Fostering Collective Ethical Capacity within the Teaching Profession

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Abstract A depth of ethical knowledge and understanding are essential for the enactment of ethical decisions and actions. Ethics is the foundational core for democratic teaching, learning and educational leadership. It is imperative that the development of ethical insight and the formation of an ethical stance become fundamental elements of both initial and continuing teacher education. Educators must be adept at cultivating ethical cultures within schools and districts. They need to know how to effectively foster the collective ethical capacity of all those with whom they are called to serve. To ensure the highest level of ethical professional practice and action, the collective ethical knowledge, sensitivity, awareness, and efficacy of the teaching profession must continue to evolve. The ongoing ethical formation of the teaching profession is essential for the public's continued trust and confidence in the ethical actions and practices of the educational community. Educative processes designed to enhance the collective ethical capacity of the teaching profession are explored in this inquiry. Critical reflection and various dialogic processes focusing on the lived ethical experiences encountered within teaching were used for fostering the ethical leadership and decision making of educators.

Keywords Ethical knowledge · Ethical leadership · Lived experience · Educational efficacy · Critical reflection · Dialogic process

"This is ethical education at its best – coming together, participating in collaborative discussions that support and further our collective understanding of the ethical standards of practice" (Ontario College of Teachers 2012).

A depth of ethical knowledge and understanding are essential for the enactment of ethical decisions and actions. Ethics is the foundational core for democratic teaching, learning and educational leadership. It is imperative that the development of ethical insight and the formation of an ethical stance become fundamental elements of both initial and continuing teacher education and ongoing professional learning. Educators must be adept at cultivating

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ethical cultures within schools and districts. They need to know how to effectively foster the collective ethical capacity of all those with whom they are called to serve.

To ensure the highest level of ethical professional practice and action, the collective ethical knowledge, sensitivity, awareness, confidence and efficacy of the teaching profession (Fig. 1) must continue to evolve. The ongoing ethical formation of the teaching profession is essential for the public's continued trust and confidence in the ethical action of the educational community.

Educative processes designed to enhance the collective ethical capacity of the teaching profession are explored in this inquiry. These processes involve critical reflection and dialogue and focus on the lived ethical experiences of educators. These inquiry-based processes hold considerable promise for fostering the ethical sensitivity, efficacy and confidence of educators.

Context for Ethical Capacity Building

The Ontario College of Teachers, as the self-regulatory body for the teaching profession, is responsible for the development and enforcement of the *Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession* (Ontario College of Teachers 2006c; Smith 2013a). These ethical standards are the foundation of initial and continuing teacher education in the province. The ethical standards also represent key criteria for the accreditation of all teacher education programs.

The enforcement or integration of the *Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession* through ongoing teacher education, research and knowledge mobilization is a key object and mandate of the College. The enforcement of these ethical principles is understood as an ongoing process of formation and education. The strengthening of the individual and collective ethical professional practice of educators is the ultimate goal. Fostering the collective ethical capacity of teaching profession is a central component of the "enforcement" of the *Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession* (Ontario College of Teachers 2006c).
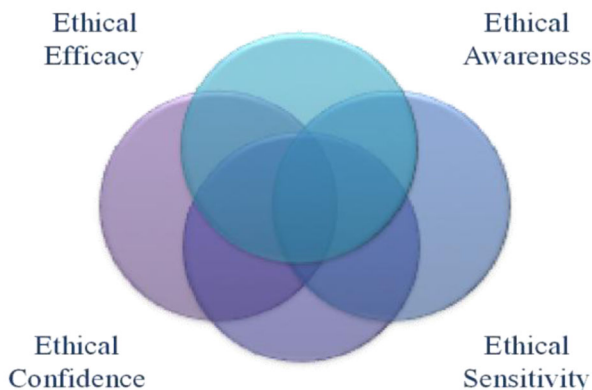

Fig. 1 Ethical knowledge and action

The ongoing enhancement of the collective ethical capacity of the teaching profession is a central public obligation of the Ontario College of Teachers as a self-regulatory body. The public entrusts the teaching profession to engage in continual ethical self-regulation. The enforcement of this self-regulatory process through the vision and framework of the ethical standards is an essential public and moral responsibility of the Ontario College of Teachers. Ongoing education in ethics, based on the ethical standards, is essential for fostering the collective ethical capacity of the teaching profession within the ever-increasing complex and multifaceted educational milieus (Fig. 2).

A commitment to fostering the ongoing ethical education of the teaching profession is a shared public responsibility. Individual practitioners must accept personal responsibility for their own ongoing ethical formation. Educational colleagues and school systems are also ethically responsible for creating ethical organizational cultures that support the ongoing ethical knowledge and action of all members of the school community. Initial and continuing teacher education programs also have a significant moral responsibility related to the ethical education of prospective and practicing educators.

The *Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession* (Ontario College of Teachers 2006c) provide a solid ethical framework for guiding the ethical practice of educators. Ongoing education in ethics enables educators to effectively respond to many multifaceted ethical challenges encountered in practice by activating their ethical knowledge and exercising their highly informed professional judgment as resources for guiding their ethical decisions and

Fig. 2 Ethical efficacy cycle

actions. 623 educators participated in educative sessions designed to critically reflect upon and explore dimensions of ethical professional practice. These dialogic and inquiry based professional learning sessions helped to foster ethical capacity, knowledge and efficacy within the teaching profession. The 623 educators explored their individual and collective ethical knowledge and practices through participating in various ethical professional learning processes. Each educator self-selected the ethical professional learning processes s/he wanted to explore.

Theoretical Constructs

The theoretical constructs that support this inquiry include phenomenology (Buber 1970; Merleau-Ponty 1962; Ricoeur 1992), narrative (Bruner 1986; Connelly and Clandinin 1990; Lyons and LaBoskey 2002; McEwan and Egan 1995; Witherell and Noddings 1991), case work (Jenlink and Kinnucan-Welsch 2001; Shulman 1992; Shulman and Colbert 1988; Shulman et al. 2002), ethics (Haynes 1998; Starratt 2004; Strike and Soltis 1998), self-study (Bullough and Pinnegar 2004; Hoban 2004; Loughran and Northfield 1998), and self-regulation (Karoly 1993).

The theoretical framework for exploring ethical knowledge and practice through the lived experience of educators is rooted in the traditions of phenomenology (Ricoeur 1992; Buber 1970; Merleau-Ponty 1962). Phenomenologists (van Manen 2003; Merleau-Ponty 1962) understand and analyze the essence of an experience by acknowledging that wisdom and knowledge are founded in the lived experience of people. Teachers' stories are examples of lived experience that reveal the essence of ethical practice. These narratives make theory observable in the work of the practitioners they describe. It is the lived ethical experience and the wisdom gleaned from real situations that were viewed by the College as being important to be explored and studied. These lived experiences elucidate what it means to be an ethically guided educator. Yet any inquiry is theory laden. Therefore, setting out a backdrop of theory in which to understand the concrete and specific examples that arise from living is essential in bringing together theory and practice, even when theory is implicit in action.

Ethical Capacity Building Processes

Core dimensions of educators' ethical practice were phenomenologically explored (Ricoeur 1992; Merleau-Ponty 1962) through multiple dialogic (Buber 1970) inquiry processes. Engaging in conversations regarding the ethical professional practice of the teaching profession served to enhance awareness of the importance of the framework of the ethical standards for the collective ethical practice of Ontario's teaching profession. These dialogic encounters also served to illuminate the significance of ethical thought, action and reflection for effective professional practice and for the ongoing ethical evolution of the profession. The College also believed in the richness (Geertz 1973) of educators' lived experiences along with their ability to reflect on, share and analyze their ethical practice through narrative processes.

The potential use of visual storytelling (Hollingsworth 2005; Lambert 2003; Clarke and Hollingsworth 2000; Perry and Talley 2001; Copeland and Decker 1996), as a medium to create a living memory of ethical professional practice, inspired the College to embark upon an exploration into the significance of this multi-media tool to support the development of an ethical orientation within teaching. Visual narratives of teaching have the potential to introduce particular ethical dilemmas that raise questions of judgment and ultimately draw on the guiding principles or ethical standards of the teaching profession. Case inquiry is another

effective narrative process for de-privatizing practice (Ingvarson 2003) and illuminating the ethical nature of teaching. To reflect and to enter into a dialogical case discussion with others regarding real life ethical situations provided educators with the opportunity to consider and reflect on their own professional judgments and actions. Case inquiry provides a structure for examining ethical practice and comprehending the theory that underpins it (Shulman and Colbert 1988; Shulman 1992). Case discussion (Shulman et al. 2002) offers opportunities for collegial reflection and shared meaning making. Ethical cases written by educators were used to facilitate group discussions regarding the ethical dimensions of teaching. The exploration of ethical dilemmas and ethical decision-making were the focus of these sessions. These dialogue sessions emerged as an effective means to explicate the ethical theories and principles underpinning the individual and collective professional practice of educators.

Ethical practice lies at heart of teaching and leadership. The moral landscape (Ayers 2004) of teaching and leadership requires a strong moral purpose (Fullan 2003) and a deeply rooted moral compass (Sergiovanni 1992; Langlois 2004). Moral purpose and direction enable the individual to recognize and to commit to supporting learning as a moral enterprise (Starratt 2004). Along with this commitment comes a requirement that educators make ethical decisions consistent with their values, beliefs and with a sense of authenticity (Langlois 2004).

Starratt (2004) understands ethics as the principles, beliefs, assumptions and values that characterize a moral life. Ethical teaching and leadership require that the educator act based on the principles, beliefs, assumptions and values that are espoused in the individual's "system of ethics" (pg. 5). Ethical decision-making frameworks and dilemma-based scenarios developed through the ethical inquiry work of the Ontario College of Teachers (Smith 2003b; Smith and Goldblatt 2009) invited educators to reflect on, identify and analyze the congruence between their espoused ethical beliefs and their lived actions.

Processes designed to enhance the collective ethical capacity of the teaching profession involved ongoing education in ethics and ethical leadership. The College supported a variety of inquiry based educative processes to advance the ethical knowledge and action of educators within the contexts of teacher education, leadership development and professional practice. Educative processes that involve critical reflection and dialogue focused on the lived ethical experiences of educators have proven highly effective for increasing ethical sensitivity, efficacy and confidence. The College's ethical resources (Ontario College of Teachers 2003a, 2003b, 2003d, 2005, 2006a, 2006b, 2009b, 2011, 2013a, 2013b, 2014a), educative processes and continuing teacher education additional qualifications policy guidelines help to provide ongoing education in ethics based upon the ethical standards. Educative professional learning processes for advancing the ethical knowledge, awareness and sensitivity of educators are depicted in the *Ethical Capacity Building* chart (Table 1). The data sources or records of lived experience and the ethical resources developed from the data sources are also listed in Table 1.

Data Analysis and Meaning Making

The lived ethical experiences and ethical knowledge of 623 educators became elucidated through narrative-based professional learning processes (Smith 2012), written narratives (cases, narratives, vignettes, and digital stories) ethical questionnaires (Langlois 2005, 2012a) and ethical profiles (Langlois 2007, 2009, 2012b). These data sources provided rich and thick descriptors (Lincoln and Guba 1985) for exploring, analyzing and understanding ethical professional practice.

The data analysis and meaning making processes involved several groups of individuals that were involved in the ethical education processes. The educators involved in the institutes

Table 1

Ethical capacity building	Data sources	Ethical resources
Professional learning processes		
Ethical frameworks	Ethical decision making charts Ethical inquiry cycle Ethical lens chart	Exploring Ethical Knowledge through Inquiry, Booklet 2 (Ontario College of Teachers 2003b) Exploring Leadership and Ethical Practice (Smith & Goldblatt 2009) Inquiring into the Ethical Dimensions of Professional Practice (Ontario College of Teachers 2013b) Ethical Inquiry Cycle (Smith 2013b) Exploring Ethical Professional Relationships: A Self-Reflective Resource (Ontario College of Teachers 2013a)
10 Narrative institutes	Written narratives Written vignettes Written cases 2 Digital stories	Cases for Teacher Development (Smith and Goldblatt 2005) Casebook guide for teacher education (Smith & Goldblatt, 2006) A Teacher's Story –Digital Story (Ontario College of Teachers 2006a) A Principal's Story, One at a Time Digital Story (Ontario College of Teachers 2006b) Inquiring into the Ethical Dimensions of Professional Practice (Ontario College of Teachers 2013b) Knowledge Keepers Digital Story and Discussion Guide (Ontario College of Teachers 2014a) Living the Standards Resource Kit (Ontario College of Teachers 2009a) Learning From Experience: Supporting Beginning Teachers and Mentors. (Ontario College of Teachers and Brock University 2008) Standards in Practice (Ontario College of Teachers 2003d)
7 Ethical leadership institutes	Written dilemmas, challenges or issues 3 Digital Stories	Exploring Leadership and Ethical Practice (Smith & Goldblatt 2009) Gail -Digital Story (Ontario College of Teachers 2011) Voices of Wisdom -Digital Resource (Ontario College of Teachers 2010) Knowledge Keepers-Digital Resource (Ontario College of Teachers 2014a)
1 Professional judgment institute	Written vignettes Written dilemmas Conceptual images depicting the essential dimensions of professional judgment	Exploring Ethical Professional Relationships: A Self-Reflective Resource (2013a) Inquiring into the Ethical Dimensions of Professional Practice (2013b)
Ethical questionnaire	423 completed questionnaires	Power points
Ethical profiles	423 Individual ethical profile 20 Collective ethical profiles	Power points

engaged in preliminary analysis of the narratives and the co-construction of the ethical resources. College staff that facilitated the ethical capacity building processes also engaged in the analysis of the narratives and the co-construction of ethical resources for the teaching profession. Dr. Lyse Langlois and her staff from Laval University were responsible for specifically analyzing the ethical questionnaires and constructing the ethical profiles. These profiles were constructed from the questionnaire results.

Several levels of qualitative analysis were employed for the multiple narrative data sources. The analysis process contributed to achieving a comprehensive understanding of the essence of the lived ethical experiences of educators. The analysis process included multiple readings, the collaborative identification of themes and issues as well as dialogic critique of various ethical dimensions inherent within each the data source. These dimensions included language, concepts, content, ethical knowledge, relationships, ethical pedagogy and ethical efficacy. The meanings derived from the various narrative sources or data sets were then validated through two levels of analysis engaged in by both the participating educators and College staff. Charts, conceptual maps and visual content analysis mechanisms were created to explicate the ethical meaning and pedagogical implications embedded within the narratives.

The themes, dilemmas and issues that were identified from the narrative data sources were used as conceptual frameworks for the development of inquiry based resources co-constructed by the participants and College staff to support the collective ethical capacity of the teaching profession. These resources reflect the lived ethical reality and knowledge of educators.

Quantitative data analysis was employed for the ethical questionnaires. 423 educators completed the ethical questionnaires. The questionnaire data was analyzed using SPSS software. Descriptive statistics, such as frequency and mean scores for ethical dimensions, as well as standard deviations were calculated. Statistical diagrams of individual scores were produced to help communicate the ethical profile that emerged from the questionnaire results for each participant. Group profiles were also constructed for each cohort of educators that participated in the process. A global profile was also constructed for all 423 educators that participated in the ethical leadership questionnaire.

Ethical Frameworks

"I gained knowledge of several frameworks for understanding and discussing ethical problems and dilemmas in my practice" (Ontario College of Teachers 2012).

A diversity of ethical frameworks was experientially shared with 623 members of the teaching profession. These frameworks were designed to help enhance the ethical knowledge, sensitivity and decision making of educators. The frameworks that were employed in ethical leadership educative sessions or ethical institutes that helped inform professional judgment included:

- Ethical Decision Making Process (Smith 2003a; 2003b)
- Ethical Standards (Ontario College of Teachers 2006c; Smith 2013a)
- Ethical Reflective Frameworks (Smith and Goldblatt 2009)
- Ethical Lenses: *Justice*, *Care* and *Critique* (Starratt 2004; Langlois and Lapointe 2010)
- Ethical Inquiry Process (Smith 2013b)
- Ethical Profiles (Langlois 2005, 2007, 2009, 2012a)

Institute participants consistently expressed deep gratitude for being exposed to a diversity of different ethical frameworks that provided them with concrete lenses for critically reflecting and exploring the complex ethical challenges and dilemmas they encountered daily within professional practice. The frameworks served as helpful guides for uncovering the values, issues, perspectives and implications associated with the complex and multi-dimensional ethical terrain that exists in schools. The ethical frameworks and lenses helped to empower educators and support them in accessing their ethical knowledge and enacting the ethical efficacy necessary for making the decisions that were in the best interest of those involved. Ezra, an elementary educator emphasized the significance of these frameworks for ethical leadership,

> This institute crystalized my thinking and was a motivator for future possibilities for leadership development and professional learning. The variety of lenses that a leader could use to understand and implement ethical leadership; the concrete examples of what ethical leadership means 'on the ground' and how to 'live' it in ways that are clearly recognizable to others. (Ontario College of Teachers 2014b, p. 1)

Narrative Institutes

Ten narrative-based educative institutes were facilitated with 200 members of the teaching profession. These dialogic professional learning sessions invited educators to critically reflect on their ethical professional practices through the written construction of cases, narratives, vignettes and digital stories. The ethical challenges, dilemmas and issues inherent within professional practice became illuminated through these narrative-based professional learning processes. The ethical insight, knowledge, practices and efficacy of educators was also revealed within these records of practice. Making visible the ethical dimensions of professional practice enabled educators to individually and collectively critically reflect upon and investigate the ethical terrains inherent within teaching and educational leadership. The cases, narratives, vignettes and digital stories developed by educators became inquiry-based ethical resources (Ontario College of Teachers 2003b, 2003c, 2003d, 2005, 2006a, 2006b, 2009b, 2011, 2013a, 2013b, 2014a) for teacher education and professional practice.

Ethical Leadership Institutes

> I believe that supporting learning in this important area is a worthy and important endeavor for the College. As with any learning, in order for full effect, it needs to be embedded into practice and revisited. If there is any mechanism to follow-up with candidates that have attended the institute over a period of time to gauge effect, this would be highly recommended. As this is a large area of study, further recommended reading on the topic of ethical leadership and decision-making would also be appreciated (Ontario College of Teachers 2014b, p. 5).

Seven ethical leadership sessions were facilitated with the teaching profession. These institutes engaged 423 educators in critical exploration of ethical dilemmas, issues and challenges encountered within professional practice. A central focus of these institutes was the exploration of various ethical frameworks (Smith and Goldblatt 2009; Starratt 2004, 2012; Langlois 2011; Langlois and Lapointe 2010) and *Ethical Profile* processes (Langlois 2007,

2009, 2012b). These experiential and inquiry-based professional learning processes helped to foster professional judgment. Brad, a school principal gained deeper insight into ethical decision making as well as increased consciousness regarding ethical pedagogy as a result of participating in an ethical leadership institute for course instructors of principal development programs. The following reflection written by Brad illustrates his learning within the institute,

> I learned ways to increase my own capacity in the three areas of ethical decision-making. How do I learn to use the lens of ethical decision making in my daily practice making it less intuitive and more explicit. How do we support ethical decision- making and pedagogy in the classroom? How do we ensure that all voices are being heard and that each and every child has the opportunity for full engagement in their education? (Ontario College of Teachers 2014b, p. 3)

Members of the teaching profession have expressed an overwhelming interest in fostering their individual and collective ethical sensitivity, knowledge and efficacy. An example of this extensive interest occurred when over 700 members of the teaching profession applied to participate in the College's first summer Ethical Leadership Institute within the first 2 days that this institute was advertised. Due to limited space restrictions, 200 members were able to register for this first summer ethical leadership institute.

Educators attending the ethical institutes consistently commit to sharing the knowledge gained in these sessions with colleagues and are very passionate about continuing to conscious foster their own ethical formation through further reading, course work, engaging in focused ethical dialogue with colleagues or offering to take a leadership role in fostering the ethical capacity of members of their school communities. Pam, a new school principal illustrates this commitment to make a difference in the ethical formation of others,

> I would like to bring some of the learning to my colleagues. In the future, I believe that a local "Ethical Institute" would be timely and well received by our leadership team. Connecting younger, less experienced leaders (such as myself) to more seasoned professionals for this type of learning could be an important model for "ethical mentorship" for newer principals in Ontario. I would be happy to engage in any follow-up learning or planning in the near or distant future. Thank you! (Ontario College of Teachers 2014b, p. 5)

Participants at the ethical leadership institutes have requested that the College continue to support teacher's ongoing education related to ethical knowledge and practice. The vital importance of ethical education being an essential component within the continuum of teacher education was also stressed. The *Ethical Profile* process was viewed as an outstanding and transformative educative process for all 423 members of the teaching profession who engaged in the educative institute.

Ethical Profile

> I gained a better understanding of my ethical knowledge and how I can better support an ethical organizational culture as an educational leader (Ontario College of Teachers 2012).

An *Ethical Profile* (Langlois 2007, 2009, 2012a; Langlois and Lapointe 2010) process was employed as an individual and collective ethical resource for the teaching profession. Practitioners and teacher educators embraced this as a valuable practical and theoretical tool for

informing ethical professional practice and professional judgment. This ethical reflection and inquiry processes (Smith 2012; Smith and Goldblatt 2009; Ontario College of Teachers 2014a, 2014b) has proven to be one highly effective dialogic process for supporting the enforcement of the *Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession*.

The *Ethical Profile* instrument (Langlois 2007, 2009, 2012a; Langlois and Lapointe 2010) was first used with educators within an Ethical Standards institute for school principals and classroom teachers. This instrument and associated experiential processes has proven to be a valuable reflective and inquiry based resource for inviting the profession to critically explore and plan for the advancement of the collective ethical capacity of the teaching profession. Ongoing education based on the ethical standards that invite critical reflection and dialogue with colleagues is necessary for the advancement of ethical knowledge, action and efficacy.

Four-hundred twenty-three educators individually critically reflected on their professional practice utilizing an ethical knowledge self-assessment tool (Langlois 2005, 2012b) from Laval University. This ethical self-assessment tool was designed utilizing the ethical knowledge and practice framework of the ethics of *Care*, *Justice* and *Critique* (Starratt 2004). Educators that are viewed by others as being highly ethical practitioners by others consciously integrate these three ethics into all decisions and actions. This integration is possible because these educators possessed a highly evolved ethical consciousness that is informed by these three ethical lenses.

Individual Ethical Profiles

> I have gained insight into my own "ethical profile". I have learned how ethical frameworks and processes can support ethical leadership and decision-making. By integrating the three ethics and "flexing" towards and from the middle, I can ensure balanced and fair ethical decision-making. (Ontario College of Teachers 2014b, p.1)

An individual *Ethical Profile* (Langlois 2007, 2009, 2012a) was then generated for each educator based on three dimensions of ethical knowledge: *Ethic of Care*, *Ethic of Justice* and *Ethic of Critique*. The profile provided schemata of the individual ethical knowledge and sensitivity of each practitioner. A collective profile of all members of the profession who completed the ethical knowledge self-assessment was also generated. The collective profile for the 423 members of the teaching profession revealed that the ethic of *Critique* and *Justice* require additional focus to enable educators to enhance their individual and collective ethical action. The ethical of Care was considerably more developed than the other two ethical domains of *Justice* and *Critique*. Advanced levels of ethical knowledge in all three ethical domains are required for consistently embodied ethical leadership. An example of an individual ethical profile is provided in Fig. 3.

Collective Ethical Profiles

A series of collective ethical profiles were generated for each cohort of educators that completed based ethical questionnaire. These group profiles provided an overview of the collective ethical knowledge of each group of educators who participated in the *Ethical Profile* process from across the province. An example of a collective group ethical profile for a cohort of highly experience and ethical school principals is provided in Fig. 4.
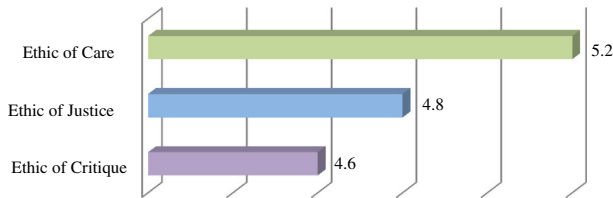
Fig. 3 Individual ethical profile

Lyse Langlois provided the following analysis of this unique and exceptional group of educators,

> The January 15, 2014 cohort group shows a leadership profile centered on an ethic of critique (5.4); this score is rather exceptional when compared to other cohort scores in which this ethic does not generally exceed 5.0. The ethic of critique for this January 15, 2014 cohort group is followed closely by the ethic of care. These two ethical components represent great strengths in this cohort, for the group is able to analyze injustice and other components associated with this ethic as concern for others (care). One area for improvement for this cohort would be related to the ethic of justice. It appears that this group conceives of the notion of justice as being closer to a definition of social justice and fairness (critique). Normative, procedural justice seems to create a challenge for this group (Langlois 2014, p. 1).

Ethical leadership is consistently enacted when individual members and the "collective" membership have extensive ethical knowledge, sensitivity and efficacy. This extensive ethical knowledge and awareness is depicted in all three ethics of *Justice*, *Care* and *Critique* on the ethical barometer scales below. Gaps of knowledge, awareness and sensitivity will significantly impact on educator's ability to make informed ethical professional judgments and act consistently from within an ethical stance. These gaps also impact upon educator's ability to engage in social justice teaching, critical pedagogy and apply the ethical standards and standards of practice within their teaching and leadership.

Professional Judgment Institute

Twenty educators from the 423 educators who participated in ethical leadership institutes responded to an invitation to be involved in an ethical leadership Institute focused on professional judgment. These educators engaged in a multiday ethical leadership institute focused on professional judgment. The collective ethical profile
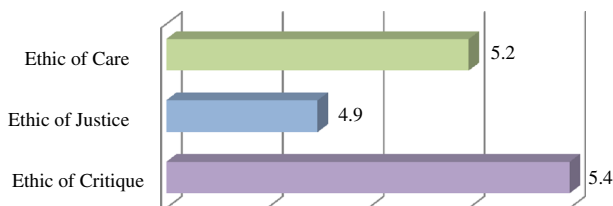

Fig. 4 Collective ethical profile- cohort January 15, 2014

for this group of educators also revealed advanced ethical knowledge than most the other members of the profession that had participated in the ethical self-assessment. Figure 5 illustrate the collective ethical profiles from this group of educators.

Ethical Organizational Cultures

Ethical leaders are adept at fostering organizational cultures that actively foster the collective ethical capacity of all members of the institution. Organizations with a strong ethical culture have established certain conditions that elicit individual and collective respect, regard for transparency and clarity in decision-making and communication (Langlois 2011). These organizations have institutionalized actions that unite employees and have practices that inspire and sensitized people rather than control them.

Critical dialogue lies at the heart of an ethical culture (Bohm et al. 1991). Dialogue can be understood as a "shared inquiry, a way of thinking and reflecting together" (Issacs, 1999, p.9). Langlois (2011) has identified three forms of organizational culture that impact on individual and collective ethical practice: *Culture of Support*, *Culture of Indifference* and *Culture of Control*.

Educators identified these cultural lenses as important ethical frameworks for exploring the ethical dimensions and challenges inherent within organizations. The collective ethical profiles of the practitioners that completed the *Ethical Profile* reveal important information regarding the organizational cultures in which they work (Langlois 2011). These cultures impact upon the ongoing development and enactment of both individual and collective ethical leadership.

These organizational ethical profiles also revealed significant information regarding the ethical nature of the organizational cultures that influence the ethical capacity and efficacy of educators. Exploring organizational cultures through the ethical lenses of the *Ethic of Support*, *Ethic of Justice and Ethic of Critique* can help to foster the individual and collective ethical knowledge and sensitivity of educators. The ethical capacity within an organization can be enhanced when a large number of employees have acquired and embodied advanced ethical knowledge and efficacy. These employees adopt an ethical stance that impacts the organizational culture as they are able to consciously and consistently apply their advanced ethical sensitivity and efficacy to all situations. These collective actions support the ethical capacity development within the organization.

Educators can also enhance their ethical leadership within organizations by critically reflecting on and inquiring into the ethical dimensions associated with *Cultures of Support*, *Cultures of Control* and *Cultures of Indifference*. These lenses can be employed to assist leaders in reflecting on the impact of their actions and decisions for the ethical nature of the organizational culture.
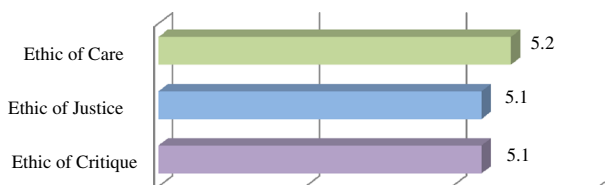

Fig. 5 Collective ethical profile- professional judgment cohort

Implications for Professional Practice

The digital stories, role playing and ethical cases helped deepen our understanding of different ethical frameworks that we can us in our practice (Ontario College of Teachers 2012).

As a result of the ethical professional learning processes a number of new ethical resources have been inspired based on the lived ethical experiences of educators that critically inquired into their professional practice through the ethical institutes and ethical profile process. The inquiry based ethical resources (cases, narratives, vignettes, ethical frameworks, digital stories, books and kits) have been embraced by the teaching profession and teacher education institutions as valuable and powerful processes for critically exploring and advancing the ethical awareness, knowledge, sensitivity, confidence and efficacy of the teaching profession. Leadership development programs for principals and supervisory officers consistently identify the significance of these resources for transforming the ethical stance and practices of educators enrolled in these programs.

The extensive impact of employing the *Ethical Profile* as an educative ethical inquiry process and practical resource for enforcing the *Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession* cannot be understated. Engaging in the *Ethical Profile* process serves as another form of critical self-reflection and ethical analysis for members of the teaching profession based on the core principles and rich concepts inherent within the *Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession* (Ontario College of Teachers 2006c).

The *Ethical Profile* process also helps to support educators as they address the many challenges associated with advancing and applying ethical knowledge: self-knowledge, self-discipline, duty, justice responsibility and the greater good. The *Ethical Profile* process employed by the College included several components that together served as an effective capacity building model for the enforcement of the ethical standards: an ethical standards educative session, self-assessment survey and critical reflection on one's individual profile, as well as the dialogue regarding the implications of the collective profile for the teaching profession. The educators that engaged in the *Ethical Profile* process overwhelming identified significant benefits to the advancement of their ethical knowledge, leadership and actions. This ethical inquiry process clearly supports individual and collective ethical self-regulation. It holds great promise for the ongoing enforcement of the ethical standards.

The *Ethical Profile* process explicitly enables educators to individually and collectively critically explore the ethical awareness, sensitivity and efficacy of the teaching profession. The multiple forms of feedback from this ethical inquiry processes provides a valuable map and means for enhancing the ethical capacity of educators and organizational cultures. This process facilitates critical dialogue regarding educator's ethical responsibilities for shaping the ethical cultures in which they work.

Educational Significance

We need time and forums to continually engage in this type of dialogue regarding ethics in order to advance our profession (Ontario College of Teachers 2012).

The significance of the College taking a leadership role in fostering the collective ethical capacity of the teaching profession is clearly depicted through the increased ethical agency of the educators involved in the various educative processes. The ethical institutes, profiles and resources served as catalysts for fostering the ethical leadership of these educators. Fostering

the ongoing ethical formation of the collective teaching profession is a shared social responsibility. It requires an ethical commitment and embodiment of an ethical stance on the part individual educators, school boards, teacher education programs, Ministries of education and teacher organizations. Ethical practice is informed through ethical consciousness, ethical knowledge, ethical sensitivity and ethical insight.

The College's educative efforts to support the ongoing enforcement of the ethical standards and advance the collective ethical formation of the teaching profession through engaging have been highly successful and promising. It is evident that the institutes, ethical profiles, ethical frameworks and inquiry-based resources are opportunities for educators to actively engage in the regulatory work of the College and to support the collective ethical capacity of the profession. To fully achieve this ethical goal for the teaching profession requires the ethical agency of individual practitioners, school communities and educational organizations that embody,

> . . . a disciplined 'seeing' into the 'life of things' and ideas. Ethical critique is enhanced by an ethical culture where deep thinking about ethics and dilemmas are supported (Ontario College of Teachers 2012).

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