

# Moral judgement changes among undergraduates in a capstone internship experience

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This mixed-methods study explored the moral growth of undergraduates in a recreation management internship experience. The quantitative phase reported moral judgement gains in Personal Interest and Post-conventional schema, and N-2 scores, as measured by the Defining Issues Test 2 (DIT-2), among 33 interns. The case-study method used a pattern matching technique to show congruence between the theoretical patterns of Neo-Kohlbergian theory of moral development and observed patterns of judgement and action among 10 intern cases representing low and high levels of post-conventional reasoning as measured by the DIT-2.

## Introduction

Recreation management is one of the human service professions that requires a high degree of generalised and systematic knowledge as well as a primary orientation to others' interest rather than to individual self-interest (Barber, 1963). Recreation professionals specialise in the planning, organisation, facilitation and evaluation of the leisure experience for diverse sets of individuals and groups including consumers, clients, patients and family members. Recreation professionals are guided by a distinct philosophy that promotes the constructive use of leisure, preserves and conserves resources and promotes human dignity (Ross, Beggs, & Young, 2011). The leisure service delivery system consists of a large network of government, non-profit, for-profit and specialised organisations that provide recreation, therapeutic recreation, park, sports management, hospitality, and tourism experiences (Stevens, 2010). The ethical responsibilities of recreation professionals across these service sectors derive in part from the fact that their decisions, behaviour and actions affect the interests of those whom they serve; namely, individuals, communities and natural environments. Through their varied roles,

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recreation practitioners are in a position to act on many value-laden decisions in everyday practice as they provide direct services, consultation, education, research and advocacy to the public. This diverse work may present practitioners with a variety of complex ethical dilemmas.

Administrative ethical dilemmas that cut across various leisure-service sectors focus on safety, fraud, sexual harassment, conflicts of interest, whistle-blowing, child endangerment and dishonesty or stealing (Jamieson & Wolter, 1999). Setting-specific dilemmas are also evident. According to McLean and Yoder (2005), outdoor recreation managers and national park officials have stewardship responsibilities for natural resources that are used for leisure by the public. These practitioners may encounter environmental and wildlife issues, and/or dilemmas associated with preservation, conservation and ecosystem management. Similarly, tourism practitioners have obligations to preserve cultural artefacts and environments while providing educational and tourism experiences for visitors and guests. In contrast, commercial recreation business owners deal with issues related to business reciprocity, the marketing of controversial goods and services, and/or the generation of profits. Therapeutic recreation specialists are further challenged by the increased complexity of health care, and may encounter ethical issues related to the therapist–patient relationship, patient–client confidentiality and privacy, ethical implications associated with managed health care, fairness in the distribution of services, competence, and/or fidelity (Jacobson & James, 2001). Across these various recreation service sectors, practitioners are cast into conflicting roles requiring them to be open to ‘multiple styles of learning, diverse populations, and social concepts, values, and ethical behaviours that enable them to fulfil their responsibilities to society’ (Kinney, Witman, Sable, & Kinney, 2001, p. 90).

In a professional context, ‘doing right’ is conveyed through a discipline’s code of ethics. The USA National Recreation and Park Association (1991) endorses general ethical principles of practice designed to have universal application regardless of professional sector. These principles include: integrity/honesty, professional competence, fairness, impartiality, efficiency, fiscal responsibility, promotion of public interest, avoidance of conflict of interest activities and provision of equal employment opportunities (NRPA). To address ethical issues associated with unique practice settings some professional sectors, such as therapeutic recreation (TR), have adopted their own ethical code. Ethical principles guiding TR practice include: beneficence, non-maleficence, autonomy, justice, fidelity, veracity, informed consent, confidentiality/privacy, competence and compliance with laws and regulations (American Therapeutic Recreation Association, 2009).

There is ample evidence suggesting that recreation professionals deal with general and setting-specific ethical issues on a regular basis; therefore, it seems logical to prepare students majoring in recreation careers to handle the ethical dilemmas associated with practice. Although educators present the ethical codes and norms of recreation practice within the professional preparation curricula, students must be socialised to develop an internalised understanding of these ethical values in order to successfully integrate into the profession. The professional internship

experience offers an ideal opportunity for this socialisation to occur, as students experience moral issues and practice ethical decision-making in their new role across a variety of leisure service sectors.<sup>1</sup>

While professional codes of ethics provide guiding principles of practice and can inform student interns about appropriate responses to a wide variety of ethical dilemmas in the field, simply referring to an ethics code for a proven solution may be problematic and limiting. For instance, students may struggle with the generality and subsequent ambiguity of some ethical principles as they try to apply them in practice. Or students may be challenged by ethical principles that are too specific to be helpful. 'A code of ethics that addresses every eventuality in practice is impossible because human activity is so diverse and unpredictable ... some codes might be helpful, of course, but because of certain limitations, they can be poor substitutes for moral contemplation and ethical decision making' (McLean & Yoder, 2005, p. 113). Rather than rely exclusively on a code of ethics to address dilemmas, students must also be able to identify moral situations, reason and decide upon the best course of action, and act on those decisions, regardless of the consequences. These are integral components of moral behaviour proposed by Rest, Narvaez, Bebeau and Thoma (1999) in their Neo-Kohlbergian theory of moral development.

Within the field of recreation management, there is no empirical evidence examining the impact of the internship experience on student moral development. The recreation internship is traditionally viewed as an opportunity for students to experience practical application of coursework, skill development and competencies related to practice (Holmes-Layman & Pommier, 2001; Hurd & Schlatter, 2007). The primary emphasis of research in the internship arena has been in relation to the descriptive picture of internship programs or students' attainment of entry-level competencies for practice (Beggs, Ross, & Goodwin, 2008; Beggs, Ross, & Knapp, 2006; Stumbo, Carter, & Kim, 2003; Zabriskie & Ferguson, 2004). Although there is a wealth of literature detailing a variety of issues germane to the study of developing and implementing effective programmes (Coco-Ripp, 2005; Grabel & Lee, 2005; Kelley, 2004; Skalko, Lee, & Goldenberg, 1998; Stratta, 2004; Williams, 2004), none offers insight into the role of the internship in moral development.

To address the gap, this study: (1) investigated changes in interns' moral judgement as determined by the DIT-2 over the course of a 14-week internship experience; and (2) explored congruence between the theoretical patterns of Neo-Kohlbergian theory of moral development and the observed patterns of intern moral judgement and actions among 10 intern cases, using a pattern-matching method that replicated Johnson's (2008) research with teacher candidates.

### *Integrated learning framework*

In order to understand the impact of the internship experience on the moral development of recreation management interns, it is important to describe the context

Table 1. Seven design principles of the Integrated Learning Framework (Reiman &amp; Oja, 2006, pp. 133–135) and Connection to Recreation Management Internship Program in the study

<b>Integrated Learning Framework Design Principles</b>	<b>Connection to Recreation Internship Program</b>
<p><b><i>Contextualised Learning &amp; Development</i></b> Initially, educators contextualise instruction by accounting for prior knowledge and experience as well as present intellectual reasoning of diverse learners.</p>	<p><b><i>Contextualised Learning &amp; Development</i></b> Through a professional development pre-internship course and highly individualised matching and site approval process, the university internship coordinator, on-site supervisor and intern develop a clear and mutually agreed upon plan for intern development that is continued throughout the 14-week internship experience.</p>
<p><b><i>Complex New Helping Experiences</i></b> When learners engage in complex and significant new roles the experience with practice (action) precedes and shapes the intellectual consciousness that grow out of it. Inquiry (analysis and reflection) best grows out of practice-based problems present in one's immediate experience in the new role.</p>	<p><b><i>Complex New Helping Experiences</i></b> During the internship, interns engage in complex new helping roles for 14–16 weeks within the health and human service arena.</p>
<p><b><i>Guided Inquiry</i></b> Unexamined experience forfeits a potential for growth. Careful feedback offered as the learner makes meaning of new experiences includes both learner self-assessment and guided reflection by the educator. Planned activities, on-going discussions and journalling include focus on the ethical issues related to practice.</p>	<p><b><i>Guided Inquiry</i></b> Because students may not be sophisticated in their reflection, they are guided by a 'more capable other' such as an academic supervisor and/or on-site supervisor. Regularly scheduled academic assignments serve as the mechanism through which the guided inquiry occurs.</p>
<p><b><i>Balance Between Experience and Inquiry</i></b> Balancing experience and inquiry/reflection discourages over-reliance on the experience or the self-analysis. Usually this means that the practice-based experience is sequenced with guided inquiry each week. Too great a time lag between action and reflection or too little time appears to halt the growth process.</p>	<p><b><i>Balance Between Experience and Inquiry</i></b> Academic assignments are intentionally staggered over the 14-week internship so that there is not a time lag between intern action and reflection. These assignments provide a mechanism for timely reflection and ensure that the intern is in regular contact with the academic supervisor who is in a position to provide guided support and inquiry. These assignments afford the intern multiple venues to reflect on their experience while in the midst of practice.</p>
<p><b><i>Support and Challenge</i></b> Acknowledging and reinforcing a learner's current meaning making system is referred to as matching (support). Alternatively, when the learner demonstrates a readiness for more conceptual and ethical complexity, a constructive mismatch (challenge) is provided via the inquiry process.</p>	<p><b><i>Support and Challenge</i></b> Academic and on-site supervisors provide differentiated support and challenge to help the intern accommodate the new practice experience. In this process, the supervisors frame instruction to the intern's present level of understanding.</p>

(Continued)

Table 1. (Continued)

Integrated Learning Framework Design Principles	Connection to Recreation Internship Program
<p><b>Continuity</b></p> <p>The complex goal of fostering change in interns' performance as well as ethical and conceptual judgement requires a continuous interplay between experience and inquiry ... Typically, at least four to six months are needed for significant learning and development to occur.</p>	<p><b>Continuity</b></p> <p>Because the recreation internship lasts only three and a half months in duration, this design principle is not fully met.</p>
<p><b>Reflective Coaching</b></p> <p>Joyce and Showers's (1995) model of coaching includes: ascertaining prior knowledge, clarifying the supporting rationale and evidence for the new skill, introducing demonstrations, providing opportunities for practice with self-assessment, and integrating observation and feedback to assess the learning.</p>	<p><b>Reflective Coaching</b></p> <p>The person most critical in the reflective coaching process is the on-site supervisor, as (s)he interacts with the intern on a daily basis in practice and is expected to provide feedback of a formal nature at least once a week. Throughout the 14-week experience, the site supervisor's mentoring role helps the intern adapt to the new environment of practice. While the internship programme does not guarantee the pairing of an intern with a site supervisor who is proficient in reflective coaching, the department's site approval criteria for an appropriate site supervisor attempts to weed out those supervisors who may be limited in their ability to mentor the intern in this expected manner.</p>

of the internship programme under study. The internship programme appears to address the seven design principles of the Integrated Learning Framework (ILF), a practice-based theoretical framework that has been employed in the design of professional development programmes for pre-service and in-service teachers (Reiman & Oja, 2006). The seven principles of the ILF include: contextualised learning and development, complex new helping experience, guided inquiry, balance between experience and inquiry, support and challenge, continuity over time and reflective coaching. The overall goal of the ILF is 'the development of more complex and more integrated understanding of oneself; the formation of greater conceptual judgment complexity and flexibility as one interprets and acts in practice; the growth of more complex ethical judgment reasoning; and the acquisition of new performances that enhance instruction and engagement with learners' (Reiman & Oja, 2006, p. 135). The context of the current recreation internship in relation to the seven principles of the ILF is illustrated in Table 1. A more detailed review is described in Craig and Sable (2011).

## Theoretical framework

### *Four Component Model of moral behaviour*

Rest et al.'s (1999) Four Component Model of moral behaviour served as the theoretical framework in this study. Rest et al. conceptualised the domain of moral psychology to include at least four major internal components that lead to moral behaviour: moral sensitivity, moral judgement, moral motivation and moral character. The four components 'do not follow each other in a set temporal order' (Rest et al., 1999, p. 102), but rather they are integrated in a complex and unique way to provide a dynamic feedback system that leads to moral behaviour. Narvaez and Rest (1995) indicated that the Four Component Model depicts an 'ensemble of processes' and that deficiency in any of the four components can result in a failure of moral action.

People who demonstrate *moral sensitivity* are aware that there is a problem when it exists, are empathetic and able to interpret the situation, can imagine cause-effect chains of events, and understand how their various actions would affect other people. People who are deficient in moral sensitivity may fail to act in a moral manner because they do not realise how their actions impact other people.<sup>2</sup> Rest, Thoma and Edwards (1997) described *moral judgement* as 'defining what the moral issues are, how conflicts among parties are to be settled, and the rationale for deciding on a course of action' (p. 5). Rest et al.'s (1999) conception of moral judgement includes three schemas and seven developmentally ordered judgement types, which describe periods of consolidation within a modal schema and transition between schemas.<sup>3</sup> *Moral judgement* can be measured by the Defining Issues Test (Bebeau & Thoma, 2003), which produces various scores that are utilised in this study (see the Methods section for scoring details). *Moral motivation* is concerned with weighing the importance of choosing among various competing values. Rest et al. (1999) described this component as 'the degree of commitment to taking the moral course of action, valuing moral values over other values, and taking personal responsibility for moral outcomes' (p. 101). A person who exhibits moral motivation gives priority to moral values above competing values despite this incompatibility.<sup>4</sup> They described *moral character* as 'persisting in a moral task, having courage, overcoming fatigue and temptations, and implementing subroutines that serve a moral goal' (1999, p. 101). A person who is able to persevere at a challenging task despite peer censure or perceived threat is more likely to carry out a moral intention.<sup>5</sup>

While professional preparation programmes such as teacher education (Johnson, 2008; Reiman & Johnson, 2003; Reiman & Peace, 2002), counselling (Brendel, Kolbert & Foster, 2002; Cannon, 2008), dentistry (Bebeau, 2002), nursing (Krichbaum, Rowan, Duckett, Ryden, & Savik, 1994), medicine (Morton, Worthley, Testerman, & Mahoney, 2006; Self & Baldwin, 1994), physical therapy (Delaney, Edwards, Jensen, & Skinner, 2010; Sisola, 2000), accounting (Ponemon & Gabhart, 1994; Porco, 2003) and pharmacy (Latif & Berger, 1999) have

conducted studies in moral sensitivity, moral judgement, or moral motivation with students engaged in fieldwork experiences, to our knowledge, this study is the first in the field of recreation management. Since no objective measurements of moral character have been developed to date, there is a lack of research examining this component in professional preparation programmes (Bebeau, 2002).

## **Methods**

### *Setting and sample*

The setting for this study was a nationally accredited recreation management programme at a public university in the northeast USA. The sample of students was recruited from a required pre-internship course that takes place one to two semesters before the start of the internship semester. The course is designed to prepare students for the internship experience through the identification of career goals and the selection of an approved internship site. Course topics include an orientation to the philosophy, goals and purpose of the internship experience; review of career settings; importance of networking through professional associations; understanding of ethical principles as applied in practice; and issues related to the transition from college to professional life, including supervision, conflict management, and stress/self-care. At the conclusion of the course, students submit a summative portfolio emphasising self-assessment, internship goals and objectives, skills in resumé and cover letter construction, and interviewing techniques.

The sample was selected from two student cohorts who completed the pre-internship class during either the fall or spring semester, prior to their summer internship experience. From a convenience population of 49 recreation management interns (61% female), a sample of 33 (14 from fall, 19 from spring) voluntarily agreed to participate in the study during their internship semester. All but one of the 33 participants were college seniors. The 33 participants (60% female) completed the DIT-2 in a pre-test format at the conclusion of the pre-internship course and in a post-test format at the conclusion of their 14-week summer internship experience.

Using a criterion sampling strategy (Patton, 2002), 10 interns were purposefully selected to serve as case studies based on their level of Post-conventional reasoning on the DIT-2 pre-test. The researchers were primarily interested in examining the judgement and action patterns among interns who demonstrated low and high levels of Post-conventional reasoning; thus those interns who demonstrated Maintaining Norms as their primary judgement schema at the pre-test were not selected for the case study. Using Bebeau and Thoma's (2003) research typology of DIT scores of students from high school through graduate school, it was expected that these college seniors would exhibit *P* scores within the 40-range. Using this typology, we determined that a 'low' pre-test score on the DIT-2 would include *P* scores of 35 and below, and a 'high' pre-test score would include *P* scores of 45 and above. The 5 interns with the lowest scores in our sample were selected to

represent cases with 'low' Post-conventional reasoning (pre-test *P* scores were 12, 12, 12, 14 and 16), and 5 interns with the top five scores were selected to represent cases with 'high' Post-conventional reasoning (pre-test *P* scores were 41, 46, 50, 54 and 60). Even though the pre-test *P* score of 41 was not within the predetermined score of 45 and above, this intern was included in the 'high' Post-conventional reasoning category because her score represented the next highest *P* score in the total group. In order to provide assurance of anonymity and confidentiality, pseudonyms were assigned to interns throughout the case study.

### *Design*

This study employed a sequential explanatory research design whereby data were collected sequentially in two phases: a quantitative phase followed by a qualitative phase (Creswell, 2003). The use of semi-structured interviews and artefact analyses after the collection of DIT-2 pre- and post-test data allowed us to extend and explain the overall picture of moral development among interns. Quantitative data were collected using a pre-experimental, one-group pre- and post-test design to determine change in interns' moral judgement scores. Narrative cases of 10 of the 33 interns provide a unique view into the connections between intern moral judgements and actions and the theoretical/predicted patterns of moral judgement and actions defined in the Neo-Kohlbergian moral development theory. This qualitative approach is similar to Johnson's (2008) study of teacher candidates. Multiple forms of qualitative data were gathered including artefacts, observations/field notes, and interviews by using a collective case study method (Stake, 2005). A collective case study constitutes several case studies of different individuals because it is believed together they will lead to better understanding and theorising about a larger collection of cases (Yin, 1994). Additional cases are chosen because such cases are expected to yield similar information or contrary, but predictable findings. Selection of multiple cases permits comparative case analysis, which allows the researcher to note attributes of interest both within individual cases and between multiple cases. An advantage to exploring multiple cases is that 'the evidence is often considered more compelling and the overall study is therefore regarded as being more robust' (Herriott & Firestone, 1983, as cited in Yin, 1994, p. 45).

### *Quantitative data*

*Measure of moral judgement.* The Defining Issues Test-2 (DIT-2) is an objective paper-and-pencil test of moral reasoning. It presents 5 hypothetical moral dilemmas, each followed by 12 issues which the respondent rates and ranks in order of importance in resolving the dilemma. For each respondent the patterns of ratings and rankings determines 'estimates of the relative strength of three moral schemas: Personal Interest, Maintaining Norms, and Post-Conventional moral reasoning' (Rest et al., 1999, p. 6). An individual's scores will demonstrate thinking



in all three schemas, while one is predominant. Results are reported as percentage scores in each of the three schemas. The N2 index (an overall score of moral judgement) represents the degree to which Post-conventional items are prioritised (almost identical to the post-conventional *P* score), plus the degree to which Personal Interest items (lower-stage items) receive lower ratings than the ratings given to Post-conventional items (higher-stage items) (Bebeau and Thoma, 2003, p. 19). The use of the consolidation and transition Type scores provides a fuller account of an individual's moral judgements. According to Bebeau and Thoma (p. 20), the seven Types include:

Type 1: predominant in personal interests schema and consolidated;

Type 2: predominant in personal interests, but transitional;

Type 3: predominant in maintaining norms, but transitional; personal interests secondary schema;

Type 4: predominant in maintaining norms schema and consolidated;

Type 5: predominant in maintaining norms schema and transitional; post-conventional secondary schema;

Type 6: predominant in post-conventional schema, but transitional; and

Type 7: predominant in post-conventional schema and consolidated.

Different schemas guide moral decision-making in different ways, thus people who 'are in periods of consolidation are better able to access and utilise their moral judgment schema, while those in transition can be distracted by several competing schemata' (Johnson, 2008, p. 431). The moral judgement Types may come into play during an internship experience, where interns are confronted with daily ethical situations that must be handled immediately. Interns who are in transition can experience difficulty 'interpreting and acting upon moral situations involving issues of fairness and justice' while interns in periods of consolidation are better able to make decisions 'at a quicker pace and in a more deliberate manner' (Johnson, 2008, p. 431). On the basis of evidence for validity and reliability as reported in Bebeau and Thoma (2003), the DIT-2 is adequate for research purposes.<sup>6</sup>

### *Qualitative data*

*Artefacts.* The first source of qualitative data included intern artefacts, which were academic assignments associated with the internship programme, including: formative and summative papers submitted by the intern throughout the internship experience, weekly reflective journals, bi-weekly online asynchronous discussions with intern peers and academic faculty supervisors, and a summative internship portfolio document submitted by the intern at the conclusion of the internship experience.

*Observations and field notes.* A second source of qualitative data included researcher observations and field notes. Each intern was visited on-site at the mid-term point of the internship in order to obtain a descriptive picture of the internship site; field notes were taken during this visit. Interns were questioned in order to obtain information about their roles and responsibilities, performances and impressions of the site supervisor as a mentor. These questions were designed to gain insight into situations in which moral sensitivity, moral reasoning, moral character and moral motivation may have come into play for the intern through the first half of the internship experience. The site supervisor was also questioned in order to obtain information about the intern's performance and ways in which the supervisor mentored the intern into the job tasks. Additionally, the site supervisor was asked to describe situations in which the intern was required to demonstrate moral behaviour. Beyond the field notes gathered during the site visit, additional researcher observations and field notes were recorded in the interns' case files as warranted, based on the emergence of issues or concerns.

*Interviews.* At the conclusion of their internship, semi-structured interviews were conducted with each of the 10 high/low intern cases. In order to address issues of authenticity and reliability, the interview guide was developed through a series of observations, focus groups, telephone interviews with experienced site supervisors, and a pilot test study. Interview topics included: (1) background information about how the intern selected his/her internship site (e.g. valued elements of experience); (2) logistical information regarding internship living arrangements, transportation, financial commitments; (3) main components of internship work (e.g. type of work assigned, confidence level based on intern perception of preparedness to do the work, ways in which the intern negotiated increased responsibility and accountability); (4) performance during internship (e.g. interns' self-perception, others' perceptions, factors that promoted successful performance, barriers that impeded success, accomplishments/challenges); (5) negotiating intern role at site (e.g. social interaction and relationships with co-workers, clients/patients, site supervisor and/or academic supervisor); (6) impact of academic assignments on learning; and (7) exposure to ethical situations posing problems and contradictions for intern's current understanding (e.g. knowledge disturbance and disequilibrium). Because this study focused on intern moral development, questions in section seven of the interview guide were designed to elicit examples of ways in which moral sensitivity, moral judgement, moral motivation, and moral character emerged for interns during the experience. This section of the interview guide is found in Table 2.

### *Data analysis*

*Quantitative analysis.* Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse the pre- and post-test DIT-2 results. Paired samples *t*-tests were employed for the results of all 33 interns to examine changes from pre- to post-test in overall moral judgement (N-2 score) and in the Personal Interest Schema, Maintaining Norms

Table 2. Interview questions designed to elicit descriptions of ethical dilemmas encountered by interns

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During the internship you faced a variety of new situations. Some of these experiences may have challenged your sense of 'right and wrong' or challenged your values and principles. You may have had to step up and manage conflicts or you may have found yourself in the middle of adverse or uncomfortable situations.

1. Were you ever in situations during the internship where you had to make a decision(s) about what was right but you weren't sure what to do? If so, please describe these situations.  
 Probe: typical matters of interpersonal relations in the workplace; ethical questions about the nature of responsibility, confidentiality, ethics of supervisory styles, fairness, honesty, loyalty, intent.  
 Probe: did you ever experience an uneasy feeling in the pit of your stomach?
  2. Why was/were this/those (a) conflict(s) for you? What makes this/those (a) moral/ethical problem(s) for you?
  3. How did you think through the problem(s)?
  4. Describe the consequences you considered when making the decision(s).
  5. How did you think about the choice(s)?
  6. What was/were the major consideration(s) in making the decision(s)?
  7. Did you alert others to the conflict(s) and/or seek their advice? Can you explain why you sought outside help? Did it help you to make the decision(s) or complicate the decision(s)?
  8. How did you resolve the moral/ethical conflict(s)?
  9. How did you know what you should do? How did you know it was the right decision(s)?
  10. Talk about the emotional aspect of having to carry out an action(s) that you thought was/were 'right' but may have been construed differently by others.  
 Probe: How did these situations make you feel; was this difficult/ easy, and why?
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Schema, & Post-conventional Schema. A bar graph was used to represent the pre- to post-test changes in Type Indicator scores for all 33 interns.

*Qualitative analysis of 10 high/low intern cases.* Qualitative analysis relied on all data sources discussed in the previous section to explore the phenomenon of the recreation management internship. Trochim's (1989) outcome pattern-matching analysis method was employed to investigate whether congruence (or incongruence) existed between the theoretical patterns of Neo-Kohlbergian theory of moral development and observed patterns of intern moral judgement and actions. The use of this method was a replication of Johnson's (2008) earlier research with teacher candidates.<sup>7</sup> The general analytical strategy employed in the pattern-matching method relied on theoretical propositions of moral development theory as defined by Rest et al. (1999) and as operationalised in their Four Component Model. This primary proposition suggests that for moral action to occur, an individual must interpret the situation and the action possibilities (moral sensitivity), form a moral judgement about what should be done (moral judgement), choose a moral or non-moral value to seek through action (moral motivation), and carry out the intended act (moral character). In accordance with Neo-Kohlbergian theory, one would expect

an intern to exhibit certain cognitive-affective interactions for each component and might anticipate certain situational factors that influence each component.

Rather than arbitrarily make decisions about which of the four components were evident in the interns' judgements and actions, a decision rules figure was created based on each of the four components as defined by Rest et al. (see Table 3), allowing for consistent categorisation of intern judgement and action patterns. This strategy was adapted from Johnson's use of a coding matrix for the moral/ethical domain among teacher candidate interns. As depicted in Table 3 each component of the Four Component Model is categorised by judgements and/or behaviours that are 'evident' or 'not evident'. Utilising this coding matrix as a guide during the analysis process, the principal researcher examined the qualitative data sources within each of the 10 high/low intern cases. Although this study did not utilise multiple raters of the qualitative data, a number of design elements were employed in order to strengthen the authenticity and dependability of the case findings. Alternative explanations to the interpretations were minimised by using

Table 3. Decision rules for coding of qualitative data based on Rest et al.'s (1999) Four Component Model

Moral sensitivity		Moral judgement schemas		
<b>Behaviour evident:</b>	<b>Behaviour not evident:</b>	<b>Personal interest:</b>	<b>Maintaining norms:</b>	<b>Post-conventional:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aware that moral problem exists</li> <li>• Sees &amp; values multiple perspectives</li> <li>• Can interpret situation &amp; understand how own actions impact others</li> <li>• Empathy</li> <li>• Emotional skills involved</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are not aware of moral situations; not sensitive to problem</li> <li>• Don't realise own actions impact others</li> <li>• Egocentric perspective: own perspective is only one that counts</li> <li>• Not open to debate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Judgement made in relation to how it impacts self</li> <li>• Self-preservation &amp; protection</li> <li>• Ego-centric perspective</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for rules that are consistently applied to all</li> <li>• Want to maintain the social order</li> <li>• Right conduct is what the law/ company policy says</li> <li>• Need for norms &amp; society-wide cooperation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decisions made on optimising others' welfare</li> <li>• Societal norms can be altered</li> <li>• Appeal to moral ideals which can be shared &amp; open to scrutiny</li> </ul>
<b>Moral motivation</b>		<b>Moral character</b>		
<b>Behaviour evident:</b>	<b>Behaviour not evident:</b>	<b>Behaviour evident:</b>	<b>Behaviour not evident:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates commitment to taking moral course of action</li> <li>• Values moral ideals over competing values</li> <li>• Takes personal responsibility for moral outcomes</li> <li>• Puts aside self-serving values</li> <li>• Has internalised understanding &amp; commitment to ethical standards of practice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competing values overshadow moral values</li> <li>• Gives in to competing values</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persist in moral task</li> <li>• Have courage in face of adversity &amp; conflict</li> <li>• Overcome fatigue or temptation</li> <li>• Strength of conviction</li> <li>• Performs tasks with integrity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wilts easily under pressure</li> <li>• Easily distracted or discouraged</li> </ul>	

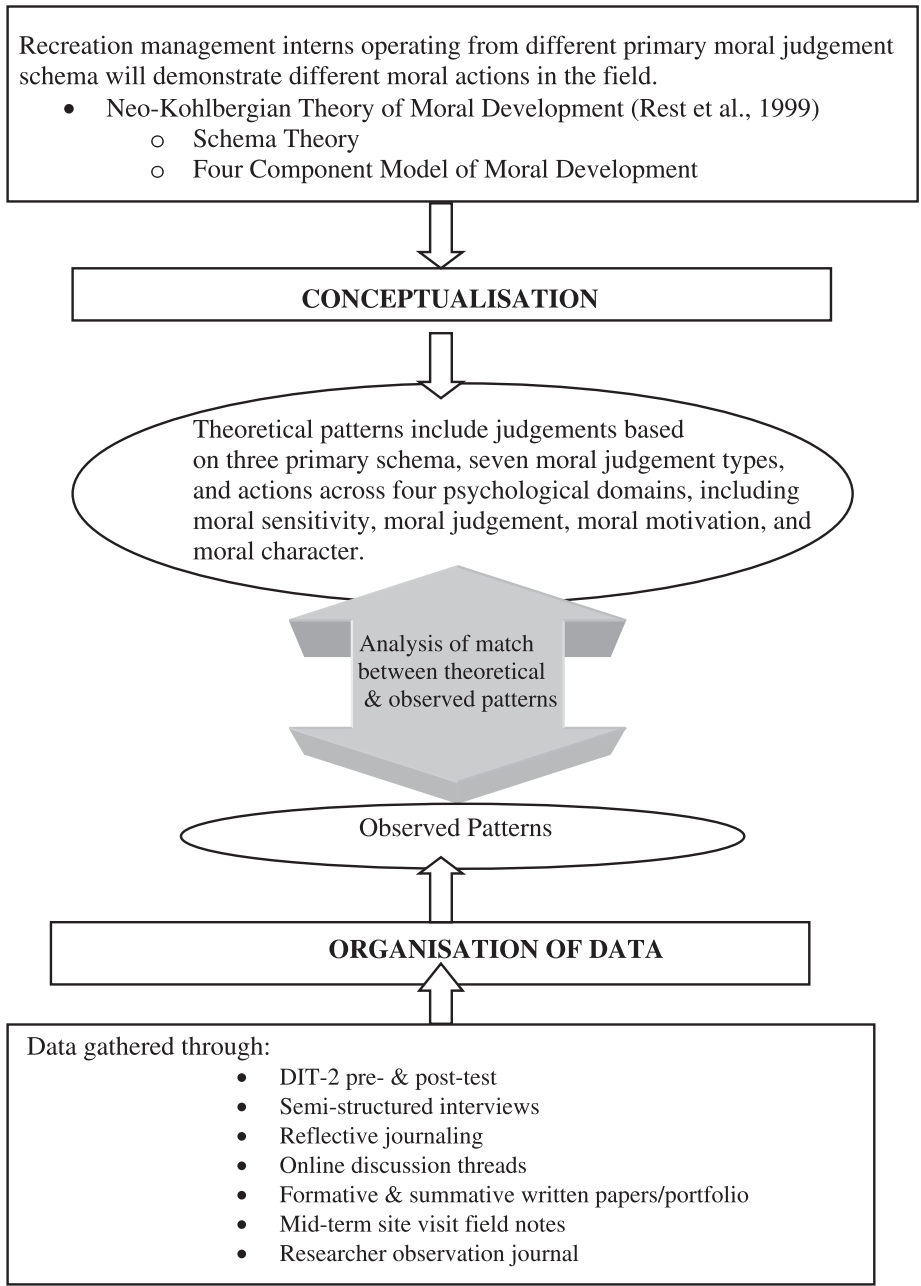
certain verification procedures such as utilisation of member check procedures, cross-checking data across intern cases, triangulating data by using multiple types of data (e.g. artefacts, observations/field notes, interviews), and connecting the findings to the theoretical and empirical literature (Creswell, 2003).

Outcome pattern matching is a theory that 'postulates structural relationships between key constructs and can be used as the basis for generating patterns of predictions' (Trochim & Cook, 1992, p. 54), comparing an empirically based pattern with a predicted one or several alternative predictions. 'Through such analysis it is assumed that judgments [and actions] are not random but, rather exist in a systematic form described as a pattern' (Johnson, 2008, p. 435). When employing outcome pattern-matching logic, 'the inferential task involves the attempt to relate, link, or match these two patterns ... to the extent that the patterns match, one can conclude that the theory, and any other theories that might predict the same observed pattern, receive support' (Trochim & Cook, 1992, p. 56). If patterns do not match, 'the theory may be incorrect or poorly formulated, the observations may be inappropriate or inaccurate, or some combination of both states may exist' (p. 56). If the patterns coincide, the results help strengthen the internal validity of the case study (Yin, 1994).

Similar to Johnson's study of teacher candidates, the empirically based patterns in the current case study were generated from all of the quantitative and qualitative data obtained from the 10 high/low intern cases. The researcher compared observed patterns of intern judgement and actions with theoretical ones predicted by Rest et al.'s (1999) Neo-Kohlbergian theory of moral development, as illustrated in Figure 1. Rest et al.'s theoretical patterns, denoted in the top section of Figure 1, are derived from Schema Theory and the Four Component Model, and suggest that as interns utilise different moral judgement schemas (Personal Interest, Maintaining Norms, Post-Conventional) they may demonstrate different actions with regard to moral sensitivity, moral motivation and moral character. The observational patterns of intern moral judgements and actions were generated from the DIT-2 pre- and post-tests, artefacts, observations/field notes and interviews as depicted in the lower section of Figure 1.

As illustrated by the two-directional arrow in the middle of Figure 1, the theoretical and observational patterns are then analysed for 'congruence and incongruence' (Johnson, 2008, p. 436). In the current study, we defined *congruence* as consistency between the artefact analysis (e.g. case artefacts, observations/field notes, interviews) and the four hypothesised moral behaviour components of moral sensitivity, moral judgement, moral motivation and moral character. *Incongruence* is defined as inconsistency between the artefact analysis (e.g. case artefacts, observations/field notes, interviews) and the four hypothesised moral behaviour components of moral sensitivity, moral judgement, moral motivation and moral character. An example of congruence can be illustrated by an intern who is in transition, predominantly using the Personal Interest Schema who indicates during her post-internship interview that she 'remained silent' and 'did what she was told' during a situation in which she was asked to participate in a questionable billing

*Theoretical Realm*



*Observational Realm*

Figure 1. Theory of outcome pattern-matching. Note: Adapted from Johnson, L. E. (2008). Teacher candidate disposition: Moral judgement or regurgitation? *Journal of Moral Education*, 37 (4), 436. Copyright © Journal of Moral Education Ltd reprinted by permission of Taylor & Francis Ltd (<http://www.tandfonline.com>), on behalf of Journal of Moral Education Ltd.

practice. She articulates that she chose to remain silent and do what she was told because she did not want to be perceived as ‘a troublemaker’ so that she could pass the internship and ‘graduate on time’. Despite her recognition that the questionable billing situation may have been ‘wrong’ (moral sensitivity), she chose to remain silent, thus resulting in a failure of moral action. This would be consistent with a predicted pattern of moral behaviour for a person who is in transition, predominantly using a Personal Interest Schema. It is important to note that research shows ‘there is not an exact one-to-one relationship between moral schema and behavior’ (Sprinthall, Sprinthall, & Oja, 1998, p. 219); however, studies have shown that behavioural trends showing consistency with the theory do exist.

## Results

### *Quantitative findings*

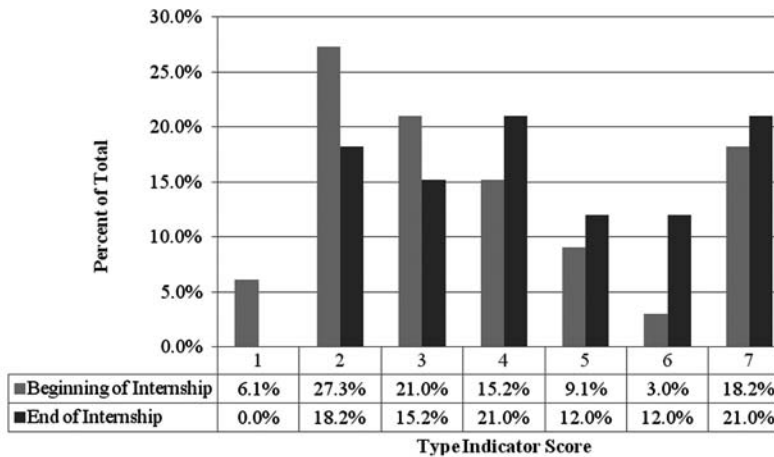
A paired samples *t*-test showed a statistically significant difference in overall moral judgement (N2 score,  $p = .000$ ) for the total sample of 33 recreation management interns who completed a 14-week internship experience (see Table 4). Analysis of schema scores shows a significant decrease in Personal Interest Schema ( $p = .006$ ) and a significant increase in Post-conventional Schema ( $p = .012$ ). There was an increase in Maintaining Norms schema scores that did not reach statistical significance.

Figure 2 shows the distributions of Type Indicator scores at the beginning and end of the internship for the total sample of 33 recreation management interns. At the beginning of the internship 6.1% were consolidated in the Personal Interest Schema (Type 1), and at the end of the internship none of the interns was consolidated in Type 1. Consolidation at the Maintaining Norms Schema (Type 4) increased from the beginning to the end of internship, and consolidation in the Post-conventional Schema (Type 7) also increased. These are promising findings in the direction we would hope for.

Table 4. Change in DIT2 mean schema scores and N2 index for full sample ( $n = 33$ )

Subscale	Pre-test			Post-test			<i>t</i> -test	
	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>t</i> value
Personal Interest	33	31.50	10.34	33	25.61	13.84	-.60	2.93*
Maintaining Norms	33	34.17	11.42	33	34.35	14.55	n/s	n/s
Post-conventional P-Score	33	29.02	12.43	33	35.03	12.80	.40	-2.66**
N-2 Index	33	25.94	14.40	33	35.76	13.63	.55	-4.34***

Notes.  $df = 32$ , \* $p < .01$ , \*\* $p < .05$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$ , n/s, not significant.



**Type Indicator Scores**

- Type 1: predominant in personal interests schema and consolidated;
- Type 2: predominant in personal interests, but transitional;
- Type 3: predominant in maintaining norms, but transitional; personal interests secondary schema;
- Type 4: predominant in maintaining norms schema and consolidated;
- Type 5: predominant in maintaining norms schema and transitional; post-conventional secondary schema;
- Type 6: predominant in post-conventional schema, but transitional; and
- Type 7: predominant in post-conventional schema and consolidated

(Bebeau & Thoma, 2003, p. 20)

Figure 2. Distributions of type scores at beginning and end of internship for full sample ( $n = 33$ )

*Case study findings*

Table 5 shows the pre- and post-test DIT-2 mean scores and Type Indicator scores for the five interns who were selected to represent cases with ‘low’ Post-conventional reasoning and the five interns who were selected to represent cases with ‘high’ Post-conventional reasoning. All of these scores derived from the DIT-2 scoring report. Although statistical significance is not sought for the case study method, a review of the pre- and post-test  $P$  scores for the 10 intern cases revealed some positive trends. Nine out of the 10 interns showed increases in overall moral judgement scores,  $N2$ , and 8 out of the 10 interns demonstrated growth in Post-conventional reasoning at post-test.

Based on the predicted patterns of Neo-Kohlbergian theory of moral development (Rest et al., 1999), interns with low  $P$  scores on the DIT-2 would be expected to demonstrate judgements and actions from an egocentric perspective or in relation to group norm conformity. In contrast, interns with high  $P$  scores on the DIT-2 would be expected to demonstrate judgements and actions that were open to conflicted viewpoints, considered the rights of others, took into account



Table 5. Pre- and post-test DIT-2 mean scores and type indicators for 10 selected cases

Pseudonym	<b>OVERALL MORAL JUDGEMENT</b>				<b>SCHEMA SCORES</b>				Type Indicator		
	N-2 Index		Personal Interest		Maintaining Norms		Post-conventional		Pre	Post	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	
<b>LOW CASES</b>											
<i>Ty</i>	8	20	52	22	28	32	12	40	2	6	
<i>Riley</i>	23	39	24	30	52	44	12	26	3	4	
<i>Karen</i>	20	22	32	50	56	22	12	28	3	2	
<i>Mike</i>	18	31	28	8	52	62	14	24	4	4	
<i>Lauren</i>	14	26	30	34	54	38	16	28	3	3	
<b>HIGH CASES</b>											
<i>Amy</i>	43	49	27	22	10	26	41	46	7	7	
<i>Amelia</i>	50	58	26	6	28	38	46	56	7	7	
<i>Bob</i>	52	55	24	8	16	32	50	52	7	7	
<i>Tara</i>	55	55	6	6	26	38	54	46	7	7	
<i>Fae</i>	60	46	14	26	26	26	60	46	7	7	

both logical and emotional domains and adhered to universal moral principles. The pattern-matching analysis resulted in noteworthy congruence between these theoretical patterns and the observed patterns of judgements and actions for the 10 high/low intern cases. Furthermore, strong connections were identified for Type Indicator as interns in transition tended to demonstrate difficulty interpreting and acting upon moral situations while those who were consolidated tended toward quick and deliberate decision-making when faced with ethical dilemmas in practice. Within limitations of space, we provide a few intern case examples of congruence between the theoretical patterns of Rest et al.'s theory and the observed patterns of judgements and actions among high/low interns. Although only a few cases are used to illustrate congruence, the other intern cases within both high/low pre-test *P* score groups demonstrated similar judgement and action patterns. Because incongruence was not evident in the case analysis, no intern case examples are presented to illustrate these patterns.

Congruence was noted as the five intern cases with low pre-test *P* scores tended to demonstrate judgements and actions that emphasised personal interests and a need to maintain the *status quo* of the internship agency. These interns were primarily focused on their own needs, less able to show empathy for others, worried about negative responses from those in positions of authority and, in their attempts to uphold the established rules of the agency, did what they were told regardless of the ethical consequences of their actions. This pattern was evident in the case of Lauren, an intern with a pre-test *P* score of 16 (Type 3) and post-test *P* score of 28 (Type 3) who worked with an event-planning firm in a large urban city in the northeast USA. Lauren's actions appeared to be motivated by self-interest and a desire to please others as she grappled with a poorly planned cookout event for low-income families sponsored by the city's mayoral office. Based on the contract, Lauren planned food for 250 people but became overwhelmed when 600 people showed up. She was aware, however, that the chef had actually brought enough food to feed 400 people. As the original 250 meals ran out, people continued to approach her for their free meal. Once the dilemma became evident, Lauren stuck to the original contract and told the people that the food was gone, despite knowing that there actually was food for 400 people. The result of her decision angered the attendees and the mayor's staff and as the incident escalated into a 'chaotic' and emotionally charged situation, Lauren reversed her decision and told the chef to make the extra food. When asked to explain the motivation for changing her decision, Lauren responded, 'I was scared because all of these people were screaming at me, and it was all inner city people, and we were in the middle of the projects ... that was a very difficult situation because I didn't know what to do.' She also indicated that she changed her decision because she wanted to make a good impression on the mayor's staff because they were a profitable account for her internship agency. She struggled with the need to abide by the contract, which is Maintaining Norms reasoning, but at the same time wanted to avoid the angry crowd voicing their displeasure with her decision, which is Personal Interest reasoning. Lauren's admitted confusion about what to do and her slow response to

act was consistent with an individual who is in a period of transition (Type 3). Her inability to empathise with the families who did not get food even though she was aware that this could have been their only meal of the day was a breakdown in moral sensitivity. Her inability to choose the moral value (cooking the extra food) over a competing value (avoiding the crowd's vocal displeasure) appeared to be a failure of moral motivation. Taken together, Lauren's actions reflect a person in transition, predominantly using Maintaining Schema but also using Personal Interest Schema as a secondary schema. This pattern appears to demonstrate congruence with Rest et al.'s hypothesised theory of moral development.

Riley, an intern with a low pre-test *P* score of 12 (Type 3) and post-test *P* score of 26 (Type 4) worked for an entertainment-booking agency in the northeast region of the USA. She faced a recurring ethical dilemma that she described as the owner's focus on 'making money at all costs'. In one particular situation, Riley struggled with the owner's decision to charge a client \$1000 for terminating his contract and cancelling his event upon learning of his cancer diagnosis. She noted, 'I had a hard time with his [owner's] decision ... I guess I'm just a softy. The client cancelled because of a health reason, not a business reason, so it's tough to take ... I had a hard time looking at this situation from a business standpoint.' In the post-internship interview, Riley shared a number of situations that fell into this category, yet she never spoke up about her concerns during the internship. When asked to explain her reasons for not speaking up during these questionable situations, Riley noted, 'Well there wasn't much that I could do, because I didn't have the authority there to do anything.' Riley appeared to demonstrate moral sensitivity, as she was aware that ethical issues existed that posed potentially negative effects on the clients. Despite this awareness, however, she was not able to carry out a moral action, such as articulating her displeasure about these questionable business practices to the owner, another co-worker, or her academic supervisor. Riley did not want to be viewed as a 'troublemaker' and didn't want to disturb the way things had been done at the agency. This factor motivated her judgements and actions. She was clearly challenged by what she saw as the reality of the business world as she continually allowed the owner's competing values to overshadow her own value of what she felt was right. Her lack of moral action appeared to be a result of deficiencies in moral judgement and moral motivation. Although Riley demonstrated actions that reflect the Maintaining Norms schema, she was in transition at the beginning of the internship, using the Personal Interest Schema as a secondary schema, and at the end of the internship her type score (Type 4) indicated consolidation in the Maintaining Norms Schema. This pattern appears to demonstrate congruence with Rest et al.'s hypothesised theory of moral development.

In contrast to the judgements and behaviours of interns with 'low' pre-test *P* scores, interns with 'high' pre-test *P* scores who encountered ethical situations in practice were more apt to consider others' perspectives, remained open to conflicted viewpoints, showed patience and tolerance during times of ambiguity and conflict, put the needs of others before their own and took a caring and empathic

approach with others. This pattern was characteristic of Tara, an intern with a pre-test *P* score of 54 (Type 7) and post-test *P* score of 46 (Type 7) who worked with a harbour tour business in the northeast region of the USA. Tara faced an ethical challenge when an intoxicated woman came on a two-hour harbour tour with her two-year-old child and displayed behaviour that put her child at risk. Tara was aware that something was wrong with the woman and acted immediately by speaking to the boat captain, sitting with the woman throughout the cruise to quietly inquire about what was going on and to keep an eye on her child, and remaining with the woman and child at the end of the cruise until the police arrived. She noted, 'I realised the woman was in trouble but did not want to embarrass or hurt her. I just sat and talked with her and tried to get to the foundation of why she was upset. In the meantime, I kept my eye on her son, making sure he was safe.' Although Tara recognised the serious nature of the consequences, she remained sensitive to the woman's feelings and responded with a caring and empathic approach. She noted, 'Even though the woman was wrong, I still wanted to make her feel comfortable.' In this situation, Tara demonstrated moral behaviour as she was able to interpret the situation as a moral issue (moral sensitivity), quickly formed a judgement about what should be done to protect the child (moral judgement), chose a moral value by electing to do something rather than remain silent (moral motivation), and carried out the acts of calmly questioning the woman without embarrassing her, keeping her eye on the child and alerting the captain and the authorities to the issue (moral character). When confronted with ethical challenges throughout her internship, Tara demonstrated similarly deliberate decisions and actions, a pattern consistent with a consolidated Type. Tara's actions throughout the duration of her internship appeared to be illustrative of a person consolidated in the Post-conventional Schema, showing congruence with Rest et al.'s hypothesised theory of moral development.

## **Discussion**

The results showed that this internship modelled on the ILF produced changes in moral judgement among recreation management interns. The significant increase in overall moral judgement scores (N2 scores) for the full sample of 33 interns is promising. The significant declines in Personal Interest scores and increases in Post-conventional scores suggest that interns are better able to reject personal interest items that reflect more simplistic or biased judgements and to prefer judgements based on moral purposes. This is an important finding because interns who make decisions from the Post-conventional Schema are said to have access to better conceptual tools to help them to make sense of their world and derive guides for decision-making (Rest & Narvaez, 1994).

The distribution of Type scores for the full sample of 33 interns show promising shifts in the number of interns who were consolidated in their primary judgement schema at the end of the internship. These shifts included a decrease in the number of interns who were consolidated in Type 1, Personal Interest Schema (6.1%

at pre-test; 0% at post-test), increases in the number of interns who were consolidated in Type 4, Maintaining Norms Schema (15.2% pre-test; 21% post-test) and increases in number of interns who were consolidated in Type 7, Post-conventional Schema (18.2% pre-test; 21% post-test). The results suggest that at the end of the internship, a greater number of interns were better able to access and utilise their primary moral judgement schema and fewer interns were distracted by competing schema. This is especially important when interns are challenged by ethical situations that require 'quick and deliberate decision-making' (Johnson, 2008, p. 431), as illustrated by the child endangerment situation encountered by Tara. Although these quantitative findings cannot be generalised to the greater population, they are consistent with the literature, which suggests that carefully designed fieldwork experiences have the potential to promote student moral judgement (Boss, 1994; Cannon, 2008; Porco, 2003; Reiman & Peace, 2002; Sprinthall & Thies-Sprinthall, 1983; Watson, 1995).

As evidenced by the findings of the collective case study, the recreation internship appears to be a fertile training ground for student moral development. Recreation interns assume a considerable helping role where success or failure can result in consequences for their consumers and clients. According to the theoretical patterns of Rest et al.'s theory (1999), if we have knowledge about an intern's predominant moral judgement schema, we may be able to anticipate their judgements and actions with regard to moral sensitivity, moral motivation and moral character. We want interns to develop the moral character to act in the best interest of others, and to treat everyone fairly and with respect. In the stressful practice environment, it is not easy to identify a specific ethical issue and decide on the best course of action but, as this study shows, interns who demonstrate higher levels of moral judgement should be at a distinct advantage in the process of interpreting an ethical situation and the action possibilities, forming a moral judgement about what should be done, choosing a moral value to seek through action, and carrying out the intended act.

The case study further illustrates the value of investigating moral development by attention to all four components as a way to gather a more complete picture of ethical abilities needed for real-world professional practice. The process of being sensitive to and identifying ethical issues, being motivated to reason and decide on the best course of action and being able to act requires knowledge and skills that need to be learned and developed. Since the inception of the Four Component Model, educators in professional preparation programmes have shown a growing interest in examining *how* students perform as 'moral agents' (Triezenberg & Davis, 2000) in the field. This recognition has been highlighted by a significant influx of applied ethics models designed to integrate practical and ethical dimensions of practice, particularly in allied health disciplines such as dentistry, medicine, physical therapy, and nursing (Bebeau, 2002; Delany et al., 2010; Hambrick, Pimentel, & Albano, 2009; Triezenberg & Davis, 2000).

However, while there is great interest in applied ethics models among professional preparation programs, most of the studies that utilise Rest et al.'s (1999)

Four Component Model are focused primarily on moral judgement (Carpenter & Richardson, 2008; Nunner-Winkler, 2007; Swisher, 2002). This current study has contributed to the Four Component Model by showing that there is value in exploring the internship experience as a primary pedagogical resource not only for intern training in moral judgement, but moral sensitivity, moral motivation and moral character as well. The unique 'existential quality' of the internship experience as told by the 10 high/low intern cases further contributes to the advancement of the Four Component Model.

### **Educational implications**

As demonstrated by these findings, a recreation management internship modelled on ILF principles appears to be a viable pedagogical strategy to advance student moral development. Although recreation management educators have long valued ethics education in the classroom curriculum, we have yet to adequately capture how students actually handle the moral demands and complex ethical issues of practice. There is no doubt that an understanding of ethics is crucial to student professional development, but research suggests that the greatest gains in moral reasoning are achieved by educational interventions of an extended duration and include active engagement of students in ethical problem-solving (Sisola, 2000).

In the current study, we were surprised by the significant post-test moral judgement gains of the 33 interns because the internship was only 14 weeks in duration and not the 4–6 months recommended in the ILF (Reiman & Oja, 2006). This suggests that other factors outside the internship experience may have influenced this change in intern moral judgement. We question whether the didactic training in the pre-internship course may have had an impact on intern moral judgement growth over the course of the internship experience. Perhaps the coverage of ethical issues of practice, ways in which ethical codes inform professional behaviour and conflict management strategies in the pre-internship course enabled interns to more effectively anticipate ethical problems and adjust accordingly. We further speculate whether these findings were impacted by the recreation management practicum requirement, a less-intensive, 50-hour fieldwork commitment conducted by all recreation students in this curriculum 1–2 semesters prior to the internship semester. The practicum experience may have assisted interns with their adjustment to professional behaviour expectations of the different service sectors. These are areas that warrant further inquiry.

The collective case study demonstrated that how interns respond to the ethical challenges of practice depends on their ability to recognise ethical issues when they exist, reason about the issues and make ethical decisions, prioritise professional values over other competing values and demonstrate the skills needed for moral action. Recreation management educators need to recognise the critical role of the internship beyond the entry-level competency outcomes it provides and begin to view this fieldwork experience as a pivotal element of moral education for our students. As suggested by this study, an internship modelled on the ILF is a viable

pedagogical strategy that can have a far greater impact on the moral development of interns than previously realised.

### **Research implications**

To address the limitations of this study, future research should consider employing a control group where interns from similar programmes participate in a similar study of moral development. Using a larger sample with a control group would allow generalisation of the results to the field and may enable researchers to quantitatively examine whether different service sectors of the recreation management field have an impact on the moral development of interns, an issue that this study did not address.

A longitudinal study of interns spanning the full period of time they are in the university recreation management programme would potentially provide more information about the effects of the internship experience on student moral development. For example, gathering DIT-2 data on newly admitted students could serve as a baseline of their moral-reasoning levels, which could then be systematically assessed at numerous points in time throughout the curriculum. In addition to seeing how the internship or other fieldwork experiences might impact these scores, multiple data points may show how traditional ethics instructional strategies in the classroom impact student moral-reasoning scores.

To address the limitation of a single rater of the case study data, an additional level of qualitative analysis with a second rater is currently underway for a future paper that will explore aspects of the internship experience that appear to foster or constrain moral development among each of the 10 high/low cases. This analysis will attempt to determine factors that may have influenced individual intern gains and/or regression in predominant Schema and Type scores from pre- to post-test. This analysis further examines how the seven design principles of the ILF can be utilised to enhance the resources and/or limit the constraints to intern moral development; for example, the need for site supervisors to be excellent ethical role models and the importance of the core values and norms of the internship agency site.

### **Notes**

1. Student interns typically work in the following leisure service sectors: (a) public and government settings including local parks and recreation departments, community recreation centres, state and federal parks and natural resources, cultural resources, outdoor recreation, forestry; (b) non-profit settings including YMCA/YWCA, boys/girls clubs, American Cancer Society, United Way; (c) event-planning settings including private firms, resorts and entertainment agencies; (d) private membership organisations such as country clubs; (e) employee services providing corporate team-building and fitness programming; (f) sport management agencies including recreational, semi-professional and professional sports; (g) armed forces recreation for military personnel and their families; (h) tourism and hospitality settings including the cruise industry, convention centres, visitor bureaux, theme parks, fairs, festivals, zoos, hotels; (i) campus recreation for students, faculty, staff and public con-

- sumers at colleges and universities; and (j) therapeutic recreation for people with disabilities/illness across a variety of settings including hospitals, substance abuse centres, day programs, long-term care centres and community-based adapted recreation agencies.
2. 'Overall, moral sensitivity requires first that emotional reactions be regulated for attentional focusing, and, second that the dilemma be examined from multiple perspectives before one undertakes the moral reasoning process' (Morton, Worthley, Testerman, & Mahoney, 2006, p. 390).
  3. According to Bebeau and Thoma (2003), a person who uses a Personal Interest Schema makes ethical decisions based on personal stake and interests. In the Maintaining Norms Schema, 'maintaining the established social order defines morality; law is connected to order in a moral sense. The schema leads to the expectation that without law (and duty to one's roles), there would be no order' (Rest et al., 1999, p. 38). In the Post-conventional Schema individuals 'appeal to moral ideals and/or theoretical frameworks for resolving complex moral issues' (Bebeau & Thoma, 2003, p. 18). 'The defining characteristic of this schema is that rights and duties are based on sharable ideals for organizing cooperation in society, and are open to debate and tests of logical consistency, experience of the community, and coherence with accepted practice' (Rest et al., p. 41).
  4. Moral motivation in the Neo-Kohlbergian tradition emphasises two critical aspects: (1) the importance of ordering and prioritising moral values over competing non-moral values and (2) the formation of role concept or professional identity. The internship can be a 'motive force' for moral behaviour (Hoffman, 2000) and stimulate the development of a 'moral self-identity' (Narvaez, 2005). The prioritisation of moral values in one's value system 'impacts the likelihood of moral values being acted upon in moral situations' (Hardy & Carlo, 2005, p. 48).
  5. 'A person may be morally sensitive, may make good moral judgments and place high priority on moral values but if the person wilts under pressure, is easily distracted or discouraged, is a wimp or weak-willed, then moral failure occurs because of a deficiency in Component IV [moral character]. Psychological toughness and strong character do not guarantee adequacy in any of the other components, but a certain amount of each is necessary to carry out a line of action' (Rest, 1994, p. 24).
  6. For example, test-retest reliability ranges from .70 to .80, and internal consistency reliability is between .70 and .80. Validity for the DIT has been assessed in terms of seven criteria and is said to be moderate to high. Construct validity in terms of the DIT being a measure of cognitive structures is .60. Concurrent validity has been at moderate levels for pro-social behaviour (.31) and political views (.40-.65). Moderately high levels of concurrent validity have also been found between Loevinger's Scale of Ego Development (.65) and Kohlberg's Moral Judgment Interview (.65). The DIT is equally valid for males and females as gender accounts for only 0.5% of the *P* index, although the DIT-2 has not been used as extensively as the original DIT, validity has remained strong with a correlation between the two tests reported at .79.
  7. In a case study of teacher candidates, Johnson (2008) investigated two measures of moral judgement (DIT-2; teacher intern written assignments) and explored the congruence between these assessments. In her qualitative analysis, Johnson adapted Trochim's (1989) outcome pattern-matching method to examine congruence between the theoretical patterns of Neo-Kohlbergian theory of moral judgement (Rest et al., 1999) and interns' written assignments. In the current study, we replicated Johnson's use of Trochim's analysis method in a study of recreation management interns and, in addition, explored congruence between the theoretical patterns of Rest et al.'s (1999) Four Component Model of moral development and the observational patterns of intern moral judgements/actions derived from case artefacts, observations/field notes and interviews.



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