The Influence of Parenting Styles on the Development of
Moral Judgment in College Level Adolescents


A dissertation submitted

by

SCOTT M. HAWKINS

to

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY


in partial fulfillment of
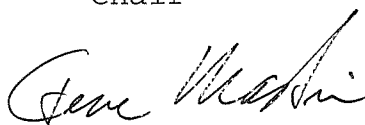the requirements for the degree of


DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
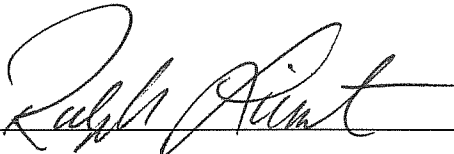
in

PROFESSIONAL COUNSELING


This dissertation has been
accepted for the faculty of
Liberty University by

_____

Dr. Ron Allen
Chair

_____

Dr. Gene Mastin
Advisor

_____

Dr. Ralph Linstra
External Reader

Abstract

THE INFLUENCE OF PARENTING STYLES ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF MORAL

JUDGMENT IN COLLEGE LEVEL ADOLESCENTS

By Scott Mitchell Hawkins

This research project addresses the relationship between parenting styles and the development of moral judgment in college students enrolled in a four year private University in Central Virginia. The purpose of this study is to identify the extent to which parenting styles are one of the "building blocks" for the development of moral judgment in adolescents. The instruments used are the Parental Authority Questionnaire (Buri, 1988) and the Defining Issues Test – II (Rest, 1999). The researcher hypothesized that the levels of moral judgment found in college students who perceive that they were parented by parents utilizing an Authoritative parenting style will be significantly higher than the levels found in college students who perceive their parents relied primarily on Authoritarian or Permissive Parenting Styles. Statistical analysis was performed using regression analysis and the hypothesis was rejected because the permissive style was found to have a more powerful impact on moral development than the less powerful, although significant, authoritative parenting style.

April 1, 2005

# DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my wife and best friend Holly Hawkins for being a Proverbs 31 wife; mother of Nathan and Nicole; and for providing me with unconditional love, remarkable patience, support and understanding for all my life's goals. Nathan, this is dedicated to you for sacrificing your playmate to the completion of this dissertation. Nicole, this is dedicated to you for sharing your coach and movie partner with the educational process. Thank you both for your Love, prayers, and patience. This work is further dedicated to my loving parents, Ron and Peggy Hawkins, who supplied a fantastic model for parenting and saw me through all of life's unexpected twists and turns. Mom, thanks for always being there for me. Dad, thanks for being my role model, mentor, and one of the few true companions one finds on this journey.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my deepest gratitude and heartfelt thanks to my father, Dr. Ron Hawkins, for his countless hours of support, editing, and his unwavering belief in me. Dad, thanks for being my Lighthouse in the midst of every storm I've ever weathered.

I would also like to thank Dr. Ron Allen for his willingness to chair my committee, navigate my statistics, and remind me that people survive this process. Thank you for your investment in my life and for helping me turn this dissertation into a degree.

I would like to thank Dr. Gene Mastin and Dr. Ralph Linstra for serving on my committee and for offering me wise counsel and words of encouragement. I would like to further thank Dr. Linstra for his support in the Sport Management program for the past two years; teaching and advising, which has allowed me the window of opportunity needed to complete this dissertation process.

I would like to thank George and Ellie Davis for always praying for me and believing in me.

I would like to thank Angela Mendez, Hannah Hilliard, Jamie Sylvester and Jennifer Washburn for their support in formatting, editing, and assisting with this dissertation. You all are appreciated deeply and your smiles and words of encouragement have meant so very much to me.

I would like to acknowledge once again the commitment that Holly, Nathan, and Nicole have made in supporting me through additional years of education, comprehensive examination, and dissertation. You are all truly the wind beneath my wings, I Love you all, and you will always be my heroes.

I wish to thank my parents, Ron and Peggy Hawkins ... it is amazing to me the strength one can draw from knowing that they are Loved, believed in, and prayed for. You have been incredible role models and prayer warriors for me and I draw strength and wisdom from your modeling of marriage and parenthood throughout the years. I Love you and pray God's blessing on you always.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

## CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

*Introduction to the Problem:*

The development of moral judgment constitutes one of the most widely debated challenges facing Philosophers, Theologians, Educators, and Psychologists in our present day culture (Smetana, 1995, 1999; Marsden, 1997; Wells, 1994; Colson & Eckard, 1991; Guiness, 2000; Plantinga, 2002; Sire, 2000; MacIntyre, 1990; Moreland, 1987; Oden, 1995; Erickson, 1994; Willard, 1998).

Becker and Becker (2001) in their *Encyclopedia of Ethics* seek to define the scope of this challenge when they ask;

> What is the source of morality in the individual? How are moral attitudes and behavior acquired? Are they products of genetic factors and of biological maturation? Are they results of socialization? Or do they arise through the activity of more or less autonomous psychological processes within the individual? Are they rooted in cognition or intelligence? Or are they more matters of the heart, based upon feeling or emotions? How do particular childrearing and educational practices affect moral understanding and behavior? (p. 828)

Guiness, (2000) observes that the problems related to constructing a definition of morality have been further complicated by the pervasiveness of the postmodern mindset which dominates our present context and asserts that truth cannot be known. He summarizes postmodern thought when he asserts; "Truth in any objective or absolute sense, truth that is independent of the mind of the knower, no longer exists. At best, truth is relative - it's all a matter of interpretation and it all depends on the perspective" (p. 11, 12).

This enthronement of personal perspective has provided the foundation for the full development of the current postmodern mindset (Veith, 1994; Erikson, 2000; Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, and Tipton, 1985; Barna, 2003). This contemporary mindset provides little if any foothold for assisting persons with an understanding of the processes related to the development of moral judgment. Some contemporary authors have suggested that we must leave the development of such a capacity exclusively to the individual (Perls, 1979). Albert Ellis (1999) summarizes this mindset in his article entitled; *How to stubbornly refuse to make yourself miserable about anything; yes, anything!*

Still other authors have lamented that we have abandoned

concern for the development of the capacity for moral judgment in children and adolescents in our Western culture (Sweet, 1999; Barna, 2003; Goleman, 1997; Beck, 1984; Covey, 1997; Sommers, 2000).

"We have been thrown back," Christina Sommers (2000) writes, "into a moral Stone Age; many young people are totally unaffected by thousands of years of moral experience and moral progress" (p. 101). Americans have developed a general disdain for all things historical and are deeply committed to defining moral values from a personalized frame of reference. (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, and Tipton, 1985).

Veith, (1994) concurs;

In issue after issue, people are casually dismissing time-honored moral absolutes. The killing of a child in the womb used to be considered a horrible, almost unspeakable evil. It has been transformed into something good, a constitutional right. People once considered killing the handicapped, the sick, and the aged an unthinkable atrocity. Today they see euthanasia as an act of compassion. (p. 17)

Clearly, a large segment of the American culture has cut itself loose from the insights and teachings of the

Philosophers, Theologians, Educators, and Psychologists of the past who have reflected deeply on the development of moral judgment.

Many contemporary authors have focused on the role of educational institutions, the social matrix of family, and the culture at large for recovering the training processes related to the development of moral judgment in our children and adolescents. (VanderVen, 1998; Lickona, 1991; Moran, 1987; Sichel, 1988; Turiel, 2002; Hoffman, 2001; Chazan, 1985). In the Christian community we have witnessed the birth and popularity of programs like Focus on the Family and Listen America.

In this study we discovered the relative absence of research studies and literature designed to evaluate the relationship between the family, social involvement, educational programs, and the development of moral judgment in children and adolescents. The relative absence of this research leaves a vacuum in the literature, the culture at large, and in the Christian community. We will examine the relationships between family and the development of moral judgment in children and adolescents.

Specifically, for the purposes of this study we address the paucity of research that seeks to examine the question of

how parenting and particularly parenting styles are related to the development of moral judgment in adolescents who perceive that they have experienced a particular parenting style.

Ignorance of the literature on moral development and the lack of structured research have left the Christian community with a crisis of major proportions as it seeks to respond to the erosion of biblical values that is so prominent in the contemporary church and culture (Wells, 1994; Sweet, 1999; Parrott, 2000; Peck, 1983; Blanchard & Waghorn, 1997; Clark, Johnson, and Sloat, 1991; Beck, 1984; Balswick & Balswick, 1989).

*Purpose of the Study:*

The purpose of this study is to identify the extent to which parenting styles are one of the "building blocks" for the development of moral judgment in adolescents. In this study we join those who have sought to identify a core set of parental characteristics that contribute to a parenting style that provides an optimal environment for the development of moral judgment in children and adolescents (Covey, 1997; Parrot, 2000; Smalley and Trent, 1996; Stinnett and Beam, 1999; McDowell, 1999).

Further, given the perennial interest in the effects of

parenting on the development of higher levels of moral judgment in children and adolescents, the primary purpose of this present study is to assist with the task of filling the void in recent scholarship on the relationship between parenting styles and the development of moral judgment in adolescents. Past research has shown that the authoritative parenting style traditionally has been associated with greater gains in social domains (Hoffman, 2001; Baumrind, 1991; Smetana, 1995; Durkheim, 1961; Belsky, Crnic, & Woodworth, 1995; Losoya, Callor, Rowe, & Goldsmith, 1997; Olsen, Martin, & Halverson, 1999).

In this study we hypothesize that authoritative parenting will also be positively associated with greater gains in moral judgment (Hoffman & Saltzstein, 1967; Parikh, 1980; Hart, 1988; Speicher, 1992; Boyes & Allen, 1993).

This study will also seek to make recommendations regarding preferred styles of parenting that may result in the attainment of higher levels of moral judgment in adolescents.

*Hypothesis:*

The Researcher's Hypothesis is as follows:

**H:** The levels of moral judgment attained by college students who perceive that they were parented by parents utilizing an

Authoritative parenting style will be significantly higher

than the levels found in college students who perceive their

parents relied primarily on Authoritarian or Permissive

Parenting Styles.


The Null Hypotheses are as follows:

**N1:** There is no significant relationship between college

students who perceive that they were parented utilizing

an Authoritative parenting style and the levels of moral

judgment they have achieved.


**N2:** There is no significant relationship between college

students who perceive that they were parented utilizing

an Authoritarian parenting style and the levels of moral

judgment they have achieved.


**N3:** There is no significant relationship between college

students who perceive that they were parented utilizing a

Permissive parenting style and the levels of moral

judgment they have achieved.


The researcher chose a $p$ value of .05 because this

particular $p$ value is used most commonly in the social

sciences and is sufficiently stringent to safeguard against

accepting too many insignificant results as significant, while

also not being too difficult to achieve (Isaac and Michaels,

1997; Hinkel, Wiersma, & Jurs, 1979). The researcher believes

that there is a relatively low likelihood of negative

consequences occurring to the participants should a Type I

error occur as a result of the present study. Therefore, the

researcher was willing to enhance statistical power at the .05

level as a trade off to more conservative options such as .01.

*Definition of Terms:*

The following terms are defined conceptually and

operationally. Wherever possible, these terms are defined via

their authors intended usage.

**Parenting Styles**: Baumrind (1966, 1967, 1971, 1978, 1991)

maintains that categorizing parents according to whether

they are high or low on parental demandingness and

responsiveness creates a typology of four parenting styles:

Indulgent, Authoritarian, Authoritative, and Uninvolved.

In this study we will examine the impact of three of these

parenting styles on the development of moral judgment in

adolescents. The three we will examine are described by

Baumrind (1991) as follows:

1) **Indulgent parents** (referred to in the study as "Permissive") are more responsive than they are demanding. They are nontraditional and lenient, do not require mature behavior, allow considerable self-regulation, and avoid confrontation.

2) **Authoritarian** parents are highly demanding and directive, but not responsive. They are obedience and status oriented and expect their orders to be obeyed without explanation.

3) **Authoritative** parents are both demanding and responsive. They monitor and impart clear standards for their children's conduct. They are assertive, but not intrusive and restrictive. Their disciplinary methods are supportive, rather than punitive. They want their children to be assertive as well as socially responsible, and self-regulated as well as cooperative. (p. 62)

**Moral Judgment**: moral judgment will be defined using the stages and theoretical insights proposed by Lawrence Kohlberg (1969, 1971, 1972, and 1976) and James Rest (1974, 1978, 1998, and 2000). Morality will include the following

terms: Moral development, Morality, and Moral Judgment.

Kohlberg (1969, 1971, 1972, and 1976) defines the development of moral judgment utilizing the following stages:

**Level I: Preconventional/Premoral**

Moral judgments are based in values that reside in external, quasi-physical events, or in bad acts. The child is responsive to rules and evaluative labels, but views them in terms of pleasant or unpleasant consequences of actions, or in terms of the physical power of those who impose the rules.

Stage 1: Obedience and punishment orientation

Egocentric deference to superior power or prestige, or a trouble-avoiding set. Objective responsibility.

Stage 2: Naively egoistic orientation

Right action is that which is instrumental in satisfying the self's needs and occasionally others'. Relativism of values to each actor's needs and perspectives. Naive egalitarianism, orientation to exchange and reciprocity.

**Level II: Conventional/Role Conformity**

Moral judgments are based on values that reside in performing the right role, in maintaining the conventional order and expectancies of others as a value in its own right.

Stage 3: Good-boy/good-girl orientation

Orientation to approval, to pleasing and helping others. Conformity to stereotypical images of majority or natural role behavior. Action is evaluated in terms of intentions.

Stage 4: Authority and social-order-maintaining orientation

Orientation to "doing duty" and to showing respect for authority and maintaining the given social order or its own sake. Regard for earned expectations of others. Differentiates actions out of a sense of obligation to rules from actions for generally "nice" or natural motives.

**Level III: Postconventional/Self-Accepted Moral Principles**

Judgment is directed by conformity to shared standards, rights, or duties apart from supporting authority. The standards conformed to are internal, and action-decisions are based on an inner process of thought and judgment concerning right and wrong.

Stage 5: Contractual/legalistic orientation

Norms of right and wrong are defined in terms of laws or institutionalized rules which seem to have a rational basis. When conflict arises between individual

needs and law or contract, though sympathetic to the former, the individual believes the latter must prevail because of its greater functional rationality for society, the majority will and welfare.

Stage 6: The morality of individual principles of conscience.

Moral judgments are oriented not only toward existing social rules, but also toward the conscience as a directing agent, mutual trust and respect, and principles of moral choice involving logical universalities and consistency. Action is controlled by internalized ideals that exert a pressure to act accordingly regardless of the reactions of others in the immediate environment. If one acts otherwise, self-condemnation and guilt result.

James Rest (1974, 1978, 1998, and 2000) has developed his moral theories using Kohlberg's stages as a point of departure.


*Significance of the Study:*

In this study we seek to integrate the insights generated through reflection on current research studies to better address the question of what parenting styles will best serve

to engage children and adolescents with meeting the complex challenges related to maturing moral judgment in their personal experiences. This creates a significant question for contemporary parents, educators and counselors to address.

It may also prove beneficial to the Christian community to examine the development of moral judgment within a framework committed to multitasking across the insights of contributions from the field of the social sciences and theology. When we explore the landmark research studies on moral development we do not see much evidence of this interaction. Christian authors and counselors have often omitted focused interaction with the research studies on moral development.

Having declared this purpose we are struck by the fact that there is a lack of research examining the relationship between parenting styles and the development of moral judgment in adolescents. The review of the literature on parenting styles has demonstrated a positive correlation between authoritative parenting and the development of both instrumental and social competence and lower levels of problem behavior in both boys and girls at all developmental stages.

The benefits of authoritative parenting and the detrimental effects of permissive parenting are evident as

early as the preschool years and continue throughout

adolescence and into early adulthood. Although specific

differences can be found in the competence evidenced by each

group, the largest differences are found between children

whose parents are uninvolved and their peers who have more

involved parents. Differences between children from

authoritative homes and their peers are equally consistent,

but somewhat smaller (Weiss & Schwarz, 1996; Baumrind, (1971);

Berkowitz, & Grych, (1998); Darling, (1999); Huxley, (1998);

Maxson, (1998).

In the Old Testament, the Proverbs and the Prophets

consistently spoke to the necessity of an inward and outward

commitment to high moral values in the people who claimed

Jehovah as their God. Isaiah articulates the passion of God

for moral reflection and action by the people of God in Isaiah

when he speaks for God and says; "And he looked for justice,

but saw bloodshed; for righteousness, but heard cries of

distress" (Isaiah 5:7). Jesus instructed the Sadducees and

Pharisees on the necessity of a commitment to moral action

when he said, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and

with all your soul and with your entire mind. This is the

first and greatest commandment.  And the second is like it:

Love your neighbor as yourself.  All the Law and the Prophets

hang on these two commandments" (Matthew 22:29-32).

America is a nation adrift on the issue of what constitutes morality, how morality is to be promoted, and if indeed it is permissible to promote a particular view of what is moral and immoral (Colson, & Eckerd, 1991; Guiness, 2000).

Assisting persons, particularly parents and educators, with the development of solid principles designed to address the issue of morality and rooted in research represents a worthy investment of time and energy for educators and professional counselors. This is one of the guiding purposes of the study: The relationship between parenting styles and the development of moral judgment in adolescents.

Assumptions and Limitations:

This study was limited to a sample group of students who are currently enrolled in and pursuing an undergraduate degree at a private university in central Virginia with a strong religious commitment. It cannot be generalized to institutions that do not share a similar religious worldview.

This study was limited by its focus on only one theory of parenting styles (Baumrind, 1967).

This study was also limited by its strong reliance on only one theory of moral development (Kohlberg, 1969).

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

*Introduction:*

Philosophers, Theologians and Psychologists have contributed to the extensive literature addressing issues related to moral judgment and its development (Collins, 1998; McDowell, 1999; Willard, 1998; Plantinga, 2002, Guiness, 2000; Erikson, 1983; Grenz & Olsen, 1992). In keeping with the current emphasis by writers like McMinn (1996), Plantinga (2002), Crabb (2001) and McGrath (1999) on the task of defining the scope of moral development and subsequent thoughts on integration we survey in this review of literature contributions to the discussion on moral judgment from authors in these three disciplines and explore areas of common emphasis.

*Contributions to the understanding of the development of moral judgment from the field of Philosophy:*

Attempts to explain the development of moral judgment surfaces as one of the major challenges addressed in the writings of philosophers. (Hakim, 1992; Barzun, 2000; Lewis, 2000; Willard, 1998, MacIntyre, 1990).

The young Plato considered possession of good moral judgment a gift of the gods rather than something that could be learned from teachers or parents (MacIntyre, 1990; Becker and Becker, 2001). The mature Plato, (360 B.C.) in his *Republic*, suggested that through imitating the virtuous moral judgments of another a young person could develop moral character. This conviction led him to advance a curriculum designed to prepare the virtuous ruler for his ideal state (Hakim, 1992; MacIntyre, 1990; Tarrant, 1993).

Aristotle (350 B.C.) devoted volume VII of his *Nicomachean Ethics* to the dilemma of akrasia i.e., how does a person do the thing he knows he ought not to be doing. Like Plato before him he argued that high levels of moral judgment could not be developed by reason alone (Becker and Becker, 2001). The young must be nurtured in an environment where exhibitions of good moral judgment were rewarded so they became associated with pleasure. Bad moral judgments met painful consequences sufficient to generate efforts directed at their discontinuance (Barker, 1981; Hakim, 1992).

The Stoics advanced the notion that the development of moral judgment occurred as a consequence of interaction with nature. Cicero in *De Finibus* maintained that

individuals participated in the development of their own moral judgment as they moved beyond the desire for self-preservation, chose goods that were in keeping with the higher ethics of nature and ultimately habituated a pattern of moral judgment that brought them into harmony with nature (Cicero, *De Finibus*, 45 B.C.). In this harmonized state, achieved by only a few, benevolence and regard for the survival of others and the concern for justice becomes as natural to the human personality as regard for the self (Hakim, 1992; Neill, 1984; Degler 1991).

Later, Maimonides (1135 - 1204 AD) would reject the Stoic conceptions of moral development and restate the importance of Aristotelian and Platonic thought. He insisted that growth in moral judgment occurs when persons repeatedly practice behaviors held by those outside themselves to be inherently virtuous. Good moral judgment was not, in Maimonides view, an instinctual possession of the person, nor merely the product of rationality but rather the willful submission to a body of virtue communicated to the individual and modeled for the individual by persons exercising significant social influence over him.

Another Medieval author who wrote extensively on the development of moral judgment was Thomas Aquinas (1266-1273). In his *Summa Theologiae*, he argues that the development of superior moral judgment is not the product of processes adhering naturally to human personality. Quite to the contrary, growth in moral judgment is dependent for its commencement and advancement on something from outside the person, which must be received as gift... a gift of grace (Chesterton, 1993; Garrigou-Lagrange, 1965; Helm, 1997). This gift of grace from the Creator of the human persona is given to carry the person through three successive stages, which lead to ever higher motivations for moral action. In the first stage, the person utilizes this gift of grace to focus on resisting the appetites and eschewing sin. In the second stage, the person utilizes the empowerment of the grace gift for the choosing to do the good. In the third stage, the person seeks more radically to participate in behaviors that lead to the enjoyment of God and His glory (Chesterton, 1993; Pegis, 1945; McGrath, 1998).

Writing at the close of the medieval period, Immanuel Kant insisted that all human beings share in a sense of duty (Beck, 1984; Barzun, 2000).

Additionally, Kant maintained that social influences, instruction in moral judgment or the repetition of approved moral behaviors could not in the final analysis make persons more moral. These could only serve to help a person recognize the "unconditional constraint" of a shared human feeling of being morally conditioned, in the face of which, as he says, all one's inclinations must be silent (Helm, 1997).

Rousseau was the first philosopher in the modern era to wrestle with the identification of the processes that contributed to the development of moral judgment (Barzun, 2000). He advanced the notion that development in moral judgment was achieved by means of passage through five age related stages. The pupil was a developing child, not a little adult. Training needed to be adapted for each phase of the child's development (Barzun, 2000).

Moving forward to the twentieth century the writings of social philosophers like Durkheim and Dewey were replete with references to moral development. Durkheim (1961) placed emphasis on the role of society in assisting individuals with the development of sound moral judgment. In keeping with the emphasis of Maimonides, Durkheim insisted that moral development is a consequence of

socialization (Durkheim 1961; Degler, 1991). "For Durkheim, learning is a social process whereby the young are influenced by the adult generation so as to give rise to a group of physical, intellectual, and emotional states that are demanded by the social context. To know and to be moral is to be formed and influenced by society" (Chazan, 1985, p. 24). Adults, in Durkheim's view, are imbued with authority and "moral authority is the dominant quality of the educator" (Durkheim, 1961, p.86).

John Dewey's life spanned nearly a century from the middle of the nineteenth century to the middle of the twentieth century. Much has been written about Dewey's contribution to moral education (Boydston and Poulos, 1974; Guinlock, 1971). Dewey's thoughts on Moral development are summarized in his *Moral Principles in Education* (1975). Disagreeing with Durkheim, Dewey affirms that "morality cannot be reduced to one determinant factor of whether biological, psychological or social. It is an emergent product of the interactive process" (Chazan, 1985 p. 105). Dewey suggested that the development of moral judgment took place across a threefold process (Dewey, 1975). Dewey clearly viewed growth in moral judgment as the outcome of a process engaged by a person who is aware of the rational,

social and moral dimensions of the decisions and choices being made (Dewey, 1975). Dewey was impatient with all forms of education that did not consider the moral value and significance of the information being communicated (Dewey, 1975).

Many Philosophers have accepted the challenge of trying to make sense of our post-modern society. They assert that in this world individuals are autonomous and create their own reality (Bellah, 1985; Veith, 1994; Erikson, 1983). Grenz & Olsen (1992), maintain that the present era is characterized by two extremes which he labels as "existentialism" and "eterminism".

Autonomy or existentialism is summarized by Griffin (1989) when he says, "In the very act of existing we must create our own values, realizing all the while that they only seem important because we have chosen to make them so" (p. 17-18). Each individual's morality is developed through personal choices rather than any other internal or external force. In contrast, behaviorists like Skinner (1969) insist that human freedom to choose is mythical. Persons are formed/determined by their environments (Skinner, 1969; Wilson, 1990).

Representative writings of ancient, medieval and twentieth century philosophers have been examined for contributions regarding the development of moral judgment. Insights discovered were informative, yet often conflicting. Many theorists have suggested that the capacity for moral judgment is an innate possession of all persons (Griffin, 1989; Carl Rogers, 1942, 1951, 1980, 1983). Postmodernists posit no such possession. (Sichel, 1988; Moran, 1987; Van der Ven, 1998; Colby, 2003; Hoffman, 2001). Others maintained that the capacity for moral judgment was the possession of only a few who harmonized with the higher laws of nature. Others view the rush for moral development as the result of a sense of duty resonating in relationship to the idea of God and the good, which is internal to all humans. Still others view the acquisition of moral judgment as dependent upon the reception of a gift received from God. Aristotle, Maimonides, Durkheim, and Dewey insisted that the development of moral judgment is a progressive experience rooted in the context of nurturing social relationships.

*Reflections on the development of moral judgment from the field of Theology:*

Discussions referencing the development of moral judgment abound in Theological writings (Grenz & Olson, 1992; Erikson, 1983, Tillich, 1951; Horton, 1994; Willard, 1998; McGrath, 1999; Hoekema, 1986).

Theological discussions on morality have evolved out of the central thesis that humans are created beings and the God who created them is the God who delights in revealing Himself and His kingdom laws to his creation (Grenz & Olson, 1998; Erikson, 1983; Allen, 1984; Collins, 1993). His revelation is classified under the headings of General and Special Revelation (Grenz, 2000). Bruce Demarest (1984) defines general revelation as:

> that divine disclosure to all persons at all times and places by which one comes to know that God is, and what he is like, while not implanting saving truths such as the Trinity, incarnation, or atonement, general revelation mediates the conviction that God exists and that he is self sufficient, transcendent, immanent, eternal, powerful, wise, good, and righteous. (p. 944)

General Revelation is important for discussions on the development of moral judgment in humans because it includes

the revelation of God's moral law within the structure of the human person as well as the residue of the divine image (Grenz & Olson, 1998). Additionally, general revelation also includes the revelation of God in nature and history (Tillich, 1951).

The significance of general revelation for the discussion on moral judgment is identified by C.S. Lewis (1952) who wrote that "human beings, all over the earth, have the curious idea that they ought to behave in a certain way" (Collins, p. 264). This internal barometer of right and wrong is what many in theology have called the conscience (Kroll, 2002; Barackman, 1981). In Romans 1:21-23, Paul argues that men and women who reject God are "deserving of condemnation (1) because of the revelation of God in nature (vv. 19-20) and (2) because of the revelation of God in their conscience (vv. 21-23)" (Kroll, 2002, p. 24).

Evangelical theologians affirm the centrality of the conscience in any discussion on the development of moral judgment in humans (Gladwin, 1977; Pierce, 1955; Ramsey, 1966; Barakman, 1984; Brown, 2002). It is internal and common to all persons, cultures, and times. This assertion requires some level of agreement with the philosophers who

saw the capacity for moral action as something internal to humans. It also affirms the significance of structures in the human personality that for all people function as an instructor in moral law.

McCaully and Barrs (1978) emphasize the importance of the image as another internal structure in human personality that is central for discussions on the development of moral judgment. They find in Genesis 1:26, "Let us make man in our image" an organizing principle around which the discussion of morality and moral development in humans may occur. They state: "We adopt the statement of Genesis 1:26 as the organizing principle first because it speaks of our origin, our very constitution as humans. Second, we adopt it because the New Testament teaches explicitly that the purpose of salvation is to restore this image" (p. 15).

Grenz (2002) quotes Martin Luther as he describes the restoration of the image of God in humans as the primary issue in moral development, and believes "it can be restored through the word and the Holy Spirit" (p. 223). The restoration of the image of God is tied to the process theologians call sanctification.

The significance of concepts like conscience and the

image of God are central to the discussion of the

development of moral judgment because they are concepts

sourced in Scripture.  Common revelation is significant for

our discussion but secondary to the significance of special

revelation (Grenz, 2002; Brown, 2002).

Thomas Aquinas cites the need and sources for special

revelation when he says, "God's special revelation is

necessary if we are to know the deeper salvific mysteries.

These are given through the Christian faith, specifically

through the Bible" (Grenz p. 175).  Leon Morris (1976)

concurs, "Without special revelation we would not know how

to interpret general revelation.  With it to guide us we

can discern God's handiwork" (pp. 42-43).

On the basis of the special authority of Scripture

theologians have emphasized the significance of the

conscience and image of God in humans for their discussion

on moral judgment (Berkhof, 1953; Barth 1975; Berkouwer,

1962; Brunner, 1953; Hoekema, 1975). Though flawed, the

conscience and image of God call humans to the

acknowledgment of God's existence and submission to His

moral laws (Delitzsch, 1867; Kroll, 2002; Calvin, 1960;

Erikson, 1983).  The cultivation of these elements in human

personality are a focus for families and communities of

faith as they encourage individuals to heed the voice of conscience and urging of the image of God to pursue a relationship with the Creator and an identification with the rightness of the moral law of God written in their minds. This can lead to the experience theologians call regeneration and the commencement of a progressive sanctification or growth in moral judgment and behavior that is carved out within the context of relationships (Grenz, 2000; Adams 1973; Cloud and Townsend, 2001; Barth, 1953; Brown, 2002).

The scriptures of the Old and New Testament speak to the issue of sin and its negative impact on the conscience, the image of God, and the internal capacity of the individual to achieve growth in moral development. McMinn (1995) reminds us of the importance of sin for any discussion of moral development. The Christian counselor will in his view see that "the client is like every human, plagued with self-serving desires, an unhealthy need for approval, and the grief and loneliness that come from living in proximity with other fallen humans" (p. 146). Sin, for evangelical theologians, is our sickness and is at the core of all that is morally inadequate in our human nature (Erikson, 1995; Grenz, 2000; Brown, 2002; Crabb,

2002; McGrath, 1998; Oden, 1995).

Evangelical theologians have collectively called for dealing with sin seriously and the abandonment of superficial explanations for moral deficits views that see persons merely as victims of immoral environments (Menninger, 1973; Mowrer, 1960; Vitz, 1977; Plantinga, 1995). They advance the notion that moral development is about transformation through the knowledge and obedience to the word of God and the work of the Holy Spirit in the believing community of the church where, through teaching, encouragement, correction, and accountability – the process of moral growth or sanctification goes forward (Crabb, 2001; Foster, 1978; Brown, 2002; Willard, 1998; Wilhoit, 1995).

Evangelical theologians have consequently affirmed the importance of inferiority over externals as central to true moral development. In speaking to the issues related to the internal and external worlds of the person Gardner (1999) offers the following observation; "rich lives include continuing internal conversations about who we are, what we want to achieve, where we are successful, and where we are falling short" (p. 11). Gardner (1999) goes on to insist that this self-talk should proceed under the

influence of "the universal mirror test: What would it be like to live in a world if everyone were to behave in the way that I have?" (p. 12).

This type of thinking keeps the matter of inferiority firmly at the forefront in evangelical conversations regarding moral development and helps to assure attention to issues like the image of God, conscience, sin, and the cognitions or control beliefs that are at the core of human personality and are essential elements in the transformation process that is central in the Biblical and Theological paradigms of moral development.

Theologians remind us that we carry on discussions regarding morality and a host of other important issues in a world of competing worldviews and agendas (Jacobsen and Jacobsen, 2004; Guiness, 2000; Grenz & Olsen, 1992; Kostenberger, 2004). This reality serves to heighten the significance of Special Revelation. Evangelical Theologians affirm that scripture presents "the truth" against which the veracity of all worldviews must be assessed (Grenz, 2000; Hodge, 1952; Neibuhr, 1941; Erikson, 1983).

Wolterstoff (1976) attempts to provide Christian scholars with a way of choosing between competing theories.

He believed three kinds of beliefs must be recognized as we

seek to discuss and refine our reflections on issues like

moral development. These are data beliefs, data-background

beliefs, and control beliefs. Walterstorft asserts,

> Data beliefs are testable assumptions about reality.
> Data-background beliefs relate to the evidence we are
> willing to accept or reject to support or reject our
> data beliefs. Control beliefs are a part of the
> scholar's value system that predisposes us to accept
> or reject the explanations for metaphysics and
> epistemology advanced by varied theoreticians.
> (Jacobsen & Jacobsen, p. 21)

Evangelical Theologians are not different from other

scholars. Regardless of the point from which they start it

is important that they form their arguments under the

control of deep seated commitments to control beliefs.

These control beliefs condition the outcomes of their

positions on issues like moral development.

Wolterstorff insisted that: "Because all scholars

possessed control beliefs that functional in a thought-

shaping manner similar to religious faith, Christians

should feel free to admit their control beliefs and take

them seriously" (Jacobsen & Jacobsen, p. 22). Wolterstorff
further suggested that, in the past, Christians following a
path of conformism with respect to science had been too
quick to rethink their faith in light of changing views
within the academy. His suggestion was that Christians
ought to be more confident, even stubborn, in asserting the
privileges of faith over science. The belief content of
the Christian scholar's authentic commitment ought to
function as a control belief over theory weighing.

Evangelical Theological scholarship is obligated to
acknowledge our control beliefs and begin and continue our
discussion of moral development within the structure
provided by control beliefs derived from the Scriptures.
It is important for the discussion of moral development
that we recognize that the control beliefs which form the
foundation for our understanding of elements central to the
development of moral judgment are derived from special
revelation, i.e. from the Bible. These beliefs find their
power in the fact that they are the gift of the Holy Spirit
and represent a standard of absolute truth against which
the rightness and wrongness of all moral actions must be
evaluated (Adams, 1976; Collins, 1993; Grenz & Olsen, 1992;
Barna, 2003).

This is not to deny that there are some important points of connection between conclusions on moral development reached by Philosophers and Theologians. Theorists, Researchers, and those who pursue integration across these disciplines have to be struck by common emphases. Both have at times maintained that the capacity for moral action is part of the structure of human personality. They have disagreed over how the structure was to be defined and where it originated from. Both have at times insisted that development of the capacity for moral judgment had to commence with the reception of a gifting from outside the person. Both have emphasized at times the necessity of social structures for the development of moral judgment. Both have struggled with human freedom, responsibility, and determinism as they have sought to understand the mechanics and processes relate to the development of moral judgment. These points of similarity and dissimilarity may contribute to rich interaction between philosophers and theologians in the issue of moral development. Theologians need not fear the interaction as long as they remember to hold firm to Wolterstorff's insistence that they not surrender control

beliefs in absolute truth and the absolute authority of the Scriptures.

*Reflections on the development of moral judgment from the field of Psychology:*

Initial attempts in the field of psychology to explain the origins and development of moral judgment in individuals were grounded in the theory and writings of Sigmund Freud and Jean Piaget.

The "Father of Modern Psychology", Dr. Sigmund Freud theorized that there were elements within the mind around which constructs required for moral judgment developed (Gay, 1989; Storr, 1989). These personality constructs he labeled Id, Ego, and Superego. Numerous authors have discussed Freud's views on the contributing of these internal structures to human and moral development (Kline, 1984; Brenner; 1974; St. Clair, 1986; Parrott, 1997). The Id represented:

> The organization of the sum total of the instinctual pressures on the mind, basically the sexual and aggressive impulses. The ego comprises a group of functions that orient the individual toward the external world and mediate between it and the inner

world. It acts, in effect as an executant for the driver and correlates these demands with a proper regard for the conscience and the world of reality. The superego is a split-off portion of the ego, a residue of the early history of the individual's moral training and a precipitate of the most important childhood identifications and ideal aspirations. (Corsini, 1995, p. 21, 22)

Freud maintained that moral development in children began gradually and was centered in the early prohibitions and encouragements received from grownups and particularly parents (Corsini, 1995; Arlow, 1976; Parrott, 1997). The parent-child relationship played the central role in the development of these moral constructs, stored in the superego. Parents are the primary sources of security and comfort for the child and become "love objects". Parents also punish and enforce rules, thereby becoming "objects of hate" (Sholevar, 1980; Capuzzi and Gross, 2003). The substance for moral judgments moves from being sourced in the external to being sourced in an internal frame of reference which constitutes a moral imperative for the individual. Freud and object relations theorists who

followed him asserted that the child developed an internal locus of control that served as the foundation for moral judgments as he internalized the parent's moral standards and the superego develops (Jones, 2000; Kohut, 1988; Mitchell, 2000; Elkind, 1985; Arlow, 1989).

Piaget (1932) departed from the Freudian approach and conceptualized moral development as part of overall cognitive development. This developmental process consisted of sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete operational, and formal operational stages (Piaget, 1963, 1966). Moral judgment, in his view, developed according to an age-regulated timeline tied to maturational processes that are unique to the individual. Piaget's notion of moral maturity as a process related to a biological blueprint and increasingly complex cognitive functions was a radical departure from the predominately accepted Freudian view that saw morality as a fixed response to introjections received from significant persons in the environment and emerging as a consequence of a Psychodynamic process that was not tied to the cognitive and affective maturation of the person.

Piaget (1963, 1966) advanced the notion that there were two types of moral reasoning; moral realism and

autonomous morality. In describing the first type (moral

realism), Piaget felt children judged bad behavior by the

amount of damage caused by the individual's behavior. In

describing the second type (autonomous morality), Piaget

felt that children who had achieved this level of reasoning

were able to discern motives within behavior to determine

whether the behavior itself was good or bad. This stage of

moral development was only attainable when the child

reached the ages of twelve or thirteen (Green, 1989;

Nichols). This notion of "moral maturity" as a component

of overall human development rooted in cognitive

development and biological maturation raised serious

questions regarding the efficacy of explanations offered by

classical psychoanalysis and encouraged the exploration of

explanations broader than the comparatively simplistic and

subconscious introjection models advanced by  Freud and the

Neo-Freudians (Fromm, 1955; Horney, 1940; Jung, 1909;

Sullivan, 1953).

Behaviorism emerged as an inevitable byproduct of

Darwinian evolutionary theory and attempted to explain the

development of moral judgment in ways that differed

radically from Psychoanalysis and Piagetian cognitivism

(Watson, 1930; 1928; 1929). Behaviorists maintained that

man is preeminently nothing more than the sum total of the

responses he has made to stimuli; hence moral judgments

like all human behaviors were determined by conditioning.

Supported by the techniques of Classical and Operant

conditioning a behavioral therapist could strengthen or

extinguish any behavior or commitment to any moral position

through the appropriate application of rewards and

consequences (Rogers, 1989; Bridgman, 1954; Barkley, 1995;

Forehand, 1996; Eyberg and Bogs, 1998).

Bandura (1963, 1977) expanded behavioral theory with

the creation of Social Learning Theory.  In this

formulation of Behaviorism the judgments made by persons

regarding morals and other things are rooted in more than

just responses to stimuli.  He contended that a person's

perception of their self-efficacy and their relationship

with social environments played a vital role in creating

thoughts and expectations which then limited or expanded

the individual's capacity to imitate behaviors. Cognitions

about the self and the culture were at work in the

development of responses to moral and social questions, and

outcomes were related to more than simply stimulus-response

bonds.

Durkheim (1961; 1967; 1973; 1979) agreed with Bandura

and asserted that the development of moral judgment has to

be understood within the social context within which it is

observed. "we are moral beings only to the extent that we

are social beings." (Durkheim, 1961, pg. 64) For Durkheim,

moral judgments possess power because they regulate social

bonds or contracts between individuals within a societal

context. Here Durkheim is borrowing from the earlier work

of Alfred Adler who argued that moral behavior flowed not

just from the input of others but from an innate interest

in and concern for other people. Adler (1959, 1964, 1969)

saw human development as a process revolving around the

accomplishment of specific life tasks.  These tasks

included friendship, work, marriage and procreation.  Each

of these tasks with the roles required for fulfilling them

demand the development of the ability to work with others

in a way that is guided by interest in the well being of

others and the self (Jones and Butman, 1991; James and

Gilliland, 2003).

Adler affirmed that the highest ideal was

*Geimeinschaftsgefuhl*, a multidimensional construct which

among other things affirms that the development of moral

judgment is integral to the development of social interest

(Bottome, 1939). Adler advocated an approach to social

community that respected human responsibility, rationality, individuality, social interconnectedness and capacities for change. He championed the moral necessity of a family environment that placed high value on the realization of the individuals' unique lifestyle. Adlerians maintained that: "Those family atmospheres that reject, suppress, overprotect, and disparage the child are breeding grounds for discouragement, and the discouraged child becomes the maladjusted child" (James and Gilliland, 2003, p. 108).

The development of moral judgment for the social psychologists and Adlerians is a matter of learning, interpreting and responding to the rules that undergird and contribute to order in a particular social community.

Carl Rogers (1942, 1951, 1980, 1983) chose to view human beings in a way that differed radically from his predecessors. Rogers believed humans were endowed with an innate sense of morality and when surrounded with the right conditions the innate capacity for making good moral judgments for the self and others would blossom.

Perls (1969) extended Rogers' confidence in an inner voice that served as the only trustworthy guide for the development of individual morality. These optimistic theories of human nature contributed to a celebration of

humans that led to the development of secular humanism and to present day postmodernism. This optimism regarding all things human also led to the suspension of the felt need for joining the educational process to training for making moral judgments. All attempts at training the youth for responsibility and morality were viewed as forms of indoctrination that represented a violation of human dignity (Sichel, 1988; Moran, 1987; Van der Ven, 1998; Colby, Ehrlich, Beaumont, Stephens, 2003; Hoffman, 2004).

This deeply American emphasis on personalism was not held by all psychologists. Some dissented and focused on remediating or developing what they saw as deficits innate to the human personality (Menninger, 1973; Glasser, 1990; Mowrer, 1966; Covey, 1997).

Glasser asserted, in sharp contrast to Rogers, the moral necessity of the real, the right and the responsible (1965; 1976; 1985; 1990). Individuals were to be instructed from family and educators on the three R's. This instruction placed emphasis on the good of the self and the other in an environment that facilitated the development of a success identity. The development of moral judgment is an element in the education of the young who are taught to appreciate that they are responsible for

their actions and possess volition as an intrinsic

component of their humanness (Glasser, 1990; Wobholden,

1991).

Choice theory rejects the determinism of Behaviorism

and advances the use of logical consequences to motivate

better choices as opposed to the exclusive use of reward

and punishment (Glasser, 1990; Corsini, 1995).

Following Glasser's lead, Smetana (1990) insisted

that:

Morality pertains to the system of rules that

regulates the social interactions and social

relationships of individuals within societies and is

based on concepts of welfare (harm), trust, justice

(comparative treatment and distribution), and rights.

Morality is defined here as an individual's

prescriptive understanding of how individuals ought to

behave towards each other. Moral judgments are

predisposed to be obligatory, universalisable,

unalterable, impersonal, and determined by criteria

other than agreement, consensus or institutional

convention. (p. 178)

The first theorist to attempt the broader application

of Piaget's theory to an expanded explanation for moral

development was Lawrence Kohlberg (1969). He conceived

three levels of moral reasoning with two stages at each

level. According to Kohlberg, how people reason rather than

what specific moral conclusions they reach, determines

their specific stage of moral development.

Kohlberg (1969, 1971, 1972, 1976), like Piaget,

believed that the stages of moral development were

dependent upon the logical reasoning nature of cognitive

development. Kohlberg (1976) stated that "there is a

parallelism between an individual's logical stage and his

moral stage which places limitations on moral development"

(p.32). He believed that these limitations were placed upon

moral development because an individual was only able to

function with the logic and reasoning skills attained at

the level of his or her cognitive development. This

limitation impacted the degree of reasoning an individual

was able to apply to moral dilemmas (Kohlberg, 1972, 1976).

The conceptualization of Kohlberg's (1971, 1976)

stages of moral development was directly related to the

stage progression of Piaget's (1932) model of cognitive

development (Kohlberg, 1976). The cognitive maturities

acquired at lower levels of development were insufficient

for functioning at levels of moral development that

required higher levels of cognitive maturity. In other
words, the attainment of higher levels of cognitive
development is necessary for progression to higher moral
stages (Kohlberg 1976).

Kohlberg's (1971, 1972, 1976) stages of moral
development were described in theory as functions of how an
individual makes use of cognitive maturity to reason about
moral dilemmas. It is how cognition is used in each stage
that sets the stages qualitatively apart from one another.

Using Piaget's (1932) cognitive stages as a base,
Kohlberg (1971, 1972, 1976) conceptualized the development
from lower-order moral reasoning to higher-order
conceptualization. The individual used capacities attained
at specific levels of cognitive development to form moral
judgments. These moral judgments by necessity required
parallel levels of cognitive development. This concept is
foundational to Kohlberg's theory.

Although studies have provided evidence that cognition
is a necessary precursor to the advancement of moral
development, evidence has clearly indicated that it may not
be the only factor that influences the development of moral
reasoning. Since few or no individuals in studies
demonstrated higher moral development than attained levels

of cognitive growth, cognition was seen as a necessary prerequisite for moral thought. However, since the majority of participants are typically further advanced in their cognitive growth than in their moral development, it appears that cognition by itself is not sufficient predictor of growth in capacity for moral judgment.

In summarizing the contributions from representatives in the field of Psychology we note similarities with the contribution from the fields of Philosophy and Theology. Again we noted an emphasis on the presence of moral judgment as an innate gift unique to the individual. The individual is therefore the only person who can construct a morality that is meaningful for the self. Others in the field of Psychology have insisted that morality is to be taught to the young by those in positions of authority and that this is an important part of the socialization process. Some have seen in this teaching process a determinism that is absolutely rigid and removes all freedom of choice from the individual. Still other Psychologists have viewed the evolution of moral judgment as the outcome of a complex process involving socialization, instruction, and age related development as well as a complex mix of determinism and human freedom.

Along with this discussion on the relationship between cognition and moral development the literature focuses on the role of parents and particularly parenting styles in the development of moral judgment (Hoffman, 2000; Kostenberger, 2004; Van der Ven, 1998; Gurian, 1999; Brown, 2002; Majors, 2001).

*The contribution of Parenting Styles to the development of moral judgment:*

Parenting has been demonstrated throughout the literature to have a stabilizing effect on individuals throughout the lifespan. Factors such as pleasantness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, self-esteem, extraversion, and morality are all heavily influenced by parental involvement. (Belsky, Crnic, & Woodworth, 1995; Losoya, Callor, Rowe, & Goldsmith, 1997; Olsen, Martin & Halverson, 1999).

Robert Coles, (1997) author of the book *The Moral Intelligence of Children*, states that character or moral development is an interaction between nature and nurture. It develops as a result of parental interaction, balanced parenting styles, and a child's own choices.

Ronald Huxley, (1998) in his book, *Love and Limits: achieving a balance in Parenting*, explores the two sides of

discipline and the need that children have for a balance between them. Being too permissive (Indulgent) leads to the development of children who are spoiled and have little regard for other people's wants and needs. Too much rigidity (Authoritarian style) leads to the development of low self-esteem, depression and defiance. What the author calls for is the striking of a balance between those two disciplinary styles (Authoritative), (Baumrind, 1991; Huxley, 1998; Darling & Steinberg, 1993; Barber, B. K. 1996). Huxley, (1998) suggests that achieving this balance is easier if discipline is viewed from the vantage point of moral development. In other words, we are not merely punishing behavior, we are shaping character.

For most children then, Parents are the original and often most meaningful source of moral guidance (Damon, 1999; Baumrind, 1991; Darling & Steinberg, 1993; Steinberg, L., Darling, N., & Fletcher, A. C. 1995).

It is Dianna Baumrind's (1965, 1966, 1971, 1989, 1991, 1996) seminal work in the area of parenting styles that has directed research on the subject for decades. Baumrind has created the three primary "styles' of parental interaction. There is actually a fourth, *Neglectful*, style that is not utilized in this research study. Baumrind's styles are:

*Authoritative Style:*

Authoritative parenting is a flexible, interactive style characterized by high levels of responsiveness and demandingness (Baumrind, 1967). Authoritative parents frequently offer explanations of the reasoning behind rule systems, while consistently enforcing the restrictions that are established. The needs and individual viewpoints of children are a priority to authoritative parents (Baumrind, 1967).

Children of authoritative parents generally are known to demonstrate high social and instrumental competence (Darling, 1999). Buri, Louisells, Misukanis, and Mueller (1988) reported a strong positive relationship between parental authoritativeness and self-esteem, a strong inverse relationship between authoritarianism and self-esteem, and no relationship between permissiveness and self-esteem.

Authoritative parents rear children who are more likely to be independent, self-assertive, friendly with peers and cooperative with parents (Baumrind, 1971). It has been hypothesized that authoritative parents utilize their value of strictness and responsiveness to prompt a generalized respect for all authority figures and rule systems (Maxson, 1998).

Authoritative parents encourage their children to think for themselves and recognize their children's unique characteristics such as individual rights, interests, and personality; they also assert their own rights as parents rather than consistently putting their children first.

### Authoritarian Style:

Authoritarian parenting is a highly restrictive style, in which children are expected to maintain strict obedience to rigid rule systems. These parents are high in demandingness but low in responsiveness (Baumrind, 1967). Little discussion and explanation of rules and restrictions are introduced by authoritarian parents. The authoritarian parent is more interested in conformity than in their children's individual thoughts and feelings. Discipline is embraced as a power tactic, and the individual needs of children are not often seen as paramount (Baumrind, 1967).

Children of authoritarian parents generally are known to have high academic commitment, low incidents of problem behavior, but poor social and instrumental competence (Darling, 1999). Children of authoritarian parents tend to suffer more frequently and severely from depression and are often seen as socially withdrawn, distrustful, rebellious, and

have low self-esteem.

### *Permissive Style:*

Permissive parenting is a loosely structured style, in which children are exposed to few parental demands and expectations. Permissive parents are high in responsiveness but low in demandingness. Children are encouraged to express their feelings and impulses. Little restriction is imposed, resulting in minimal overt control over behaviors (Baumrind, 1967).

Permissive parents use minimal, passive means of discipline, if any discipline is used at all. They prefer to see themselves as their child's friend or resource rather than as a controlling parental figure.

Children of permissive parents have been shown to function poorly in all domains, including social and cognitive (Darling, 1999). Attitudes toward authority and rule systems are significantly negative among children who experience permissive parenting styles (Maxson, 1998).

Damon, (1999) discourses on children's moral development with these insights:

All children are born with a running start on the path to moral development. A number of inborn responses

predispose them to act in ethical ways. For example, the

capacity to experience another person's pleasure or pain

vicariously -- is part of our native endowment as humans.

The development of a moral identity follows a general

pattern. It normally takes shape in late childhood, when

children acquire the capacity to analyze people -

including themselves - in terms of stable character

traits. In childhood, self-identifying traits usually

consist of action-related skills and interests. With age,

children start to use moral terms to define themselves.

(p. 122)


For most children, parents are the original source of

moral guidance.

Parents' explanations of rationales for decisions

regarding rules and corrective measures assist young people in

understanding the nature of regulation and limitation. They

facilitate their children's moral development with this

behavior by motivating them to think reflectively about the

rationale for their own actions (Smetana, 1999). Parents

believe that children who have been taught right from wrong

and choose to behave morally will be better people because of

their decision, with enhanced self-worth and dignity (Mosher,

1999).

Today's parents and children live in a society which makes it hard to discern between what is right and wrong, moral or corrupt. Historically, people have probably always thought that theirs was the worst of times. But today, with the attacks upon traditional ideas of morality and the beliefs of postmodernity, parenting is a particularly daunting task (Mosher, 1981).

When children and adolescents are engaged in the practice of general reasoning about moral problems, their use of moral problem-solving skills becomes more mature. Children's moral development is increased by exposure to opportunities to reason about the moral basis of real-life and hypothetical dilemmas (Smetana, 1999).

Parental uses of reasoning and parental engagement of children's reasoning have been associated with children's higher levels of moral internalization and behavior that reflects higher moral reasoning (Smetana, 1999). As parents explore values and moral issues with their children and adolescents, through the use of verbal reasoning, discourse, and dialog, they assist with the internalization of moral codes (Tappan, 1997).

Behavioral implications of reinforcements, social

implications of modeling, cultural influences of norms and socialization patterns, and socio-cultural influences of language and scaffolding all work together within the parameters of parenting decisions to create clear moral influences within parenting styles.

Limited parenting style implications have been noted in the moral domain within the education literature. Generally, the parenting styles are largely associated with personality and socialization trends (Darling, 1999). However, many of them can be extrapolated into significant meaning for the moral domain.

Three previous studies have examined the relationship between parenting style and moral development. Pratt and Diessner (1994) reported that adolescent moral reasoning is predicted positively by the use of the Authoritative parenting style and negatively by the Permissive parenting style. Boyles and Allen (1993) reported similar results while employing different methods of assessing moral reasoning and parenting style. They found the highest levels of moral reasoning in college students with Authoritative parents and lowest with authoritarian parents.

Research has also demonstrated that parents at higher stages of moral reasoning tend to use more Induction and other

Authoritative parenting elements (Parikh, 1980).

Family boundaries appear to be a determining factor for how one views moral authority (White, 2000). When family members perceive their family boundaries to be permeable and unfixed, they tend to be more likely to explore relationships outside the family. Differentiation beyond family boundaries leads individuals "to give equal weight to parents and others as sources of moral authority" (White, 2000, p78).

Children whose moral education is indoctrinative, haven't thought about, practiced, or made the parent's moral norms their own, any more than the adults have thought about or practiced family values in word and deed in front of their children (Mosher, 1981).

Flexible families are more likely to encourage a variety of points-of-view, be more understanding, interactive and apt to allow their children opportunities to express their opinions and explore sources of moral authority (White, 2000). A family's sensitivity to change contributes to its identification of perspectives, increasing a capacity for empathy and perspective taking. Family adaptability has been defined as the "ability of a family system to change its power structure, negotiation style… and relationship rules in response to situational and developmental stress" (White,

2000, p78).

Patterns of positive communication skills enable family members to increase their awareness of one another's needs and viewpoints. Families who actively participated in ongoing discussions concerning moral judgments and interpersonal needs were more likely to demonstrate higher levels of moral judgment in their children. There is evidence that has supported parental discussion styles as a promotion of moral reasoning in children and adolescence.

Families have a moral impact by providing opportunities for social modeling by adults and more experienced family members. Teaching by example is thought to be one of the surest ways in helping children to translate moral reasoning into appropriate moral behavior. Children utilize their families as the initial backdrop against which all future moral situations will be weighed (Berkowitz & Grych, 1998).

Conversely, influences such as marital discord, parental psychopathology (especially depression) and adverse socioeconomic circumstances can have a detrimental effect on moral development (Berkowitz & Grych, 1998).

Ironically, because of Piaget's (1965) assertion that parent's gravitated towards being authoritarian and consequently suppressed moral reasoning, the effects of

parenting as explored by Kohlbergian moral reasoning were largely ignored for decades (Berkowitz, Grych, 1998). Thankfully, researchers eventually questioned Piaget's position and the stage was set for exploring the variables that enhance or detract from moral development.

*Summary of Review of the Literature:*

This present study is based on the desire to examine the specific relation between parenting styles and the development of moral judgment in adolescents. In the review of the literature we have examined contributions from the fields of Philosophy, Theology, and Psychology on the etiology and development of moral judgment in the young. We have also examined studies in the literature on parenting that have given rise to the current questions and hypotheses of the present research study.

Three studies have specifically examined the relationship of parenting style to moral development:

Boyes and Allen (1993) found the highest levels of moral judgment in college students with authoritative parents and the lowest levels of moral judgment in college students who perceived that their parents employed the authoritarian style.

Pratt and Diessner (1994) reported that adolescent moral

judgment is predicted positively when the authoritative parenting style is employed and negatively when the permissive parenting style is employed.

Berkowitz (1995) argued that there was no relationship between parenting style and the development of moral judgment; however, his research was conducted using a clinical sample.

Given the scarcity of research concerning the impact that parenting style has on the development of moral judgment in college age adolescents further research is necessary to determine whether or not there is a statistically significant relationship between  parenting style and the development of moral judgment in adolescents.

# CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

*Population and Sample:*

The population from which the sample was drawn consisted of a convenience sample of students from five sections of Psychology 210 (Human Development) at Liberty University who were enrolled and attending in the spring semester of 2004. The preponderance of these students were freshman but all academic levels (Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior) were represented in the sample population. These students were between the ages of 18 -21. It should be noted that this is a required general education course and therefore has a wide variety of majors represented.

The participants were fully informed volunteers who had been given advance permission by their instructors to devote one class session to their participation in this data collection. Prior to participation the students were informed of the nature of the study they were participating in and assured of their anonymity.

Students had to meet one criterion or they were excluded from participation in the study. Namely, they must have experienced the majority of their parenting experience within

the continental United States. This criterion was established

since the instrument used to assess parenting styles was

normed utilizing persons who had experienced their parenting

in North America.

*Instrumentation:*

**Parental Authority Questionnaire**

The Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ), (Buri, 1988)

was designed to measure three distinct parental styles

associated with parental authority. This questionnaire has

been widely used in research studies (Gonzalez, 2001; Gray,

1999; Lamborn, 1991; Sternberg, 1992; Paulson, 1994; Baumrind,

1991). Parenting styles assessed were: Permissiveness,

epitomized largely by a lack of rules and little interaction

with the child; Authoritativeness, characterized by the

presence of mutually agreed upon rules and open communication

between the parent and child; and Authoritarianism, epitomized

by rigidly set rules with little if any compromise and a

parental attitude that children should obey and not question

rules established by parents.

The PAQ provides a quantifiable method for assessing the

style of parenting respondents perceive they received from

their parents. In responding to the Parental Authority

Questionnaire, respondents are asked to indicate how much they agree with or disagree with each statement. Each item was designed to contribute to the identification, from the point of view of the respondent, of the style with which authority was exercised by his or her parents. A 5-point Likert scale is used to collect data on the students' responses, with scores ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). The PAQ rendered separate scores for each respondent's perception of their parents on measures of parental authoritativeness, parental permissiveness, and parental authoritarianism. The PAQ contained thirty items. Ten items measured the permissive style, 10 the authoritarian style and 10 the authoritative style. Scores can range from 10 to 50 and measure the degree to which the respondents perceive that their parents used each of the three parenting styles. Three separate scores were recorded for each respondent: one for parent's permissiveness, one for parent's authoritativeness and one for parent's authoritarianism. The higher the score for the particular parenting style the greater the perception of the respondent that this was the parenting style of choice utilized by his/her parents. The lower the score the lower the use of that parenting style in the perception of the respondent (Buri, 1991).

Evidence for the reliability of the PAQ scales was provided by Buri (1991), who reported that the internal reliability for the six PAQ scales ranged from a low of .74 to a high of .87.  Test-retest reliability estimates ranged from a low of .77 to a high of .92 (Gonzalez, Greenwood, Gordon, WenHsu, 2001). With regard to content validity there was 95% agreement between 21 evaluators on the categorization of the items (Buri, 1989).

**Defining Issues Test – II**, (Rest, 1999)

The second measure of interest for this study required an instrument for assessing the level of moral judgment attained by the respondent.  The Defining Issues Test (DIT-II) is an instrument that has been featured frequently in research on the development of moral judgment and was the instrument of choice for this study (Bebeau & Thoma, 1994; Navarez, 2001; Kochanska & Thompson, 1997; Killen, 2002; Thoma & Rest, 1998; Walker, 2001). Rest (1999) has cited over 400 published articles using the DIT and the DIT-II to measure the development of moral judgment since its introduction in 1974.

The DIT-II is rooted in Kohlbergian theory; particularly in the assumption that specific responses to moral dilemmas are indicative of the attainment of specific stages of moral

judgment. In the DIT-II, Rest, Narvaez, Thoma, Bebeau, (1997)

have created an assessment inventory that is shorter, clearer

in its instructions, purges fewer subjects for bogus data, is

more powerful on validity criteria and has updated the

dilemmas and items used in the test (Rest, Narvaez, Thoma,

Bebeau, 1997). They determined that their cut-off points for

exclusion of subjects were too stringent.  The purged sample

is used in calculating the statistics that were used to test

the hypothesis in this study.

In terms of reliability using Cronbach's alpha the DIT-II

is in the upper .70s/low .80s. Test - retest is about the

same. Validity has been assessed in terms of seven criteria

over fifteen years. DIT-II scores show discriminant validity

for verbal ability/ general intelligence and from

conservative/liberal political attitudes (Rest, Narvaez,

Thoma, Bebeau, 1999, Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Rest, 1974,

1978, 1979, 1986, 1999).

In the DIT-II the respondent encountered five short story

scenarios that describe moral dilemmas.  The respondent

decided what the character in the story should do with each

moral dilemma to achieve the most satisfactory result.  After

respondents indicated their choice for best solution they were

asked to view a list of statements that may or may not have

guided them in their decision. Reading through the list of statements they are asked to identify those statements that influenced most powerfully their selections.

Additionally, the respondents were asked to rank the statements 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th with respect to their level of influence on their decisions. The evaluation of the respondents ranking of these importance factors provided the means for assessing their level of moral reasoning.

Several developments have recently occurred with the DIT that has increased the validity and reliability of the instrument. The DIT-II reflects the insights of Rest, Narvaez, Thoma, Bebeau, (1997, 2000) in which they developed a new way to assess the reliability of the data reported in the instrument and detect bogus responses. They devised a new developmental index for the DIT-II replacing the P score with the N2 score. They have maintained that the P score is valid with the N2 score being the most valid from the DIT-II for use in statistical analysis to obtain a measurement of moral judgment. In this study we will report our statistics utilizing N2 index for purposes of comparison.

*Procedures:*

Permission was received from the Liberty University

Institutional Review board to conduct this research study

(Appendix A). Permission to administer the assessment

inventories was secured from the professor's teaching the

class sections attended by the participant's in the study. The

researcher described the voluntary nature of participation,

planned uses for the study, and the provision for absolute

confidentiality of the participants. The researcher then

administered the assessments to all willing participants. Time

allotted for the completion of both assessments was 50

minutes.  A total of 200 volunteers from 5 class sections

participated in providing data for this study.  After the data

was collected, the DIT-II was sent to the Center for the study

of Ethical Development at the University of Minnesota for

scoring and calculation of the appropriate N2 index scores.

The PAQ was hand scored by two paid assistants at Liberty

University. After all results were obtained, the data was

entered into an SPSS software program for analysis.

*Design:*

This study employed a Linear Regression design for the

purpose of studying the extent to which the independent

variables taken together accounted for the variance in the

dependant measure. The regression model was further utilized

to determine what specific contribution each parenting style (independent variable) made to the explanation of variance in the dependant measure (N2 - Moral Judgment) score. The design allowed the researcher to explore the strength that each of the independent variables had within the analysis and whether or not the influence on the dependant measure was significant. The design also allowed the researcher to identify independent measures (parenting styles) that did not have a significant effect on the development of moral judgment (N2 score). The regression analysis identified the independent variables (parenting styles) that accounted for the strongest impact on the N2 score and those that had the least effect on the N2 score. This allowed the researcher to determine levels of significance and retain or reject the hypotheses.

Two primary assessment tools were used to examine the direction and strength of the relationship. The Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ) was used to assess the participants' perception of their parents' general parenting styles. The Defining Issues Test - II (DIT-II) was used to assess the participants' current level of moral judgment. In addition to these instruments, demographic information such as the participants' age, gender, race, and family composition was collected. This study is to be considered exploratory

research because the existing research literature doesn't provide a clear direction regarding specificity in directional hypothesis testing.

*Data Analysis:*

A Regression analysis was employed to determine if parenting styles accounted for a significant amount of the variance in the dependant measure of the N2 index scale. Perceived parenting style was calculated using the Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ). The current level of moral judgment was calculated using the N2 index score from the Defining Issues Test - II (DIT-II).

The hypothesis being tested was: **H:** The relationship between levels of moral judgment found in college students who perceive that they were parented by parents utilizing an Authoritative parenting style will be significantly stronger than the relationship between levels of moral judgment found in college students who perceive their parents relied primarily on Authoritarian or Permissive Parenting Styles.

To test this hypothesis the researcher first set up a correlation matrix. (Isaac and Michael, 1995; Hinkle, Wiersma, & Jurs, 1990). This matrix is found in Appendix C, table 1. Then the researcher performed a regression analysis using the

three general parenting style scale scores from the PAQ as the independent variables, and the N2 score from the DIT-II as the dependant measure for moral judgment. The results of the regression analysis are found in Appendix C, table 2.

The correlation matrix for the three parenting style groups showed a significant relationship between the permissive parenting style and level of moral development at a (.026) level of significance. Significance levels for authoritarian (.968) and authoritative (.087) were not significant.

A regression analysis was then run using the N2 (moral judgment) score from the DIT – II as the dependant measure and the parenting style scores from the PAQ as the independent measures. This analysis supported the correlation results with an interesting exception. The regression analysis (Table 2) yielded a Beta Coefficient of .176 for the permissive parenting style with a significance level of .014. This analysis answered the question of the direction and significance or insignificance of the relationship between parenting styles and levels of moral judgment attained by the respondents.

A Correlation matrix was calculated using the parental preferences and the N2 scores. The only significant

relationship was found between the permissive parenting style and the level of moral judgment achieved (.026). In the correlation matrix the relationship between the N2 and the authoritative parenting style registered a significance level of .087.

A simple linear regression was calculated predicting subject's moral development based on their perceived parenting style. A significant regression was found (F (3.049), = p<.05), with an R2 of .031. Additionally, a regression was calculated for each of the groups of subjects who reported an experience of parenting with parents who utilized either a permissive, authoritarian, or authoritative parenting style. The regression analysis revealed that the highest level of relationship between parenting style and level of moral judgment achieved was found in the group that reported experiencing the permissive parenting style. The Beta Coefficient for this group was .176 and was significant at the .014 level. The Beta Coefficient for the group that perceived that they were parented by parents utilizing the authoritative style was .142 and was significant at the .048 level. The students reporting an experience with authoritarian parents had a Beta Coefficient of .034. This was not significant at the .05 level.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Demographic information as well as normative information relevant for the scoring of the Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ) and the Defining Issues Test - Two (DIT-II) is reviewed in this chapter. The results of the statistical analysis are reported. Finally, the acceptance or rejection of the Hypothesis is also reported.

*Demographic Data:*

The population from which the sample was drawn consisted of a convenience sample of 209 co-ed students. These students were from Liberty University and were enrolled and attending a section of Psychology 210 (Human Development) in the spring semester of 2004.

The participants were fully informed volunteers who had been given advance permission by their instructors to devote one class session to their participation in this data collection of data. Prior to participation the students were informed of the nature of the study they were participating in and assured of their anonymity. Students who participated in the study signed a statement covering Informed Consent.

Students had to meet one criterion or they were excluded
from participation in the study. Namely, they must have
experienced the majority of their parenting within the
continental United States. This criterion was established
since the instrument used to assess parenting styles was
normed utilizing persons who had experienced their parenting
in North America.

The preponderance of these students were freshman (105)
but all academic levels (freshman, 105; sophomores, 50;
juniors, 33; and seniors, 21) were represented in the sample
population. The ages of the sample were as follows: 17 and
below, 3; 18-19, 133; 20-21, 52; 22-23, 13; and 24 and up, 8.
The sample was divided along gender lines with Males
comprising an N of 82 and Females with an N of 127. Along
ethnic lines, the sample was represented as follows: African
American, 20; Hispanic, 10; Asian, 6; European, 1; Native
American, 1; and Caucasian, 167.

The most interesting demographic information to this
researcher was the respondent's answers to the question
concerning whether they were raised in an intact or broken
home. The way the question was asked required the student to
respond by answering whether or not they had spent more than
half their childhood in a home with both their mother and

father present. The results showed that 136 respondents were raised in intact homes, 24 were from broken homes, and 49 students failed to respond to the question.

*The Parental Authority Questionnaire, (Buri, 1988):*

The Parental Authority Questionnaire was created based on Dianna Baumrind's (1971) description of specific styles utilized by parents in their parenting. The PAQ was developed to provide a quantifiable means of measuring older adolescents and adults perceptions of parenting styles.

The PAQ is made up of 30 items that relate to parental orientations. Comprised of 10 each - permissive, authoritarian, and authoritative items, the questionnaire is designed to measure the degree to which the taker perceives that each parent displayed each of the three parenting styles.

Questions on the PAQ are worded in such a way as to encourage the participant to evaluate the degree of authority utilized by their parents in the parenting situation. Each question is answered using a Likert-type response, ranging from (5) Strongly Agree to (1) Strongly Disagree.

Scoring of the PAQ yields a score ranging from 10 to 50 for the three scales measured (Permissiveness, Authoritarianism, and Authoritativeness). Internal consistency

reliability was established by Buri (1991), using a pool of 185 college students. With regard to content validity there was 95% agreement between 21 evaluators on the categorization of the items (Buri, 1989).

*The Defining Issues Test - II, (Rest, 1998):*

The Defining Issues Test (DIT-II, Rest, 1998) is comprised of five short story scenarios that describe a specific moral dilemma. The respondent has to decide what the character in the story should do in each situation. The respondent must first rate and then rank in order of importance to their decision making, the factors ($1^{st}$, $2^{nd}$, $3^{rd}$, and $4^{th}$) that were of most importance in encouraging the protagonist to arrive at the course of action that they took in the story. It is assumed that by evaluating the responder's choices, their level of moral judgment can be ascertained.

In terms of reliability using Cronbach's alpha the DIT-II is in the upper .70s/low .80s. Test - retest is about the same. Validity has been assessed in terms of seven criteria over fifteen years. DIT-II scores show discriminant validity from verbal ability/ general intelligence and from conservative/liberal political attitudes (Rest, Narvaez, Thoma, Bebeau, 1997, Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Rest, 1974,

1978, 1979, 1986, 1999).

*Findings Related to the Hypothesis:*

The Hypothesis as stated was:

> **H:** The levels of moral judgment found in college students who perceive that they were parented by parents utilizing an Authoritative parenting style will be significantly higher than the levels found in college students who perceive their parents relied primarily on Authoritarian or Permissive Parenting Styles.

This hypothesis was rejected following a regression analysis which yielded a Beta Coefficient of .176 for the effect of the permissive parenting style on the dependent measure of moral reasoning. This effect was significant at a .014 level. The regression analysis also yielded a Beta Coefficient of .142 for the effect of the authoritative parenting style on the dependent measure (N2).

The hypothesis that the authoritative parenting style would yield a stronger effect than either the permissive or authoritarian parenting styles was therefore rejected. The effect of the permissive parenting style was, in fact, stronger then the effect of the authoritative parenting style.

The Null Hypotheses were as follows:

**N1:** There is no significant relationship between college

students who perceive their parents utilized an

Authoritative parenting style and the levels of moral

judgment achieved by these students.

This Null hypothesis was rejected following a regression

analysis which yielded a Beta Coefficient of .142 and a

significance level of .048. The results indicated that the

authoritative parenting style accounted for level of moral

judgment achieved by these students at a level that was

significant.

**N2:** There is no significant relationship between college

students who perceive that their parents utilized an

authoritarian parenting style and the levels of moral

judgment achieved by these students.

This Null hypothesis was accepted following a regression

analysis which yielded a Beta Coefficient of .034 and a

significance level of .629. These results indicated that the

authoritarian parenting style did not account for a level of

change in the respondents moral judgment score that was

significant at the .05 level of significance.


**N3:** There is no significant relationship between college

students who perceive that their parents utilized a

Permissive parenting style and the levels of moral

judgment achieved by these students.


This Null hypothesis was rejected following a regression

analysis which yielded a Beta Coefficient of .176 and a

significance level of .014. The results indicated that there

was a significant relationship between college students who

perceived their parents utilized a Permissive parenting style

and the levels of moral judgment achieved by these students.


*Summary of the Researcher's Findings:*

Results of the statistical analysis in relationship to

the Hypothesis and the Null Hypotheses were reported in this

chapter. The hypothesis produced no statistical significance

as written and was rejected. The Null hypotheses one and three

were also rejected. Null hypothesis number two was accepted as

written. The parenting style responsible for the most powerful

effect on moral judgment discovered as a consequence of regression analysis was for respondents who perceived that they were parented by parents utilizing the permissive parenting style. Although the number of respondents who were in the group selecting permissive parenting was small (N=3) the Beta Coefficient for that group was the strongest (.176). This indicated that the permissive parenting style accounted for the greatest effect on the moral judgment score (N2).

This result is not in concert with research studies examined in the review of the literature on parenting styles. It is true that the N for the group is small (N=3). Strong inferences should not be drawn from this element in the study until the study is replicated with a larger group of respondents who believed they were parented by parents who utilized the permissive parenting style.

The authoritative parenting style did account for a significant amount of the variance in the N2 score with a Beta Coefficient of .142 and a significance level of .048. Even though significant, these results required the rejection of the hypothesis and the rejection of the N1 and N3 Null Hypotheses.

This study may indicate that the PAQ and the parenting styles it envisions are becoming blurred in the postmodern

culture. The authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive styles of parenting may be more blended than at other times in American history and students may be having a difficult time with the adjectives and statements used in the PAQ. The PAQ was formulated in 1991 and the language it uses may be confusing to the contemporary student. The mean N2 scores for all groups were within three (3) points of each other. This may indicate that the PAQ is not useful in the present context for differentiating respondents into groups.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, DISCUSSION AND

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This Chapter presents a summary of the study, a discussion of the results of the Statistical analysis, and some potential recommendations for future research.

*Summary:*

The present study examined the representative contribution from Philosophy, Theology, and Psychology to the literature on moral development as well as literature on the relationship between parenting styles and the development of mature moral judgment in college age adolescents. The research study was created to examine the question regarding the role of parenting styles in the enhancement of moral development in college level adolescents. The question under consideration was whether parenting styles should be considered essential contributors or detractors in the development of moral judgment in the children and adolescents experiencing them. The study utilized the Parental Authority Questionnaire and the Defining Issues Test – 2nd Edition to determine respondent perception of the parenting style utilized by their parents

and the level of moral judgment achieved by the respondents.

The Researcher proposed the Hypothesis that:

**(H)** The levels of moral judgment achieved in college students who perceived that they were parented by parents utilizing an Authoritative parenting style would be significantly higher than the level of moral judgment achieved by college students who perceived their parents relied primarily on Authoritarian or Permissive Parenting Styles.

Three Null hypotheses were also proposed. The Null Hypotheses were as follows:

**N1:** There is no significant relationship between college students who perceive their parents utilized an Authoritative parenting style and the levels of moral judgment achieved by these students.

**N2:** There is no significant relationship between college students who perceive that their parents utilized an Authoritarian parenting style and the levels of moral judgment achieved by these students.

**N3:** There is no significant relationship between college

students who perceive that their parents utilized a

Permissive parenting style and the levels of moral

judgment achieved by these students.


To test the Hypothesis and the three Null Hypotheses, 209

students from a private, four year Institution of higher

learning were given the DIT-II to determine the mean moral

judgment score (N2) for the group and the mean N2 score for

the individual groups that were formed by student responses to

the PAQ. The PAQ scores allowed the researcher to separate the

respondents into three groups based on their perception of the

parenting style utilized by their parents. The groups were

designated permissive, authoritarian, and authoritative.

Analysis of the data utilizing a correlation matrix and

linear regression yielded the following results. The

correlation matrix showed a significant relationship between

the permissive parenting style and the development of moral

judgment in the respondents. (See Appendix C; Table 1). The

linear regression for the whole group yielded a significant

effect for parenting style on the development of moral

judgment in the respondents (See Appendix C; Table 2). A

Stepwise regression revealed significant effects for the permissive parenting style and the authoritative style on levels of moral judgment achieved by the respondents (See Appendix C; Table 1).

The Hypothesis was rejected. The Null that no significant effect would be observed on levels of moral judgment achieved by respondents who perceived that they were parented by parents utilizing the permissive or authoritative parenting style was rejected. The Null for the authoritarian parenting style was confirmed. The authoritarian parenting style did not create a significant effect on levels of moral judgment achieved by respondents who perceived it to be the style of parenting utilized by their parents.

While the authoritative style was shown to correlate positively with higher levels of moral judgment in the participants, so too was the permissive style. The permissive style actually had a more powerful influence on the respondents level of moral judgment achieved than did the authoritative style. The authoritarian style registered a level of influence on the development of moral judgment in the respondents that was insignificant. The hypothesis, that the authoritative parenting style alone would register a positive effect on levels of moral judgment achieved by the

respondents, was rejected.

*Discussion:*

The researcher believes that the results of this study should encourage further investigation into the relationship between parenting styles and the development of moral judgment. There are numerous variables which could have influenced the veracity of the present study. They Include:

The Nuclear family has changed so significantly as to require a modified definition. The nuclear family at one point was used to define a husband, wife, and their biological offspring. Today's nuclear family, by common assent and definition, involves a blended family and step-siblings. A blended family would include a husband and/or wife on at least their second marriage who bring children into their present marriage from previous relationships. This changes the dynamics of perceived parenting styles by virtue of the question of ownership (children) and the inherent power struggles, triangulation, and period of adjustment (averages three years) that exists when two or more families blend to become one.

Another significant issue with regards to the clarity of modern parenting is that of role confusion. Parents today have

been led to believe that spanking is harmful if not outright

abusive/illegal and are often confused as to how directive and

involved their parenting can be/should be. This might lead to

a tentative form of parenting that could certainly make

(Parenting) style differentiation difficult.

The considerable changes evident in society as a whole

must be considered as well. In an age of Postmodernity,

*absolutes* are looked at as relics of a bygone era, leaving

parents standing on uncertain ground when looking at

traditional parenting roles and styles in the face of the

changing societal norms seen in a postmodern society.

Each of these factors contribute to a general confusion

regarding how parenting is to be carried out and how a person

would respond when questioned regarding their perception of

the parenting style utilized by their parents.

Powerful forces are at work in American culture. Judith

Rich Harris's (1998) book, *The Nurture Assumption: Why*

*Children Turn Out the way they Do*, created a great debate as

she questioned the importance of parents for the development

of moral judgment and values in their children.

Harris (1998) states, "You have been led to believe that you

have more influence over your child's personality than you

really do" (p. 351). She believes that group socialization is

the primary force preparing children for their adult lives.

Brooks, (2004) reiterates this thought; Children identify

with peer groups they think are like themselves, and, out

of loyalty to the group, they take on the behavior of its

members. Brooks goes on to say that while research has

not proven the importance of parental influence, neither

has it disproved its importance; thus it remains an

assumption. (p. 21)

This study seems to support Harris' thesis. The

respondents shared similar group means on N2 scores regardless

of their perspective on parenting style experienced. It seems

that something other than parenting style is also at work in

the moral development of adolescents. The study illustrates

that parenting style does affect the N2 score but the effect

for authoritative parenting style is only moderately

significant (.048). The effect for the permissive parenting

style is stronger at (.014) with the overall regression

analysis giving parenting style a significant effect at .031.

L. Alan Sroufe (2002) is probably correct when he says,

"Parent and peer experiences combine to prepare the individual

for adult social relationships......but behaviors......are put

into practice and elaborated in the symmetrical relationships

of the world of peers" (p. 198).

There can be little doubt that parents and their influence on their children are being generally marginalized in our present culture. In our non-agrarian society children and adolescents spend the majority of their time away from home and the mentorship of their parents. Some spend a lot of time with their peers. However, many spend a lot of time with the technology of the twenty-first century. Video games, internet, and cell phones monopolize major amounts of time for the contemporary adolescent. The adolescent of 2005 looks at test like the PAQ and sees his/her parents through different lenses than the adolescents of the 1980's.

Something must be said for authoritative parenting. Its effect on moral development was significant. Something may also be said for the permissive parenting style when it is utilized on a foundation of affirming love. The respondents to the PAQ experienced both types of parenting and both styles of parenting and both styles exerted a level of influence on the development of moral judgment in the respondents that was significant.

It is a cause of no little curiosity that the Liberty respondents were 4-6 points below the mean for the nationally normed same age group on the DIT-II or N2 score. This raises interesting questions regarding the type of student who

chooses to attend or is asked to attend Liberty. Why were they below the national norm on their level of moral judgment? Are we seeing a unique kind of adolescent at Liberty who needs special assistance with the development of moral reasoning? Is there something systemic in Evangelical life that inhibits the development of innate moral reasoning? Have the respondents in this research study been conditioned to respond to externally imposed rules of morality while languishing behind on the development of moral reasoning regardless of the parenting style they have experienced? Why was their so little difference on mean development in moral judgment regardless of reported experience with parenting style?

Another equally important issue requiring our attention has to do with the suitability of the tests administered (PAQ, DIT-II) for research with today's adolescents. Could it be that the current generations of adolescents surveyed in the review of the literature are so cut off from the values and language implicit in these assessment inventories that the results are not to be trusted? This is a generation obsessed with self and struggling with self-control (Goldman, 1986; Bellah, 1985). How do they relate to the values of Kohlberg, Rest, and others? Would they see morality the same way Kohlberg did? How does their context and structure of reality

impact the way they take these tests? How valid are the results?

Also to be addressed in considering the instruments used would be the assessment qualities and range of the Parental Authority Questionnaire. The PAQ doesn't test for or seek to identify the Uninvolved parenting style in its present format and it has been suggested that this parenting style needs to be assessed in today's parenting styles. The uninvolved parenting style may very well be one of the predominate styles in use by contemporary parent's in today's society.

*Recommendations for Future Research:*

The researcher believes that the findings of this study warrant a revisiting of the whole concept of parenting styles. It is therefore recommended that Dianna Baumrind's parenting styles be revisited and revised/strengthened in the face of today's specific challenges, roles, and responsibilities that surround the role of parenting in the new millennium.

A second recommendation is that the DIT-II be critiqued to address the religious commitment of the respondent's in our study and ascertain if the lack of sensitivity to a particular religious orientation could have a direct effect on the N2 scores observed in our study (Our respondent's N2 scores were

3-6 points below the national norm for their academic level).

A third recommendation is that the analysis be replicated with other independent variables to see what other variables might account for a larger amount of variance in the moral reasoning (N2) dependent measure. Independent variables that might be considered would be peer influence and time spent with technologies like video games, internet, and cell phones.

A fourth recommendation is that instruments be identified/developed that might be better suited for the language and styles of contemporary adolescents.

A fifth recommendation is that the evangelical community consider allocating resources to explore research based investigations into issues related to the development of moral judgment in the youth influenced by its churches and outreach ministries.

A sixth recommendation is that the study be replicated with a larger number of respondents who identify the parenting style used by their parents as the permissive parenting style to have a stronger, more generalizable N.

A seventh recommendation is for the study to be replicated in other conservative, religiously affiliated universities to see if the scores are consistent throughout the sample populations surveyed.

A final recommendation would be to replicate the present study at secular universities throughout this geographical region. Schools to be considered would include the University of Virginia, Virginia Tech, Lynchburg College, Sweetbriar College, and Longwood University.

REFERENCES

Adams, J. (1972). *Essays on Counseling*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing.

Adler, A. (1959). *Understanding human nature.* New York: Premier Books.

Adler, A. (1964). *Social interest: A challenge to mankind.* New York: Capricorn Books.

Adler, A. (1969). *The science of living.* New York: Doubleday Anchor Books.

Allen, R. B. (1984). *The Majesty of Man.* Portland, OR: Multnomah.

Arlow, J. A. (1976). Communication and character: A clinical study of a man raised by deaf-mute parents. *Psychoanalytic Study of the Child,* 31, 139-163.

Balswick, J. & Balswick, J. (1989). *The family: A Christian perspective on the contemporary home.* Grand Rapids: Baker Book House.

Bandura, A. (1977). *Social learning theory, 2$^{nd}$ edition.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Barna, G. (2003). *Think like Jesus: Make the right decision every time.* Nashville, TN: Integrity Publishers.

Barker, E. (1981). *The Politics of Aristotle.* Oxford
University Press.

Barth, K. (1975). *Church Dogmatics.* Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark.

Barzun, J. (2000). *From Dawn to Decadence: 1500 To the
Present.* New York, NY: HarperCollins Press.

Baumrind, D. (1966). Effects of authoritative parental control
on child behavior. Child Development 37(4), 887-907. San
Fransisco: Jossey Bass.

Baumrind, D. (1971). Current patterns of parental authority.
*Developmental Psychology Monographs*, 4, 2, Pt. 2.

Baumrind, D. (1989). Rearing competent children. In W. Damon
(Ed.), *Child development today and tomorrow* (pp. 349-
378). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Baumrind, D. (1991a). The influence of parenting style on
adolescent competence and substance use. *Journal of Early
Adolescence,* 11, 56-95.

Baumrind, D. (1991b). Effective parenting during the early
adolescent transition. In P.E. Cowan and E.M Hetherington
(Eds.). *Advances in family research, Vol. 2* (pp. 111-
163). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Bebeau, M.J. & Thoma, S.J. (1994). The impact of a dental
ethics curriculum on moral reasoning. *Journal of Dental
Education,* 58(9), 684-92.

Beck, L.W. (1984). *A Commentary of Kant's Critique of Practical Reason*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Belski, J., Crnic, K., & Woodworth, S. (1995). Personality and parenting: Exploring the mediating role of transient mood and daily hassles. *Journal of Personality*, 63, 905-929.

Bellah, R.N., & Madsen, R., Sullivan, W.M., Swidler, A. Tipton, M. (1985). *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life*. New York: Harper & Row.

Berkowitz, M. & Grych, J. (1998). Fostering goodness: teaching parent's to facilitate children's moral development. *Journal of Moral Education,* 27 (3), 371-391.

Blanchard, K., Waghorn, T. (1997). *Mission Possible*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Bottome, Phyllis (1939). *ALFRED ADLER.* New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons.

Boydston, J., Poulos, K. (1974). *Checklist of Writings About John Dewey.* Carbondale, Ill: Southern Illinois University Press.

Boyes, M., & Allen, S. (1993). Styles of parent-child interaction and moral reasoning in adolescence. *Merrill Palmer Quarterly,* 39(4), 551-570.

Brooks, Jane B. (1999). *The Process of Parenting.* New York,

   NY: McGraw-Hill.

Brown, W. (2002). *Character and Scripture: Moral formation,*

   *community, and Biblical interpretation.* Grand Rapids, MI:

   William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.

Buri, J. R. (1991). Parental authority questionnaire. *Journal*

   *of Personality and Assessment,* 57(1), 110-119.

Calvin. (1949). *Institutes of the Christian Religion.*

   Eerdmans.

Capuzzi, D., Gross, Douglas R. (2003). *Counseling and*

   *Psychotherapy: Theories and Interventions.* Upper Saddle

   River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall.

Chazan, B. (1985). *Contemporary approaches to moral education.*

   New York, NY: Teacher's College.

Chesterton, G.K. (1993). *Saint Thomas Aquinas: The Dumb Ox.*

   New York: Doubleday.

Clark, Robert E., Johnson, L.,Sloat, Allyn K. (1991).

   *Christian Education: Foundations For The Future.* Chicago:

   Moody Bible Institute.

Cloud, H., Townsend, J. (2001). *How people grow.* Grand Rapids,

   MI: Zondervan.

Colby, A. (2003). *Educating Citizens.* San Francisco, CA:

   Jossey-Bass.

Coles, Robert (1997). *The moral intelligence of children: How to raise a moral child.* New York, NY: Random House.

Collins, G. (1998). *The soul search: A spiritual journey to authentic intimacy with God.* Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers.

Collins, G. (1993). *Biblical Basis of Christian Counseling for People Helpers.* Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress.

Colson, C. & Eckerd, J. (1991). *Why America doesn't work.* Dallas, TX: Word Publishing.

Corsini, R. J., Wedding, D. (1995). *Current Psychotherapies.* Fifth Edition. IL: F.E. Peacock Publishers, Inc.

Covey, S. (1997). *The 7 habits of highly effective families.* New York, NY: Golden Book.

Crabb, L. (2001). *Shattered Dreams: God's Unexpected Pathway to Joy.* Colorado Springs, CO: WaterBrook Press.

Damon, W. (1999). The moral development of children. *Scientific American*, 281 (2), 72-79

Darling, N. (1999). *Parenting style and its correlates.*

Darling, N. & Steinberg, L. (1993). Parenting style as context: An integrative model. *Psychological Bulletin,* 113(3), 487-496.

Degler, Carl N. (1991). *In Search of Human Nature: The Decline and Revival of Darwinism in American Social Thought.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Demarest, B. (1984). "Revelation, General," in the *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Elwell, W. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

Dewey, J. (1975). *Moral Principles in Education.* Carbondale, IL: Arcturus Books, Southern Illinios University Press.

Dornbusch, S.M., Ritter, P.L., Leiderman, P.H., Roberts, D.F., & Fraleigh, M.J. (1987). The relation of parenting style to adolescent school performance. *Child Development* (58), 1244-1257.

Durkheim, E. (1961). *L'education morale.* Glencoe: Free Press.

Ellis, A. (1999). *How to make yourself happy and remarkably less disturbable.* San Luis Obispo, CA: Impact Publishers.

Elkind, D. (1985). Egocentrism redux: Developmental Review.5, 218-226.

Engstrong, T. & Rohrer, N. (1993). *Making right choices.* Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.

Erickson, M. (1983). *Christian theology.* Grand Rapids: MI: Baker Book House.

Falwell, J. (1992). *The New American Family: The Rebirth of The American Dream.* Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Inc.

Foster, R. (1978). *Celebration of Discipline.* San Francisco, CA: Harper Collins.

Fromm, E. (1955). *The sane society.* New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Gardner, H.; Csikszentinihalyi, M.; Damon, W. (2001). *Good Work: When Excellence and Ethics Meet.* New York: Basic Books.

Grrigou-Lagrange, R. (1964). *The Theological Virtues.* St. Louis, Missouri: B. Herder Book Co.

Gilligan, C. (1982). *In a different voice: Psychological theory and women's development.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Gladwin, J.W. (1977). *Conscience.* Bramcote, Nottingham.

Glasser, W. (1965). *Reality therapy.* New York, NY: HarperCollins.

Glasser, W. (1976). *Positive addiction.* New York, NY: HarperCollins.

Glasser, W. (1981). *Control theory.* New York, NY: HarperCollins.

Glasser, W. (1990b). *The quality school.* New York, NY: HarperCollins.

Goleman, D. (1997). *Emotional Intelligence*. New York: Bantam.

Gonzalez, A., Greenwood, G., & WenHsu, J. (2001). Undergraduate student's goal orientations and their relationship to perceived parenting styles. College Student Journal 35(2), 182-192.

Gouinlock, J. (1971). *The Moral Writings of John Dewey.* New York: Hafner Press.

Gray, M.R., & Steinberg, L. (1999). Unpacking authoritative parenting: Reassessing a multidimensional construct. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*( 61), 574-587.

Grenz, S.; Olson, R. (1992). *20$^{th}$ Century Theology: God and the World in a Transitional Age.* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

Guinness, O. (2000). *Time for Truth: Living Free in a World of Lies, Hype, and Spin.* Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

Gurian, M. (1999). *The Good Son.* New York: Jeremy P. Tarcher.

Hakim, A. (1992). *Historical introduction to philosophy.* New York, NY: MacMillan Publishing Company.

Harris, J. R. (1998). *The nurture assumption: Why children turn out the way they do.* New York: Free Press.

Hart, Archibald, D. (1989). *Unlocking The Mystery of Your Emotions.* Word Publishing.

Helm, Paul. (1997). *Faith and Understanding*. Grand Rapids,

   Michigan: Edinburgh University Press.

Hinkle, D., Wiersma, W., & Jurs, S.(1979). *Applied statistics*

   *for the behavioral sciences.* Dallas, TX: Houghton Mifflin

   Company.

Hodge, C. (1952). *Systematic Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI:

   Eerdmans.

Hoekema, A. (1986). *Created in God's Image*. Grand Rapids:

   Eerdmans.

Hoffman, M. (2001). *Empathy and Moral Development*. Cambridge,

   England: Cambridge University Press.

Horney, K (1941). *New ways in psychoanalysis.* New York:

   Norton.

Horton, Micahel S. (1994). *Beyond Culture Wars*. Chicago, IL:

   Moody Press.

Huxley, R.(1998). *Love and limits: Achieving a balance in*

   *parenting.* Singular Publishing Group, Inc. San Diego, CA.

Issac, S., Michael, William B. (1995). *Handbook in Research*

   *and Evaluation: For Education and the Behavioral*

   *Sciences*. San Diego, CA: EdITS.

Jacobsen, D.; Jacobsen, R. (2004). *Scholarship and Christian*

   *Faith: Enlarging the Conversation.* New York: Oxford

   University Press.

Jung, C. (1909). *The psychology of dementia praecox.* New

    York & Washington: Nervous and Mental Disease.

Killen, A.R. (2002). Morality in erioperative nurses. *AORN*

    *Journal, 75(3), 532-540.*

Kohlberg, L. (1969). 'Stage and sequence: the cognitive-

    developmental approach to socialization. In D. A. Goslin

    (Ed.), *Handbook of socialization theory and research.*

    Chicago: Rand McNally.

Kohlberg, L. (1971). Stages of moral development as a basis

    for moral education. In C. Beck & B. Crittenden (Eds.),

    *Moral Education* (pp. 30-41) New York: Newman Press.

Kohlberg, L. (1972). A cognitive developmental approach to

    moral education. *Humanist,* 32 (6), 13-16.

Kohlberg, L. (1976). Moral stages and moralization: The

    cognitive-developmental approach. In T. Lickona (Ed.),

    *Moral development and behavior.* New York: Holt, Rinehart,

    and Winston.

Kostenberger, A.(2004). *God, marriage and family: Rebuilding*

    *the Biblical foundation.* Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books.

Kroll, W. (2002). *The book of Romans: Righteousness in Christ.*

    Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers.

Lamborn, S.D., Mounts, N.S., Steinberg, L., & Dornbusch, S.M.

    (1991) Patterns of competence and adjustment among

adolescents from authoritative, authoritarian, indulgent, and neglectful families. *Child Development* (62), 1049-1065.

Lewis, H. (2000). *A Question of Values: Six Ways We Make the Personal Choices That Shape Our Lives.* Crozet, VA: Axios Institute.

Lickona, T. (1991). *Educating for Character.* New York: Bantam.

Losoya, S.H., Callor, S., Rowe, D., & Goldsmith, H. (1997). Origins of familial similarity in parenting: A study of twins and adoptive siblings. *Developmental Psychology, 33,* 1012-1023.

MacIntyre, Alasdair. (1990). *Three Rival Versions of moral Enquiry: Encycolpedia Geneaology and Tradition.* Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press.

Majors, R. (2001). *Educating our Black Children.* London & New York: RoutledgeFalmer.

Marsden, G. (1997). *The Outrageous Idea of Christian Scholarship.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Maxson, T.Z. (1998). *Parenting style: Effects on children's view of authority.* Paper presented at the 106th annual Conference of the American Psychological Association. San Francisco, CA.

McCullough, D. (1995). *The trivialization of God: The dangerous illusion of a manageable deity*. Colorado Springs, CO: NAVPRESS.

McDowell, J. (1999). *The New Evidence That Demands A Verdict*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.

McGrath, Alister E. (1999). *Science and Religion: An Introduction*. Malden, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers Inc.

McMinn, M. (1996). *Psychology, theology, and spirituality in Christian counseling*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House.

Menninger, K. (1973). *Whatever Became of Sin?* New York: Hawthorn.

Moran, G. (1987). *No Ladder to the Sky: Education and Morality*. San Francisco, CA: Harper and Row.

Moreland, J.P. (1987). *Scaling the Secular city: A Defense of Christianity*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

Morris, L. (1976). *I believe in Revelation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.

Mosher, R. L. (1981). Parenting for moral growth. *Journal of Education;* Aug '81, Vol. 163, Issue 3, P. 244, 18 p.

Mowrer, O. (1966). *Abnormal Reactions to Actions*. Dubuque: W.C. Brown and Co.

Narvaez, D. (2001). Moral text comprehension, implications for education and research. *Journal of Moral Education, 30*(1), 43-54.

Neill, S. (1984). *Christian Faith and Other Faiths*. Downers Grove, Illinios: InterVarsity Press.

Nichols, W., Pace-Nichols, M., Becvar, D., & Napier, A. (2000). *Handbook of family development and intervention*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Niebuhr, R. (1941). *The Nature and Destiny of Man*. New York: Scribner.

Oden, Thomas C. (1995). *Requiem: A Lament in Three Movements*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press.

Olsen, S.F., Martin, P., & Halverson, C.F. (1999). Personality, marital relationships, and parenting in two generations of mothers. *International Journal of Behavior Development, 23*, 457-476.

Parikh, B. (1980). Development of moral judgment and its relation to family environmental factors in Indian and American families. *Child Development*, 51, pp. 1030-1039.

Parrott, L.(2000). *Helping the struggling adolescent: A guide to thirty-six common problems for counselors, pastors, and youth workers*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

Pascarella, E., Terenzini, Pl (1991). *How College Affects Students: Findings and insights from twenty years of research.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Paulson, S.E. (1994). Relations of parenting style and parental involvement with ninth-grade students' achievement. *Journal of Early Adolescence,* 14(2), pp. 250-267.

Peck, Scott M. (1983). *People of The Lie: The Hope for Healing Human Evil.* New York: Simon and Schuster.

Pegis, Anton C. (1945). *Basic Writings of Saint Thomas Aquinas: Volume One.* New York: Random House.

Perls, F. (1969/1992). *Gestalt therapy verbatim.* Highland, NY: The Gestalt Journal Press.

Perls, F. (1973/1979). *The Gestalt approach and eyewitness to therapy.* New York: Bantam.

Piaget, J. (1932). *The moral judgment of the child.* London: Routledge & K. Paul.

Piaget, J. (1965). *The moral judgment of the child.* M.Gabain, Trans.) New York: Free Press.

Pierce, C.A. (1955). *Conscience in the New Testament.* London.

Platinga, C. (2002). *Engaging God's World: Christian Vision of Faith, Learning, and Living.* Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.

Plantinga, C. (1995). *Not the way it's supposed to be: A breviary of sin.* Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.

Pratt, M., & Diessner, R. (1994). Parenting style, scaffolding, and moral stage in parent-adolescent discussions of real-life and hypothetical dilemmas. Paper presented at the annual conference of the *Association for Moral Education*, Banff, Canada.

Rest, J. (1974). The cognitive-developmental approach to morality: the state of the art. *Counseling and Values, 18,* 64-68.

Rest, J., Narvaez, D., Bebeau, M. J., & Thoma, S. J. (1997). *Development, domains, and culture in moral judgment: A neo-Kohlbergian approach.* Unpublished manuscript, University of Minnesota.

Rest, J., Narvaez, D., Bebeau, M. J. (1997). Alchemy and beyond: indexing the defining issues test. *Journal of Educational Psychology,* 89, pp. 498-507.

Rest, J., Narvaez, D., Thoma, S. J., & Bebeau, M. J. (1999). DIT2: devising and testing a revised instrument of moral judgment. *Journal of Educational Psychology,* 91, pp. 644-659.

Rest, J., Thoma, S. J., & Narvaez, D. (2000). *Moral Judgment: Stages and Schemas*. Manuscript submitted for publication.

Rogers, C. R. (1942). *Counseling and psychotherapy*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Rogers, C. R. (1951). *Client-centered therapy.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Rogers, C. R. (1980). *A way of being.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Rogers, C. R. (1983). *Freedom to learn for the 80s.* Columbus, OH: Charles E. Merrill.

Sholevar, Pirooz, G. (1981). *The Handbook of Marriage and Marital Therapy.* Philadelphia, PA: SP Medical and Scientific Books.

Sichel, B. (1988). *Moral Education*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Sire, J. (2000). *Habits of the mind: Intellectual life as a Christian calling.* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

Skinner, B.F. (1969). *Contingencies of reinforcement: A theoretical analysis.* New York: Appleton Century-Crofts.

Smalley, G. and Trent,J. (1993). *The Gift of the Blessing.* Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers.

Smetana, J. (1995). Parenting styles and conceptions of

parental authority during adolescence. *Child Development*,

66(2), 299-316.

Smetana, J.G. (1997). *Parenting* and the *development* of social

knowledge reconceptualized: a social domain analysis, in

*J.E. Grusec & L. Kuczynski (Eds). Parenting and the*

*Internalization of Values* (pp. 162-192). New York: Wiley.

Smetana, J.G. (1999). The role of parents in moral

development: a social domain analysis. *Journal of Moral*

*Education,* 28 (3), 311-321.

Sommers, C.H. (2000). *The war against boys: how misguided*

*feminism is harming our young men.* New York: Simon &

Schuster.

Steinberg, L., Lamborn, S.D., Dornbusch, S.M., & Darling, N.

(1992). Impact of parenting practices on adolescent

achievement: authoritative parenting, school involvement,

and encouragement to succeed. *Child Development* (63),

1266-1281.

Stinett, N., Stinnett, N., Beam, J., and Beam, A. (1999).

*Fantastic Families: 6 Proven Steps to Building a Strong*

*Family.* LA: Howard Publishing Co., Inc.

Storr, A. (1989). *Freud.* New York: Oxford.

Strage, A.A. (1998). Family context variables and the development of self regulation in college students. *Adolescence,* 33(129), 17-31.

Strage, A.A. (2000). Predictors of college adjustment and success: similarities and differences among southeast-aisian-american, Hispanic and white students. *Education* 120(4), 731-740.

Strage, A.A., & Brandt, T.S. (1999). Authoritative parenting and college students' academic adjustment and success. *Journal of Educational Psychology.* 91(1), 146-157.

Sullivan, H. S. (1953). *The interpersonal theory of psychiatry.* New York: Norton.

Sweet, Leonard (1999). *Soul tsunami.* Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, Mi.

Tappan, M. (1998). Moral education in the zone of proximal development. *Journal of Moral Education,* 27 (2), 141-160.

Tarrant, H. (1993). *Plato: The Last Days of Socrates.* New York, NY: Penguin Books.

Tillich, P. (1951). *Systematic Theology.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Thoma, S.J., & Rest, J. (1998). The relationship between decision-making and patterns of consolidation and transition in moral judgment development. *Developmental Psychology,* in press.

Turiel, E. (2002). *The Culture of Morality.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

van der Ven, J. A. (1998). *Formation of the Moral Self.* Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.

Veith, G. E. (1994). *Postmodern Times: A Christian Guide to Contemporary Thought and Culture.* Wheaton, Illinios: Crossway Books.

Vitz, P. (1977). *Psychology as Religion: The Cult of Self Worship.* Grand Rapids, IL: William B. Eerdmans.

Walker, L.J. & Taylor, J.H. (1991). Family interaction and the development of moral reasoning. *Child Development, 62,* 264-283.

Walker, L.J. (2002). The model and the measure: An appraisal of the Minnesota approach to moral development. *Journal of Moral Education, 31(3),* 353-367.

Weiss, L.H. & Schwartz, J.C. (1996). The relationship between parenting types and older adolescents' personality, academic achievement, adjustment, and substance use. *Child Development, 67 (5),* 2101-2114.

Wells, David F. (1994). *God in the wasteland.* W.M.B. Eerdman's
    Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Mi.

White, F. (2000). Relationship of family socialization
    processes to adolescent moral thought. *The journal of
    social psychology,* 140 (1), 75-91.

Wilhoit; Dettoni. (1995). *Nurture that is Christian.* Wheaton,
    IL: Victor Books.

Willard, D. (1998). *The Divine conspiracy: Rediscovering our
    Hidden Life in God.* New York, NY: HarperSanFransico.

Wilson, Sandra D. (1990). *Released from Shame: Recovery for
    Adult Children of Dysfunctional Families.* Downers Grove,
    Illinios: InterVarsity Press.

Wolterstorff, N. (1976). *Reason within the Bounds of Religion.*
    Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.

Yancey, P. (1999). *The Bible Jesus read.* Grand Rapids, MI:
    Zondervan Publishing.

Youniss, J. (1980). *Parents and peers in social development.*
    Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Youniss, J. & Volpe, J. (1978). A relational analysis of
    children's friendships. In W. Damon (Ed.), *New directions
    for child development,* Vol. 1. San Francisco: Jossey-
    Bass.

APPENDIX A:

Letter from Institutional Review Board

Liberty University Application to Perform Research on Human Subjects

*Cover Sheet*

1. Title of Experiment

A Dissertation on: "The Influence of Parenting Styles on Moral

Development."

2. Campus addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses of:

Principle Investigator:

Scott Hawkins, M.A. – (434) 582-2155

T.E. # 124 smhawkins@liberty.edu

Liberty University

1971 University Bld.

Lynchburg, Virginia 24502


Research Supervisor:

Dr. Ronald Allen – (434) 592-4054

Campus North - 2400 M rallen@liberty.edu

Liberty University

1971 University Bld.

Lynchburg, Virginia 24502

Other collaborators:

Dr. Gene Mastin - (434) 592-4042

Campus North - 2400 V rgmastin@liberty.edu

Liberty University

1971 University Bld.

Lynchburg, Virginia 24502


Dr. Ralph Linstra - (434) 582 -2000

Schilling 127 C rlinstra@liberty.edu

Liberty University

1971 University Bld.

Lynchburg, Virginia 24502


3. Location at which the research will be performed: (if the research will be done at an off campus location, give the name of the person at that location who has authorized its use for this project.)

The research will be performed entirely at Liberty University. The instruments administered will be the Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ) and the Defining Issues Test -II (DIT-II). There will be between 160 - 200 subjects who are enrolled in Psyc 210 for the Spring 2004 semester. Dr. Gadomski has given permission to administer the tests in these classes and Dr.

Ronald Allen and the dissertation committee (Dr.'s Mastin &

Linstra) have approved of the instruments.


Signature of Principle Investigator:

_____Date_____


Signature of Advisor (if applicable):

_____Date_____


*Protocol*

I.    Purpose

1. Give a brief statement of the background that lead to this

project. Describe the aims and goals of the research.

Explicitly state your hypothesis:

This research is being conducted to provide the framework and

statistical support necessary for the completion of my

dissertation, "The Influence of Parenting Styles on Moral

Development", in pursuit of the completion of my Ph.D. in

Professional Counseling from Liberty University.  The goal of

the research then is to answer the stated Hypothesis:



**H:** The levels of moral judgment found in college students who

perceive that they were parented by parents utilizing an Authoritative parenting style will be significantly higher than the levels found in college students who perceive their parents relied primarily on Authoritarian or Permissive Parenting Styles.

The Null Hypotheses were as follows:

**N1:** There is no significant relationship between college students who perceive their parents utilized an Authoritative parenting style and the levels of moral judgment, achieved by these students.

**N2:** There is no significant relationship between college students who perceive that their parents utilized an Authoritarian parenting style and the levels of moral judgment achieved by these students.

**N3:** There is no significant relationship between college students who perceive that their parents utilized a Permissive parenting style and the levels of moral judgment, achieved by these students.

II. Procedure

1. Give the research design.

This is a Quasi-Experimental design implemented for the

purpose of studying the relationship between parenting styles

and moral development. Two primary assessment tools will be

used to explore the relationship between parenting styles and

moral development. One instrument (PAQ) will examine the

participants' perception of their parents' general parenting

styles. The second instrument (DIT) will evaluate the

participants' present level of moral development. In addition

to these instruments, demographic information such as the

participants' age, gender, race, and family composition will

also be collected.


2. State the dependent and independent variables.

This is a Quasi-Experimental design implemented for the

purpose of studying the relationship between parenting styles

and moral development. Two primary assessment tools will be

used to explore the relationship between parenting styles and

moral development. One instrument (PAQ) will examine the

participants' perception of their parents' general parenting

styles. The second instrument (DIT-II) will evaluate the

participants' present level of moral development. In addition

to these instruments, demographic information such as the participants' age, gender, race, and family composition will also be collected. The primary purpose of this study is to explore and more fully understand the relationship between parenting styles and moral development. In doing so this study explored the correlations between participants present levels of moral development and their perceptions of the degrees to which their parents displayed elements of authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive parenting styles.

To test the hypothesis the researcher will perform a regression analysis using the p index score from the DIT as the dependent variable and the four general parenting style scale sores from the PAQ as the independent variables. The researcher will then create a multiple linear regression model to establish the degree to which the four independent variables worked in tandem to predict the dependent variable.

2. What will the participants do?

The participants will be fully informed volunteers who have been given advance permission by their instructors to devote a portion of one class session to their participation in this data collection. There are two instruments to be administered in the students' regular classroom (PAQ & DIT-II). There is no

treatment component however the results of the study will be available to the students' in the researchers' office following the study should any student be interested in inquiring. After receiving permission from the respective professors to administer the assessments, the researcher will describe the voluntary nature of participation, planned uses of the study, and the provision for absolute confidentiality. The researcher will then administer the assessments to all willing participants. Anticipated time involved for the completion of both assessments will likely range between 40 - 50 minutes.

3. Will any deceit or misleading information be used? NO.

4. Will any audio or video recording be done?  NO. Will participants be recorded without their knowledge? NO. If so, include the post experiment release form that offers the participants the options of having their tape used or erased.

III. Participants

1. State any criteria for inclusion or exclusion of participants. If age, gender, race or religion are to be

used as criteria, the justification for these criteria must be clearly stated. The participants will be fully informed volunteers from several sections of Psyc 210 who have been given advance permission by their instructors to devote one class session to their participation in this data collection.

2. Describe the methods that will be used to recruit participants, including payment and other incentives that will be offered to participants. The participants will be fully informed volunteers from several sections of Psyc 210 who have been given advance permission by their instructors to devote one class session to their participation in this data collection. There will be no payment or incentives given to the students to encourage participation.

IV. Benefits

1. State the benefits to society or the participants that can be reasonably expected from this research.

It will provide further clarification towards answering the debate over whether or not there is a preferred, most effective, parenting style. It will also demonstrate the influence that parenting styles have on moral development.

V. Risks

1. Describe any physical or psychological risks to the participant, experimenters or Liberty University.
There will be NO known risks beyond those of asking students to refer to their childhoods and reflect upon the parenting they received. It is possible if someone had an abusive childhood that this would be an unpleasant exercise.

2. In regard to each risk noted above state the precautions that will be taken to minimize the risk. To minimize this possibility I will have the Professors introduce the nature of the exercise and the fact that participation is voluntary before I ever come to the class. I will then reiterate the nature of the instruments and the fact that participation is voluntary before administering the instruments.

3. How will you protect the confidentiality of your participants? Will the data be anonymous YES - (no identifying names or numbers.)

APPENDIX B:

Informed Consent

Please read this consent carefully before you decide to

participate in this study. You can receive a copy of this

agreement if so desired.

Purpose of the research study: The purpose of this study is to

determine if there is a preferred parenting style not only in

terms of effectiveness but also in terms of encouraging

stronger moral development.

What will you do in the study?: You will fill out two

instruments during a single class period and a demographic

form. (gender, race, etc…)

Time Required: 1 fifty minute class period.

Benefits: There is no guarantee of direct benefits to you in

participating in this study. This study may help us

in answering meaningful questions about parenting styles and

moral development.

Confidentiality:  The information that you give in this study

will be handled with complete confidentiality. Your

information will be completely anonymous and no record will be

kept that identifies the information as coming from you. This

study will not involve the use of audio or video taping at any
time.


Voluntary Participation: Your participation in this study is
completely voluntary.

Right to withdraw from the study: You have the right to
withdraw from this study at any time and for any reason
without penalty.

How to withdraw from the study: If you wish to withdraw from
the study you should let the principle investigator know and
he will remove you from the study immediately. There is no
penalty for withdrawing and your participation will not
influence negatively your standing in this class at any time.

Who to contact if you have questions about the study: The
principle investigator is Scott Hawkins, Assistant Professor,
Liberty University, Lynchburg, Va. 24502. Telephone: (434)
582-2155

Who to contact about your rights in this study:

Dr. Ronald Allen, Chairman, Institutional Review Board,
Liberty University, Lynchburg, Va. 24502. Telephone: (434)
582-2000

Agreement: The study described above has been explained to me.
I voluntarily and without remuneration consent to participate

in this study. I have had the opportunity to ask any questions

that I have had. I understand that future questions I may have

about the research or about my rights as a subject will be

answered by the principle investigator listed above. I hereby

release and agree to indemnify and hold harmless Liberty

University, its agents, employees, successors and assigns,

from any liability for any claims that may arise as a result

of this research study and/or my participation therein, and in

consideration of the benefits derived by me from this research

study. I also hereby agree not to sue or otherwise assert any

claim against Liberty University, its agent or employees for

any cause of action arising out of the research study

referenced above.


_____Date:_____
Signature of Participant

APPENDIX C:
SPSS Statistical Analysis

**Correlation between PAQ and N2Score of the DIT2**

| | | Permissive | Authoritative | Authoritative | N2SCORE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Permissive | Pearson Correlation | 1 | -.121 | .101 | .159(*) |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | . | .080 | .147 | .026 |
| | N | 209 | 209 | 209 | 196 |
| Authoritarian | Pearson Correlation | -.121 | 1 | .033 | .003 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .080 | . | .635 | .968 |
| | N | 209 | 209 | 209 | 196 |
| Authoritative | Pearson Correlation | .101 | .033 | 1 | -.123 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .147 | .635 | . | .087 |
| | N | 209 | 209 | 209 | 196 |
| N2SCORE | Pearson Correlation | .159(*) | .003 | -.123 | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .026 | .968 | .087 | . |
| | N | 196 | 196 | 196 | 196 |

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**Regression Analysis of PAQ Scores and the N2Score of the DIT2(a)**

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 24.590 | 6.429 | | 3.825 | .000 |
| | Permissive | .382 | .155 | .176 | 2.469 | .014 |
| | Authoritarian | .058 | .119 | .034 | .483 | .629 |
| | Authoritative | -.230 | .115 | -.142 | -1.994 | .048 |

a Dependent Variable: N2SCORE

**Model Summary (b)**

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|-----|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | .213(a) | .045 | .031 | 12.72538 |

a  Predictors: (Constant), Permissive, Authoritarian, Authoritative
b  Dependent Variable: N2SCORE

**ANOVA(b)**

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|-------|-----------|----------------|-----|-------------|-------|---------|
| 1 | Regression | 1480.980 | 3 | 493.660 | 3.049 | .030(a) |
| | Residual | 31091.585 | 192 | 161.935 | | |
| | Total | 32572.565 | 195 | | | |

a  Predictors: (Constant), Permissive, Authoritative, Authoritarian
b  Dependent Variable: N2SCORE

A simple linear regression was calculated predicting subjects' moral development based on their perceived parenting style. A significant regression was found ($F(3,192) = 3.049$, p <.05), with an $R^2$ of .031.

## MEAN N2 SCORES (DIT-II)



Category