

Do Emotional Individuals Tend to Make Less Ethical Decisions?

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Abstract

Emotional intelligence has been identified as a necessary factor for the psychological wellbeing of workers and overall success in life. Researchers have indicated that emotions, specifically negative emotions, could affect the decision-making process. One workplace event that elicits strong emotions is making ethical decisions. Using a total of 130 participants, this study measured emotional intelligence and manipulated negative emotions (sadness and anger), assessing their influence on ethical decision making. Participants were exposed to two work scenarios and their ability to understand, perceive, and manage emotions while solving an ethical dilemma were compared. Results showed that emotions did influence ethical decision making, especially in the experimental condition involving the negative emotion of sadness. In addition, participants' emotional intelligence scores were used to explain the variance in making the correct ethical decision. Theoretical and practical implications are discussed in the context of emotions and decision making.

Keywords

Emotional Intelligence, Motivation, Empathy, Decision Making.

I. Introduction

Emotions are defined as intense feelings directed at someone or something [1]. These feelings can be positive or negative which is measured as an emotion's "valence" [2]. Krishnakumar and Rymph (2012) assert that negatively valenced emotions can impact thought processes needed to make ethical decisions. While previous studies support that emotions can influence ethical decision making [4-5], there is little research exploring if emotional intelligence explains any variance in making ethical decisions. Specifically, the present study explores if emotional individuals tend to make less ethical decisions and, if so, is it because these individuals lack the emotional intelligence to identify, regulate, and control negative emotions?

II. Ethical Decision Making

In the workplace, employees are tasked with making decisions regarding how they respond to various situations. These decisions are driven by numerous factors, but emotions often play a key role [6]. Applied to organizations, employees are sometimes faced with ethical dilemmas that involve interpersonal contexts accompanied by high levels of emotion [7]. Therefore, the more skilled an employee is in dealing with his or her emotions in a workplace environment the more likely they should be to make sound ethical decisions [3].

Ethical Decision Making (EDM) refers to decisions that involve what is morally right or wrong [8]. We use our own values as well as societal standards when judging a situation or problem ethically [9]. This can be a source of great discomfort when emotional forces prompt individuals to behave less ethically [10]. Recent

major business scandals, such as Enron, "underscore the need for businesses to do much more to ensure high standards of ethical behavior among managers and employees" [11; p 169]. This has led to an increased interest in ethical decision making and the variables involved in the decision-making process.

EDM in the literature lacks a comprehensive theory. Schwartz (2016) however provided an integrative theory that attempts to reconcile the rationalist and non-rationalist based approaches. This integrated Ethical Decision-Making model with its focus on the individual within a work context provides the framework for the current study. Based on this model, Krishnakumar and Rymph (2012) isolated the role of emotional intelligence in moderating the relationship between an individual's negative emotions and their ethical decision making.

Previous research in EDM often used vignettes or scenarios to present situations that require participants to indicate how they would respond in real life [13-15]. Sims (1999; p 189) developed six ethical business dilemmas that were "intended to provide a means for studying how different individuals solve realistic business dilemmas." His study expanded on previous ethical scenarios by providing multiple choices in the solution of each dilemma. Answer choices ranged from least to most ethical decision. Newer EDM research indicates that the elicitation of different discrete emotions may influence ethical decision making based on the evaluation and interpretation of the scenario [4,17]. Moreover, the presence of others in an ethical dilemma could influence social norms or obstruct the EDM process through their interpersonal relationships with the decision maker [3]. However, there is little research investigating if negative emotions and emotional intelligence affect the decision maker. The present study asserts that negatively valenced emotions could influence decision makers to respond less ethically if they do not have the emotional intelligence to identify, regulate, and control negative emotions.

III. Emotional Intelligence

Emotional Intelligence (EI) is defined as the ability to perceive, thoughtfully use, understand, and manage both one's own and others' emotions [18]. It is a multi-dimensional construct, first proposed by Salovey and Mayer (1990), that links emotion and cognition with the aim of improving human interactions. Haidt (2001) proposed that emotions play a primary role in moral (or ethical) decision making. Krishnakumar and Rymph (2012) further assert that emotions elicited in an ethical dilemma are processed by abilities included under EI. Previous research shows that those high in EI are more adept at reasoning through emotional antecedents and should be able to mitigate problems long before they have any impact [21]. Two models of EI have emerged, the ability model and the mixed model. The ability model describes EI as "abilities that involve perceiving and reasoning abstractly with information that emerges from feeling" while the

mixed model defines EI as “ability with social behaviors, traits and competencies” [22; p 389]. Both ability and trait self-report measures of EI currently exist. There is little consensus as to which measure is more reliable and valid [23-25]. Research on emotional intelligence has previously focused on the regulation of emotion in regard to addictive behaviors [26], problem solving [19], and risk taking such as gambling [27-28]. Results of these studies indicated that lower levels of emotional intelligence tend to lead to worse outcomes for individuals including destructive behaviors such as substance abuse, impaired social functioning, or an inability to attain meaningful goals [29-32]. Several researchers also assert that EI is critical for successful academic and work performance [33-36]. Some studies found that emotional intelligence is positively related to ethical decision making [37-40]. However, whether emotional individuals tend to make less ethical decisions has received little attention.

IV. EI and EDM

Krishnakumar and Rymph (2012) used two of Sims (1999) ethical business dilemma scenarios as well as a shortened version of the EI instrument developed by MacCann and Roberts (2008) to investigate the roles of negative emotions and EI in EDM. Their findings support previous research that increased levels of sadness and anger are associated with making less ethical decisions [42]. High EI individuals were better able to deal with negative emotions and arrive at more ethical decisions compared to low EI individuals. However, the instrument used to measure emotional intelligence showed poor reliability (Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.58$). Researchers further suggested that using full-time student samples for the EDM scenarios with themes relating to the workplace may not be generalizable to other populations, especially since there was no data regarding the work status of participants (full-time or part-time) which is assessed in the present study. We further aim to strengthen the results of Krishnakumar and Rymph (2012) by using an EI measure with strong reliability indexes and constructively replicating the design (method section) as close as possible.

V. Hypotheses

1. Individuals exposed to negative emotions will make less ethical decisions than those not exposed to negative emotions.
2. Individuals exposed to negative emotions will be less likely to repeat ethical decisions in a similar future situation than those not exposed to negative emotions.
3. Individuals with lower EI will make less ethical decisions than those with high EI scores.

VI. Method

A. Participants

Undergraduate students ($n = 130$) at a southeastern university in the United States were invited to sign up via the online SONA system to take part in this study. Participants ranged from 18 to 44 years of age where the average age was 19. Most respondents were women (77.7%; $n = 101$) with 22.3% being men ($n = 29$). Over half of the participants were classified as working (63.8%; $n = 83$) with 16.9% working Full-time ($n = 22$) and 46.9% working Part-time ($n = 61$). The remaining 36.2% of participants were classified as not working ($n = 47$).

B. Measures

The study consisted of two versions (A and B) of a paper/pencil survey with two ethical decision-making scenarios and an emotional

intelligence scale. Sadness (high or low) and anger (high or low) were manipulated for the experimental group. Participants were randomly assigned to either the control or experimental group. Distributing the surveys randomly was expected to minimize any systematic contextual (e.g. time of the day) or methodological (e.g., study explanation) effects.

1. Experimental Manipulation

Version A had the two original scenarios (see the description below) as developed by Sims (1999), Policies and Yearend Report. Version B contained modified scenarios designed to elicit more negative emotions (sadness and anger) than the first version.

2. Ethical Decision-Making

EDM was assessed through the responses given to the two scenarios [16]. These scenarios focused on workplace events. The first scenario (Appendix A, Scenario 1: Policies) involves a dilemma that arises when an employee is conflicted between deciding to report an unethical activity at the workplace or just ignore it. Respondents were asked to choose one of five solutions to the ethical dilemma. To prevent participants from guessing, we randomly arranged all answer choices in the survey. The answer choices ranged from least ethical (i.e., say nothing) to most ethical (i.e., make sure that the violation was corrected, no matter how far I would have to go). Sims had previously standardized these answer choices [16]. A higher score indicated a higher ethical decision. Scenario 2 (Appendix A, Scenario 2: Year-end report) also shows another workplace scenario where a worker faces a dilemma on how best to react to co-worker who is not putting in much effort on a joint yearend report task that has been assigned to them. Similar to Scenario 1, we randomly arranged all answer choices in the survey. The experimental group’s scenarios were changed so that the scenarios will produce more intense feelings of discomfort and negative emotions. That is, the first scenario was intended to induce more sadness among the participants while the second scenario will provoke more anger.

The sentence below was added to Scenario 1 to modify it (italicized in Appendix B):

“She/he is also a very close friend of yours. You are also aware that he/she is the sole income provider for his/her household. Hence this could lead to emotional consequences.”

This addition should increase the probability that the participants will feel more sadness, if the respondent chooses the more ethical options.

Likewise, Scenario 2 was modified by adding the following:

“This year the preparation of the report was especially hard, because in addition to writing the report, you also had to coach the new employee. Because of the demanding nature of this project, you’ve also had to sacrifice a lot in your personal life (e.g. your parents’ anniversary, your kids’ soccer games, etc.). You really feel angry about this situation.”

This addition should increase the potential for feelings of anger if the respondent chooses the more ethical options.

In addition, this study also assessed the likelihood of reoccurrence of the decision made by asking respondents to ‘indicate the estimated percentage of times you would make each of the above choices, if similar situations arise in the future, and write the percentages in

the blanks (The numbers should add up to 100%).’ This addition to assessing EDM as described in previous studies [3] is used to add robustness to the measurement although a one item measure of EDM is also acceptable. Only the percentage score provided for the most ethical decision possible was recorded for analysis. This added robustness to the construct of EDM is labelled in this study as Ethical Decision Reoccurrence (EDR).

3. Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence was measured using the 16-item Wong and Law EI Scale (WLEIS) [43]. This measure of emotional intelligence has been used and referenced in previous studies [44]. Responses are measured on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Totally disagree) to 7 (Totally agree). A sample item from this scale is “I am able to control my temper so that I can handle difficulties rationally.” Higher numbers indicate higher levels of emotional intelligence. Coefficient alphas for the WLEIS range from .69 to .91 for self-ratings depending on the subscale(s) used.

4. Manipulation Check

The manipulations of sadness and anger were evaluated by using eight items (Interest, Happiness, Surprise, Sadness, Anger, Disgust, Fear, and Shame) following the discrete emotions framework suggested by Izard (discrete emotions; 2009) and Tangney et al. (moral emotions; 2007). After reading the scenarios and selecting an answer choice, participants were presented with the following instructions:

“Now, imagining yourself in the above situation, please indicate the amount of emotions you felt as you made your decision by circling the appropriate response below.”

Participants rated the extent to which they felt each emotion on a scale ranging from 1 (Not at all) to 7 (Very much so). The modification of Scenario 1 was expected to yield more sadness and the modification of Scenario 2 was expected to yield more anger overall.

C. Procedure

Participants came to the research lab at their designated time and were given an informed consent form to read over and sign. This document explained that participants were taking part in a study assessing how they would handle different workplace events. Once a participant indicated that he or she agreed to take part in the study, they were given two survey instruments to complete based on the group they were assigned to. The control group received the two original scenarios developed by Sims (1999) while the experimental group received modified scenarios designed to elicit more negative emotions. Upon completion, the participants returned the surveys to the researchers and were shown out of the research lab.

VII. Results

A. Manipulation Check

As expected, the modification of Scenario 1 (Experimental group) produced significant sadness ratings more than the control group and the modification of Scenario 2 (Experimental group) produced significant anger ratings more than the control group (see Table 1).

Table 1: Means, standard deviations, F , and p -values from a one-way ANOVA ($N = 130$)

Dep. Variables	Control (No emotions) ($n = 65$)		Experimental (Emotions) ($n = 65$)		F	p
	M	SD	M	SD		
Ethical Scenario 1						
Interest	4.37	1.73	3.67	1.92	4.67*	.033
Happiness	2.17	1.36	1.80	1.28	2.54	.114
Surprise	3.49	1.86	3.70	2.02	.399	.529
Sadness	2.37	1.67	3.58	1.96	14.53***	.000
Anger	3.30	1.91	3.31	2.02	.000	1.00
Disgust	3.44	2.02	3.00	1.85	1.73	.191
Fear	3.09	2.15	3.49	2.00	1.20	.274
Shame	2.30	1.78	2.89	2.11	2.90	.091
EDM 1	3.72	0.99	3.34	0.89		
Ethical Scenario 2						
Interest	4.95	2.09	3.78	2.22	9.58**	.002
Happiness	2.60	1.69	1.86	1.31	7.73**	.006
Surprise	3.62	1.98	3.98	1.83	2.45	.120
Sadness	2.26	1.49	2.83	1.91	3.59	.060
Anger	2.91	1.79	4.23	1.93	16.44***	.000
Disgust	2.60	1.81	2.69	1.93	.079	.779
EDM 2	4.34	0.85	4.09	1.23		
Total EDM	4.03	0.68	3.72	0.71		

Note. EDM=Ethical decision-making. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

B. Analysis of Variance

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test whether individuals exposed to negative emotions made less ethical decisions than those not exposed to negative emotions. Results indicated that participants significantly differed in Ethical Decision Making (EDM) for Scenario 1 (Sadness), $F(1, 128) = 5.42, p = .021, \eta^2 = .041$, and the average across the two scenarios, $F(1, 128) = 6.63, p = .011, \eta^2 = .049$. For Scenario 1, participants in the control group who were not exposed to negative emotions ($M = 3.72, SD = .992$) tended to make better ethical decisions than those in the experimental group who were exposed to negative emotions ($M = 3.34, SD = .889$). This was also the trend for the average across the two scenarios with the control group ($M = 4.03, SD = .684$) tending to make better ethical decisions than the experimental group ($M = 3.72, SD = .712$). There was no significant difference in EDM for Scenario 2 (Anger), $F(1, 128) = 1.75, p = .188, \eta^2 = .013$. That is, participants in the control group ($M = 4.34, SD = .853$) tended to make similar ethical decisions as those in the experimental group for Scenario 2 ($M = 4.09, SD = 1.234$; see Table 2 for a summary of the results). Thus, Hypothesis 1 was only partially supported in that individuals exposed to the negative emotion of sadness (Scenario 1) tended to make less ethical decisions than those not exposed to the negative emotion of sadness, but this was not the case for the negative emotion of anger (Scenario 2).

Table 2: Means, standard deviations, F , and p -values from a one-way ANOVA with hypothesis 1 variables

Dependent Variables	Original Scenarios ($n = 65$)		Manipulated Scenarios ($n = 65$)		F	p
	M	SD	M	SD		
Ethical Scenario 1						
EDM 1 (Sadness)	3.72	.992	3.34	.889	5.42*	.021
Ethical Scenario 2						
EDM 2 (Anger)	4.34	.853	4.09	1.234	1.75	.188
Scenario 1 and 2 Average EDM						
Average EDM	4.03	.684	3.72	.712	6.63*	.049

Note. EDM = Ethical decision-making. * $p < .05$.

A one-way ANOVA was also used to test if individuals exposed to negative emotions were less likely to repeat the same ethical decision if a similar situation arose in the future than those not exposed to negative emotions. The analysis did not reveal significant differences in ethical decision making reoccurrence (EDR) across Scenario 1, $F(1, 128) = 2.64, p = .106, \eta^2 = .020$, Scenario 2, $F(1, 128) = .322, p = .571, \eta^2 = .003$, or the sum of both scenarios, $F(1, 128) = .238, p = .626, \eta^2 = .002$. Participants' likelihood of repeating the same ethical decision in a future situation was similar regardless of the scenario type or randomly assigned condition (see Table 3 for a summary of the results). Thus, Hypothesis 2 was not supported.

Table 3: Means, standard deviations, F , and p -values from a one-way ANOVA with hypothesis 2 variables

Dependent Variables	Original Scenarios ($n = 65$)		Manipulated Scenarios ($n = 65$)		F	p
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Ethical Scenario 1						
EDR 1	19.40	23.25	13.69	16.13	2.644	.106
Ethical Scenario 2						
EDR 2	39.08	25.01	41.62	26.00	0.332	.571
Scenario 1 and 2 EDR Sum						
Sum	58.48	41.14	55.31	32.36	0.238	.626

Note. EDR = Ethical decision-making reoccurrence

C. Regression

Finally, a linear regression analysis was used to determine if individuals with low EI made worse ethical decisions than those with high EI scores. For the control group, EI scores had a weak positive relationship with the average ethical decision scores

across the two scenarios ($r = .11$). As emotional intelligence scores decreased, making the most ethical decision tended to slightly decrease. However, the regression model was not significant overall, $F(1, 63) = .736, p = .394, R^2 = .012$, with emotional intelligence explaining 1.2% of the variance in making the most ethical decision ($\beta = .03, p = .394$). For the experimental group, EI scores also had a weak positive relationship with the average ethical decision scores across the two scenarios ($r = .18$). Again, the regression model was not significant overall, $F(1, 63) = 2.134, p = .149, R^2 = .033$, with emotional intelligence explaining 3.3% of the variance in making the most ethical decision ($\beta = .08, p = .149$). Although weak positive relationships were found between emotional intelligence and ethical decision making for both groups, the overall regression models were not significant. Thus, Hypothesis 3 was not supported.

VIII. Discussion

Previous research supports that emotional intelligence is positively related to ethical decision making [37-40]. However, the role of emotions (especially negative emotions) and the ability to deal with those emotions has received little attention. Krishnakumar and Rymph (2012) attempted to address this gap in the literature by looking at the extent to which individuals exposed to the negative emotions sadness and anger make less ethical decisions as well as the role of emotional intelligence. Expanding on this research, the present study addressed limitations of the former study by using an EI instrument with better reliability and including the work status of respondents. We found that individuals exposed to the negative emotion of sadness tended to make less ethical decisions than those not exposed to the negative emotion of sadness. However, there was no significant difference in ethical decision making across the anger scenario. It is possible that in experimental conditions, participants are hesitant to transfer feelings of anger to hypothetical decisions. There was also no significant difference in likelihood of repeating the same ethical decision in a similar future situation across the two groups. One could argue that, it is easy to experience sadness in decision making processes, but the experience of anger may not necessarily transfer in ethical decision-making processes. Also, we found weak positive relationships between emotional intelligence and ethical decision making across the two groups although overall regression models were not significant. Thus, concerns of making an ethical decision or having the emotional intelligence to arrive at such decisions ought to be studied further.

A. Recommendations and Limitations

This study was not without limitations. One concern is the small sample size used ($N = 130$). It is possible that more participants may have yielded different results. The present study used a student sample to solve ethical business dilemmas. We assessed respondents' work status and found that 63.8% were working either full-time or part-time. However, we did not exclude those classified as not working from the analyses. A future study with similar student samples in similar cases should consider only using participants who are currently employed or a non-student working population.

We used two ethical business dilemma scenarios developed by Sims (1999) to assess EDM similar to Krishnakumar and Rymph (2012). As expected, the modification of Scenario 1 (Experimental group) produced significant sadness ratings more than the control group and the modification of Scenario 2 (Experimental group)

produced significant anger ratings more than the control group (see Table 1). However, the findings show that respondents tended to make similar ethical decisions for Scenario 2 (Anger) across both groups. For the manipulated anger scenario, respondents were imperceptibly told they were angry about the situation because they have had to sacrifice a lot in their personal life due to the demanding nature of the yearend report (see Appendix B, Scenario 2). Although the manipulated scenario did elicit anger, the emotion was not strong enough to affect EDM. Future research should explore further to determine why respondents tended to make similar ethical decisions even though the modified scenario in the experimental group elicited more anger than the original scenario in the control group. We suggest altering the modification of the anger scenario or using a different scenario designed to elicit anger to assess EDM. At best, field experiments where the emotion of anger can be transferred could be considered.

Although we used an EI instrument with better reliability, our results were similar in that EI only explained a small amount of variance in ethical decision making. Moreover, overall regression models were not significant. One reason for this may be moral disengagement of students solving ethical business dilemmas in a controlled lab environment rather than in an organizational setting. Subsequent research should attempt to replicate findings in applied contexts with employee samples. Another reason could be the presentation of the EI instrument prior to the ethical decision-making scenarios in the study. It is possible that this prompted respondents to be more aware of their emotions when solving the ethical business dilemmas causing a lack in variation of ethical decisions regardless of an individual's level of emotional intelligence. The opposite could hold true in that respondents may have felt emotions while solving the ethical business dilemmas but were not aware of them. Future studies should address this issue by randomly assigning the order of the surveys to see if answering questions related to EI first affects solving an ethical business dilemma.

For Ethical Decision Reoccurrence (EDR), only the percentage score provided for the most ethical decision was recorded for analysis and not necessarily the percentage score for the answer choice the participants selected. Consider a respondent choosing the least ethical decision and being 80% confident they would repeat that decision in a similar future situation, as well as a participant who chooses the second most ethical decision and is 80% confident of this decision. Both individuals' EDR score of 80% would not be recorded for analysis, because only the percentage score for the most ethical decision was recorded and all other scores were ignored as done in past studies. This might be one of the reasons for the current findings for Hypothesis 2. Future studies could analyze all the percentage scores for each ethical decision.

Finally, EDR was the only robustness measure we used unlike Krishnakumar and Rymph (2012) who also measured EDM confidence. We did not include this variable because the goal of the present study was the likelihood that a respondent would repeat the ethical decision they made in a similar future situation rather than how confident they were in the current decision they made. It is possible for an individual to choose a worse ethical decision but be highly confident in that decision. Further, confidence levels do not tell us anything more regarding consistency in making sound ethical decisions in the workplace. Therefore, we felt the variable

confidence would not provide as much value as reoccurrence to the implications of our results. A future study should consider looking more closely at robustness measures in ethical decision making to determine if they are necessary and, if so, which measures are more reliable and valid.

B. Implications and Applications

This paper adds to existing literature supporting assertions that modified scenarios elicit more negative emotions and emotional intelligence plays a role in ethical decision making. High EI individuals tend to better deal with emotions and arrive at more ethical decisions than low EI individuals. This is important in organizational contexts given that emotional intelligence "play(s) a role in shaping the interaction between individuals and their work environment" [9; p 29]. It is important for all members of an organization to understand the role of emotional intelligence in mitigating negative emotions in the context of EDM [3].

Agarwal and Chaudhary (2013) assert that knowledge of EI will help in the making of a good leader. This implies that emotionally intelligent individuals who have a voice on ethical matters are more likely to be heard or followed especially for large corporations. Certainly, the issue of the 'dark side' of charisma where unethical leaders pervert the emotions of their followers will be resisted by individual employees who are emotionally intelligent. This is well documented in leader-member exchange research [47-48]. Skills associated with EI, specifically emotion regulation, could lead to better outcomes for organizations in ethical contexts from enhancing decision making processes to avoiding the next Enron scandal. Even in team contexts, decision makers can anticipate the positive and negative emotional consequences of decisions on both the decision makers and others. Accordingly, hiring managers should consider adding EI as a measure in selection batteries or providing EI intervention training to ensure employees can anticipate, recognize, empathize, and regulate their own emotions in emotionally charged ethical situations at the workplace.

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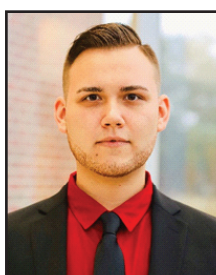
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Appendix A

Original Ethical Decision-Making Scenarios

Scenario 1 (Policies; Sims, 1999).

You have recently learned that a co-worker has been violating one of your company's policies on an ongoing basis. This violation is quite serious and would look very bad for your department if it were discovered. The coworker has more seniority than you, and he/she is well respected in the company. You are unsure if his/her behavior is illegal, but you are sure it is not right.

- Say nothing.
- Confirm the violation only if I was specifically asked by management.
- Mention the violation to the co-worker only, hoping that it would stop.
- Report the violation to my supervisor only, letting it drop after that.
- Make sure that the violation was corrected, no matter how far I would have to go.**

Scenario 2 (Yearend Report; Sims, 1999).

Your department is responsible for issuing a yearend report. You have worked alone on the report for the past three years, and everyone in the company has always given you positive feedback; as a matter of fact, you have always enjoyed a sense of pride in the report. This year, however, you have been instructed to allow a relatively new employee to take part in the report. Reluctantly you have agreed, since there seemed no way out of the situation. The report has been divided by your manager, each writer being given an independent section. Two days before the report is due, the other employee gives you the opportunity to read his/her section. You are horrified by what you have read, the errors in format, grammar, and content are numerous.

- Say nothing.
- Report the errors to my manager.
- Correct the errors myself.
- Politely explain the errors to the other employee.
- Work diligently with the other employee, until all errors were corrected.**

Appendix B

Modified Ethical Decision-Making Scenarios

Scenario 1 (Policies; Sims, 1999).

You have recently learned that a co-worker has been violating one of your company's policies on an ongoing basis. This violation is quite serious and would look very bad for your department if it were discovered. The coworker has more seniority than you, and he/she is well respected in the company. *She/he is also a very close friend of yours. You are also aware that he/she is the sole income provider for his/her household. Hence, this could lead to emotional consequences.* You are unsure if her/his behavior is illegal, but you are sure it is not right.

- Say nothing.
- Confirm the violation only if I was specifically asked by management.
- Mention the violation to the co-worker only, hoping that it would stop.

- (d) Report the violation to my supervisor only, letting it drop after that.
- (e) **Make sure that the violation was corrected, no matter how far I would have to go.**

Scenario 2 (Yearend Report; Sims, 1999).

Your department is responsible for issuing a yearend report. You have worked alone on the report for the past three years, and everyone in the company has always given you positive feedback; as a matter of fact, you have always enjoyed a sense of pride in the report. This year, however, you have been instructed to allow a relatively new employee to take part in the report. Reluctantly you have agreed, since there seemed no way out of the situation. The report has been divided by your manager, each writer being given an independent section. Two days before the report is due, the other employee gives you the opportunity to read his/her section. You are horrified by what you have read, the errors in format, grammar, and content are numerous. *This year the preparation of the report was especially hard, because in addition to writing the report, you also had to coach the new employee. Because of the demanding nature of this project, you've also had to sacrifice a lot in your personal life (e.g. your parents' anniversary, your kids' soccer games, etc.). You really feel angry about this situation.*

- a) Say nothing.
- (b) Report the errors to my manager.
- (c) Correct the errors myself.
- (d) Politely explain the errors to the other employee.
- (e) **Work diligently with the other employee, until all errors were corrected.**