

MORAL SELF-CONCEPT OF PUBLIC AND CHRISTIAN SCHOOL TEACHERS
IN AN ATLANTA METROPOLITAN AREA COUNTY

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Dedication

This study is dedicated to my family. To my extraordinary wife Karen, without whose support my successful completion of the Ed.D. program would not have been possible. You are truly a virtuous wife. To my son, Matthew, who provided many joyous breaks while I carried out my studies and who taught me about priorities. To my daughter, Rebecca, who asked me many times during the completion of this study to play by pressing her face upon the windows of my office doors. You unknowingly encourage me to live my life in the proper perspective. I love you all very much.

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Abstract

Historically, the importance of moral and ethical behavior has helped govern the educational process in the United States. The research shows that students notice and are affected by the moral character of a teacher as it is conveyed by a teacher's behavior and lifestyle, both in and out of the classroom. This quantitative causal-comparative study, conducted in October and November of 2004, examined the moral self-concept of teachers as measured by the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale: Second Education (TSCS:2). The population consisted of 210 teachers from a metropolitan Atlanta county employed by public and Christian elementary and secondary schools. The investigation explored differences among subgroups of teachers by place of employment (by both public and Christian schools, and by elementary and secondary schools), worship service attendance as reported by each subject, and teaching experience in both Christian and public schools. Among the various subgroups, statistically significant differences were found at the $p < .05$ level in the teachers' self-perceptions of moral values as measured by the TSCS:2 for teachers grouped by years of experience. Further research recommended includes examination of teacher moral self-concepts by gender subgroups and by subject area.

INDEX WORDS: Moral Self-Concept, Tennessee Self-Concept Scale, Moral Component of Teaching

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Chapter 1

Introduction

One need only peruse any daily newspaper to find evidence that society is concerned with positive behavior on the part of public figures. Public discourse regarding the behavior of persons involved in legislative bodies, non-profit organizations, the military, businesses, and education abounds from the Internet to the nightly news. Charges of ethics violations and pleas for ethical conduct codes have rung through legislative bodies repeatedly during the past decade. Accusations of misuse of funds have been levied against leaders of non-profit organizations. Military personnel from the highest ranks to the lowest have been accused of and charged with misconduct as reported by the news media. Accusations of greed against corporate officers have been communicated to stockholders via minutes of board meetings. Along with these other public figures, teachers are experiencing the challenges of meeting society's expectations of correct behavior and facing the consequences of improper behavior. Teachers are visible public figures who have a direct impact on the values and behaviors of the students they teach. This study examines the moral self-concept of teachers instructing at a variety of grade levels, at varying tenure levels, at differing ideological structures, and with varying church worship attendance.

Society, as a whole, values moral behavior from its teachers (Wynne and Ryan, 1997). *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* (2003) defines *moral* as "relating to principles of right and wrong in behavior" or "conforming to a standard of right

behavior.” The same resource defines *self-concept* as “the mental image one has of oneself.” (*Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 2003). Thus, moral self-concept may be understood as “the mental image one has of oneself” regarding “conforming to a standard of right behavior.” By definition, then, moral self-concept encompasses both an internal component, the mental image possessed by the individual, and an external component, the behavior exhibited by the individual.

The moral self-concept of teachers affects the educational process in several ways. Wynne and Ryan (1999) avow that the moral self-concept of a teacher is not only facilitative and cautionary; it can also steer one toward morally acceptable behavior which society values in its teachers. Lawrence Kohlberg (1969) found a positive relationship between a person’s moral self-concept and a variety of moral behaviors, along with Huston and Korte (1976) and Lockwood (1976). A teacher’s exemplar of morally acceptable conduct results in positive student learning in the moral realm (Bennett, 1999; Fenstermacher, 1990; Lickona, 2004; Noddings, 2003; Ryan & Bohlin, 1999). Further, the moral self-concept of teachers themselves guides their instruction and the choices they make regarding curriculum and methodology (Buzzelli & Johnston, 2002).

Background of the Study

The Societal Imperative.

Teachers are facing increasing pressure from politicians, parents, religious institutions, and the public to demonstrate values and behaviors that are in conformance with society’s principles and standards (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999). Societies have established

societal moral expectations almost from the beginning of recorded history. As a Judeo-Christian society, we subscribe to the teachings recorded in the Bible as foundations of moral behavior. The Ten Commandments (*Bible*, Exodus 20), given to Moses by God on Mount Sinai, have been dated at approximately 1444 B.C. (Barker, 1985; MacArthur, 1997). The Ten Commandments form the foundation of Judeo-Christian teaching in ethics and morality. The Sermon on the Mount (*Bible*, Matthew 5-7) occurred over two thousand years ago. In this discourse, Jesus instructs the listeners in proper motives and thoughts leading one to moral behavior. Both the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount are the cornerstones of our society's fundamental moral codes, or ways in which one should behave toward others.

From the previous century, examples of society's expectation of moral behavior can be found in teacher contracts and teacher registers (the legal documentation of attendance and requirements for educators), verifying the importance of morality in the educational process. A Wisconsin teacher's contract from 1922 required teachers not to smoke; not to drink beer, wine or whiskey; not to dress in bright colors; to be home between 8 p.m. and 6 a.m.; not to keep company with men; and not to get married (Ornstein & Levine, 1989). School registers of the state of Georgia, dated 1917-18, required teachers to have a period of moral values lessons each day. As recently as 1997, the State of Georgia mandated teachers in each school district to conduct lessons in morals and ethics (Georgia Department of Education, 1997). Thus, moral instruction has been a part of the American educational process over many years.

The American public still believes moral education to be an important aspect of schooling (Power, Higgins, & Kohlberg, 1989). In two Gallup surveys (1975, 1980) of

public attitudes toward public schools, 79% of respondents indicated they favor “instruction in schools that would deal with morals and moral behavior.” In another Gallup poll, published in 2004, 73% of the respondents gave grade school teachers a very high/high rating in regards to their honesty and ethical standards (Moore, 2004). Americans believe that moral education is important, much like Socrates, who professed that the mission of education is to teach people to be smart and good (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999). The American public must also believe that teachers are modeling good behavior to their students by living moral lives.

However, in a recent national poll, nearly 75% of American adults said that they believe that people in general lead less honest and moral lives than they used to live (Putnam, 2000). Certainly one would come to this conclusion by following the moral infractions of educators reported in the mass media and other sources. Teachers have been accused of immoral actions toward students including misbehaving sexually with minors (Associated Press, 2004b; Gegax, 1999; Portner, 1995). Dodd (2004) reported on teachers who purchased advanced university degrees. Awtrey (2004) reported the inappropriate use of public funds by a Georgia high school principal, athletics director, and coaches in 2004. Reports of teachers helping students cheat on standardized tests appear multiple times in the literature (Hayasaki, 2004; Kantrowitz, McGinn, Pierce, & Check, 2000; Kelly, 1999; Labi, Hylton, Nordan, & Sieger, 1999). Instances of improper behavior of teachers have been well documented by research as well as by the media.

Much of the public assumes that Christian schools hire Christian teachers who display a moral self-concept consistent with Christian principles prescribed by the *Bible* (Black, 2003). Much of the public also assumes that public schools hire not only

Christian teachers but also teachers of other faiths and beliefs who display an array of behaviors and lifestyles (Schultz, 2002). Public attitude toward the differences between public and Christian education assumes that Christian schools convey a more conservative view of morality (Burch, 2004; Cavanagh, 2003; Schultz, 2002). However, former U.S. Secretary of Education William Bennett (1988) had the following to say about the importance of the teaching of values in both public and private schools:

Everything we know suggests that the vast majority of American children, for the near future, will go to public schools. None of those children should be relegated to a desert of moral relativism while others attend private institutions where solid values are taught. Why? Because the children in our public schools are our future teachers, statesmen, and corporate leaders. They are our future citizens, our future parents. Finding alternatives to public education where it is deficient is, in the end, not enough. Rather, we want the children in *all* of our schools to have the opportunity to learn the things we hold important. We want them to learn the values we cherish as a nation. We must care about our public schools; and we must care about the values taught in them. (p. 71)

Thus, according to Bennett, public schools must recognize and respond to the imperative task of supporting the proliferation of instruction in morality in the public school system.

The Philosophical Imperative.

In addition to the societal background, it is important to understand the intellectual background of this study. From early times, scholars have debated morality and the significance of moral expectations. Aristotle's *Nichomachean Ethics* and Socrates'

Meno point to the importance of educating the populace not only in the academic sphere, but also in the moral realm. This debate continues through philosophical treatises to modern times (Nucci, 1989b). In the 19th century, the English philosopher John Stuart Mill espoused the development of character as a solution to social problems and as a worthy educational ideal (Miller & Kim, 1998). Mill's contemporary, Herbert Spencer, avowed ". . . education has for its object the formation of character" (Purpel & Ryan, 1976, p. 4) and linked moral behavior to educational philosophy. In the 20th century, American feminist ethicist Carol Gilligan expressed a conception of moral behavior involving an internal compass reading of care and responsibility in relationships rather than one of rights and rules (Gilligan, 1993; Simpson, 1989). Whether the foundation of moral expectations is from a religious or societal perspective, there are values to transmit and to be encouraged (Noddings, 2002).

Self-concept is defined as how one thinks about self, in contrast to self-esteem, which is conceptualized as how one feels about self (James, 1920). In the 20th century, famed moral development theorist Lawrence Kohlberg presented a framework of moral development defining moral stages based upon one's reasons for moral adherence (Kohlberg, 1976b). Thus, according to Kohlberg, the way one views his or her morality (or self-concept) is an important part of one's development. In order for the moral self-concept to form, the individual should become familiar with something within that represents the parents or the law-giving figure (Piaget, 1965). Some would call this the conscience, the force that guides one in right and wrong moral decisions. Hence, this internal force may be a precursor of the desired external moral behavior. Once the self-concept of a person is formed, it may continue to be influenced by a number of factors

ranging from social identities such as being a teacher (Brewer, 1991) to age (Jensen, Huber, Cundick, & Carlson, 1991). Gender also affects one's self-concept, especially in the area of moral development (Gilligan, 1993; Woolfolk, 1987).

People frame their behavior in terms of justice when they are more self-aware (Skitka, 2003). This self-awareness contributes much more toward moral behavior than learning specific expectations of right behavior (Blizek, 1999). Rogers (1973) noted that people who are more in touch with their experiences come to value orientations such as social responsibility and loving interpersonal relationships. Having a strong sense of one's morality can become extremely useful when values conflict. Kohlberg (1973), in his theory of the stages of moral development, emphasized the internal process one undertakes when behavioral judgments are difficult because of the involvement of conflicting values. This internal process, more than values imposed from external motivators, determines an individual's level of moral development. Consequently, one's moral self-concept is an important component indicating one's stage of moral development and a strong predictor of one's moral behavior.

The Professional Imperative.

Societal expectations and philosophical ruminations have motivated educators to assume the responsibility of conveying moral values as part of the educational process. In the last several hundred years, moral education has been seen as a primary function of educational institutions. John Locke, 17th century English philosopher, advocated education as education for character development (Huitt, 2004). The American philosopher John Dewey (1934), an influential philosopher and educator of the early 20th

century, saw moral education as central to the school's mission. In more current times, research studies have shown that the public and educators believe moral education to be an important aspect of teaching. Power, Higgins, and Kohlberg (1989) studied the importance of building character through the formation of good habits modeled by teachers and by the structure throughout the school environment and found that healthy relationships and a sense of a democratic process play a large role in the moral formation of students. Spears' 1973 survey of members of *Phi Delta Kappa* (an educational honor society) on goals of education showed the following ranking of the goals of public schools: develop skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening; develop pride in work and feeling of self-worth; and develop good character and self-respect. In terms of defining good character, these educators included moral responsibility and sound moral behavior as important components of character instruction. The moral development of students is one of the two educational goals most desired by both the public and educators (along with academic competence) (Wynne & Walberg, 1985). These goals (moral and academic development) are interrelated in that students who value learning and are self-disciplined, religious, and hard-working score higher on achievement tests (Etzioni, 1984; Ginsburg & Hanson, 1986).

In developing the moral realm of students, Campbell and Bond (1982) propose an Aristotelian model that includes behavior modeling by important adults and older youth as a major factor in the moral development and behavior of youth in contemporary America. Aristotle, according to Ryle (1975), believed that a teacher could teach virtues to students, not by lecture, but by example. The behavior of one set of important adults in students' lives, teachers, is often enforced by a code of ethics developed by educators,

school board members, and legislators and applied to teachers through state departments of education. In Georgia, where this study occurs, public educators have a binding code of ethics (*Code of Ethics for Educators*, 2004) developed by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission at the direction of the Georgia Legislature. The Georgia General Assembly has also enacted a code of moral values and principles of conduct to govern the behaviors of elected officials, including members of school boards, during their tenures in office and following completion of their terms (H.B. 48, 2005). In 2004, legislators proposed similar special codes of moral values and conduct for the school systems in the state (H.B. 198, 2004). Although this legislation failed to obtain the governor's signature pending the passage of a similar requirement for the legislature, the mandate for moral behavior in the form of legally binding codes of ethics appears imminent also for school system personnel (Associated Press, 2004a).

Answering the Call.

The societal, intellectual, and professional background sets educational expectations that are encountered in the research background and used to set direction for the future regarding the role of a teacher's moral self-concept. The research shows that a teacher's moral self-concept is important, especially in the ways the self-concept aids in regulating a teacher's behavior and lifestyle both in and out of the classroom (Ball & Wilson, 1996; Bergem, 1993; Burstall, 1996; Campbell & Bond, 1982; Chow-Hoy, 2001; Fenstermacher, 2001; Foster, 1994; Orr, 1998; Richardson & Fallona, 2001). Moral behavior exhibited by a person is related to his or her moral self-concept. Kohlberg (1976a), Selman (1976), and Piaget (1965) state that moral self-concept is closely related

to one's social and cognitive development as measured by one's exhibited behavior. According to Lickona (1976), Kohlberg and his colleagues have consistently confirmed a correlation between position on a moral scale based upon one's moral judgment and an array of behaviors including honesty, bystander intervention, and refusal to inflict pain on another. These traits are also required for teachers modeling moral examples for their students. These studies confirm that a teacher's moral self-concept is related to the teacher's behavior and the moral example set for the teacher's students.

Other research explores the ways in which a teacher conveys moral dimensions. Sanger (2001) studied teacher' beliefs and practices as they relate to morality and concluded that teachers' beliefs and views of the moral dimensions of teaching are complex. Teachers and researchers may define morality in widely varying ways. Some definitions may center upon mutual respect of the individual, while others in Sanger's study frame morality in terms of consequences in a communal fashion of rights and wrongs. These definitions can impact a teacher's instruction in many ways, including classroom procedures and expectations. Fenstermacher (2001) explored several ways teachers foster moral development and concluded that the modeling of moral behavior is too interwoven and complex to accurately study. Richardson and Fallona, (2001) investigated the relationship that exists between what a teacher believes and how those beliefs are manifested in the classroom and concluded that expert teachers have a coherence of their methods, beliefs, and goals by weaving them together to include the moral aspects of teaching. Ball and Wilson (1996) deduced that in the teaching profession, a teacher's involvement in the intellectual and moral realms is virtually indivisible.

Purpose of the Study

In the professional literature, agencies such as the Center for the Advancement of Ethics and Character, Character Education Partnership, and the Center for the 4th and 5th Rs (Respect and Responsibility) are reporting the imperative analysis of the moral beliefs and values that are associated with significant levels of positive moral values and behaviors in teachers (Banner & Cannon, 1997; Buzzelli & Johnston, 2002; Fenstermacher, 1990; Fullan, 2003; Jackson, Boostom, & Hansen, 1993; Lickona, 2004; Ryan & Bohlin, 1999). The identification of moral values and attributes can reasonably be assumed to begin with an understanding of the moral self-concept of teachers.

This study was designed to enhance knowledge and practice in the field of educational leadership and moral development as well as enriching teacher education programs and providing guidance to human resource professionals in the field of education. Educators may use the results to enhance programs of study for teacher training and professional development. School districts may use the results to improve the process of teacher selection to identify teacher candidates who will be stronger moral educators for their students. Teacher education programs may be impacted with the encouragement to examine their curricula to determine whether the formation of a future teacher's moral self-concept is being encouraged and developed in coursework and required educational experiences. Further, for current teachers, the design of professional in-service training may address the development of moral awareness among teaching staffs. The general problem also presents a model for further investigations relating to the moral self-perceptions of educators.

Problem Statement and Research Areas

This study began with the premise that there are no identifiable differences in teachers' perceptions of their own morality among the six variables identified in the research areas. These variables were selected in order to determine identifiable potential influences on teachers' moral self-concepts. The variables dissect the research participants by secondary and elementary teaching levels, ideological systems, regular church attendance, and experience in both public and Christian education systems, and length of employment. The study began with the following assumptions:

- 1) There are no differences between the moral self-concepts of secondary teachers in public schools and in Christian schools.
- 2) There are no differences between the moral self-concepts of elementary teachers in public schools and in Christian schools.
- 3) There are no differences between the moral self-concepts of secondary and elementary teachers.
- 4) There are no differences between the moral self-concepts of teachers who attend church regularly and those who do not. (For the purposes of this study, attending church worship services 75% or more of the time defines a regular church attendee.)
- 5) There are no differences between the moral self-concepts of teachers now teaching in a Christian school who have taught in a public school and teachers now teaching in a public school who have taught in a Christian school.
- 6) There are no differences between the moral self-concepts of teachers who

have taught less than 11 years and those who have taught for 11 or more years.

This dissertation follows a traditional five-chapter format. The first chapter of the dissertation presents the societal, intellectual, professional, and research background of the study; the problem statement; the professional significance of the study; an overview of the methodology used; delimitations of the study; and definitions of key terms. Chapter 2 contains a review of the literature. Chapter 3 includes a discussion of the test instrument, the research design, and the setting of the study. Chapter 4 presents the findings of the study including a discussion of the measurements used, the data collected, and statistical findings. Chapter 5 contains the results, conclusions, and other data obtained during the investigation.

Definitions of Key Terms

Character: "[R]ight conduct in relation to other persons and right conduct in relation to oneself" (Lickona, 2004, p. 11).

Christian: One who professes belief in the teachings of Jesus Christ (*Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 2003).

Christian Schools: Institutions of learning that help children learn about the world and their place and tasks in it in a context that challenges students to celebrate the lordship of Jesus Christ over all of creation (Edlin, 2003).

Church: A body or organization of religious believers (*Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 2003).

Educator: One skilled in teaching or an administrator in education (*Merriam-Webster's*

Collegiate Dictionary, 2003).

Ethics: Principles focusing on the goods of relationship, the goods of accomplishment, and justice (Strike, 1990).

Moral: Harmony and fair play between individuals (external actions); tidying up that which lies within an individual (internal thoughts); and a world view that encompasses the general purpose of human life as a whole (spirituality) (Lewis, 1952).

MOR: Moral Self-Concept scale, as measured by the *Tennessee Self-Concept Scale: Second Edition* (Western Psychological Services, 1996).

Moral Self-Concept: Describes the self from a moral-ethical perspective, “examining moral worth, feelings of being a good or bad person,” and “satisfaction with one’s religion or lack of it” (Western Psychological Services, 1996, p. 23).

Public Schools: A free tax-supported school controlled by a government authority (*Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 2003).

Regular Church Worship Service Attendance: Presence at church worship services 75% or more of the time

Religion: The service and worship of God or the supernatural (*Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 2003).

Self-Concept: A personal definition (self-definition) that is induced by the question, “Who am I?” and is different from *self-esteem* which refers to the kind of self-definition evoked by the question, “How do I feel about myself?” (Western Psychological Services, 1996).

TSCS:2: Tennessee Self-Concept Scale: Second Edition (Western Psychological Services,

1996).

Summary

Students at all levels of our society's educational systems are taught not only by direct or intentional instruction, but also by indirect instruction. A portion of this indirect instruction takes place through the moral example given by educators through their dealings with students, staff, family, and the community (Bennett, 1999; Fenstermacher, 1990; Lickona, 2004; Ryan & Bohlin, 1999). An old axiom states, "I can't hear your words because your actions are speaking too loudly" (as quoted in Miano, 1995). In the process of helping students learn appropriate ways to handle a variety of situations, an educator's moral example as a role model is important (Fenstermacher, 1990).

During recent years, school systems across the nation have implemented many character education programs to aid in the battle against declining morals and the display of less virtuous behavior (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999). One of the most effective character education methods occurs indirectly by employing teachers who live out the standards of morality, good character, and integrity in their everyday lives both inside and outside the classroom (Lickona, 2004). In aiding the stability of this example, according to Lickona (1976) and Allport (1955), a sense of one's own self-concept can be a source of consistency in moral conduct.

Chapter 2

Review of Related Literature

Exploring a topic entails fully examining the literature to date. With a topic such as the moral self-concept of teachers, both the philosophical literature and empirical research influence the knowledge base and actions occurring in educational institutions that affect educational philosophy, teaching methodology, and ultimately the development of students. This literature should be investigated for one to understand the ways a teaching staff's moral self-concept influences attitudes and behavior and the resulting implications for the education profession.

To investigate an issue requires specific language and definitions. The first section of this review of the literature addresses the challenges in finding such terminology for *self-concept* and *moral*. An investigation of common elements in the definitions proposed by several major theorists in the field establishes the basis for the definitions used in this study. The review includes definitions of *self-concept*, *moral*, and *moral self-concept*, with consideration in particular to their relation to educational staff members teaching in public schools and those teaching in private Christian schools.

Research in the areas of self-concept, morality, and moral self-concept, especially as they relate to education and teachers, is explored in the second part of this chapter, along with theories derived from the research. Other topics reviewed include educational variables relating to moral self-concept such as teacher performance, teacher education programs, relationships among public school teaching and private Christian school

teaching, and demographic variables such as gender and years of experience. These studies are explored and described to establish the background of theoretical and empirical research that have shaped and guided the present study. The review of existing studies helps one to understand the historical and empirical work already undertaken and to explore implications of the findings of this study as they contribute to a greater understanding of the importance of teachers' moral self-concept.

Searching to Define Self-Concept

The Historical Search for Self-Concept.

The self is unique by being the largest of the structures comprising the cognitive system by encompassing virtually all personally relevant information acquired throughout one's lifetime (Greenwald & Pratkanis, 1984; Kihlstrom & Cantor, 1984; Markus, 1983; Nowak, Vallacher, Tesser, & Borkowski, 2000). This uniqueness is also evident in the self's role as a classification power for many other psychological configurations as well as a manager of control for important personal and interpersonal processes (Nowak et al.). Erikson (1950, 1980) affirmed that self-identity is a crucial stage of development in order for a person to engage in meaningful relationships, as one would do when engaged in education. To know oneself, or at least to think one knows oneself, is an essential component of well-being (Erikson, 1950). Deardon (1975) theorized that the better people know themselves based on true information, the greater the possibility of bringing their actions under conscious control.

Knowing the self has been a topic of interest from the time of ancient Greeks to the present day (Gergen, 1971). "Know thyself" has been attributed to Plato, Thales, and

Pythagoras, as well as Socrates. The Roman poet Juvenal even said the precept descended from Heaven (Gergen, 1971). Plutarch acknowledged that the dictum “Know thyself” was carved on the Delphic oracle, where kings and generals sought advice from the gods on matters of importance (Gergen, 1971). This precept was not a means to an end; rather, it was a directive to reflect upon one’s actions and motives as a means of self-improvement (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999).

Historically, self-concept theory has had an actively developing life in the professional literature. Rene Descartes wrote of the non-physical inner self in 1644 when he proposed that doubt was a principal tool of discipline inquiry. He articulated that if he doubted, he was thinking, and thus he must exist. Accordingly, existence depended upon perception (Purkey, 1988).

The Theoretical Search for Self-Concept.

William James (1890/1950) included a very long chapter (over 100 pages) entitled “The Consciousness of Self” in his classic 1890 two-volume work entitled *The Principles of Psychology*. The chapter is a clearly written introduction to the self with many insights into James’ proposition that the self has two basic components: the *I* concerning how people address themselves (or the reflexive self), and the *me* pertaining to how persons learn about themselves (or the transcendent self.) James (1920) later conceptualized the *me*, or transcendent self, into three components: the material *me*, social *me*, and spiritual *me*. The material *me*, according to James, is composed of one’s self-definition based upon worldly possessions such as housing, car, and physical attractiveness. One’s social *me* consists of the social roles one plays in society, including

friend, family member, and worker. The individual's beliefs comprise the spiritual *me*. According to James (1920), individuals define themselves by operating within one or more of the *me*'s.

James (1910) and Sullivan (1953) featured the self as the central focus of their personality theories. Both constructs consist of a multi-dimensional concept of the self imbedded in a personality theory that states the personality tends to maintain itself. In the area of counseling, Prescott Lecky (1945) asserted that self-consistency is a primary motivator of behavior. Other researchers have found that personality is fluid and changing. Raimy (1948) initiated explorations of self-concept in counseling interviews and declared that the guiding principle of psychoanalysis is the alteration of an individual's self-concept (Purkey, 1988). One of the giants of self-concept theory, Carl Rogers (1947), introduced a whole system of helping people centered upon a self that could be altered as a means of changing the person's behavior.

Jensen, Huber, Cundick, and Carlson (1991) report that researchers (Damon & Hart, 1982; Epstein, 1973; Fitts, 1968) have introduced categories such as the active, physical, social, and psychological self in regard to James' *me* dimension, or self as an object. The categories of continuity, distinctiveness, volition, and reflection introduced by Damon and Hart (1982) apply to James' *I* dimension. These categories attempt to delineate and elaborate the multiple dimensions and characteristics of the complex construct called the self.

Relying upon James' model of the self, Flores and Clark (2004) assessed Mexican teachers preparing to enter a U.S. bilingual teacher preparation program using two standardized instruments: the WAI (an open-ended survey based upon the question,

“Who am I?”) and the Teacher Self-efficacy Quiz (TSQ). Flores and Clark concluded that self-concept, especially personality and moral worth, may influence how teachers distinguish their capability to teach and capability to shape students. Further, the authors of the study deduced that strong self-concepts indicate strong, effective teachers.

Psychologists initially rejected the study of self-concept because it could not be readily observed objectively in a controlled laboratory (Rosenberg, 1989). It was not until Raimy (1948) conducted a quantitative analysis of changes in the self-concept of college students -- measuring their self-concept before and after counseling sessions -- that professionals began empirically studying the students' sphere of self-concept. The study reported a rise in the self-concept of successfully counseled students. Rosenberg believes that the lack of other studies investigating the area of self-concept is due to the emergence of behaviorism.

After James introduced his theory of self-concept, J. B. Watson (1913/1994) introduced the behaviorist paradigm. This opposing theory included the notion that references to the consciousness, mind, and thoughts were to be discarded and replaced by a science of psychology that accepted only the controlled laboratory experiment as its scientific model. It was not until the 1940s that Donald Snygg proposed an alternative paradigm of phenomenology (Rosenberg, 1989). This theory represented a shift from an external to an internal frame of reference. It included a conception that the external behavior of an individual can be predicted by that which takes place internally (Rosenberg, 1989).

Self-concept theory is a part of sociology as both a social product and a social force (Kaplan, 1987). Group identity significantly affects one's self-concept and

behavior, according to a model and initial research proposed and conducted by Brewer (1991). Although the self-concept includes unconscious aspects, it is primarily a part of one's conscious world (Snygg & Combs, 1949; Wylie, 1979), which would include social or group identification. James (1910) wrote that the self has as many identities as there are persons whose opinions deeply matter. Jones, Rhodewalt, Berglas, and Skelton (1981) discovered that the behavior of others or a group toward an individual could influence the individual's self-concept. Sullivan's self-concept theory concentrates heavily in the social area. Mannarino, in his study of preadolescent friendship (1978), found that Sullivan's theory is empirically supported in regards to friendship positively correlating with self-concept.

In the area of psychoanalysis, elements directly present either in awareness or, in Rogers' (1951) terms, "accessible to awareness" are included in the term *self-concept*. Rogers' theory relies heavily on empirical data, according to Kahn and Rachman (2000). Although Heinz Kohut disagreed with areas of Carl Rogers' research and felt it lacked direction and substance (Kohut, 1973/1978), Kahn and Rachman state that both Rogers and Kohut focused upon self in their theories. Rosenberg (1989) contended that as soon as one considers a person's individual thoughts rather than trying to analyze the thoughts for an underlying cause (as Rogers' theory expects), however, the prominence of self-concept is realized. Kohut, alternatively, emphasized self-cohesion and various expressions of the self when fragile or vulnerable as predominant characteristics of self (Kahn & Rachman, 2000).

Self-concept theory suggests that people's concept of themselves influences their behavior (Norberg, 2004). Marsh and Roche (1996) declared that self-concept is often

positioned as a mediating variable that facilitates the attainment of other desired behavioral outcomes. The perceptual theorists assert that individuals act according to their perception of the world at the point of behavior extending “far beyond sensory experience to include such perceptions as beliefs, values, feelings, hopes, desires, and the personal ways in which persons regard themselves and other people” (Combs, Avila, & Purkey, 1978, pp. 15-16). A profoundly imbedded component of intrapersonal, perceptual, and interpersonal communication is one’s self-concept, which affects individual behavior (Brassfield & Daniels, 1995). Brassfield and Daniels also noted that self-concept theory is based on the belief that an individual’s behavior can be predicted by the recognition of the individual’s own interpretation or perception of himself or herself. Purkey (1988) avowed that self-concept, although dynamic, does provide for a consistent direction of behavior. The ways individuals perceive themselves are learned and serve as a kind of gyrocompass for behavior (Purkey, 1970).

The Empirical Search for Self-Concept.

In the empirical self-concept literature, two seemingly contradictory views of the self have been recognized. A number of studies have recognized the self as stable and unchanging (Greenwald, 1980; Markus, 1977; Mortimer & Lorence, 1981; Swann & Read, 1981). Others studies have asserted that the self may change over time, i.e., people vary in their thoughts and feelings of self, mainly due to changes in social situations and groups (Gergen, 1967; Savin-Williams & Demo, 1983). Turner (2001) described the self as stable yet variable at any given moment. Rogers (1951) described the self as orderly and steady but also as flexible. Research conducted by Markus and Kunda (1986)

revealed that the self is generally stable, but that at times environmental conditions could cause the self to be more fluid. This dual nature of the self-concept, i.e., its stable and malleable natures, has only rarely been the focus of empirical work and remains to be further studied and evaluated.

According to the malleable self-concept school of thought, one's feelings about the self will change based on external events; e.g., they are different when complemented by a supervisor than when reprimanded by a supervisor; the news of the presence of cancer elicits a different set of thoughts of self than a report of the absence of cancer; performing a musical solo flawlessly in front of a large crowd extracts a different concept of self than noticeably missing notes in the same solo. The malleable and changing nature of self-concept is conceptualized to derive mainly from social environments. However, very few empirical studies in the field of psychology have explored the acquiescent nature of one's self-concept. Although some studies have explored the relationship between the way people see themselves and the way others see them (e.g. Rosenberg, 1981; Shrauger & Schoeneman, 1979), few have explored the social malleability of self-concept (Jones, Rhodewalt, Berglas, & Skelton, 1981; Morse & Gergen, 1970). The field of sociology has also delved into the area of the dynamic nature of the self (Alexander & Knight, 1971; Martindale, 1980; Zurcher, 1977). Other research has documented changes in one's view of self when treated in various ways (Fazio, Effrein, & Falender, 1981; McGuire & McGuire, 1982). Even though these studies have investigated the self-concept as it relates to various social situations, they have, for the most part, not attempted to correlate the self-concepts offered by various social situations with the existing self-concepts, excepting the research of Markus and Kunda (1986).

The stable self-concept seems to have been documented more with empirical research than the malleable nature of self-concept (Markus & Kunda, 1986). One of the most pervasive findings of research has supported the hypothesis that individuals seek stability and actively resist information that challenges their view of self. Studies have revealed that individuals discount and tend to ignore and refute accounts that differ from their own account of their behavior (Greenwald, 1980; Greenwald & Pratkanis, 1984; Markus, 1977; Tesser & Campbell, 1983; Rosenberg, 1979; Wurf & Markus, 1983). Other studies have found that individuals seek out information and environments that are confirming to their own self-perception (Swann, 1985; Swann & Hill, 1982; Swann & Read, 1981). These inquiries suggest that self-concept is stable and does not change; in fact, that individuals resist situations and accounts that will offer information that is inconsistent with their own self-concept. Markus and Kunda deduced in their research that each person possesses a great diversity of complex structures of the self. The self concept at any given time (referred by Markus and Kunda as the *working self-concept*) is a subset of this multifaceted structure of self-conceptions.

Other research recognized that facets of self-concept become more distinct with age (Byrne & Shavelson, 1996; El-Hassan, 2004; Marsh & Ayotte, 2003; Marsh & Shavelson, 1985). Marsh and Shavelson reported that a person's self-concept becomes more distinct and differentiated with age, as did Byrne and Shavelson (1996). Research conducted by Marsh and Ayotte (2003) also found that self-concept becomes progressively more multidimensional with age, but additionally found that self-concept declines linearly with age. Similarly, Charles and Pasupathi's (2003) research revealed that the self-concept (for women) had less intra-individual variability with increasing age.

Globally, El-Hassan (2004) found similar results indicating a more distinct self-concept with age while conducting research in Lebanon.

The work of Carol Gilligan and Nancy Chodorow has been instrumental in identifying gender differences in self-concept (Garbarino, 1999; Gilligan, 1977, 1993). They identified a distinguishing structure of care and feelings that were a much more prevalent part of females' than males' self-concepts. Charles and Pasupathi (2003) found in their work that when self-concept is studied over time, women exhibited a greater variability in self-concept than men. In their investigation using students in grades 2 through 6, Marsh and Ayotte (2003) reported gender differences in self-concept as it relates to academics. Girls showed a higher self-concept in reading and music, while boys showed a higher self-concept in math and sports. Similarly, college student women scored higher in verbal and artistic domains of self-concept, while college men scored higher in the math and physical self-concept domains (Vispoel & Fast, 2000). The same study, interestingly, indicated that these gender differences in self-concept sometimes do not parallel in actual performance. Michie, Glachan, and Bray (2001) discovered that college females experienced more negative academic self-concept overall than males.

Wurf and Markus (1983) noted that self-concept research had focused primarily upon the effects of neutral or positive experiences on self-concept characteristics. Therefore, they researched the effect that negative information may have on self-concept, using college students as subjects. Fifty-five college students participated in the study in which they were grouped into four groups based on their self-rating on trait adjectives. In one study, students rated themselves based on three tasks and then rated their belief in their answers. In a second study, students participated in a small-group problem solving

discussion and then rated the accuracy of false feedback of others' views of their self-traits. Their findings suggest that people do not always ignore or systematically change negative information related to them.

Although some earlier researchers (e.g. Coopersmith, 1967; Marx & Winne, 1978) concluded that the facets of self-concept were so dominated by a unified factor that the facets could not be differentiated, the theory of the self has come to include several different constructs of the self that can be simultaneously considered as part of one theory of the self. These constructs have been identified by researchers and may be measured separately and combined to determine an individual's total self-perception (Jensen, Huber, Cundick, & Carlson, 1991). Three self-evaluation instruments measuring self-concept constructs include the Omnibus Self-Test, The Australian Self-Description Questionnaire II (SDQII), and the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale: Second Edition (TSCS:2). Self constructs that the Omnibus Self-Test measures are as follows: self-confidence, selfishness, self-critical, self-control, self-as-agent, moral self-concept, self-regard, self-disclosure, self-analysis, self-reliance, self-esteem, and self-identity (Jensen, Huber, Cundick, & Carlson, 1991). Five of the concepts from the SDQII that are also used with the National Educational Longitudinal Survey of 1988 (NELS:88) are parent relations self-concept, verbal self-concept, mathematics self-concept, same-sex self-concept, and opposite-sex self-concept (Marsh, 1994). Other self-factors included on the SDQII are general academic, problem solving, physical ability, appearance, religion, honesty, emotional stability, and general-self concept (Marsh & Shavelson, 1985). Self-concept constructs reported on the TSCS:2 are physical self-concept, moral self-concept, personal self-concept, family self-concept, social self-concept, academic/work self-

concept, and total self-concept (Western Psychological Services, 1996).

Discovering a Definition for Self-Concept.

Marsh (1990; Marsh & Yeung, 1997) argued for the need to more fully explore the overlapping affective constructs of self-concept, self-efficacy, locus-of-control, and self-attributions in order to ensure a specific yet inclusive definition of “self-concept.” Marsh and Yeung’s research supported the need for more critical definitions in these areas and, further, for different constructs of the self-concepts, such as the academic and moral self-concepts, in order to be able to clearly measure and delineate the constructs.

Self-concept is different from self-efficacy, as clearly distinguished by Bandura (1993). While self-concept involves total perceptions regarding oneself, self-efficacy involves judging one’s capabilities. Bandura identified this as self-beliefs. Accordingly, “Because confidence is considered an integral component of an individual’s self-concept, self-efficacy beliefs are often viewed as requisite judgments necessary to the creation of self-concept beliefs” (Pajares & Schunk, 2001, p.6). Pajares (1996) further proposed that self-concept is a question of “Who am I?” while self-efficacy involves a question of “Can I do this?” A multidimensional perspective of self-concept acknowledges that its development transpires from both a combination of the internal factor of competence/importance incongruity and the external factor of the support/approval of others (Hoge & Renzulli, 1991). Other research equating self-concept with self-efficacy has been inconclusive (Pajares & Schunk, 2001), resulting in the two distinct constructs within social cognitive theory (Flores & Clark, 2004).

One’s self-concept, according to Rosenberg (1979), may be viewed in terms of

exteriority or interiority. Each person has two selves, according to Rosenberg: an overt (revealed) self and a covert (concealed) self. The overt self includes those behaviors and characteristics that are available to the public and others. They are the physical, demographic, and behavioral characteristics that comprise a social exterior. The covert self includes thoughts, feelings, and notions that are only known by the self and never communicated to others through actions and words. This self may be referred to as the psychological interior. Rosenberg noted, based on his research asking children of different ages about themselves, that as a person grows through the adolescent years, he or she tends to show an increase in the development of the psychological interior as a separate component of self. Interestingly, though, younger children tend to identify themselves more with physical characteristics, while older children identify themselves more with social characteristics and behaviors. This suggests that older children are capable of introspection, reflection, and reacting to their inner thoughts and processes.

Current literature includes several shades of self-concept definitions. According to Rosenberg (1989), self-concept is “the totality of the individual’s thoughts and feelings with reference to [the] self as an object” (p. ix). Shavelson, Hubner, and Stanton (1976) defined self-concept broadly as a person’s self-perceptions molded through encounters with and understandings of one’s surroundings. Marsh and Shavelson (1985) defined self concept as “a person’s perceptions of him- or herself” (p. 107). Purkey (1988) defined self-concept as the “totality of a complex, organized, and dynamic system of learned beliefs, attitudes and opinions that each person holds to be true about his or her personal existence” (p. 1). The publishers of the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale identify one’s self-concept as a personal definition that is induced by the question “Who am I?” and is

different from self-esteem, which refers to the kind of self-definition evoked by the question “How do I feel about myself?” (Western Psychological Services, 1996). Thus, many similar definitions of *self-concept*, recognizing the uniqueness of each person’s self-definition of him or herself, have entered the professional field over the past several decades. For the purposes of this study, the aforementioned personal definition induced by the question, “Who am I?” will be used.

Defining “Moral”

Problems with Defining “Moral.”

As evidenced in the literature, *moral* is an imprecise word. Indeed, it is a word scholars find hard to define. Straughan (1988) stated, “*Moral* is not a very exact word, nor a word to be confidently applied or withheld” (p. 83). After discussing the various synonyms currently found in the English language, MacIntyre (1984) described the challenge offered those who attempt to define *moral* as it applies to human beings in trying to be precise while covering the many aspects of the word. This challenge occurs because of a dilution of the concepts and ideas surrounding morality. According to MacIntyre, “What we possess . . . are the fragments of a conceptual scheme, parts which now lack those contexts from which their significance derived. We possess indeed simulacra of morality; we continue to use many of the key expressions. But we have . . . lost our comprehension, both theoretical and practical, [of] morality” (p. 2). Today, according to MacIntyre, persons cannot agree on morality so much so that the term *moral* is mainly used to express disagreements, such as disagreements regarding war, abortion, and the role of government.

Sockett (1996) asserted that the lack of a definition of *moral* requires the discovery of a congruent moral language. He alleged that the education profession, unlike the medical profession, does not have adequate language to deal with morals. Sockett postulated that teachers simply do not indulge in deep philosophical debates related to morals as compared to the extensive literature found in professional medical literature. In the medical field, according to Sockett, morality is a rich topic full of much abundant and worthwhile discourse. According to Sockett (1993) and Bellah and his associates (1985), teachers are unable to use moral language in meaningful discourse because they do not have the vocabulary or necessary conceptual framework since it was lacking in the curriculum during their training.

Progress in Defining "Moral."

Other researchers and philosophers have attempted to define *moral*. Lewis (1952) described three areas that define morality: harmony and fair play between individuals (external actions); tidying up that which lies within an individual (internal thoughts); and a world view that encompasses the general purpose of human life as a whole (spirituality). According to Lewis, morality involves "relations between man and man: things inside each man: and relations between man and the power that made him" (p. 64). The questions on Fitts and Warren's self-concept instrument, the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale: Second Edition (TSCS:2) (Western Psychological Services, 1996) delve into all three areas of Lewis' definition of morality.

Wilds' (1936) historical review traced the development of the meaning of the word *moral*. Regarding external components of morality encompassing behavior and

interactions among human beings, Wilds traced the earliest evidence of the term to early Chinese philosophy in writings dated approximately 2500 years ago. The Chinese base of the definition of *moral* as used in their moral training is similar to the Latin word *mores*, meaning manners, customs, and conduct. Wilds described the influence of Brahmanism on the culture of India, resulting in a general definition of the term *moral* similar to that found among the Chinese, cementing adherence to the rigid caste system as an element of a moral life. Zoroaster in 500 B.C. added a definition of *moral* to the Persian philosophy that said one should strive to live as right as possible and that good would triumph over evil in the end, both in individual lives as well as on a cosmic plane.

Other researchers describing development of the concept of morality include Ornstein (1977), Ornstein and Levin (1989), Reisner (1927), and Thut (1957), who all included the moral development of humans in their writings on the history and foundations of education. While Reisner and Thut concentrated on virtuous behavior in describing morality, Ornstein and Levin seemed to describe morality more in terms of a person's inner thoughts and motives. The contrasting views of each of these theorists added to the development of a workable definition of morality.

External Components of a "Moral" Definition.

C.S. Lewis (1952) included the relations among people as the first of three components of morality. This behavioral/social emphasis has been the primary focus of moral teaching for centuries. External actions were important elements in the moral definitions appearing in the literature and language of the Hebrews. According to historian Thomas Davidson (1900), the Jewish culture has traditionally focused on moral

discipline in its educational programs. The Jewish culture conventionally based morality upon adherence to the law of rules and regulations as defined by the *Torah*, or *Law*. In the Jewish culture, a moral person is one who keeps the laws and regulations of Judaism, as evidenced by external actions. Wilds' historical review (1936) acknowledged that Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle agreed that moral behaviors are a crucial cog of a functioning society. Eighteenth-century scholar Adam Smith equated virtuous behavior with the obedience to a set of rules (MacIntyre, 1984; Smith, 1817/1997).

Kneller (1963) included among those philosophers championing only the intellect as the basis of morality the advocates of scientific realism and pragmatism. Pragmatists Charles Sanders Peirce, William James, and John Dewey defined moral behavior as relative. Peirce and Dewey defined moral behavior using a scientific orientation and, therefore, used factual terms based upon ever-expanding scientific and natural terms. Noddings (2002) noted that, in contrast, John Dewey espoused consistency of an individual's actions as a component of the definition of *moral*. Dewey stated that an individual should use the same moral principles in school that the person uses outside the school environment (Noddings, 2002).

Internal Components of a "Moral" Definition.

Lewis (1952) included the things inside each person as a second component of his definition of morality. The internal realm of morality includes the individual's thoughts and judgments concerning one's morality. Socrates defined morality by relating to universal concepts of piety, temperance, and justice, which could be learned and internalized through clear thinking (Wilds, 1942). Plato defined morality as the

attainment of character. Aristotle asserted that morality is defined by a person's well-being and well-doing, based on sound internal reasoning, which will lead to happiness. According to the *Bible*, Jesus said, "What comes out of a man is what makes him 'unclean.' For from within, out of men's hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance, and folly. All these evils come from inside and make a man 'unclean'" Mark 7:20-23 (New International Version). Tom's theory (1984) included a concern for what a person believes to be significant or important, if these valuations lead to desirable ends.

Lawrence Kohlberg defined morality as involving the internal decisions based on the concept of justice (1971). Kohlberg conceptualized six stages that are based upon what is right, reasons for maintaining the right, and the social perspective behind each stage (Kohlberg, 1976a). Other philosophers cite limitations with Kohlberg's definition, specifically noting that by concentrating on the cognitive-judgmental realm, the behavioral component is ignored (Hersh, Paolitto, & Reimer, 1979). Kohlberg (1971) acknowledged, however, two other possible definitions than his own. One would be to act decently, the other to adhere to the norms and laws of society. Both definitions have the inherent problem, according to Kohlberg, of requiring a definition of specific moral actions. To illustrate Kohlberg's point, Hersh, Paolitto, and Reimer (1979) contend that most would agree that it is wrong to lie. However, if a bystander saw a gunman chasing a person, would it still be wrong to lie to the gunman about the other person's whereabouts? In accordance with Kohlberg's framework, an action by itself is not moral or immoral. The moral element enters when a person explains the internal rationale of thoughts surrounding the action.

Spiritual Components of a “Moral” Definition.

In Lewis’ (1952) definition of morality, the third component is that of the relations of a person and a higher being. Reisner (1927) interpreted the philosophy of Cicero as supporting the spiritual basis of morality. Cicero believed that nature, human and physical, was at heart rational and moral and, thus, he thought it was logical to believe in a divine will, which could be interpreted as a supreme being, running throughout the depth and breadth of life. Prussian-born eighteenth-century philosopher Immanuel Kant, although personally believing that there were no rational reasons for believing in God, contended that a belief in God was necessary for morality (Patrick, 2002). While William James believed in the relativity of values, he also recognized the view that humans are primarily spiritual in their moral dealings (Kneller, 1963). Kohlberg speculated that a seventh stage may exist in his six-stage model of moral reasoning that links religion with moral reasoning (Kohlberg, 1981).

Among the general public, much evidence exists that people link morality and a belief in a supreme being. George Washington stated in his farewell address as president that “reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle” (Barton, 2002b, p. 51). A 2002 Pew Research Center poll (Gardyn & Paul, 2002) found that many people believe that a belief in God is needed to be moral and have values. When categorized by race, 69 percent of African-Americans, 63 percent of Hispanics, and 44 percent of Caucasians acquiesce that a belief in God is needed to be moral and have values. Age categories in the poll were positively correlated for the same question. For another item in the same poll, 62 percent of African-Americans and Caucasians believe that children are more likely to be moral

when raised with faith, along with 59 percent of Hispanics. Age groups were also positively correlated for the question.

William James (1902) espoused that authentic religious experience ought to be demonstrated in mature moral functioning. James did recognize, however, that morality and religion are not synonymous; that is, personal religion contains some elements that personal morality does not. Walker (2003) contended that, although James' arguments are comprehensive and persuasive, the area of moral psychology has largely overlooked the significance of religion and spirituality in morality.

Empirical research is overall lacking in this area. Many of the existing studies (which will be discussed later) are qualitative studies, especially in the educational arena. One significant study, conducted by Damon and Colby (1992), involved an exploration of 23 people identified as persons leading extraordinary moral lives in regards to commitment and action. These individuals were chosen by a panel of ethical experts using a set of criteria identified by the researchers. One of the most stimulating findings was unexpected, that almost 80% of the exemplars attribute their strong moral commitment and action to their religious faith. This was particularly surprising in that the selection criteria for the sample did not indicate anything visibly religious in nature. Still, some of the methodology was questioned in that it lacked a control group, the sample size was small, and the study lacked objective methodology.

Some of these concerns were addressed in a recent study by Matsuba and Walker (2005) which explored the differences among young adult moral exemplars and a comparison group by researching their life stories. The exemplars were chosen based on their commitment to various social-service organizations. The control group was matched

with the exemplars in terms of gender, ethnicity, age, and educational level. Subjects participated in a narrative interview. As in the Damon and Colby study (1992), the moral exemplars were found to have a much higher level of faith development than the comparison group, suggesting that levels of faith development may need to be taken into account in moral development theories and definitions.

Of course, oftentimes the terrain of discourse regarding a personal faith, even in an attempt to define morality, can be viewed as a landmine. What is needed is a definition that leads away from the ruse of normative ethical relativism but allows work with “ethical absolutes or ethical universals in a way that avoids the pitfalls of the dogmatic approach to morality” (Goodwin, 1978, p. 679). Kohlberg (1970) recognized the need to define morality and argued that a definition cannot contain a list of virtues and vices. He concluded that a definition must be based upon the concept of justice. According to Goodwin (1978), Kohlberg’s definition agrees more with John Rawls, who leaned upon justice in his definition, than Plato, who noted that morality is akin to mathematical properties in that neither changes but both remain constant. John Rawls (1971) believed that justice is the first virtue and entails three concepts: liberty, equality, and reward for contributions to the common advantage.

As evidenced by the multiple definitions in the above section, many widely varying definitions for *moral* have been and continue to be used throughout the professional literature. For the purposes of this study, the Lewis (1952) definition will be used, as it seems to be more comprehensive yet easily understood than others. This definition is comprised of three elements: “relations between man and man; things inside each man; and relations between man and the power that made him” (p. 64).

Moral Self-Concept

Internal Apparatus of Moral Self-Concept.

In regard to moral development, as previously discussed, one of the most influential contemporary approaches to measuring moral reasoning is that of Kohlberg, who relied upon the work of Piaget (Pratt, Golding, Hunter, & Sampson, 1988). Kohlberg (1984) identified and researched six progressive stages of moral development that are based upon a person's rationale or justification for acting morally. Kohlberg (1976b) also noted that, although intelligence and maturity of moral judgment are not highly correlated, a limited reasoning stage (following Piaget's stages of development) does limit the capability for moral reasoning. Gardner (1999) researched the moral self-concepts of children and found significant differences between the moral self-concept of seventh grade and fifth grade boys. Avila (2000) found that ninth grade students who previously participated in gifted classes had a higher moral self-concept, and that a significant correlation exists between one's reading competency and moral self-concept.

Philibert (1979) challenged Kohlberg's theory as incomplete; only in the last two stages does a person's conscience enter the structure. Philibert also noted that the early work of Carl Rogers in the development of a personal self specifically incorporated a stage structure that had many similarities to each of Kohlberg's stages, but was also lacking in the area of one's conscience formation. In response to this deficiency, Philibert proposed a four-stage theory of conscience entitled autonomy, intensity, extent of practical cognition, and originary consciousness. The last stage, originary consciousness, was used by Philibert to describe people who are aware that their being, freedom, and consciousness are limited and originated.

Kohlberg (1976a) did note that one may behave morally with limited moral judgment. The person may act morally even though not understanding (or believing in) moral principles. Allport (1955) distinguished between an immature conscience, based on the “must” (or be punished), and a mature conscience, based on the “ought” (because it is the right thing to do). The immature conscience may act morally unintentionally while the mature conscience is intentionally moral.

Rosenberg (1979) stated that intertwined with what a person really is exists a concept of what the person believes she or he should be or ought to be. This is broader than the traditional view of the conscience, because it also includes the entire structure of self-demands that people place upon themselves regarding morality. Rosenberg declared that one’s moral self-concept includes a tendency to visualize a picture of an idealized image, and this includes “the individual’s thoughts and feelings with reference to himself as an object” (p. 45).

The conceptual formation of the moral self has been the topic of a number of research studies. Skitka (2003) acknowledged that the aspect of the self (material, social, or personal and moral) that controls the working self-concept determines the way in which people define fairness. Skitka presented a model (labeled the Accessible Identity Model or AIM) linking justice reasoning with a person’s self-concepts. The model is based on the principle that “before we can judge others and decide how to behave ourselves, we have to decide who we are” (Spears, Doosje, & Ellemers, 1999, p. 63).

Thus, following Lewis’ definition of morality, research supports the premise that one’s moral self-concept involves an internal component. This internal component includes feelings and thoughts one has that may not be apparent to one’s fellow beings.

External Apparatus of Moral Self-Concept.

The self is never more than a stranger's glance from being stimulated (Vallacher, Nowak, Froehlich, & Rockloff, 2002). Results from a study involving the action emergence process for meaningful social behavior by Wegner, Vallacher, Kiersted, and Dizadji (1986) indicated that the degree of prior low-level identification of an action is a variable that generates a person's acquiescence to new conceptualizations of action. Markus (1983) wrote that self-perception theories were too limiting in that they did not take into account the predictor function that self-concept has upon future behavior. Markus further posited that two individuals might have an equally strong motivation for an action, but that the specific actions that follow are dependent upon the individuals' self-concept. As Erik H. Erikson (1950) acknowledged, "Sense of identity provides the ability to experience one's self as something that has continuity and sameness, and to act accordingly" (p. 1062). Thus, aspects of self-knowledge can be momentous in the revelation of future behavior (Markus, 1983).

Tsang (2001) conducted research to test the hypothesis that the manifestation of existential guilt could serve as an occasion for self-affirmation, leading to elevated moral self-concept scores and a reduction in later helping behavior. Results indicated a rise in moral self-concept scores and, unexpectedly, a positive correlation for helping behavior to increase with higher moral self-concept scores. Tsang concluded that existential guilt might motivate individuals to uphold moral principles.

Maclean, Walker, and Matsuba (2004) studied relationships among a person's identity integration (which is almost synonymous to self-concept), moral reasoning, religious orientation, and altruistic behavior. Sixty university undergraduates at a large

Canadian university were individually interviewed (and videotaped) and then asked to complete several self-report measures. The researchers found that not only does a person's identity integration and moral reasoning positively affect altruistic behavior, but the person's religious orientation is also a positive factor. The researchers suggested that the alteration of the religious orientation scales to a nonreligious content or to a different ideology (such as socialism) may produce similar results.

Thus, research supports the premise that one's moral self-concept has an external component: it is evidenced through the morality of one's actions and yields a strong influence on those actions. Thoughts influence one's actions (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999).

Spiritual and Religious Apparatus of Moral Self-Concept.

William James (1902) posited that, while different, religion and morality are related in that the practical consequences of a strong faith should be evidenced by a strong range of moral sensibilities. In James' theory of identity development, he described the spiritual *me* as "the true, the intimate, the ultimate, the permanent *me* which I seek" (1910, p. 46). This is further described as the "core" and "sanctuary of our life" (p. 43). Walker (2003) argued that, while James presented a convincing argument of the interrelations of spirituality and religion and morality, the professional field of moral psychology has generally disregarded the significance of the argument.

From an empirical perspective, it is evident, however, that the magnitude of the impact of religion and spirituality upon one's moral self-concept is beginning to emerge as more research is conducted. As mentioned prior in this study, Damon and Colby (1992) conducted a small case study of 23 moral exemplars and unexpectedly found that

80% of the exemplars ascribed the strong moral commitments underlying their moral actions to religious faith. Later, Matsuba and Walker (2005) replicated the study, but chose the exemplars using their commitment to social service organizations and also incorporated a control group based on several demographic factors. Again, religious faith was found to be extremely elevated in the exemplars, especially as compared to the control group.

An additional study found that religion and spirituality play a prominent role in the moral reasoning of ordinary people (Walker, Pitts, Hennig, & Matsuba, 1995). In this study, adults were asked to recall and discuss two moral dilemmas from their own experience: one being recent and the other being the most difficult they have confronted. A frequent theme in the study was a reliance upon religious and spiritual values. Some said that their religion provided a sensible system of morality, while others said their moral framework was deeply entrenched in their faith. Fernhout (1989) similarly posited that, for many, religion and spirituality give morality a context.

Pullen, Modrcin-Talbott, West, and Muenchen (1999) reported that as one's religiosity increases, alcohol and drug abuse decreases, and, conversely, as one's religiosity decreases, alcohol and drug abuse increases. An increase in spiritual and religious belief was found to increase one's self-concept, according to Dechesne and associates (2003). Emavardhana and Tori (1997) deduced that after participating in a separate seven-day Vipassan meditation retreat, participants' moral self-concept, as measured by the TSCS:2, increased. Similarly, strength in religious belief was associated with positive self-concept in a study conducted by Blaine, Trivedi, and Eshleman (1998).

Another facet of the study by Walker and associates (1995) entailed an exercise in

which individuals named two persons they regarded as highly moral and then justified their choices. A content analysis of those named revealed a high number of religious leaders, even though the instructions were to name *moral* exemplars. In another part of the study, participants wrote down attributes and characteristics of a highly moral person, a highly religious person, and a highly spiritual person. Interestingly, many of the descriptors were similar and appeared on each of the three lists. Other descriptors, however, such as *authoritarian*, *devotion*, *faithfulness*, *commitment*, and *self-righteous* appeared only on one of the lists (highly religious person.) Each type of exemplar had some unique descriptors. Walker et al. (1995) concluded that the religious, spiritual, and moral dimensions are analogous in some aspects (as they share a large number of attributes) but diverse in others (as each has a large number of unique attributes.)

Thus, William James (1902) expressed empirical criterion for the authenticity of a person's religious life in terms of moral expressions. Considerable evidence supports and is consistent with James's claim that one's religion and spirituality are foundational for their moral action and moral decision-making (Damon & Colby, 1992; Fernhout, 1989; Matsuba & Walker, 2005; Walker, 2003; Walker et al., 1995). However, it has also been noted that they are not synonymous (Walker et al., 1995), and has been further suggested that the relation between religion and morality may be culturally and historically variable (Shweder, Much, Mahapatra, & Park, 1997). Religion is one of the key aspects of a person's cultural identity (Bhugra, 2002). Barnes, Plotnikoff, Fox, and Pendleton (2000) noted that the diversity of religious practices in the United States is huge and likely growing. This could mean a variety of experiences contributing to the formation of the spiritual aspect of one's moral self-concept. For the purposes of this study, the definition

identified by the publishers of the Tennessee Self Concept Scale will be used for *moral self-concept* that describes the self from a moral-ethical perspective, “examining moral worth,” “feelings of being a good or bad person,” and “satisfaction with one’s religion or lack of it” (Western Psychological Services, 1996, p. 23).

Moral Component of Teaching

Teachers and the Language of Morality.

According to van Manen (2000), finding a language to describe an educator’s experience is a critical requisite for addressing and understanding educational pedagogical situations. Sanger (2001) investigated the language of morality and its relationship with the dimension of teaching. The study methodology included a series of formal and informal interviews with a variety of teachers combined with the analysis of video footage of the teachers’ classrooms in session. Sanger concluded that teachers have a very complex and differing set of beliefs regarding morality. This may aid in discussions encompassing morality, but also seems to suggest, according to Sanger, that there exists more than one right way to consider morality. Hansen, in 1993, offered the term “moral influence” in relationship to “habits of conduct and character that a teacher’s actions invite their students to adopt” (p. 397).

Joseph and Efron, in 1993, found that teachers define values and moral values differently based upon their experiences and worldview. In their research, 180 teachers returned questionnaires, and 26 of these teachers were selected for structured interviews. After analyzing the questionnaires and interviews, the researchers found several common themes. The key finding of their study is that teachers’ individual moralities shape the

choices they make and the conflicts that concern them as they function as educators. Further, teachers see themselves as moral agents in the educational process and feel a commitment to share their personal ethos, according to Joseph and Efron. They found that most teachers hope to have a lasting effect on their students, not just academically, but by helping their students become better people. A suggestion for further research is cited involving teachers' understanding of their own moral traditions, such as the social, cultural, and religious influences that mold their moral identities. Joseph and Efron suggested that teachers need to participate in discourse and contemplation relating to morality, especially as it relates to their role in the educational process.

Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, and Tipton (1985) explained the inability of many people to examine their moral dilemmas adequately because of a deficient vocabulary. According to the sociological research and philosophical writings of Bellah and his associates based on their interviews of 20 Americans, people have not been taught and are reluctant to use words such as *kindness*, *honesty*, and *courage*. The researchers concluded that this aids in leading to excessive individualism which threatens the nation's collective existence. Less and less meaningful discourse is occurring regarding morality because of a greater focus upon self, according to Sockett (1993). However, a recent Gallup poll (2004) on the honesty and ethical standards of various professions identified grade school teachers as the second highest rated profession.

Straughan (1988) addressed the distinction between the form and content of morality when declaring that some define morality in terms of content by the issues, ideas, and questions deemed to be moral. An educator would be operating in the moral realm only when dealing with these areas and considering these factors in their decisions

and actions, according to Straughan. On the other hand, similar to Kohlberg's theory, others may define and reflect morality as the *way* of reaching moral judgments and conclusions. An example would be in justifying one's actions by appealing to general, well-accepted principles when making or carrying out a decision. Thus, an educator would be acting in the moral realm only when reasoning that way. Straughan proposed that the educational implications with the content view of morality include a primary concern with teaching and passing on a definite subject matter in terms of specific rules and precepts about how to behave towards other people. The 'formal' viewpoint emphasizes certain ways of thinking and reasoning that children should acquire if they are to become morally fit and mature. While Straughan cited Kohlberg's moral developmental theory of reasoning, he also acknowledged that Kohlberg's theories had varied and many objections (see Modgil & Modgil, 1986). However, according to Straughan, Kohlberg conceded that the moral educator must deal with value content, structure, and behavior along with moral reasoning. Straughan stated that this perceptible rebuttal must cast further doubts upon the moral reasoning approach toward education.

According to Tom (1984), people often use the term *moral* to isolate an area of behavior. Actually, Tom suggested, almost every aspect of teaching involves a moral component. The classroom, by virtue of its structure, has a moral component that permeates nearly every aspect of student activity. The teacher-learner relation, by its nature, gives one person (the teacher) control of another (the student) in developing desirable directions. Fenstermacher (1990) expressed that teaching is a highly moral undertaking and that matters of what is fair, right, just, and virtuous are always present; for example, whenever a teacher decides who should go first, second, and so on; decides

disciplinary procedures for students tardy to class; or discusses a situation involving a student; moral considerations are present.

Teachers, Morality, and the Classroom.

Ryan and Bohlin (1999) avowed that discussions on moral issues are a critical function of education because students are at the age to form moral views and attitudes. How teachers acknowledge their personal moral viewpoints is a controversial issue, according to Ryan and Bohlin. Teachers can attempt to hide their own morals. They can also deflect questions continually back to the students. However, Ryan and Bohlin believe that direct instruction and the sharing of personal experiences by the teacher is acceptable and even desired. They suggest steering toward a middle ground in which teachers clearly communicate the importance of morality in their own lives as they help students work through their own moral problems. When appropriate, teachers should also share their own views. A set of core moral values exists in the pluralistic society of the United States, according to Ryan and Bohlin (1999), including honesty, fairness, a respect for private property, and personal responsibility. Students, thus, should see their teachers instructing in the moral realm based on these core societal values. “Nothing could be more dangerous than to have children taught by moral eunuchs” (p. 150).

Hansen (2001) reflected that pedagogical teaching method techniques are not value-neutral. Moral pre-suppositions and expectations (involving a teacher’s moral self-concept) intertwine pedagogical method techniques. Even when following a detailed, written teaching script, method comes alive with the orientation of a serious-minded teacher. Accordingly, Raudenbush, Rowan, and Cheong (1992) proposed that, despite

attempts for the routinization of the act of teaching through teacher-proof curricula and direct instruction procedures, a central component of classroom instruction is uncertainty. As previously cited, research by Joseph and Efron (1993) confirmed that classrooms cannot be value-neutral environments, and that the relationship between the student and teacher, for better or worse, is a moral relationship. Thus, it appears that moral education extends even beyond the importance of specific moral education curricula to include the entire ethos of the educational institution. This may include any influence that may occur in relation to a teacher's moral self-concept.

Sockett (1993) affirmed that teachers are often required to display the virtues of honesty, courage, caring, fairness, and practical wisdom in the proper way for the benefit of their students. Students need the security only provided by a consistency in good words that match good deeds and behavior, suggested Smalley and Trent (1988). According to Smalley and Trent, children need to see from an early age adults walking and talking honestly. Character must be rooted deeply to be an example of consistent living. "It isn't a short term change of behavior that makes an impression on our kids; *it's a life*" proposed Smalley and Trent (1994, p. 56). A teacher's example has the most potential for shaping and influencing student conduct in educationally productive ways, according to Fenstermacher (1990). Teachers act justly while expecting just conduct from students, act compassionately while expecting those traits from their students, and so forth. The philosophical literature strongly suggests that students, in the presence of a virtuous person, will themselves learn virtuous conduct (MacIntyre, 1984; Richardson & Fallona, 2001; Ryle, 1972). Thus, moral character matters in teaching (Sockett, 1993), and students seem to respond to a good example. After Bennett (1992) asked an

elementary class to give an example of why their school was a good school, one student replied, “You can’t climb on the pipes in the bathroom. We don’t climb on the pipes and the principal doesn’t either” (Bennett, 1992, p. 59). Gilbert Ryle (1972), in his classic article *Can Virtue Be Taught?*, stated

What will help to make us self-controlled, fair-minded or hard working is good examples set by others, and then ourselves practicing and failing, practicing again, and failing again, but not quite so soon and so on. In matters of morals, as in the skills and arts, we learn first by being shown by others, then by being trained by others, naturally with some worded homily, praise and rebuke, and lastly by being trained by ourselves. . . . [S]tandards of conduct are not things that can be imparted by lectures, but only inculcated by example . . . (pp. 46 – 47)

The philosophical literature suggests, then, that one acquires virtue by being around virtuous people, such as teachers. If teachers are to contribute to the moral development of their students, the teachers themselves must possess and exhibit the moral traits they seek for their students (Richardson & Fenstermacher, 2001).

Teachers, Morality, the School, and Beyond.

Todd (2001) examined the influence the teacher has in regard to how the learner perceives the curriculum, and concluded that the teacher’s moral actions greatly influence the learner’s experience. Another conclusion by Todd is that the learner’s ethical self plays a role in the success of the educational experience. Thus, Todd believes that the uncertainty and variable experiences parlayed by teachers and students cause curriculum implementation to be an imprecise exercise.

In addition, the oftentimes opposing or at least different worldviews of humanism, modernism, and post-modernism espouse definitions of morality that vary substantially and may influence an educational system. Consequently, Sanger (2001) deduced that when discussing morality with educators, there oftentimes are disagreements because material considered morally salient can differ widely. Sanger found that assumptions about the nature of morality may vary substantially among teachers employed by the same institution. One of the teachers interviewed as part of Sanger's qualitative morality study stated the following regarding morality, "Ah – that old archaic term" (Sanger, 2001, p. 692). Another teacher interviewed as a part of the same study expressed a definition of morality that included respect among people at its very basic level. This teacher felt that morality (expressed as respect and acceptance, according to the teacher) is very much needed in the educational classroom. Assumptions regarding the nature of morality may also diverge between researchers and teachers, which may lead to misunderstandings among researchers and teachers and even among teachers. Thus, when a researcher conducts research including components regarding morality, clear definitions, and statements worded for understanding should be included in the design of the study.

Additionally, the school-level processes and leadership philosophy can significantly influence teachers' conduct in the classroom, which may influence what students gain morally (Chow-Hoy, 2001). Chow-Hoy applied a qualitative research design using interviews and video of students, teachers, and administrators at two schools participating in a larger study. In the study, Chow-Hoy investigated the relationship between school context and teacher conduct. One of the schools was a public elementary

academy in an urban environment comprised of African-American male students using an Afro-centric curriculum. The other public elementary school served a diverse population of students and is described by the researcher as a very warm community school. Both schools were found to have similar philosophies stemming from the authority and influence of the principal with high expectations and a community environment in which the students engage in academic and social learning including the advancement of virtues. Chow-Hoy concluded that the principal's commitment to the school philosophy impacted teacher's views of their role in the educational process and also impacted positively the emphasis placed upon the students' development of social skills and virtues.

Ryan and Bohlin (1999) asserted that fostering virtuous behavior requires much time in prompting and pointing students in the right direction. They contended that education for virtue is about "awakening students' minds and hearts to new possibilities and pointing them in the right direction" (p.140). Sergiovanni (1992) described five characteristics a virtuous school should exemplify. They are

- transformation into a learning community, where everyone (students and faculty) is committed to becoming self-learners and self-managers;
- the belief that every student can learn and staff makes every effort to ensure that this occurs;
- provision for the whole student by properly caring for each student, include attending to the developmental, physical, and social needs of the students;
- honor and respect among everyone involved with the school;

- a partnership among school, parents, teachers, and community in which each party recognizes the need of the support and advice of each partner.

Noddings (2003) believes that parents want their children to be good, not only so that they will succeed financially, but even more so because of the belief in the correlation between the goodness of children and their happiness. Socrates captured this spirit in the classic cave allegory recorded in Plato's *Republic*.

Education isn't what some people declare it to be, namely, putting knowledge into souls that lack it, like putting sight into blind eyes. . . . [T]he power to learn is present in everyone's soul and . . . the instrument with which each learns is like an eye that cannot be turned around from darkness to light without turning the whole body. . . . Then education is the craft concerned with doing this very thing, this turning around, and with how the soul can most easily and effectively be made to do it. It isn't the craft of putting sight into the soul. Education takes for granted that sight is there but that it isn't turned the right way or looking where it ought to look, and it tries to redirect it appropriately. (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999, p. 140)

Many educators share the notion that the moral aspect and duty of education cannot be isolated from the technical pedagogical areas (Ball & Wilson, 1996; Buzzelli & Johnston, 2002; Tom, 1984). Buzzelli and Johnston maintained that the act of teaching is a moral activity because of its founding upon a relationship between two or more individuals. Further, teachers are engaged in changing the behavior of others to attain prescribed ends. Tom explained it by stating

Far too often the term *moral* is used to isolate a category of behavior – that behavior relating to right conduct – from other forms of human behavior. While

such a division may be productive in some areas of human conduct, this restrictive conception of moral seems inappropriate to the field of teaching. In a sense, almost every aspect of teaching involves a moral component, partly because teaching is by definition a social encounter and partly because the social encounter involved in teaching entails an intervention by one person in another person's intellectual and personal development. (p.95)

In education and instruction, concerns for the intellectual and the moral are inseparable, according to Ball and Wilson (1996); the moral and intellectual are, and ought to be, fused in teaching. Dewey argued against isolated character lessons and advocated for the integration of moral education into the entire curriculum (Noddings, 2002). Noddings (2002) discussed the essence of this notion in declaring that “at the present time, it is obvious that our main educational purpose is not the moral one of producing caring people but a relentless – and, as it turns out, hapless – drive for academic adequacy” (p. 94).

Kreeft (1992) described one method educators have used to teach morality called Values Clarification. According to Kreeft, values clarification exercises use a facilitator (the teacher) to encourage students to state their own values by methods involving questions regarding a student's inner thoughts and personal beliefs. Theoretically, the facilitator does not lead the students in any direction. The one moral absolute presented is that there are no moral absolutes. Facilitators do not suggest that their beliefs are true, or take action that would appear judgmental. Kreeft does not agree with this method and proposed it lacks an adequate depth or foundation. Others, such as Simon, Howe, and Kirschenbaum (1995), disagree and are strong advocates for values clarification

programs.

Teachers, Morality, and the Literature.

Two types of studies have examined the moral dimensions of teaching including teachers' perceptions of morality and moral issues. The first type includes two mixed-method studies that focused on what teachers perceive about their own morality and their role as a moral agent in the classroom (Aurin & Maurer, 1993; Joseph & Efron, 1993). These studies included both qualitative and quantitative methods. Both of the studies attempted to discover the teachers' views by employing in their methods structured interactions that provided limited categories for teachers to express their thoughts. These studies also provided some language and definitions explicitly rather than allowing the teachers to offer expression in their own language. This limitation may either limit a teacher from diverging from preconceived expectations of the researcher or lead a teacher to answer in a particular fashion.

The second type of research that includes teachers' views about morality is composed of qualitative narratives (Thomas, 1990; Sanger, 2001). In the Thomas study, the researchers invited teachers to comment on their school, students, teaching, and education in general. The researchers then used these conversations to construe moral dimensions. In the Sanger study, two teachers in different environments were chosen, interviewed in depth, videotaped teaching several times, and reactions to the videos recorded. One of the teachers studied remarked, "[W]e . . . have to be able to point out what is right and wrong, what 'we' believe if we are to be able to guide young people in today's society" (Sanger, 2001, p. 696). Another remarked that she taught universal

values without necessarily instructing them in her own religious views, stating “I don’t teach doctrine or faith” (Sanger, 2001, p. 697). Sanger concluded that teachers have substantial beliefs about morality, but have to investigate how they incorporate these beliefs in their instruction. Secondly, Sanger concluded that the teachers studied each have a complex set of moral beliefs that differ significantly. This set of beliefs also influences their instruction in the classroom. Sanger further stated that as teachers examine their moral beliefs, the interviewer “is not to suggest that there is one right way to think about morality” (Sanger, 2001, p. 698).

Educational Variables Relating to Moral Self-Concept

Moral Self-Concept and Teacher Performance.

In a recent Gallup poll on the honesty and ethical standards of various professions, nurses topped the list, followed closely by grade school teachers (Gallup Poll News Service, 2004). A 1996 MORI survey in England placed teachers as the best role models for young people (Burstall, 1996). One of the most published contemporary researchers and philosophers in moral education, Nel Noddings (2002), suggested that the education profession should dedicate a great deal of attention to the care of students in her discourse on the moral attributes of educators. A display of caring can help an educator influence a student positively forever (Egeler, 2003). Noddings does not believe that moral principles are adequate when it comes to a person’s motivation to act morally. As a result, people take the Humean position, whose foundation is that reason is (almost) slave to the passions. Some impressive empirical studies, according to Noddings, support this position, including research involving non-Jewish rescuers of Jews during the

Holocaust. Oliner and Oliner (1988) found that most of the rescuers were acting out of a sense of direct care/compassion. Only about 10% said they were acting from a principle. Consequently, care theorists rely heavily on establishing conditions that encourage goodness rather than the teaching of virtues.

Jackson, Boostrom, and Hansen (1993) addressed the difficulty of quantifying moral aspects of the educational process. They contended that the moral dimension, though hard to quantify, is very important, even when placed beside other problems facing today's schools. They contended that no paper-and-pencil tests can measure the short-term or long-term effects of students spending time under the guidance of a caring and sensitive teacher who demonstrates virtuous behavior. They further stated that, although most researchers accept that more learning can occur in this area, researchers should not focus exclusively on the expectation of proving these positive effects. They emphasized that teachers should have high moral character and treat students in a kind and understanding manner, not only for the pedagogical benefits, but also because it is a teacher's duty to treat students well and in a warm and caring approach.

Jackson (1992) suggested that the best way to learn about a teacher's moral qualities is to spend time with that person and get to know him or her. Spending much time in a teacher's classroom, engaging the teacher in conversation, and having social contact with the teacher can accomplish this learning. This qualitative method of study can glean information that would be difficult if not impossible to obtain in a structured research study.

Hansen (1993) further addressed this difficulty of quantifying certain moral aspects of teacher behavior. He explained that narrative forms are employed in much of

the research into the moral dimensions of teaching in order to distinguish areas of teaching that are not easily encapsulated through other means. Hansen observed three teachers in different types of schools, including a large public school, a co-educational private school, and a Catholic school for boys. Although the three teachers had profoundly different teaching styles, Hansen concluded that the teachers influenced their students in very similar ways morally. He suggested that teachers should reflect upon their styles and manner of interacting in the classroom to determine the effect taking place upon the students, because a teacher's style is at the heart of the teacher's possible moral influence on his or her students, for good or bad. The teacher's interests may translate into enacted values such as civility, etiquette, and appreciation of subject matter that seem to under gird almost everything a teacher does.

Moral Self-Concept and Teacher Education Programs.

In preparing future teachers in teacher education programs across the United States, one of the most popular conceptualizations of the learning process is the taxonomy first published by Benjamin Bloom in 1956. This 1956 publication proposed a structured taxonomy of development of the cognitive domain. In 1964, Bloom published a second taxonomy sequencing behaviors indicating growth in a second domain, the affective domain. (The third domain identified, of course, is the psychomotor area.) The activities included in the affective area are receiving, responding, valuing, organization of a value system, and characterization by a value. The affective domain encompasses the emotional area of functioning (Clark, 1988). The objectives in this domain run from least committed to most committed. At the lowest level, students would pay attention to an

idea or value. At the highest level, students would accept an idea or value and exhibit behavior consistent with this acceptance. The affective area, the domain in which much moral instruction functions, is more difficult to measure than the cognitive and psychomotor areas (Woolfolk, 1987).

However, instructors in teaching and teacher education programs do not often discuss concepts and ideas related to morality and moral education - concepts such as kindness, love, religion, spirituality, and soul (Buzzelli & Johnston, 2002). Richardson and Fallona (2001) declared that teacher educators, though, should help future teachers understand that teaching is a moral endeavor. Throughout teacher education programs, instructors should ask students to reflect upon their beliefs about teaching and their personal moral example. Further, instructors should explore how this will affect the manner in which teachers teach. Students are quite perceptive about their teachers' moral principles or lack thereof. When Ryan and Bohlin (1999) gave a requested presentation arguing that students, in fact, can learn virtue in a college course, a student responded, "I agree virtue *should* be taught. But I've seen so many teachers who aren't virtuous. *Teachers* should be taught virtue, first" (pp. 151 – 152). Ryan and Bohlin reported that teacher education programs have drawn more and more from psychology and sociology and tended to drop history and philosophy courses in recent years. They have been inclined to ignore the moral dimensions of learning and teaching, treating them as controversial or religious subjects (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999). Several critics have expressed concerns that discourse about the knowledge base of teaching unduly emphasizes the technical at the expense of drawing attention away from the fundamentally moral and contextualized character of teaching (Ball & Wilson, 1996). Thus, few programs have

prepared teachers for their role as moral educators. In a study of middle school history and social studies teachers, fully one-third of the thirty respondents thought of character education as their main concern in teaching, but none of them could remember hearing anything in their undergraduate teacher education courses (professional or liberal arts) about moral, character, or value education (Lanckton, 1992; Ryan & Bohlin, 1999).

Some dissonance exists among teacher educators regarding the amount of subject-area training (e.g. specific math, science, reading methodology) and personal development training colleges of education should incorporate into their curricula (Peters, 1975). This, in turn, is also a factor in the design of curricula of local school systems. Peters acknowledged that one can usually produce a measure for the development of students in subject areas, but often can have difficulty in accurately measuring the development of a student as a person.

According to MacFarlane (2001), teacher education programs should train future teachers thoroughly in the moral domain. At the very least, education students should explore typical ethical dilemmas they will face in teaching and assessing student work. In this way, future educators may formulate their responses to many of these situations in advance and thus be able to contend with the situations better as they arise during their careers (MacFarlane, 2001). Unfortunately, research by Joseph (2003) indicated that teachers sense an unclear form of suppression that restricts their full exploration of their moral codes and creates uncertainty and uneasiness. Robert Starratt (1982) captured the essence of the indifference to the character of education students in his reflective article, "The Interior Life of a Teacher." After finishing a master's degree in education, a very experienced history teacher asks himself,

Am I a better person for my several years of experience at the University? . . . I think my courses and readings have broadened me. But, you know, I was struck that never once was I challenged to be a better person by any of my professors. . . . I could have been a drug pusher, a wife beater. . . . It simply wouldn't have made a difference. . . . The courses simply dealt with prepackaged knowledge that got passed around. (Starratt, 1982, p. 33)

Public interest in morality in student curricula has resulted in efforts to mandate the inclusion of morality by legislative dictum. In 1997, the legislature of the state of Georgia, which encompasses the site of this study, passed an act to encourage character education. The act required the Georgia Board of Education to develop a comprehensive character education program for all grades from kindergarten through twelfth. The act even specifically stated the focus of the curriculum as the following character traits: courage, patriotism, citizenship, honesty, fairness, respect for others, kindness, cooperation, self-respect, self-control, courtesy, compassion, tolerance, diligence, generosity, punctuality, cleanliness, cheerfulness, school pride, respect for the environment, respect for the creator, patience, creativity, sportsmanship, loyalty, perseverance, and virtue. The Georgia State Department of Education suggests infusing the traits across the curriculum and involving all staff in any resulting in-service activities (Georgia Department of Education, 2003). Three areas identified as providing a useful climate to practice character traits are the home, school, and community, including religious institutions. The state department also emphasizes the importance of having teachers model proper morals and values in communication with parents and students and states that this modeling process should permeate the total school climate, including

discipline (Georgia Department of Education, 2003).

Public Schools and Private Christian Schools.

Citizens established the public schools of this country primarily to provide common moral instruction for a nation of immigrants (Bennett, 2003). As early as 1914 in Gary, Indiana, “released time” was used in which students could be released from the public school for specified periods of time each week to go to churches or synagogues for instruction in their own faith (Miller & Flowers, 1995). According to Barton (2002a), the number of private Christian schools in the United States increased from 1,000 in 1965 to 32,000 in 1985. These institutions make up one-fourth of the nation’s schools and attract 11 percent of the student population. Private school enrollment seems to be keeping up with public school growth. The Council for American Private Education’s biennial private school survey uses U.S. Census Bureau studies to credit a majority (75%) of that growth to a 46 percent increase in conservative private Christian schools (Ledbetter, 2003). Carper (1984) stated that all education is value oriented, and Christian nurturing is a full-time endeavor. Christian parents are also increasingly supporting schools that embody the Biblical beliefs and values of the home, according to Carper.

In the 1970s and 1980s, private Christian schools began to flourish, and the number of schools increased rapidly (Spring, 2000). Recently, many traditionally African American churches and organizations have founded private Christian schools (Spaid, 1996). A set of court cases has resulted because of the demand by state authorities that these private Christian schools conform to state requirements. The schools, by and large, do not object to meeting all safety and building requirements. They do object, however,

to curriculum requirements that run counter to their purpose and mission (Spring, 2000). Stormer (1998) contended that some public schools teach values that run counter to traditional values taught in the students' homes. This may take place, according to Stormer, through programs such as sex education, counseling, sociology, psychology, student organizations, sexual orientation policies and related curricula, and health services. Some have expressed concerns that economic and material success has so enamored the United States; it neglects more important things, such as values and moral education, according to Stormer.

Most of the concern resulting in the formation of private Christian schools was due to state regulations that required the schools to teach ethical values that were labeled by the private Christian schools as the philosophy (or religion, according to the court cases) of secular humanism. Max Hocutt stated,

The fundamental question of ethics is, who makes the rules? God or men? The theistic answer is that God makes them. The humanistic answer is that men make them. This distinction between theism and humanism is the fundamental division in moral theory. (quoted in Noebel, 1991, p. 193).

Ethics is a system of moral values and duties. What should a person do and refrain from doing? What attitudes and behaviors are good? Why do people view them as good? What is the highest good, the purpose of human existence? Christians turn to Scripture and examine all texts that address these questions. They do this because of the belief that the Bible is actually God's word and a revelation of His will for humanity. Christians do this also with the belief that the Bible is trustworthy (McQuilkin, 1995). Secular humanism answers these questions by turning to science and the scientific process.

According to the Humanist, Man is the supreme authority and all can be explained by the use of scientific, physical evidence (Noebel, 1991). Noebel further explained that Humanists are ethical relativists, with the absence of a rigid list of rights and wrongs.

Wilson (1991) stated evangelical Christians strongly influenced public schools when they began in the United States. Because they were state schools, everyone (including Jews and Catholics) had to help support a school system that taught and indoctrinated a worldview they did not share. Wilson stated that this was not a just or fair system. Consequently, Wilson claimed, when humanists took control of the schools, they forced out the more traditional expressions of religious belief. The humanists and secularists were only doing, however, what religious supporters previously had done to promote their beliefs. The United States was and is a pluralistic society, avowed Wilson. Because education cannot be silent about basic moral and life issues, such as intelligent design and evolution, it is impossible to impose state education without putting various groups in conflict, theorized Wilson. These groups struggle for control of the school system and the group in control violates the religious liberties of the other groups, according to Wilson.

Some of the public's perception seems to be that private Christian schools teach children a higher degree of values than public schools. Joseph and Efron (1993) concluded in their study that many teachers and administrators in public schools do not understand the legal parameters of religious matters in public schools and have attempted, through ignorance, to make schools religious-free zones where people do not discuss or make known matters of religion. Joseph concluded that this ignorance causes educators to respond to occurrences where religious matter is "accidentally" uncovered in

the classroom far more emotionally than intellectually due to fear, discomfort, and confusion. Barton (2001) went as far as to state that students learning in an environment that openly encourages Christian principles, morals, and values consistently attain higher results. In all fairness, however, private Christian schools can be selective in their admissions policies, unlike public schools. The former U.S. Secretary of Education, Rod Paige, in a recent interview said,

All things equal, I would prefer to have a child in a school that has a strong appreciation for the values of the Christian community, where a child is taught to have a strong faith. The reason that Christian schools and Christian universities are growing is a result of a strong value system. In a religious environment, the value system is set. That's not the case in a public school where there are so many different kids with different kinds of values. (Capital Briefs, 2003)

However, while Secretary of Education William Bennett (1988) is cognizant of the fact that many parents have placed their children in private schools when faced with institutions in areas of the country in which parents are no longer certain the institution will transmit solid values, he stressed the importance of supporting public education. In fact, a recent Gallup poll indicated strong public support for public schools, especially local public schools (McElroy, 2004). Citizens and parents should rally to restore both intellectual and moral vitality to public education in those areas where needed, according to Bennett (1998), because the vast majority of American children will go to public schools unless society makes major changes. Thus, the public perception seems to indicate that the public school teacher and the private Christian school teacher may publicly express the basis of their morality differently to students and parents, in that the

Christian teachers openly cite the influence of the Bible on their moral behavior.

Demographic Variables Relating to Moral Self-Concept

Gender and Moral Self-Concept.

A research study of academically gifted adolescents by Luscombe and Riley (2001) indicated gender differences in the area of moral self-concept. As measured by the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale: Second Edition (TSCS:2), the gifted females scored higher than the males on moral self-concept. Silverman (1993) proposed that gifted females are good in adapting to social situations and expectations, which may account for the higher score. Additionally, females seem to value social situations that would lead to a more developed moral self-concept (American Association of University Women Education Foundation, 1992). Gilligan (1977) found that, in moral situations, women tend to think in terms of “response” or “care” which contrast with the “justice” framework described by Kohlberg. Gilligan pointed out that males were exclusively used in Kohlberg’s research; this led to a bias against women’s ways of thinking by focusing on the “justice” orientation. This has led to lower average scores for women within Kohlberg’s six-stage theory and severely limited the highest stages of women’s thought, according to Gilligan (1977). According to Pratt, Golding, Hunter, and Sampson (1988), however, the sex differences in moral reasoning orientation were not as pervasive as declared by Gilligan, but were influenced instead by subject age, subject stage level on Kohlberg’s construct, and the type of real-life dilemma content recalled by subjects for discussion. Pratt et al. did find in their research, however, some differences in moral reasoning that were linked to gender. Ryan, David, and Reynolds (2004) noted that the

differences between using a care approach or justice approach in moral reasoning are due to differences in self-concept rather than in gender. Their research recommended that both self-concept and moral reasoning are enhanced when conceptualized as fluid and perspective dependent.

Years of Experience.

Although this researcher did not locate a study correlating moral self-concept with teachers' years of experience or even age across the general population, several studies were located correlating age with morality and moral reasoning. McDonald and Stuart-Hamilton (1996) conducted a study in which three groups (teenagers, 50-65 years, and older than 65) completed a written version of Piaget's moral reasoning tasks to determine the general level of moral reasoning and performance. In the study, researchers read participants several of Piaget's translated stories of moral reasoning from his work *The Moral Judgment of the Child* (1965). Based on the moral subject matter of each, researchers classified the stories into eight categories: lying, collective responsibility, immanent justice, equality and authority, stealing, carelessness, punishment, and justice between children. Researchers asked structured questions taken from transcripts of Piaget's interviews with children concerning each story after reading each story. Hence, researchers classified responses based on a higher or lower level of moral reasoning, as specified by Piaget in his evaluation of the children's responses to the stories. The study indicated two results. First, younger subjects consistently scored lower levels of moral reasoning and performance. Secondly, Piaget over-predicted all groups' level of performance as all groups gave fewer higher level responses than forecasted by Piaget.

In another study, Pratt, Diessner, Hunsberger, Pancer, and Savoy (1991) compared four systems for analyzing reasoning through the answers provided by 35 women and 29 men ages 35-85 years of age using two moral dilemmas. The four systems used were Kohlberg's (1976b) moral judgment stages, Kegan's (1982) ego-development stages, Gilligan's (1982) moral orientation system, and Suedfeld and Tetlock's (1977) integrative complexity scoring. The researchers found few gender differences and no age-group differences in their study. However, they did empirically establish that moral orientation is a significantly separate measure from the stages used in the constructs. The researchers further recognized clear links among the theoretically related developmental stage systems used for examining moral/social reasoning about personal-life dilemmas.

Kohlberg's models of moral stages and moral orientations and Gilligan's model of moral orientations were examined in a longitudinal study of 233 participants who participated in two identical separate interviews two years apart (Walker, 1989). The interviews included discussion of both a hypothetical and a self-generated real dilemma which were both scored using the models. Results supported Kohlberg's moral stage model, revealing few differences of the stage sequence over the two-year longitudinal interval. Different moral orientations were revealed for the hypothetical and real-life dilemmas, especially in Kohlberg's typology. Gender differences were mostly absent for both Kohlberg's and Gilligan's moral orientations. The interrelations between the two models were also weak, indicating that they do not measure the same construct.

Thus, although no studies could be found that analyzed teacher experience or age and self-concept, several studies investigated the relationship of age and moral judgment. While mixed in their results, inconsequential positive correlations were found.

Summary

Many philosophical and empirical writings have filled the professional literature concerning topics relating to a teacher's moral self-concept. Some relate to one's self-concept, others to morality, several to moral self-concept, while a number of studies relate to morality and moral self-concept in relation to the educational process.

As expressed earlier, Lewis (1952) defined morality as involving three facets: relations among each other (the external domain), the inner person (the internal domain), and relations between a person and a higher being (the spiritual domain). Statements on the instrument used in this study, the TSCS:2 (Western Psychological Services, 1996), relating to the external domain of one's moral self-concept include the following: "I have trouble doing the things that are right." "I sometimes do very bad things." "I shouldn't tell so many lies." "I wish I could be more trustworthy." "I do what is right most of the time." Statements on the TSCS:2 involving the internal domain of one's moral self-concept include the following: "I am an honest person." "I am satisfied with my moral behavior." "I am a decent sort of person." "I am a morally weak person." "I am a bad person." Statements on the TSCS:2 regarding the spiritual domain of one's moral self-concept include: "I am true to my religion in my everyday actions." "I am satisfied with my relationship with God." Research could possibly be conducted using the TSCS:2 as an instrument to determine relationships among teachers' moral self-concepts.

Chapter 3

Method

The preceding chapter presented a review of theoretical and empirical literature relating to moral self concept as a foundation of behavior, especially as it applies to the beliefs and behaviors of teachers. Although studies have been conducted to investigate various aspects of self-concept, and theorists have proposed structures to organize the existing knowledge of self-concept and perceptions of morality, the review supports the need for additional research focusing specifically on the moral self-concept of teachers. This study was formulated and conducted to provide additional data on teachers' self-perceptions of their attitudes and behavior with particular focus on attitudes and behaviors that may be perceived as moral in nature. This chapter details the research methodology used in the study.

The study examines the moral self-concept of a group of elementary and secondary teachers as measured by the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale: Second Edition (TSCS:2). In order to identify any potential influences on teachers' perceptions, the data were analyzed according to specific demographic categories: employment in a public school system or a Christian school, teaching in a secondary or elementary school, frequency of church attendance, experience in both public and Christian schools, and number of years of teaching experience overall. This section offers a clear and concise description of the steps taken to address the research areas of this dissertation.

Purpose

Research has shown that students notice and are affected by the moral character of a teacher as it is conveyed by a teacher's behavior and lifestyle, both in and out of the classroom (Ball & Wilson, 1996; Bergem, 1993; Burstall, 1996; Chow-Hoy, 2001; Fenstermacher, 2001; Foster, 1994; Orr, 1998; Richardson & Fallona, 2001). Thus, a teacher's moral self-concept as actualized by the moral example set by the teacher is important to students, parents, and the community. Much of the public assumes that Christian schools hire Christian teachers who display a moral behavior and lifestyle consistent with Christian principles prescribed by the Bible, while public schools hire teachers of diverse faiths and beliefs who display an array of moral behaviors and lifestyles. Some parents are placing their children in Christian schools at least in part because of a desire to have a sense of consistency between the family values and school (i.e. teacher) morals (Burch, 2004; Schultz, 2002).

Most students, parents, and communities expect their educators to be good role models and to set excellent examples to these groups (Bergem, 1993) because students learn positive (and sometimes negative) attributes from the moral example set by their teacher in each situation encountered. Research has shown that an individual's self concept functions as a manager of behavior (Carver & Scheier, 2002); thus, we would expect a teacher's moral self-concept to be a valid indicator of that teacher's moral example. This present study investigates the moral self-concept of a sample of teachers as measured by the TSCS:2. The purpose of this causal-comparative study is to determine if a statistically significant relationship exists between the moral self-concept as measured by the TSCS:2 among several groupings identified in the following research areas.

Research Areas

As measured by the TSCS:2 Moral Self-Concept (MOR) scale

- 1) There are no differences between the moral self-concepts of secondary teachers in public schools and in Christian schools.
- 2) There are no differences between the moral self-concepts of elementary teachers in public schools and in Christian schools.
- 3) There are no differences between the moral self-concepts of secondary and elementary teachers.
- 4) There are no differences between the moral self-concepts of teachers who attend church regularly and those who do not. (For the purposes of this study, attending church worship services 75% or more of the time defines a regular church attendee.)
- 5) There are no differences between the moral self-concepts of teachers now teaching in a Christian school who have taught in a public school and teachers now teaching in a public school who have taught in a Christian school.
- 6) There are no differences between the moral self-concepts of teachers who have taught less than 11 years and those who have taught for 11 or more years.

General Perspective

This causal-comparative study applies quantitative analysis to specific data collected at a discrete time from a prescribed subset of the population. This research will

attempt to determine the extent to which members of the subset differ from each other when grouped by the demographic information (the independent variables) identified in the research areas in order to determine reasons for a teacher's moral self-concept score. The t-test for independent samples will be used to determine whether there are any significant differences between the means of each pair of samples at the .05 probability level for each of the six research areas. The study answers the six research areas using the data derived from the TSCS:2 moral self-concept scores (the dependent variable) paired with demographic information (the independent variable) reported by the subjects.

Research Context

The metropolitan Atlanta county in which the research occurred contains well over 600,000 citizens. Six municipalities are located within the county. The county has the second-highest per capita income in the metro Atlanta area. The county is home to 200 international firms, with many of the firms having their United States headquarters in the county. Two public universities and two public technical colleges are also located in the county, as well as a county public school system and an independent city public school system. Fifteen large public high schools are located throughout the county, along with the corresponding number of supporting elementary and middle schools (Scott, 2003). Several private schools are located within the county, including both Christian and independent schools. According to a national survey, the county's citizens are the most educated in Georgia and 15th overall in the nation, with 45 percent of residents 25 and older having at least a bachelor's degree. In addition, the county had a 3.5 percent unemployment rate at the end of 2004 (Joyner, 2005).

The three participating public schools are all in the same school system. The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and the Georgia Accrediting Commission (GAC) are the accrediting bodies for all three schools.

The high school, established by residents in 1892 (Elgin, 1992), is a member of the Georgia High School Association (GHSAA) and is comprised of grades 9 through 12. According to the school system's website (Marietta City Schools, 2004), the student body is comprised of 1,975 students from 42 different countries. The ethnic composition is 46% African American, 38% Caucasian, 12% Hispanic, and 4% of other ethnicities. The Georgia Department of Education named the school a 2003 Georgia School of Excellence. The average SAT score for graduates in 2004 was 1092. The school has an International Baccalaureate program for academically advanced students. Seventy percent of the faculty have earned a master's degree or higher. Male teachers number 52 of the 147 teachers on staff.

The first public elementary school surveyed (which the study will henceforth refer to as "public elementary school A") opened in 1949. The school is also a past Georgia School of Excellence (Elgin, 1992). This neighborhood school houses approximately 400 students and comprises grades kindergarten through five. The ethnic composition is 44% African American, 44% Caucasian, 5% Hispanic, 4% multiracial, and 2% Asian. The entire staff is female. Seventy five percent of the faculty have earned a master's degree or higher and another 18% are currently in graduate school (Georgia Governor's Office of Student Achievement, 2004).

The second public elementary school researched (which the study will henceforth refer to as "public elementary school B") opened in 1987 and has been a Georgia School

of Excellence (Elgin, 1992) and a National School of Excellence. This neighborhood school houses approximately 515 students and encompasses grades kindergarten through five. The ethnic composition is 38% African American, 52% Caucasian, 5% Hispanic, 5% multiracial, and 1% Asian. The majority of the staff is female, but the staff does include three males. Sixty-seven percent of the faculty have earned a master's degree or higher (Georgia Governor's Office of Student Achievement, 2004).

The elementary and secondary faculties from a private non-church affiliated Christian school in the county participated in this study. The elementary school includes grades kindergarten through fifth while the secondary school covers 9th through 12th grades. The GAC, SACS, and the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) have accredited the school. The school is also a member of the Southern Association of Independent Schools (SAIS) and the Georgia Independent School Association (GISA). According to their website (North Cobb Christian School, 2003), the school was founded as an elementary school in 1983. The school added a secondary program in 1997, and the class of 2000 was the first graduating class. Fifty-seven students are in the class of 2005. The average SAT score for 2004 is 1087. The school has approximately 900 students in K4 through 12th grade. Twenty-seven teachers in the school have advanced degrees. The study will hereafter identify these schools as "Christian elementary school A" and "Christian high school A."

A second private Christian high school, referred to as "Christian high school B" participated in this research. The school offers instruction for students in 9th through 12th grades. This high school, according to its website (Dominion Christian High School, 2004), is accredited by the GAC and is currently undergoing accreditation with ACSI and

SACS. It is also an ACSI and GISA member school. Approximately 255 students attend the school in 9th through 12th grades. The faculty and staff is comprised of 30 individuals, and 19 of the faculty members have a master's degree or higher. The student body includes an ethnic composition of Caucasian, African American, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American students.

The elementary faculty of another non-church affiliated Christian school in the county (hereafter referred to as "Christian elementary school B") took part in the study. Members of a local church founded this school in 1976 as a preschool and kindergarten. However, the school no longer affiliates with the church that founded it. The GAC, ACSI, and SACS currently accredit the school. The entire school, which includes grades pre-kindergarten through twelfth, includes approximately 950 students (Mount Paran Christian School, 2004). The school moved from its original church site to an independent facility in 2003. An independent board now governs the school.

Instrument Used In Data Collection

According to Hill and Hood (1999), before attempting to construct a measure, researchers should check for an existing measure in order to establish a body of empirical research using a uniform measurement of theoretically meaningful constructs. Existing measures have been under utilized, and most researchers are likely to be interested in a construct for which a measure is available. Thus, the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale: Second Edition, an existing instrument that directly relates to the purpose of this study, was used to measure the moral self-concept of teachers. According to the test publisher, Western Psychological Services (1996), one may use the test with assurance to ascertain

strengths and weaknesses in precise areas of self-concept, such as one's moral self-concept, and to design appropriate interventions. It is also valid when differentiating among various groups, according to the publisher.

Construction of the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale: Second Edition began in 1955 by Fitts (1965) with the Tennessee Department of Mental Health, leading to publication in 1965. The test was revised in 1988 and then revised and substantially changed in 1996. The 1996 version (TSCS:2) also includes a child form (for age 7 to 14) and an adult form. The adult form has two sets of norms and score sheets; one for ages 13 to 18 and another for ages 19 to 90.

According to the authors, the test measures self-concept, or "Who am I?" rather than self-esteem, or "How do I feel about myself?" (Western Psychological Services, 1996, p.26). Moral self-concept is one of the six self-concept scores measured by the test. According to the test manual, the Moral Self-Concept scale describes the respondent from a moral-ethical perspective, which examines moral worth, feeling of being a "good" or "bad" person, and religious satisfaction or lack of it. On the first edition of the TSCS, *Moral/Ethical Self* was the name for the current *Moral Self-Concept* scale (Bertinetti & Fabry, 1977). In the present study, the researcher reviewed all the scores, including the total self-concept score; however, the Moral-Self Concept component is the focus of the study.

According to the manual, the entire test takes from 10 to 20 minutes to complete. This corresponds closely with the length of time used during the faculty meetings in which teachers completed the test. The AutoScore form used includes areas for the participants to enter current age, years of education completed, gender, and

administration date. The researcher added two additional demographic items: 1. Do you regularly attend church worship services (75% or more of the time)? ____ Yes
 ____ No 2. Number of years of experience teaching in: Public Schools ____, Christian Schools ____, Other Private Schools _____. The AutoScore form also has an area for the participants to enter name, but the researcher filled this in beforehand with “Not Needed” to allow participants to maintain anonymity.

The entire test consists of 82 short statements. After reading each statement, the participant chooses from five responses using a Likert-type scale ranging from “Always False” to “Always True.” Scales measured other than the Moral Self-Concept (MOR) scale (which is comprised of 12 of the 82 questions) include Physical Self-Concept (PHY), Personal Self-Concept (PER), Family Self-Concept (FAM), Social Self-Concept (SOC), Academic/Work Self-Concept (ACA), and a Total Self-Concept (TOT). Supplementary scores collected are Identity (IDN), Satisfaction (SAT), and Behavior (BHV). These scores have been traditionally helpful when interpreting the TOT score (Western Psychological Services, 1996).

Much data exist in relation to the reliability and validity of the TSCS:2. Brown (1998) stated, however, that these correlations are low to moderate, as would be expected with any measure of self-concept. Reliability means the extent to which the test scores will remain stable from administration to administration. The test manual presented two types of reliability: internal consistency and test-retest reliability. Reliability was estimated using Cronbach’s alpha with internal consistencies ranging from a low of .73 on the Social Self-Concept scale to a high of .93 on Total Self-Concept (Brown, 1998). According to the manual (Western Psychological Services, 1996), .83 is the internal

consistency for the adult level of the moral self-concept. Chronbach's alpha measured internal consistency and indicated "adequate" to "quite good" consistency for a test of this type. In order to measure the test-retest reliabilities, 135 high school students took the Adult test form twice. The test-retest period was from one to two weeks. The results were favorable, as the score changes were small for most of the sample, and the practical significance of the changes was minimal. The scores for the adult form range from .47 to .82 (Western Psychological Services, 1996). According to Hattie (1998), since the estimates of reliability are in an acceptable range, the standard errors of measurement for the TSCS:2 are low. The manual lists the T-score standard error as 4.8 for the moral self-concept scale.

The manual provides evidence for content validity, construct validity, concurrent validity, and discriminant validity. Content validity is the level to which a test measures an intended content area. Some consider construct validity the most important type of validity because it determines what the test is truly measuring. Concurrent validity is the degree to which the scores on two tests with the same purpose agree with one another (Gay & Airasian, 2003). Discriminant validity is shown when groups known to differ in certain areas measured by the test show different measurements in the expected direction. This type of validity measures how the TSCS:2 differentiates these groups. Many of the studies regarding the validity of the instrument occurred using earlier versions of the instrument. However, the manual reports a strong empirical correlation between the 1988 and current (1996) version.

Strong evidence exists to support the demonstration of content validity. Levin, Karnie, and Frankel (1975) used Guttman's (1970) method called *facet design* to test for

content validity. Using 451 college students and 180 medical school applicants, they concluded that a sufficient fit could be determined for a two-dimensional solution consisting of the internal and external dimensions. Additionally, as the original test was developed, seven clinical psychologists were employed to classify the test items which were developed from the works of Balester (1956), Engel (1956), and Taylor (1953) according to a two dimensional scheme represented by the test's Self-Concept Scales and Supplementary Scores.

Several key factor-analytic studies of the TSCS have been performed in relation to construct validity. Bolton (1976) factored four sets of variables in his study. At the conclusion of the study Bolton declared that the two-factor solutions showing positive and negative items had a propensity to define distinct facets of self-conception. Specifically, the effectiveness of balancing positively and negatively worded items is questioned. Hattie (1998) suggested additional research regarding problems relating to the negative and positive factors. Further, interactions were observed by Bolton exhibiting a positive relationship between the Satisfaction frame of reference and the Personal and Moral Self-Concept factors.

Walsh, Wilson, and McLellarn (1989) and McGuire and Tinsley (1981) conducted studies using multiple-group factor analysis in a hypothesis-testing approach to investigate the reality of the Self-Concept and frame of reference aspect of the TSCS. Using 678 university students and graduates and 341 male juvenile offenders as their study sample, McGuire and Tinsley deduced that in their university sample solid support was evident for independent interpretation of the Self-Concept and supplementary scores, but not in the juvenile offender sample. Accordingly, the authors appealed for more

research involving juvenile offender populations.

Walsh et al. (1989) applied the juvenile offender methodology used by McGuire and Tinsley (1981) to a sample of 404 incarcerated males in a Montana prison. They concluded that offender status itself does not lead to an undifferentiated self-concept, but that interactions of developmental maturation and offender status may have influenced the findings of McGuire and Tinsley.

Using methods other than multiple-group factor analysis for construct validity, Marsh and Richards (1988) further examined the construct validity of responses to the TSCS by investigating the internal composition of answers to the TSCS and by exploring relations between TSCS answers and external constructs. They concluded that a three-way model considering the Self-Concept scores, Supplementary scores, and positive or negative wording provided the best match. These results are similar to the results of an investigation performed during the formation of the TSCS:2 (Western Psychological Services, 1996).

As for concurrent validity measures, a number of studies have been undertaken to compare the TSCS to other similar measures that one would expect to be related. Wayne (1963) revealed a correlation of .68 between the Wehmer and Izard (1962) Self-Rating Positive Affect Scale and the TSCS Total score. Van Tuinen and Ramanaiah (1979) found a correlation of .75 between the TSCS Total Scores and the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (Coopersmith, 1981). Other constructs including scales that have been favorably compared to TSCS scales include the Jackson Personality Inventory (Jackson, 1970), Janis-Field Feelings of Inadequacy Scale (Hovland & Janis, 1959), Edwards Personal Preference Schedule (Edwards, 1959), Taylor Manifest Anxiety scale and

Cornell Medical Index (Western Psychological Services, 1996), Bell Object Relations and Reality Testing Inventory (Key, 1994), Self-Description Questionnaire III (Marsh & Richards, 1988), and the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale (Shavelson & Bolus, 1982; Yonker, Blixt, & Dinero, 1974).

Haynes (1990) concluded that the Moral and Family Self-Concept scales and Behavior score were the most strongly related measures on the TSCS to teacher evaluations of outlook toward authority, classroom performance, and group contribution.

Discriminant validity as it applies to the TSCS:2 is based upon personality theory and research which suggests that groups differing on certain psychological dimensions would also differ in self-concept (Western Psychological Services, 1996). In several studies, TSCS responses for psychiatric patients have been compared to non-patients (Congdon, 1958; Havener, 1961; Piety, 1958; Roid & Fitts, 1988; Wayne, 1963). In the Roid and Fitts study, a third group of well functioning individuals was also studied. These studies revealed significant differences among the groups.

A pattern of TSCS scores has been noted, described as the *W* pattern, for factions of individuals whose tendency is to act out when involved in conflict rather than resorting to other methods of conflict resolution (Western Psychological Services, 1996). The pattern involves low scores on the Moral and Family self-concept and high scores on the Physical, Personal, and Social Self-Concept scales. When graphed on a TSCS profile sheet, this pattern forms a *W*. Fitts and Hamner (1969) amassed evaluative data for many first offender, recidivist, and incarcerated or resident delinquents. The *W* pattern was very common. In addition, length of sentence was related to self-concept: The shorter the sentence, generally, the healthier the TSCS scores.

The *W* pattern has also been noted by Paik (1992) when studying pregnant teens. Interestingly, Butler (1991) identified the pattern in college women who identified themselves as frequent drinkers of alcoholic beverages, and in college men who identified themselves as teetotalers. A study of low income mothers revealed a correlation between low TSCS scores at childbirth and neglect (but not direct physical abuse) of the child (Christensen, Brayden, Dietrich, McLaughlin, & Sherrod, 1994). A study by Tiffany, Cowan, and Tiffany (1970) also revealed the *W* pattern among work-inhibited rehabilitation participations. *Work-inhibited* was defined as poor work adjustment, characterized by long-periods of unemployment and job hopping.

Sherman (1983) administered an anonymous questionnaire regarding various levels of drug use or abuse among students who took the TSCS. The study revealed very significant group differences on the Moral and Family Self-Concept scales. Heavy users obtained the lowest scores and, unexpectedly, the experimenters showed a more positive self-concept than the abstainers. Cavaiola and Schiff (1989) concluded that abused chemically dependent adolescents possess distinguishably low Moral Self-Concept and Identity scores as compared to non-abused chemically dependent peers. Further, improved Moral Self-Concept scores have been reported for inpatient alcoholics whose treatment included helping nursing home residents (Byers, Raven, Hill, & Robyak, 1990).

Levine, Van Horn, and Curtis (1993) found a positive correlation between skill at interpersonal negotiation and Moral Self-Concept scores but not with other TSCS scores.

Thus, over many years of development and use, the TSCS has been shown by many research studies to be a reliable and valid instrument for measuring one's self-concept. The construct has been shown to be reliable over time, and the standard error of

measurement is low. Content and construct validity is shown through principal components analysis. Concurrent validity shows acceptable levels of correlations with other psychological measures. In addition, the instrument is shown to discriminate among expected groups. According to the TSCS:2 manual (Western Psychological Services, 1996), the TSCS:2 “can be used with confidence to identify strengths and weaknesses in . . . specific areas of self-concept, and to plan interventions accordingly” (p. 79). Brown (1998) states that the TSCS:2 probably has no equal in the measure of self-concept. He further states that the TSCS:2 should maximize the opportunity to find relationships between self-concept and other concepts of importance.

Research Procedures

Data Collection.

The researcher chose prospective schools based on characteristics of a typical school, including a diversity of students racially, culturally, and socio-economically. The author avoided schools with obvious homogenous socioeconomic levels. The researcher subsequently contacted the principals of each school chosen for the study. All principals contacted agreed for their faculty to participate. Additionally, the public school system superintendent granted approval for the study, in accordance with board policy. One of the Christian high school principals required approval from the headmaster of the school, which was granted.

Next, the author constructed a timeline to administer the TSCS:2 to the appropriate teachers, all teaching at six schools within the same metropolitan Atlanta area county. The public high school teachers completed their instruments on October 6, 2004,

followed by public elementary school A the next week. Next, Christian elementary school A completed the instrument, then public elementary school B, Christian high school A, and Christian high school B. As with many psychological tests, most respondents replied rather quickly and did not dwell on a single answer. All surveys were completed by December 6, 2004. Fifty-one teachers from the public high school completed the instrument. Twenty-eight teachers from public elementary school A and 39 from public elementary school B also completed the instrument. Twenty-three elementary school teachers from Christian elementary school A and 28 high school teachers from Christian high school A completed the instrument. From Christian high school B, 16 teachers completed the assessment. From Christian high school B, 25 teachers completed the instrument. A total of 210 teachers completed the test. Participants in the study received a coupon for a free sandwich or salad from a local quick service restaurant in appreciation for their participation.

The researcher chose the participating teachers for the study at the public high school by taking a listing of the faculty by department and choosing every third teacher. These teachers personally received the instrument from the researcher on a workday to return later to a box in the faculty workroom. Fifty-three teachers received the instruments and 51 teachers returned completed instruments.

At public elementary school A, a school staff member placed the instrument in each teacher's mailbox. The instructions requested that teachers return the instrument to the principal's mailbox at their convenience. Thirty-seven teachers received the instrument, and 28 teachers returned completed instruments. At public elementary school B, the researcher visited the monthly faculty meeting and gave the survey at the

beginning of the meeting. Forty surveys were completed and collected, but the researcher only used 38 since two were from the media specialist and the counselor.

Teachers completed the TSCS:2 during a regularly scheduled faculty meeting with the elementary faculty of Christian elementary school A and a separate regularly scheduled faculty meeting with the high school faculty of Christian high school A. Twenty-three teachers from the elementary faculty took and completed instruments. Twenty-eight teachers from the secondary faculty took and completed instruments.

The teaching staff of Christian high school B in the county studied also took the TSCS:2. Teachers received the instrument at a regularly scheduled faculty meeting. Sixteen teachers completed the instrument.

At Christian elementary school B, elementary teachers from kindergarten through fifth grade took the TSCS:2 at a regularly scheduled monthly faculty meeting. Twenty-five teachers took and completed instruments at this school setting.

The researcher collected all surveys by the first full week of December 2004. Each TSCS:2 sheet was then hand scored by the researcher and three other individuals who were carefully selected and trained individually by the researcher to aid in the scoring process. The tabulators then converted the scores from raw scores to T-scores.

Data Analysis.

The researcher entered the T-scores for the moral self-concept (MOR) from the TSCS:2 into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), along with the subject's employing school (by the appropriate research label), church attendance status, and years of experience in each school setting. The SPSS package used these data to

perform appropriate t tests for independent samples and descriptive data. These procedures were used to show the significance of the relationships asked by the research areas, such as the type of school employing the educator (public or Christian [dichotomous data]) and the moral self-concept of the teacher (continuous data). The researcher analyzed all the research areas in a like manner also using t tests for independent samples to determine the significance of the differences found for each question and to attempt to determine reasons for a teacher's moral self-concept score. Throughout the study, the confidence level used is the commonly accepted level of .05 ($\alpha = .05$) (Gay & Airasian, 2003).

Summary of Methodology

By means of the aforesaid data analysis, the purpose of this anonymous quantitative causal-comparative study was to determine if a statistically significant relationship exists between the moral self-concept as measured by the TSCS:2 of several groups identified in the six research areas. The subjects were 210 teachers instructing at the elementary and secondary levels in a metropolitan Atlanta county and employed by public and Christian schools. The instrument used for the inquiry (and the dependent variable) was the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale: Second Edition (TSCS:2), which was used to identify the moral self-concept (MOR) of each teacher, along with demographic information (which is the dependent variable.) After scoring the instrument for each subject and converting the MOR score into a T score, the researcher first entered the data into the SPSS package to calculate descriptive statistics to answer the six research areas. Next, t tests for independent samples were applied to each set of groups relating to each research question

to determine the significance of any differences between groups. Using these data, conclusions will be drawn and discussed and suggestions will be made for further research to add to the existing empirical base.

Chapter 4

Results

This chapter describes the moral self-concepts of participating elementary and secondary teachers as measured by the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale: Second Edition (TSCS:2). Variables examined include church attendance, years of experience, grade level taught, and type of employer (public school or private Christian school). In this chapter, the results are organized in terms of the six specific research areas presented in Chapter 1. First, a comparison is made of the moral self-concept of secondary teachers employed by either public or Christian schools, followed by the moral self-concept of elementary teachers employed by either public or Christian schools. Third, an investigation and comparison is noted of the moral self-concept of secondary and elementary teachers in both settings. Fourth, the chapter details and compares the moral self-concept of teachers who report attending church worship services regularly and those who report not attending regularly. Fifth, the chapter includes an analysis of the moral self-concept of teachers now teaching in public schools who have taught in a Christian school compared with teachers now teaching in Christian schools who have taught in a public school. Finally, the chapter includes an exploration of the moral self-concept of teachers who have taught less than 11 years and those who have taught for 11 or more years.

Originally there were 210 teachers involved in this study. However, six of the surveys did not include usable data for all scores and scales due to some subjects not

completing all 82 questions. Five of these subjects left the entire reverse side of the survey blank, while the sixth subject did not answer the last eight questions. The last eight questions include some information used to determine a subject's moral self-concept. Other subjects left various demographic portions blank ($n = 12$), including four that left all demographic questions blank. Four others of the twelve left various pre-printed demographic information blank that was not explored by the research areas. Demographic information collected but not used in the study includes race, which was pre-printed on the test form. Of respondents indicating race, 82% are Caucasian ($n = 159$) and 14% are African American ($n = 28$). Other indicated races as Hispanic ($n = 5$), Asian ($n = 1$), and Other ($n = 1$).

The results are analyzed by each of the six research areas using t -tests for independent samples. Independent samples are two samples that are randomly formed without any type of matching (Gay & Airasian, 2003), such as the samples in this study. The objective is to explore whether mean scores of the two samples are meaningfully different at the commonly used level of significance of .05. Thus, alpha (α) equals .05 throughout the study. The strategy of the t test is to compare the actual recorded mean scores with the difference expected by chance in order to reject or accept the null hypothesis.

All moral self-concept scores reported from the TSCS:2 are reported in T scores, resulting in ratio-level data. These T scores are scores that are statistically transformed so that the mean score is 50T and the standard deviation is 10T. When t scores are normalized, the resulting distribution of scores approximates a normal distribution.

According to the test manual (Western Psychological Services, 1996), the TSCS:2 T scores for most individuals tend to fall between 40T and 60T. These relatively “flat” profiles indicate no disturbances to only mild disturbances in self-concept. The mean of all of the moral self-concept scores ($n = 204$), expressed in T scores, is 50.04, and the standard deviation for all scores is 8.915. Other descriptive statistics available to measure central tendency from the moral self-concept T scores include a bimodal mode at 51 ($n = 18$) and 55 ($n = 18$). The median is 51. The range, which is a measure of variability, shows a minimum score of ≤ 20 ($n = 2$) to a maximum of 71 ($n = 4$). The T score for the person’s moral self-concept represents the dependent variable throughout the results as organized by each research area.

Table 1 lists the frequency distribution of the T scores of all of the moral self-concept scores collected for the study.

Table 1

Frequency Distribution of TSCS:2 Moral Self-Concept Scores for All Teachers Reported

T-Score	Frequency	T-Score	Frequency
< or = 20	2	48	16
29	1	49	11
31	2	50	1
33	1	51	18
35	4	52	12
36	1	53	1
37	6	54	17
38	8	55	18
39	5	58	17
41	6	61	11
43	10	63	7
44	10	66	5
46	10	71	4
		Total	204

Horst, Tallmadge, and Wood (1975) propose a rule for determining the practical significance of the mean differences in large samples. They recommend that such differences can only be determined to signify data that can be used in the functional application of a reasonably reliable measure if they surpass one-third of a standard

deviation unit. Regarding the interpretation of effect sizes expressed as mean differences divided by the normative standard deviation, Cohen (1969, 1992) suggests that a value of 0.20 may be expressed as a small effect size, 0.50 as medium, and 0.80 as large. The following discussion regarding the results of each research area applies these guidelines.

Research Area One

Research area one investigates whether differences exist between the moral self-concept of secondary teachers in public schools and in Christian schools. Table 2 presents descriptive information relating to the area.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics of TSCS:2 Moral Self-Concept Scores for Secondary Teachers

<u>Employed by</u>	<u><i>n</i></u>	<u><i>M</i></u>	<u><i>SD</i></u>	<u><i>SE of M</i></u>
Christian schools	44	47.16	10.790	1.627
Public schools	49	50.86	7.937	1.134

As one can infer, the sample sizes (*n*) are close in size; however, the means, or averages of the values (*M*), are different. An examination will occur in the *t* test to determine whether it is a significant difference. The standard deviations are also different. Ideally, these values would be very similar. The standard error of the means (*SE of M*) are an indication of how this sample mean represents the population mean. The smaller the *SE of M* value, the less error in the sample and, therefore, smaller values for the *SE of M* indicate a better estimate of the population mean. Since the secondary public school

teachers SE of M is smaller, the sample is a better representation of the population than the sample of secondary Christian school teachers.

In performing the t test calculations for the two samples from research area one, Levene's Test for the Equality of Variances was performed for the dependent variable of the TSCS:2 moral self-concept scores. This test is performed to test the assumption of homogeneity of variance. Unequal variances can impact the results of t tests, making the probability of committing Type 1 and Type 2 errors more likely. Levene's Test for the Equality of Variance found an F ratio of 5.218 with a probability (p value) of .025 for research area one. The F ratio is used to determine whether the variances in two independent samples are equal. Since the probability (p) is less than the chosen alpha (α) level of .05 equal variances between the two samples are not assumed. Thus, the Levene's Test is significant and the two variances are significantly different. Because of this finding, the assumption of homogeneity of variance is not met. The data show a problem of heteroscedasticity, which is a lack of homogeneity of variances.

Information regarding the t test for research area one appears next in Table 3.

Table 3

TSCS:2 Moral Self-Concept Scores for Secondary Teachers Employed by Christian Schools and Public Schools

Independent Samples <i>t</i> Test for Equality of Means						
				95% confidence interval		
		<i>p</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	of the difference	
<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	(2-tailed)	difference	difference	Lower	Upper
-1.865	78.367	.066	-3.70	1.983	-7.645	0.249

Note. Equal variances are not assumed.

A mean difference of -3.70 is reported, which is computed by subtracting the mean of the secondary public school teachers sample from the mean of the secondary Christian school teachers sample. The secondary public school sample has a mean that is 3.70 higher than the secondary Christian school sample. Since T scores are used, the difference between the scores in terms of standard deviation units may be expressed as 0.37. A standard error of the mean difference and a 95% confidence interval are also reported. These data can be used to estimate the difference that might exist in the populations. Using the confidence interval reported for the equal-variances *t* test, the difference between the population means of these two samples should range from -7.645 to 0.249, which should occur 95 out of 100 times. As with other confidence levels, the smaller this interval, the better the estimate. In addition, confidence intervals should not contain zero. If so, the true difference in the population could be zero, which would

support the null hypothesis. In this case, the interval does contain zero, which fails to reject the null hypothesis.

This is a two-tailed t test since it takes into account the possibility that the correlation of the dependent variable (TSCS:2 moral self-concept score) could be positive or negative. The two-tailed significance is the probability of these results occurring by chance, given the null hypothesis is true. If no difference were found between the two samples of teachers divided by place of employment, sample means would still differ just by chance. The probability of this t test is .066, which means that differences between the two samples this large or larger could occur by chance up to 66 times in 1,000. This value is greater than the risk level chosen for this study ($\alpha = .05$), so the null hypothesis is not rejected. The differences in the means reported could occur by chance. The two groups of secondary teachers, thus, seem to have similar self-concept scores.

Research Area Two

Research area two explores whether differences exist between the moral self-concept of elementary teachers in public schools and in Christian schools. Table 4 portrays descriptive information relating to the second research area.

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics of TSCS:2 Moral Self-Concept Scores for Elementary Teachers

Employed by	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SE of M</i>
Christian schools	45	51.33	8.252	1.230
Public schools	67	50.51	8.369	1.022

More elementary public school teachers completed the TSCS:2 than elementary Christian school teachers. The means are similar, as well as the standard deviations. The standard error of the means for the two samples are also similar. Since the elementary public school teachers' standard error of the mean is smaller, it is more representative of the population than the sample of elementary Christian school teachers.

In executing the *t* test calculations for the two samples from research area two, the dependent variable of the TSCS:2 moral self-concept scores is again used for Levene's Test for the Equality of Variances. This test found an F ratio of 0.122 with a probability (*p* value) of .728 for research area two. Since the probability (*p*) of Levene's Test exceeds the chosen alpha (α) level of .05, an assumption of homogeneity for the variances of the samples can be assumed. Hence, the variances of the two samples are approximately equal.

Information regarding the *t* test for research area two appears in Table 5.

Table 5

TSCS:2 Moral Self-Concept Scores for Elementary Teachers Employed by Christian Schools and Public Schools

Independent Samples <i>t</i> Test for Equality of Means						
				95% confidence interval		
		<i>p</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	of the difference	
<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	(2-tailed)	difference	difference	Lower	Upper
.515	110	.608	.83	1.604	-2.353	4.005

Note. Equal variances are assumed.

Table 5 reports a mean difference of .83; thus, the elementary Christian school teachers sample has a mean that is 0.83 higher than the elementary public school teachers sample. The difference between the scores in terms of standard deviation units may be expressed as 0.082 since T scores are used. A standard error of the mean difference (1.604) and a 95% confidence interval are also reported. Applying the confidence interval reported for the equal-variances *t* test, the difference between the population means of these two samples should range from -2.353 to 4.005, which should occur 95 out of 100 times. This interval does contain zero, which fails to reject the null hypothesis since the difference in the population could then be zero.

The probability of this two-tailed *t* test for independent samples is .608, which means that differences between two samples this large or larger could occur by chance up to 608 times in 1,000. This value is greater than the risk level chosen for this study ($\alpha =$

.05), so the null hypothesis is not rejected. The differences in the means reported could occur by chance. Consequently, the two groups of elementary teachers appear to have moral self-concept scores that are not statistically different.

Research Area Three

The third research area investigates whether differences exist between the moral self-concept of secondary teachers and elementary teachers. Table 6 reveals descriptive data regarding this area.

Table 6

Descriptive Statistics of TSCS:2 Moral Self-Concept Scores by Grade Level Taught

<u>Employed by</u>	<u><i>n</i></u>	<u><i>M</i></u>	<u><i>SD</i></u>	<u><i>SE of M</i></u>
Elementary schools	112	50.84	8.295	0.784
Secondary schools	93	49.11	9.525	0.988

The reported means are similar, as well as the standard deviations. More elementary school teachers completed the TSCS:2 than secondary teachers. The standard error of the means for the two samples are also similar. Since the elementary teachers standard error of the mean is smaller, it is more representative of the population than the sample of secondary teachers.

The dependent variable of the TSCS:2 moral self-concept scores was used in performing the *t* test calculations for the two samples from research area three for Levene's Test for the Equality of Variances. This test found an F ratio of 1.192 with a

probability (p value) of 0.276 for research area three. Since the probability (p) exceeds the chosen alpha (α) level of .05, an assumption of homogeneity for the variances of the samples can be maintained.

Information regarding the t test for research area three appears in Table 7.

Table 7

TSCS:2 Moral Self-Concept Scores for Elementary and Secondary Teachers

Independent Samples t Test for Equality of Means						
				95% confidence interval		
		p	M	SE	of the difference	
t	df	(2-tailed)	difference	difference	Lower	Upper
1.391	203	.166	1.73	1.245	-0.723	4.186

Note. Equal variances are assumed.

The calculations from table 7 show a mean difference of 1.73; thus the elementary teacher sample has a mean that is 1.73 higher than the secondary teacher sample. Since T scores are used, the difference between the scores in terms of standard deviation units may be expressed as 0.173. According to the confidence interval reported for the equal-variances t test, the standard error of the mean difference, and the 95% confidence interval, the difference between the population means of these two samples should range from -0.723 to 4.186, which should occur 95 out of 100 times. This interval does contain zero, which fails to reject the null hypothesis because the difference in the population could be zero since it is a part of the interval.

The probability of this two-tailed t test for independent samples is .166. This value is greater than the risk level selected for this study ($\alpha = .05$), so the null hypothesis is not rejected. The differences in the means reported could occur by chance. The moral self-concept scores for the two samples, elementary and secondary teachers, seem to be similar and not statistically different.

Research Area Four

The fourth research area investigates whether differences exist between the moral self-concept of teachers who attend church regularly and those who do not attend church regularly. For the purposes of this study, regular church attendees are those who report attending church worship services 75% or more of the time. Table 8 contains descriptive data regarding this area.

Table 8

Descriptive Statistics of TSCS:2 Moral Self-Concept Scores by Church Worship Service Attendance

<u>Church attendance</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>SE of M</u>
75% or more of the time	154	50.17	9.024	0.727
Less than 75% of the time	46	49.83	8.903	1.313

The reported means are similar, as well as the standard deviations. Many more teachers completed the TSCS:2 who reported attending church 75% or more of the time than those who do not. The standard error of the means for the two samples are somewhat

similar. The sample of those who report attending church 75% or more of the time is more representative of the population than the sample of those who do not. This would be expected, since this sample is much larger than the other sample.

Levene's Test for the Equality of Variances was performed for the dependent variable of the TSCS:2 moral self-concept scores for the two samples. This test found an F ratio of 0.194 with a probability (p value) of .660 for research area four. Since the probability (p) exceeds the chosen alpha (α) level of .05, the Levene's Test results are not significant, which supports the maintenance of an assumption of homogeneity for the variances of the samples.

Information regarding the t test for research area four appears in Table 9.

Table 9

TSCS:2 Moral Self-Concept Scores Grouped by Church Worship Service Attendance

Independent Samples t Test for Equality of Means						
				95% confidence interval		
				of the difference		
t	df	p (2-tailed)	M difference	SE difference	Lower	Upper
.227	198	.821	0.34	1.512	-2.638	3.324

Note. Equal variances are assumed.

The calculations from table 9 show a mean difference of 0.34. The difference between the scores in terms of standard deviation units may be expressed as 0.034, since T scores were used. According to the confidence interval reported for the equal-variances

t test, the standard error of the mean difference, and the 95% confidence interval, the difference between the population means of these two samples should range from -2.638 to 3.324, which should occur 95 out of 100 times. This interval contains zero, which fails to reject the null hypothesis and means the difference in the population could be zero.

The probability of this two-tailed t test for independent samples is .821. This value is greater than the risk level selected for this study ($\alpha = .05$), so the null hypothesis is not rejected. The differences in the means reported could occur by chance. As a consequence, the moral self-concept scores of the two samples separated by self-reported church worship attendance appear to be similar and are not statistically different.

Research Area Five

The fifth research area investigates whether differences exist between the moral self-concept of teachers now teaching in a Christian school who have taught in a public school and teachers now teaching in a public school who have taught in a Christian school. Table 10 shows descriptive data regarding this area.

Table 10

Descriptive Statistics of Teacher TSCS:2 Moral Self-Concept Scores by Employment

<u>Employment</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>SE of M</u>
Christian school ^a	33	49.03	9.920	1.727
Public school ^b	10	51.10	5.259	1.663

^aCurrent Christian school teachers who have taught in a public school.

^bCurrent public school teachers who have taught in a Christian school.

The reported means are similar, but the standard deviations are very different. More teachers completed the TSCS:2 who currently teach in a Christian school but have public school teaching experience than those currently teaching in a public school but have Christian school teaching experience. The standard error of the means for the two samples are somewhat similar. The sample of those currently teaching in public schools but with Christian school experience is more representative of the population than the other sample.

Levene's Test for the Equality of Variances found an F ratio of 3.026 for the two samples' dependent variable with a probability (p value) of .089 for research area five. The probability (p) exceeds the chosen alpha (α) level of .05, which maintains an assumption of homogeneity for the variances of the samples.

Table 11 includes information regarding the t test for research area five.

Table 11

Teacher TSCS:2 Moral Self-Concept Scores of Teachers With Both Christian and Public School Experience Grouped by Current Employment

Independent Samples t Test for Equality of Means						
					95% confidence interval	
		p	M	SE	of the difference	
t	df	(2-tailed)	difference	difference	Lower	Upper
-.630	41	.532	-2.07	3.286	-8.706	4.567

Note. Equal variances are assumed.

The calculations regarding research area five from table 11 state a mean difference of -2.07. Since T scores are used, the difference between the scores in terms of standard deviation units may be expressed as 0.207. According to the confidence interval reported for the equal-variances t test, the standard error of the mean difference, and the 95% confidence interval, the difference between the population means of these two samples should range from -8.706 to 4.567, which should occur 95 out of 100 times. This interval contains zero, which means that the true difference in the population could be zero which would support the null hypothesis.

The probability of this two-tailed t test for independent samples is .532. This value is greater than the risk level selected for this study ($\alpha = .05$), so the null hypothesis is not rejected. The differences in the means reported could occur by chance. Therefore, differences in the moral self-concept scores for the two samples based upon reported employment history are not statistically significant and appear to be similar.

Research Area Six

The sixth research area investigates whether differences exist between the moral self-concept of teachers with less than 11 years of teaching experience and those teachers with 11 or more years of teaching experience. Table 12 shows descriptive data regarding this area.

Table 12

Descriptive Statistics of Teacher TSCS:2 Moral Self-Concept Scores by Experience

Experience (in years)	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SE of M</i>
Less than 11	102	48.70	9.227	0.890
11 or more	94	51.63	8.631	0.914

The sample sizes (*n*) exhibit a nearness of magnitude. The reported means are different, and the *t* test examination should indicate whether this is significant. A mean difference of 2.93 can be deduced. The standard deviations are different, but still somewhat close to each other in value. The standard error of the means for the two samples are somewhat similar but indicate less error in the sample of those teachers with less than 11 years of experience than the sample of teachers with 11 or more years of experience.

Levene's Test for the Equality of Variances found an F ratio of 0.662 for the two samples' dependent variable with a probability (*p* value) of .417 for research area six. Since the probability (*p*) exceeds the chosen alpha (α) level of .05, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected based on Levene's Test for the Equality of Variances, which maintains an assumption of homogeneity for the variances of the samples. Thus, Levene's Test is not significant so the variances of the two samples can be assumed to be approximately equal.

Table 13 includes information regarding the *t* test for research area six.

Table 13

Teacher TSCS:2 Moral Self-Concept Scores of Teachers By Experience

Independent Samples <i>t</i> Test for Equality of Means						
				95% confidence interval		
				of the difference		
<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i> (2-tailed)	<i>M</i> difference	<i>SE</i> difference	Lower	Upper
2.292	194	.023	2.93	1.279	0.409	5.454

Note. Equal variances are assumed.

The calculations regarding research area six from table 13 state a mean difference of 2.93. Since T scores are used, the difference between the scores in terms of standard deviation units may be expressed as 0.293. A standard error of the mean difference (1.279) and a 95% confidence interval are also reported. Applying the confidence interval reported for the equal-variances *t* test, the difference between the population means of these two samples should range from 0.409 to 5.454, which should occur 95 out of 100 times. This interval does not contain zero, which rejects the null hypothesis. As with other confidence levels, the smaller this interval, the better the estimate. In this case, all points in the interval are positive, which indicates that if teachers are sampled over and over, less experienced teachers would have lower moral self-concept scores than more experienced teachers (as earlier defined) 95 times in 100.

The probability of this two-tailed *t* test for independent samples is .023. This value is less than the risk level selected for this study ($\alpha = .05$), so the null hypothesis is

rejected and the conclusion, based on the t test for independent samples, is that teachers in this study with eleven or more years of experience do produce significantly higher moral self-concept as measured by the TSCS:2.

Summary

This chapter reported the data analysis conducted in this study. These data are organized and analyzed according to the six research areas presented in Chapter 1 of this study. Data were gathered from a total of 210 teachers employed by public and Christian schools in a single county in the Atlanta metropolitan area at both the elementary and secondary levels. In order to answer each of the research areas, the data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and t tests for independent samples. For five of the six areas, the differences of the means were found to be not significant and thus the null hypothesis was not rejected. For the sixth area, regarding teaching experience and moral self-concept, a significant difference was found. These findings are discussed in the next chapter with the purpose of identifying and summarizing the results, discussing the relationship of the current study to previous research, and interpreting the findings. The next chapter also offers suggestions for additional research and recommendations for educators.

Chapter 5

Summary and Discussion

This final chapter of the study will restate the research problem and questions and will review the methodology as an aid to the reader. The major portion of this chapter will summarize and discuss the results and their implications. Additionally, suggestions will be given for further research related to the present study.

Statement of the Problem and Purpose

Problem.

As related in research, the moral character of a teacher as conveyed by a teacher's behavior and lifestyle, both in and out of the classroom, affects students (Ball & Wilson, 1996; Bergem, 1993; Burstall, 1996; Chow-Hoy, 2001; Fenstermacher, 2001; Foster, 1994; Lickona, 2004; Orr, 1998; Richardson & Fallona, 2001). Thus, the moral example set by a teacher is very important to the development of future participants in society who behave according to moral principles. As previously explained, the study began with the understanding that teachers' moral self-concepts influence their behavior in educational environments (Erikson, 1950; Markus, 1983; Maclean, Walker, & Matsuba, 2004; Ryan & Bohlin, 1999; Tsang, 2001). The research also began with the foundation that there are no identifiable differences in teachers' perceptions of their own morality among the six independent variables identified in six research areas.

Purpose.

The purpose of this study is to determine if a statistically significant relationship exists between the moral self-concept as measured by the TSCS:2 of several samples identified in six research areas.

- 1) There are no differences between the moral self-concepts of secondary teachers in public schools and in Christian schools.
- 2) There are no differences between the moral self-concepts of elementary teachers in public schools and in Christian schools.
- 3) There are no differences between the moral self-concepts of secondary and elementary teachers.
- 4) There are no differences between the moral self-concepts of teachers who attend church regularly and those who do not. (For the purposes of this study, attending church worship services 75% or more of the time defines a regular church attendee.)
- 5) There are no differences between the moral self-concepts of teachers now teaching in a Christian school who have taught in a public school and teachers now teaching in a public school who have taught in a Christian school.
- 6) There are no differences between the moral self-concepts of teachers who have taught less than 11 years and those who have taught for 11 or more years.

Summary of the Results

No significant differences are found for five of the research areas, other than a possible small effect for areas one and five. These small effects should be interpreted with caution because of the conflicting *t* test results using .05 as the probability level. Additionally, area one revealed that the variances of the two samples are significantly different. The sixth area, based on the teachers' teaching experience, found a significant difference which will be discussed in detail later in the chapter.

Discussion of the Results

Interpretation of the Findings.

Overall, the moral-self concept of teachers in the county appears to be average compared to the population as a whole. Nevertheless, the teacher MOR scores included a few very low and very high scores. The scores for two teachers were the lowest score (≤ 20) one can receive on the test. Interestingly, both of these teachers are white males who report attending church worship services 75% or more of the time and teach at a private Christian high school. Both have less than eleven years of teaching experience. The highest score obtained in the study (71) was recorded for four teachers. All four were white female teachers who reported attending church worship services 75% or more of the time and have eleven or more years of experience. Hence, the teachers with the highest scores and those with the lowest scores all report attending church worship services 75% or more of the time. On the whole, many more teachers in the sample who provided church worship information report attending church worship services 75% or more of the time (154 teachers out of 200) than those who do not.

The teachers' scores for their moral self-concept fall, in general, in the normal range. The reported MOR mean for the entire sample ($n = 204$) is 50.04 and since T-scores are used, the anticipated MOR mean is 50. When using T-scores, the standard deviation is consistent at 10, while the standard deviation for the sample is 8.915. One may find the average moral self-concept scores surprising since public surveys have ranked teachers as having high morals (Burstall, 1996; Gallup Poll News Service, 2004), so one would expect that the scores should be higher. However, public perceptions of a person or group's morality may be based on appearances or reputation, while moral self-concept is by definition a self measure.

A small effect was noted for research area one, which entails the differences of the MOR of secondary teachers in public schools and private Christian schools. The difference was not large enough to be determined to be significant, but could indicate an area to be investigated further. The effect is surprising in that teachers in private Christian schools are expected to look toward the Bible for morality guidelines, while public school teachers may or may not attribute their values to the Bible's teachings. However, the data show that the larger MOR score occurs with public secondary teachers rather than the private Christian school secondary teachers. Some may interpret these data to show that, overall, secondary teachers employed by private Christian schools are more critical of their own morals than teachers employed by public schools. However, the data in this study does not support a significant difference for this area (only a small effect), and the conclusion of a major difference cannot be supported based on the measurable data. Interestingly, when the moral self-concept data of elementary teachers are viewed, the private Christian school teachers have the highest mean score. Still, the difference is not

considered significant according to the figures provided by *t*-test for independent samples and the data does not support an assumption of homogeneity of variance.

A small effect was also noted for research area five, which defined samples in regard of having worked in both Christian and public schools. The moral self-concept score of teachers who have taught in both environments but are currently teaching in public schools may have a slightly higher MOR score than those teaching in both environments but currently teaching at a private Christian school. The range of scores for teachers included in research area five who are currently teaching at private Christian schools is much greater and includes the minimum and maximum scores for the entire study (from ≤ 20 to 71) than that of those teachers included in research area five who currently teach at public schools (from 43 to 58.) However, the sample sizes are probably not large enough to draw even preliminary conclusions.

Significant differences were noted for research area six, which investigated the MOR of teachers grouped by years of teaching experience. Although not linked with moral self-concept and years of experience, this is consistent with previous research regarding morality and age (Byrne & Shavelson, 1996; El-Hassan, 2004; Marsh & Ayotte, 2003; Marsh & Shavelson, 1985; McDonald & Stuart-Hamilton, 1996; Pratt, Diessner, Hunsberger, Pancer, & Savoy, 1991). In the McDonald and Stuart-Hamilton study, written versions of Piaget's moral reasoning tasks were used to determine that, when grouped by age, older groups generally scored higher on the moral reasoning tasks. The Pratt et al. study used several constructs, including those by Kohlberg and Gilligan, to determine that as one ages, scores related to moral reasoning tended to become very stable. One could assume that many of the teachers with more years of experience are

also older. However, some of the teachers with less years of experience could have entered the profession later in their life or spent a number of years outside the education profession.

No significant differences were found among five of the six samples incorporated in this study's design, including groups separated by church attendance, type of school, and grade level taught. The test manual states that lower MOR scores may occur as a reflection of moral standards held by the individual or significant others that are unrealistically high. Thus, in some cases, it seems that high moral standards may have the effect of a lower MOR. Teachers may recognize that in their positions of instruction, their moral actions should possibly be exemplary of the highest standards and higher than the general population. Teachers with this recognition might sense that they do not always attain these high standards and rate themselves lower than they actually should.

Moreover, in the study, the two teachers with the lowest two scores, which were the lowest possible score for moral self-concept (≤ 20), report attending church worship services 75% or more of the time. However, just because one attends worship services regularly does not automatically cause one to adhere to the particular religion and its tenets. Further, teachers who report attending church worship services 75% or more of the time may recognize that their moral behavior should be of a high caliber and exemplary of the highest standards. Teachers possessing this belief may tend to rate themselves lower than they actually are.

Relationship of the Current Study to Previous Research.

Previous studies were relied upon to construct the present study. Prior researchers have posited theories regarding the self-concept (James, 1890/1950; Kohut, 1973/1978; Rogers, 1947; Sullivan, 1953) and its influence upon a person's being. Other investigators have reported the malleable nature of the self-concept, and have concluded that the self-concept of an individual is stable and orderly yet flexible (Markus & Kunda, 1986; Rogers, 1951; Turner, 2001). Others have analyzed the separate areas incorporating one's self-concept, including the moral self-concept (Damon & Hart, 1982; Epstein, 1973; Fitts, 1968; James, 1890/1950). The declaration that one's self concept (including the moral self-concept) influences one's behavior has also been well documented in the literature (Erikson, 1950; Maclean et al., 2004; Markus, 1983; Tsang, 2001; Vallacher et al., 2002; Wegner et al., 1986).

The importance of an instructor's moral-self concept in the development of a young person's character is one of the major issues of education today (Huitt, 2004). Historically, throughout world civilizations the moral realm of education has been as important as the realm of knowledge (Nucci, 1989). Mary Warnock of Oxford University has written, "You cannot teach morality without being committed to morality yourself; and you cannot be committed to morality yourself without holding that some things are right and others wrong" (Bennett, Finn, & Cribb, 1999, p. 527). Sanger (2001) describes six different ways teachers develop morality in their students, but does not include modeling because, "it is interwoven in complex ways into the other six" (p. 639). In the United States, moral education has traditionally used the Bible as its primary source (Hall, 1966).

In part because of the legal restrictions related to moral development that include the elimination of Biblical study in public education, churches, parents, and citizens founded Christian schools and a curriculum using the Bible as a basis of moral instruction (Barkley, 2004; Ledbetter, 2003). The U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics reported a 46 percent increase in enrollment at conservative Christian schools in the United States from 1989 to 2000. The same report detailed a percentage increase of Episcopal schools during the same period of 37 percent and nonsectarian private schools of 26 percent. The survey identified about 23 percent of all elementary and secondary schools in the United States as private schools (Broughman & Colaciello, 2001). For the 2003 – 2004 school year, 11.5 percent of the nation's elementary and secondary school population attended private schools (Gerald & Hussar, 2003). The perceived absence of character, moral, and ethical instruction has partially caused the unprecedented increase in student enrollment in parochial schools, Christian schools, charter schools, and similar institutions (Barkley, 2004; Sykes, 1995).

Because moral instruction is needed in all schools (Lickona, 2004), including both the Christian and the public school, two types of moral instruction typically occur. In the Christian school, the Bible is the basis of truth and, thus, is the basis of moral instruction (Braley, Layman, & White, 2003; Carper & Hunt, 1984; McCallum, 1996; Middleton & Walsh, 1995; Schultz, 2002; Wilkens, 1995; Wilson, 1991). Public schools use other methods, which are incorporated to educate students in moral development and character formation (Gauld, 1993; Kohlberg, 1984; McClelland, 1982; Metcalf, 1971; Piaget, 1965; Purpel & McLaurin, 2004; Simon, Howe, & Kirschenbaum, 1995; Simpson, 1989; Wynne & Ryan, 1997). Regardless of the scholastic environment, a teacher's moral

example is a major portion of a student's moral education and character formation (Banner & Cannon, 1997; Bergem, 1993; Coles, 1997; Lickona, 2004; Orr, 1998; Ryan & Bohlin, 1999; Schultz, 2002; Sergiovanni, 1992). A review of research by Wynne (1989) revealed that the quality of relationships among faculty (and between the faculty and adults in authority) is a major factor in the development of student character. Further, in general, both good and bad character is considered observable in one's conduct (Walberg & Wynne, 1989). Thus, a teacher's moral example should be a very deliberate process that is a part of discourse in the employment of educators and in teacher education programs and professional associations.

Conclusion

The study of moral self-concept is a timely topic in today's atmosphere of moral ambivalence, especially as it relates to the field of education. As discussed in the literature review, one's moral self-concept is comprised of three areas: the internal, the external, and the spiritual. Since one's moral self-concept has been determined to affect one's behavior, it seems to be a critical area of one's moral health. This study found that the moral self-concept of teachers who participated in the research project was generally on a par with the population as a whole and showed little variance relating to public school or Christian school employment, elementary or secondary teaching, or cross-domain teaching experience. The one significant finding of this research entailed a positive relationship between one's years of teaching experience and moral self-concept, with more experienced teachers reflecting a higher perception of morality. More research should occur to attempt to determine if this relationship occurs in the general teacher

population and the possible cause of this relationship. Once causes for a higher moral self-concept are determined through additional research, they should be explored as possible curriculum topics in university teacher education programs and should be incorporated in general school curricula.

As Lee Iacocca said, “In a completely rational society the best of us would aspire to be teachers and the rest of us would have to settle for something less, because passing civilization along from one generation to the next ought to be the highest honor and the highest responsibility anyone could have” (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999, p. 218).

Recommendations for Educators

The challenge of measuring a person’s moral self-concept should not discourage further research in the area of a teacher’s moral self-concept, especially since research has linked the relationship of one’s self-concept and behavior. While serving as an intern in medical school, Coles (1997) recalled the importance of an older teacher in the formation of his character,

He didn’t give lectures and sermons as to how we interns and residents ought to behave ‘Not the letter, but the spirit,’ this kindly old doc seemed to be saying to us. In fact, he *said* very little to us; he lived out his moral principles, and soon enough, we were witnesses to his behavior, to his ways of being with others, which we were challenged to absorb, as all young people are inclined to do, when they have learned to admire and trust someone older. (p. 6)

Clearly, a teacher’s moral self-concept and the resulting example set by the teacher’s behavior are an important part of the educational process.

However, moral education, also called character education, has not played a significant part in many teacher education programs. Since the 1960s, teacher education has diminished the teacher's role as a transmitter of social and personal values and has emphasized other areas such as teaching techniques, strategies, models, and skills (Huitt, 2004; Nucci, 1989a). In the opinion of most researchers in the area of character and moral development (e.g., Hansen, 1993; Joseph, 2003; Lanckton, 1992; Lickona, 2004; Ryan & Bohlin, 1999; Sanger, 2001), additional prominence must be placed on the philosophical "why" of education in addition to the technical "how" (Huitt, 2004). The two educational goals most desired by both the public and educators—academic competence and character development—are not mutually exclusive, but complementary (Noddings, 2003; Wynne & Walberg, 1985).

With the emphasis upon testing and test scores with the national No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), much effort and time is now spent teaching objectives related specifically to tests administered to determine whether an institution meets adequate yearly progress (AYP) or needs improvement (NI) (Mathis, 2004; Starnes, 2005). While academic performance is very important, much effort should also be spent upon moral instruction, according to Starnes. Further, the NCLB Act should not only address progress in the academic realm but also in the moral realm. A teacher's moral example during instruction should be acknowledged as significant in the education of a child and worthy of the public's attention for the benefit of future generations and the continuation of a just and moral society.

Limitations

This study is limited to the population studied from a suburban county in the greater metropolitan area of Atlanta, Georgia. Although the research may be used to encourage further research in the area of moral self-concept as it relates to the teaching profession, the results should not be generalized to a more general population of teachers. Further, the geographic region may have an effect on the person's moral self-concept.

The use of a single position instrument limits the study. Though the instrument used in the research, the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale: Second Edition (TSCS:2) possesses very strong psychometric properties and has been used since its publication in 1965 with a very large number of scholarly research studies, other instruments applied to the same population might present different data. These instruments may use a slightly varying definition of moral self-concept than the one used in this study and may have differing psychometric properties .

The research design incorporates a quantitative analysis with causal-comparative research. This type of research (causal-comparative) attempts to identify cause-effect relationships. However, this type of research design does have some serious inherent limitations. The most glaring occurs because the independent variable has already occurred and been assigned prior to the study; therefore, the same controls cannot occur as with an experimental study. Additionally, an apparent cause-effect relationship may not be as it appears. Many other variables may influence the relationship. Under these assumptions, only a relationship may be established (Gay & Airasian, 2003).

Recommendations for Further Research

Additional research should occur in relation to the one significant finding of this study: the positive relationship between one's years of teaching experience and moral self-concept reflected in the county studied. More research should occur to attempt to determine if this relationship occurs in the general teacher population and the possible cause of this relationship. More research could also determine whether moral self-concept increases with years of teaching experience or with years of work experience or simply as a function of growing older. A longitudinal study would be of value in this area of research.

Given that moral self-concept is composed of three areas (the internal apparatus, the external apparatus, and the spiritual and religious apparatus), further research could help clarify any restrictions teachers comprehend regarding the spiritual and religious apparatus component. The teachers employed by public schools have different expectations placed upon them in this area than teachers employed by Christian private schools, and teachers employed by other types of private institutions have yet another set of expectations placed upon them. Follow-up studies could occur regarding how these differing expectations may change or affect one's moral self-concept.

Moral self-concept by subject area taught could be fertile material for additional further research. If significant differences are found, further research could attempt to identify the causes of the differences. Helpful and significant changes could then occur in areas affecting the differences in an attempt to strengthen the moral self-concept of the instructors teaching in subject areas with a weaker overall self-concept.

Further study could also investigate the moral self-concepts of professionals

employed in service careers and the moral self-concepts of professionals employed in business and clinical careers. These results could help one identify mean moral self-concepts by career cluster.

Since many more teachers in the sample report attending church worship services than not (154 teachers out of 200), additional research could determine whether teachers mirror the general population in worship attendance and spiritual involvement.

Another recommended area for further research would focus on parental expectations for teachers in regards to setting a moral example. Since it is important for a child to be provided with a consistent example by adults in the school, community, media, and home (Schultz, 2002), it becomes important to determine the moral example expected of teachers by parents. Once expectations are discovered and expressed in specific terms, research may be conducted on the best way to teach and evaluate this example for teachers in a school system.

Since, according to the study, both Christian and public schools employ many Christian teachers, research could also be conducted to determine why a Christian teacher is drawn to each environment. Another related area for additional investigation could include reasons teachers leave one environment to be employed in the other (as seen in the study). Public and Christian schools could use this research in teacher recruitment and retention strategies.

In addition, research should be conducted to determine the most effective philosophical foundation for moral education. Christian schools have clung to the Bible, but public schools incorporate several different theoretical frameworks (Huitt, 2004). According to Huitt (2004), a framework for impacting moral and character development

is arbitrary unless it is based on some philosophical base. Since no current moral education approach is consistent with all philosophies, theories, and frameworks in use, educators must first select the philosophical base as a foundation and then develop a compatible curriculum. More information identifying an effective philosophical base would aid in the development of curricula that enhance moral growth and development.

In regards to measuring morality, the measurement is difficult since morality, by definition, involves one's behavior at all times. Further, morality is often defined in terms of traits, such as honesty and integrity (Huitt, 2004). A person's moral self-concept is also difficult to measure; it may be an indicator of a person's overt moral example, or it may be an indicator of an internal compass. However, the definition of a moral example and moral behavior varies from person to person. Brown (1998) declares that the measurement of self-concept is tenuous at best, as with all measures of constructs that are ambiguous in definition. Research should be conducted to continually craft and refine better and stronger moral self-concept instruments in terms of validity and reliability measures.

Qualitative studies in regards to teachers' moral self-concept are recommended as a further analysis of the topic. As noted in the literature review, some confusion exists in attempting to find a satisfactory definition of *moral* and the role of morality in the educational process. Qualitative data could help explain relationships and themes relating to a teacher's moral self-concept and the moral actions and example exhibited in and out of the classroom.

Future study should occur to explore the effect teachers with high moral self-concepts have upon their students. Information gleaned from such an investigation could

be valuable in proposing initiatives to improve teachers' self-concepts through improved curricula and in increasing awareness of the effects of teacher self-concept upon students.

Significant differences were observed by the researcher for a group that was not included as a part of this study. When groups were formed by gender, females had a significantly higher MOR score ($p = .006$) than males. Many more females ($n = 149$), though, completed the TSCS:2 than males ($n = 46$). An Australian study mentioned in the test manual found similar results by gender. The relation between gender and moral self-concept could also be worthy of further research.

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Appendix A

Letter of Approval to Conduct Research Project



Center for Counseling and Family Studies

1251 University Boulevard
Leesburg, Virginia 20182-5624

October 15, 2004

Mr. Tim Brown
3035 Wren's Way
Kennesaw, GA 30144

Dear Mr. Brown:

Your research study has been unanimously deemed eligible for research exempt from Institutional Review Board review. You are granted approval for conducting this research. We wish you success in your work.

Sincerely,

Dr. Ronald D. Allen, Chairman
Liberty University IRB

Phone: (541) 595-4119 or (800) 421-0699 • Fax: (541) 525-1416
Web: <http://www.liberty.edu> • E-mail: cscc@liberty.edu

Appendix B

Tennessee Self-Concept Scale: Second Edition

A copy of the testing instrument used in this study, the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale: Second Edition (TSCS:2), is not included due to copyright restrictions.