. Black/African-American
   c. Caucasian/White
   d. Hispanic/Latino
   e. Native American
   f. Other

4. What is the highest level of education attained by either parent?
   a. Not a High School Graduate
   b. High School Graduate
   c. Some College, No Degree
   d. Bachelor’s Degree Completed
   e. Graduate Degree Completed
5. What Greek Council is your fraternity/sorority affiliated with?

a. **Greek Alliance Council (GAC)** – Members include: Alpha Epsilon Omega, Alpha Iota Omega, Alpha Kappa Delta Phi, Alpha Pi Omega, Delta Phi Omega, Delta Sigma Iota, Lambda Pi Chi Sorority, Inc., Lambda Upsilon Lambda Fraternity, Inc., Phi Sigma Nu, Pi Alpha Phi, Psi Sigma Phi, Theta Nu Xi

b. **Interfraternity Council (IFC)** – Members include: Alpha Epsilon Pi, Alpha Tau Omega, Beta Theta Pi, Chi Phi, Chi Psi, Delta Kappa Epsilon, Delta Sigma Phi, Delta Upsilon, Kappa Alpha, Kappa Sigma, Lambda Chi Alpha, Phi Delta Theta, Phi Gamma Delta, Pi Kappa Alpha, Pi Lambda Phi, Sigma Alpha Epsilon, Sigma Chi, Sigma Nu, Sigma Phi Epsilon, Tau Epsilon Phi, Zeta Beta Tau, Zeta Psi


d. **Panhellenic Council** – Members Include: Alpha Chi Omega, Alpha Delta Pi, Chi Omega, Delta Delta Delta, Kappa Delta, Kappa Kappa Gamma, Pi Beta Phi, Phi Mu, Sigma Sigma Sigma, Zeta Tau Alpha, Phi Beta Chi, Sigma Rho Lambda
Appendix E

Letters of Approval

Date: Tue 14 Apr 12:27:28 EDT 2009
From: <compli@wm.edu> Add To Address Book | This is Spam
Subject: Status of protocol EDIRC-2009-04-03-5944-fhphil set to active
To: fhphil@wm.edu, mfdipa@wm.edu, edirc-l@wm.edu

This is to notify you on behalf of the Education Internal Review Committee (EDIRC) that protocol EDIRC-2009-04-03-5944-fhphil titled The Relationship between Intensity of Involvement and Community Service Engagement in the Moral Development of Student Members of Greek Organizations has been EXEMPTED from formal review because it falls under the following category(ies) defined by DHHS Federal Regulations: 45CFR46.101.b.1.

Work on this protocol may begin on 2009-04-14 and must be discontinued on 2010-04-14.

Should there be any changes to this protocol, please submit these changes to the committee for determination of continuing exemption using the Protocol and Compliance Management channel on the Service tab within myWM (http://my.wm.edu/).

Please add the following statement to the footer of all consent forms, cover letters, etc.:

THIS PROJECT WAS FOUND TO COMPLY WITH APPROPRIATE ETHICAL STANDARDS AND WAS EXEMPTED FROM THE NEED FOR FORMAL REVIEW BY THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS COMMITTEE (Phone 757-221-3966) ON 2009-04-14 AND EXPIRES ON 2010-04-14.

You are required to notify Dr. Ward, chair of the EDIRC, at 757-221-2358 (EDIRC-L@wm.edu) and Dr. Deschenes, chair of the PHSC at 757-221-2778 (PHSC-L@wm.edu) if any issues arise during this study.

Good luck with your study.

Date: Mon 23 Mar 12:24:51 EDT 2009
From: ethicalstudy <ethicalstudy@bamaed.ua.edu> Add To Address Book | This is Spam
Subject: RE: receive order
To: <fhphil@wm.edu>

I have attached the DIT manual for hand scoring to this email. I have also attached an invoice for your order. Please note that you MUST receive our approval before you administer your study to participants. Therefore, after you create your study, send the link to ethicalstudy@bamaed.ua.edu and
sthoma@bamaed.ua.edu. We will get back with you ASAP for you to begin collecting data.

Thanks and let me know if you have any questions!
Jenny

Jenny Short, M.A.
Graduate Research Assistant
Office for the Study of Ethical Development
Department of Educational Studies in Psychology, Research Methodology, and Counseling
The University of Alabama

Date: Thu 16 Apr 17:32:52 EDT 2009
From: "Thoma, Steve" <sthoma@bamaed.ua.edu> Add To Address Book | This is Spam
Subject: RE: receive order
To: "fhphil@wm.edu" <fhphil@wm.edu>
Cc: ethicalstudy <ethicalstudy@bamaed.ua.edu>

Chip I took a look at it and you are good to go. When you send us the data download the file in condensed mode with numbers (not the rating labels).

Good luck with the study,

Steve Thoma

From: Anne Massaro [mailto:amassaro@hr.osu.edu]
Sent: Friday, March 27, 2009 5:03 PM
To: Phillips, Franklin H.
Subject: RE: Permission for Use

Franklin,

You have my permission to use the EEI. Good luck in your endeavor,

Anne
Appendix F

Invitation to Participate in Study

April 19, 2009

Dear <Name of School Removed> Greek Sophomore,

As a sophomore member of a recognized Greek organization at <Name of School Removed>, you are being invited to participate in my dissertation research project by completing a brief web-based questionnaire. The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between Greek involvement and community service participation with moral reasoning development.

I have chosen to send you this invitation to participate in the study before the spring semester ends in the hopes that you will have sufficient time to complete the questionnaire. As an incentive, those that participate will be entered into a random prize drawing for a number of Visa gift cards. One lucky participant will receive a $100 dollar gift card, two will receive $50 gift cards, and eight will receive $25 dollar gift cards. Your participation is voluntary and the survey should only take about 20 minutes to complete.

To complete the survey, please go to <Web Link>. Please note that ALL information collected for this study will be kept absolutely confidential and in no way will you be associated with nor linked as an individual with any of your responses in either an oral or written report.

The survey will only allow you to submit responses once, so please plan enough time to complete it in one sitting. It will take about 20 minutes to complete. Additionally, in order for your responses to be included in this study, please complete the questionnaire by May 3, 2009.

Should you have any questions and/or concerns please feel free to email me at fhphil@wm.edu. Alternatively, you can call me at <Personal Phone Number Removed>.

Thank you in advance for taking the time to participate! Good luck on your exams.

Sincerely,

Franklin Phillips
Doctoral Candidate
College of William and Mary

THIS PROJECT WAS FOUND TO COMPLY WITH APPROPRIATE ETHICAL STANDARDS AND WAS EXEMPTED FROM THE NEED FOR FORMAL REVIEW BY THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS COMMITTEE (Phone 757-221-3966) ON 2009-04-14 AND EXPIRES ON 2010-04-14.
Participant Reminder #1

Dear <Name of School Removed> Greek Sophomore,

Last Sunday evening I sent you an email (see below) asking you to please complete a brief on-line survey as a participant in my doctoral dissertation research project. If you are one of the many students who has already completed the survey, Thank You So Much! If you have not had a chance to take to take the survey, today’s email is a reminder that there is still time. Without students like you taking the time to complete my questionnaire, I will not have data necessary to complete my project. The survey link is: <Web-Link>

As an incentive to participate, please remember that I will be performing several prize drawings after collecting my data. Several participants will win some great Visa gift cards!

Your participation is critical to my study and will likely only take you about 20 minutes. Please know that I am very appreciative of your taking the time to help me in the completion of my research! I have included last Sunday’s email below for your reference.

THANK YOU!!
Franklin Phillips
Doctoral Candidate
College of William and Mary

Participant Reminder #2

Dear <Name of School Removed> Greek Sophomore,

I wanted to send you one last email reminder to those of you who have not yet completed the survey as part of my Greek Life dissertation research. You can click on the survey by clicking on the following link: <Web Link>

Please remember that there are incentives for participating. Numerous $25 and $50 gift cards as well as a $100 gift card will be distributed via a random drawing to study participants. The cards will have a major credit card logo allowing you to spend the money anywhere credit cards are accepted.

Participation is critical to my study and will likely only take you about 20 minutes. I am very appreciative of your taking the time to help. The link to the survey will remain open until Midnight on May 3. I have included the previous email below for your reference.

Good Luck with you exams this week and next,

Franklin Phillips
Doctoral Candidate
College of William and Mary
Participant Reminder (2 Weeks Later)

I was given your email by <Name Removed>, Assistant Dean of Students at <Name of School Removed>. You received several emails (see attached below) from me at the end of the Spring 2009 semester in regards to the dissertation research project I am doing at <Name of School Removed>. Unfortunately, I have not had many students fill out the survey to this date. This is one last attempt to try and solicit your assistance with this project. Below is the link to the survey. Remember that there will be a random drawing for multiple Visa gift cards of $25, $50, and $100. Your help is very GREATLY appreciated. The survey link will remain open until May 29.

WEB LINK TO SURVEY: <Web-Link>

Thank you for your time,

Franklin Phillips
Doctoral Candidate
College of William and Mary
Appendix G

Consent to Research Form

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this study! Please remember the survey will take approximately 20-25 minutes to complete and must be done in one sitting.

Please take a moment to read the following before proceeding:

The general nature of this dissertation research project entitled, “The Relationship between Intensity of Involvement and Community Service Engagement in the Moral Development of Student Members of Greek Organizations” being conducted by Franklin Phillips has been explained to me. I understand that I will be asked to complete a web-based questionnaire. I know that my responses will be completely confidential and that no reference(s) will be made in any type of written or oral report that would link me individually to the study. I also understand that I may refuse to answer any question(s) asked and that I may discontinue participation at any time. I am aware that I may report dissatisfactions with any aspect of this study to the Chair of the Protection of Human Subjects Committee, Dr. Michael Deschenes, 757-221-2778 or mrdesc@wm.edu. I am aware that I must be at least 18 years of age to participate.

By clicking on the NEXT button, I signify that my participation in this research project is voluntary, and that I have received a copy of this consent statement.

CLICK HERE TO START:

THIS PROJECT WAS FOUND TO COMPLY WITH APPROPRIATE ETHICAL STANDARDS AND WAS EXEMPTED FROM THE NEED FOR FORMAL REVIEW BY THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS COMMITTEE (Phone 757-221-3966) ON 2009-04-14 AND EXPIRES ON 2010-04-14.
Vita

Franklin Hadley Phillips III

Birth Date: April 23, 1976

Birth Place: Norfolk, Virginia

Education:

2004-2009 The College of William and Mary
Williamsburg, Virginia
Doctor of Philosophy

1998-2000 The College of William and Mary
Williamsburg, Virginia
Master of Education

1994-1998 James Madison University
Harrisonburg, Virginia
Bachelor of Science