Can Quantitative Assessment of Moral Identity Be Improved?

David Adrion Baker
Western Kentucky University, david.baker583@topper.wku.edu

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CAN QUANTITATIVE ASSESSMENT OF MORAL IDENTITY BE IMPROVED?

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By
David Baker

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CAN QUANTITATIVE ASSESSMENT OF MORAL IDENTITY BE IMPROVED?

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Dr. Pitt Derryberry, Director of Thesis

Dr. Aaron Wichman

Dr. Andrew Mienaltowski

Dean, Graduate Studies and Research 4/20/15
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According to results from Aquino and Reed (study 5, 2002) and Hall and Derryberry (2010), high means and very low standard deviations of the average score for each question for both the internalization and symbolization scales of the Moral Identity Scale (MIS) are common. This study attempts to measure the extent to which a person considers morality to be a central part of his or her self-concept. Because participants may feel pressure to respond in a certain way on the MIS, the role of social desirability to respond favorably is very plausible. The current study, therefore, attempts to reduce socially desirable responding on the moral identity construct. The hypothesis of this study was that the revised Moral Identity Scale—compared to the original Moral Identity Scale—would display a reduction in skewness, a reduction in social desirability effects, and an increase in the ability to predict moral functioning. Analyses partially supported a reduction in social desirability and supported an increase in the ability to predict moral functioning. However, analyses did not support a reduction in negative skewness.
Can Quantitative Assessment of Moral Identity Be Improved?

According to Augusto Blasi (1980; 1993), moral identity can be conceptualized as the cognitive schema a person holds about his or her moral character. In other words, if a person’s self-definition is comprised of moral traits and characteristics, he or she should be motivated to behave in a way that is consistent with this self-conception. As a result of Blasi’s pioneering work, the concept of moral identity has been a promising idea within the field of moral and developmental psychology. According to Monin and Jordan (2009), the problem with the concept of moral identity, however, lies with how researchers in this domain have utilized many different methods of measurement. As a result, researchers have failed to reach an agreement regarding how the construct should be defined and measured because the various approaches of moral identity measurement that Monin and Jordan identified have certain strengths and weaknesses. The purpose here, then, is to review the literature regarding the history of moral identity measurement, discuss the pros and cons associated with different approaches pertaining to measuring moral identity, and provide a statement of the problem. Ultimately, the current study was designed to revise the Moral Identity Scale (Aquino & Reed, 2002).

The Moral Self

When an individual thinks about the concept of morality, he or she probably envisions an overt action or expression that would be objectively classified as moral behavior (Blasi, 1980). According to Augusto Blasi, a moral behavior, which can be classified as an overt action or expression, must be viewed in terms of the unseen variables that are comprised of inner emotions, decision-making processes, feelings, cognitions, and judgments. This, of course, makes the concept of morality very complex.
As a result of Blasi’s above-mentioned assertion that morality or moral behavior is comprised of numerous variables that cannot be witnessed overtly, many psychologists decided that it would be prudent to inquire into that which is unseen—those variables that lead to moral behavior or functioning (Derryberry, 2001).

According to Monin and Jordan (2009), Augusto Blasi’s pioneering research (1980; 1993; 1995) provided an alternative to theories of morality that focused entirely on moral judgment, moral reasoning, and their ostensible relationship to moral behavior. Specifically, in the nascent stages of research in this area of moral psychology, Blasi (1980) made apparent the major problem regarding the vague research hypotheses concerning moral cognitions or moral reasoning and their apparent association with moral action. In other words, because researchers surmised a positive relationship between those two factors, other variables that affect the degree to which an individual is consistent in terms of engaging in moral endeavors needed to be addressed. As such, the assumption of a moral motivator that links moral judgment, reasoning, and moral action had to be addressed.

This postulation of a moral motivator between moral reasoning and moral action was revolutionary because, at this time, psychological measures designed to measure levels of Kohlbergian moral reasoning or judgment and their correlations with moral actions or functioning, for example, were inconsistent in terms of predicting moral behavior (Blasi, 1980; Walker & Frimer, 2007). To state this more simply, some individuals who are not as advanced in terms of their moral reasoning level may still have a propensity to engage in moral behaviors without moral thoughts or cognitions (Blasi, 1980; Colby & Damon, 1992; Walker & Frimer, 2007). These findings, as a result,
fueled Blasi’s conjecture that moral motivation and moral self-consistency may unite the aforementioned factors of moral reasoning and moral functioning.

In essence, Blasi (1980; 1993; 1995) identified a mental structure that could account for why some individuals feel motivated to engage in morally acceptable behavior, which he termed moral identity or one’s moral sense of self. According to Blasi (1993), three underlying themes provide the basis for the existence of a moral identity: “moral understanding more reliably gives rise to moral action if it is translated into a judgment of personal responsibility; moral responsibility is the result of integrating morality in one’s identity or sense of self; from moral identity derives a psychological need to make one’s actions consistent with one’s ideals” (p. 99). Furthermore, Blasi (1980) suggested that moral identity can be conceptualized as a cognitive schema, which provides a motivational link between moral judgment and moral action. In other words, if an individual has a self-conception that includes moral traits and characteristics, he or she should be compelled to translate moral reasoning into moral action. In essence, then, this identity is a powerful source of moral motivation because people generally desire to maintain self-consistency (Aquino & Reed, 2002). Although moral identity is one of many identities that an individual has, it may or may not be important to one’s self-concept. Thus, Blasi’s work (1980; 1993) inspired other researchers to determine the manner in which an individual’s self-conception congregates around morality, which may relate to a propensity to behave ethically.

**Moral Identity Measurement**

Throughout the history of moral identity measurement, researchers of moral identity or one’s moral sense of self have employed a personological-based approach
(Monin & Jordan, 2009). In other words, moral psychologists who study this construct place great importance on the consistent individual differences among individuals whom people encounter within the environment. Thus, one would expect to encounter much variability in terms of who is and who is not motivated by moral considerations and issues. According to Monin and Jordan, this personological approach of studying moral identity can be broken down into two specific approaches. The first approach, *moral personality*, advocates the identification of moral characteristics that may be shared by individuals who have a propensity to think and act in a morally consistent manner. The second division of the personological approach, which is termed *moral centrality*, specifically focuses on quantitative measures that can assess the extent to which a person considers moral characteristics fundamental or central to his or her self-concept or identity (Monin & Jordan, 2009). Each approach is reviewed below.

**Moral Personality Approach**

Researchers who adhere to the moral personality approach of studying moral identity are concerned with determining the extent to which some personality characteristics relate to moral functioning in terms of feeling, acting, and thinking in a morally consistent manner (Monin & Jordan, 2009). In other words, because morally conscious individuals ostensibly share common characteristics, identifying and understanding those traits could provide valuable information to the research community in terms of helping promote a safe and caring environment in which every individual can live. Thus, the moral personality approach seeks to identify those common moral traits, characteristics, or prototypes. With regard to this approach, Monin and Jordan identified
two research methodologies on which scientists in this domain typically focus their research: Moral exemplar and Prototype method.

The moral exemplar method is used by researchers who want to identify the specific personality characteristics that morally conscious individuals (e.g., a person who won an award for working with the homeless) share (Monin & Jordan, 2009). According to Monin and Jordan, researchers who employ the exemplar methodology typically seek out those rare individuals who have been nominated or honored for their superior moral accolades. As an example, if a person is nominated or recognized by a community organization or church for showing great concern for the homeless, he or she is the type of person with whom researchers in this domain would want to converse. Overall, the goal is to determine the extent to which moral exemplars and regular people differ in terms of their perceived personality characteristics (Monin & Jordan, 2009).

Monin and Jordan (2009) identified a number of researchers who have utilized this approach to researching the moral self. These include Colby and Damon (1992) and Walker and Frimer (2007). Although unaddressed by Monin and Jordan, research that Hart and Fegley (1995) and Monroe and Epperson (1994) conducted would also be considered to fall under this approach.

To begin, a classic example of the exemplar methodology comes from Colby and Damon’s (1992) qualitative study of 23 moral exemplars, which was featured in their book Some Do Care. In order to identify the people to whom moral considerations were important, the authors utilized twenty-two nominators who were experts in the field of morality. After much deliberation among the group of individuals, five common themes were consistent in their descriptions of who would be considered a moral exemplar.
First, the moral exemplar would need to have a respect for all of humanity as opposed to just one group. Second, the moral individual would have to have self-consistency in terms of translating moral ideals into moral action. In other words, engaging in moral behavior is imperative. This, ultimately, is consistent with Blasi’s (1980; 1993) definition of moral identity. Third, the individual would have to have a propensity for moral behavior despite the negative consequences resulting from his or her actions. For example, a negative outcry from societal groups or a substantial loss in financial gain would definitely constitute negative consequences. Fourth, the individual would have to be an inspiration to others. Finally, the individual would have to have the lack of or presence of no ego in terms of the person being humble about his or her contributions to society. Overall, a diverse group of twenty-three moral exemplars who made significant advances in areas like poverty, education, and environmental preservation was identified and extensively interviewed for the purpose of understanding the moral personality in greater detail. Overall, Colby and Damon (1992) concluded that the moral exemplars did not take into consideration the consequences following their helping other people (i.e., they had to help because they had no other choice), were certain about relating their goals to their internalized moral principles, had faith regardless of their dismal circumstances, had an appreciation for the ideas generated by their supporters, and had continuity in moral actions despite significant changes in their lives and living situations. Overall, these individuals to whom moral exemplarity was paramount provided a crucial step in terms of understanding the moral personality.

In the same vein, in order to understand extreme moral commitments, Hart and Fegley (1995) compared a group of fifteen morally conscious African American and
Latino youth from Camden, New Jersey who were nominated by community leaders and school officials for demonstrating altruistic behavior (e.g., working in a soup kitchen) with a comparison group of youth matched on age, gender, ethnicity, and neighborhood. Hart and colleagues surmised that understanding children who can thrive and be successful in such a detrimental environment (e.g., poverty and high crime rates) would prove fruitful in terms of understanding how moral action and behaviors can be sustained.

Hart and Fegley (1995) utilized several extensive interviews that lasted from 4 to 6 hours. In these interviews, four characteristics of the self were examined: (1) attributions to self, (2) incorporations of parental ideals into the self-concept, (3) theories of self-concept, and (4) the continuity of past and future selves. In terms of the first aspect, self-attributions refer to anything an individual considers to be part of the self (e.g., appearance, personality characteristics, and relationships with others). The authors hypothesized that the care exemplar group would use more moral traits, characteristics, or goals to describe themselves than the comparison group. Overall, the care exemplars’ descriptions were comprised of 7% moral attributes compared to 2% in the comparison group.

In terms of the second aspect of the self, integration of parents and ideals into the self-concept refers to a hierarchical structure of the self that incorporates attributes from others like one’s parents or best friends. According to Hart and colleagues, because evidence has shown that parents do have a strong influence with regard to a child’s moral development, it was hypothesized that the care exemplar group would have more self-descriptions that integrate parental ideals (e.g., what I am like with my father) and fewer self-descriptions that integrate characteristics of friends than the comparison group.
Overall, it was found that 93% of the care exemplar group had self-descriptions that incorporated parental ideals compared to 60% in the comparison group. Furthermore, because 80% of the comparison group used aspects of their best friend in their self-descriptions compared to only 47% in the exemplar group, the additional hypothesis was also supported.

Regarding the third aspect of the self, a theory of self refers to specific theories that an individual may have about him or herself (Hart & Fegley, 1995). The authors stated that prior research has shown that there are three types of theories that youth and young adults use to describe themselves: level 1 is usually utilized by children; level 2 theories of self are comprised of physical attributes and social awareness; level 3 theories of self are comprised of individuating one’s self from others; level 4 theories, which are the most advanced, are comprised of well-systematic beliefs, goals, and plans for the future. Thus, it was hypothesized that the exemplar group would have more advanced theories of self than the comparison group. Overall, this hypothesis was supported because half of the exemplars were reasoning at Level 4 compared to only one from the comparison group. With regard to the last aspect, the understanding of the self from the past into the future refers to how one describes his or her past selves, actual selves, and future selves (Hart & Fegley, 1995). Overall, the authors found that the descriptions of the actual selves of the exemplar group were essentially similar to their past and future selves. On the other hand, the comparison group had dissimilar descriptions.

Thus far, the findings from Colby and Damon (1992) and Hart and Fegley (1995) support the view that moral exemplars do share many distinct personality characteristics. For example, it seems that moral exemplarity entails a connection between personal goals
and moral actions, success despite harsh living conditions, an enhanced sense of empathy, and continuity in moral functioning across the life-span, respectively.

Although moral exemplars seem to share many personality characteristics (Colby & Damon, 1992; Hart & Fegley, 1995), a study conducted by Walker and Frimer (2007) examined whether different types of moral exemplars share these personality variables in addition to having unique characteristics specific to their exemplar group. According to the authors, “a comparison of differing types of moral exemplarity can reveal both what is common to their personality functioning (and thus indicative of a personological core) and also what is unique (which would be suggestive of different kinds of moral excellence)” (p. 846). In addition, the authors were concerned with the degree to which personality variables account for moral action because, as prior research has shown (Colby & Damon, 1992; Blasi; 1980; Hart & Fegley), stages of moral judgment only account for a limited amount of variance in terms of predicting moral action. As such, one’s moral sense of self or one’s moral identity may be multifaceted in nature, which may substantiate further the manner in which personality variables provide a motivational link that bridges the gap between moral judgment and moral action.

Walker and Frimer (2007) utilized two lengthy self-report personality questionnaires and an extensive life-review interview in order to compare 50 Canadians who had been given medals for immense bravery or caring (25 in each group) and a comparison group of 50 Canadians matched on age, ethnicity, and gender. The first questionnaire required the participants to rate on an 8-point Likert Scale the degree to which certain adjectives described themselves. The second questionnaire required the participants to provide a list of their personal strivings, which was used to assess the
degree to which distinct personality characteristics provide a motivational basis for one’s goals in life. Finally, according to the authors, the semi-structured life-review interview was used for the purpose of having the participants “construct the story of their life” (p. 849). Ultimately, this interview is comprised of three different sections: (1) recollection of main chapters of one’s life with regard to childhood, adolescence, and adulthood; (2) recollection of impactful events in terms of high-points, low-points, turning-points, earliest memory, and most salient adult memory; (3) recollection of a moral dilemma, which is used to determine one’s stage of moral reasoning.

In terms of the results, the first question was concerned with whether or not the two exemplar groups would differ from the matched comparison group. As a result of extensive analyses, the authors concluded that the caring and brave exemplars—compared to the control group—displayed significantly more agentic (i.e., ability to make responsible choices) and communal (i.e., viewing yourself as part of a community or humanity) themes in their life-narrative interviews. In addition, the care and brave exemplar group reported having significantly more secure attachments as children, an absence of enemies, and an overall sense of optimism that pervaded their life stories. The results from the two personality questionnaires were not as conclusive as the life-review interview because of inconsistent results. As a result of these findings, the authors concluded that there is a general set of personality characteristics that are shared by all of those to whom morality is an important factor of life.

With regard to the question concerning whether the two exemplar groups would have unique personality profiles, differences did exist in terms of which characteristics were associated with the caring exemplars and the brave exemplars (Walker & Frimer,
Specifically, the caring exemplar participants displayed more optimism in their life stories, and they scored higher on the dimensions of communion, secure attachments, intimacy strivings, and sensitivity to the plight of others. Thus, according to the authors, these data do provide evidence for similar, yet specific personality dispositions.

Finally, with regard to the question concerning whether personality variables provide a link between moral reasoning and moral action, the authors conducted two separate logistic regression analyses for each of the exemplar groups and found that the addition of personality variables to the equation in which moral reasoning scores were entered significantly improved the prediction of moral action (Walker & Frimer, 2007). According to Walker and Frimer, these findings provide support for the view that moral personalities can differ in terms what is central to self-concept.

Overall, although these data from Walker and Frimer (2007) coincide with and substantiate previous research findings from Colby and Damon (1992) and Hart and Fegley (1995) regarding significant personality differences among moral exemplars and the general population, these data also provide support for differing moral personalities. As such, the notion of moral identity appears to be multifaceted in many respects.

One final example of the exemplar methodology comes from a study conducted by Monroe and Epperson (1994) in which they interviewed, extensively, those people who assisted or did not assist the Jewish people during World War II. The main purpose of this study was to determine whether rescuers and non-rescuers differed in the manner in which their cognitive frameworks were structured. In order to identify those who rescued or provided assistance to the Jewish people, an Israeli agency founded for the purpose of honoring the rescuers and the victims of the Holocaust provided the
researchers with a database of rescuers who were still residing in the United States and Germany. As a result, thirty individuals were randomly selected, and letters describing the nature of the study were subsequently sent. Overall, fourteen rescuers participated in these lengthy interviews that ranged from three to 40 hours. Additionally, this group of rescuers was compared with a group of non-rescuers who were matched on characteristics like age, nationality, religion, certain experiences that occurred during childhood, and socioeconomic status.

In order to understand one’s cognitive-perceptual framework (i.e., the manner in which one perceives his or her self in relation to other people), the interviewers relied upon a qualitative analysis of the responses. According to Monroe and Epperson (1994), “earlier work suggested the cognitive component provided a more useful predictor of ethical political behavior than did more traditional explanations, stressing individual background characteristics, cultural explanations, or situational factors” (p. 206). As such, the authors surmised that quantitative analysis on which survey questionnaires are based would not be the appropriate method of measurement.

Overall, Monroe and Epperson (1994) discovered that neither the rescuers nor the non-rescuers believed they had a choice to make. In other words, although the rescuers and non-rescuers believed that they had no other choice to make with regard to behavior toward the Jews during World War II, both groups differed in explicit ways: the non-rescuers viewed the world in terms of “us and them” (p. 224), and the rescuers viewed themselves as being part of all of humanity. In essence, the rescuers considered all human beings to be equally important or equal in value. Thus, a communal theme to life
seems to be a common distinction that separates those who are considered moral exemplars and those who are not.

As opposed to the moral exemplar methodology regarding the study of moral identity or the moral self, the moral prototype methodology is used by researchers who want to determine the personality characteristics that regular people consider moral (Monin & Jordan, 2009). In other words, as opposed to an expert’s opinion regarding what is considered moral, this approach utilizes the conception of morality used by the layperson (Walker & Pitts, 1998). In essence, this approach allows for greater generalizability in terms of what the general population considers to be moral. According to Walker and Pitts, using preconceived definitions of morality, which are generally devised by moral psychologists, philosophers, or theologians, can limit one’s ability to better understand moral principles, ideals, and considerations.

Monin and Jordan (2009) identified a variety of researchers who utilized the moral prototype methodology. These include Walker and Pitts (1998), Aquino and Reed (pilot studies 1 and 2, 2002), Lapsley and Lasky (studies 1, 2, and 3, 2001), and Walker and Hennig (2004). Though not identified by Monin and Jordan, Walker (1999) also used this methodology.

As an example of the prototype method, Walker and Pitts (1998) conducted three separate studies for the purpose of determining how the layperson describes and views people who are high in “moral, religious, and spiritual excellence” (p. 405). The authors surmised that these three different types of exemplars would share personality characteristics in addition to having unique ones. According to the Walker and Pitts,
utilizing conceptions from the general population would further elucidate the nature of moral character.

With regard to study 1, a sample of 120 young, middle-aged, and older adults was asked to complete a questionnaire that required them to generate a list of characteristics that described a highly moral, spiritual, or religious individual (Walker & Pitts, 1998). According to the authors, 1,249 characteristics were generated for the moral individual, 1,234 for the religious individual, and 1,440 were generated for the spiritual individual. A content analysis was done in order to eliminate synonymous or low frequency characteristics, which resulted in 91 traits for the moral individual and 110 traits for both the spiritual and religious individual. Although each had unique characteristics, many of them were shared across the groups. As such, these descriptor lists provided the basis for the second study: which characteristics are central or important to each person-concept and which ones are shared?

In study 2, a separate sample of 120 young, middle-aged, and older adults was given a questionnaire (i.e., the descriptor lists from study 1) that asked them to rank on a 7-point Likert scale the degree to which each of the descriptors was characteristic of a highly moral, religious, or spiritual individual (Walker & Pitts, 1998). In terms of the results, it was discovered that the moral individual had 42 unique characteristics (e.g., just), 50 unique traits with regard to the religious individual (e.g., traditional), and 55 unique traits for the spiritual individual (e.g., peaceful). In addition, 17 traits were shared by both the religious and moral individuals (e.g., hard-working), 12 were shared by both the moral and spiritual individuals (e.g., truthful), and 23 traits were shared by both the religious and spiritual individuals (e.g., devout). Finally, 20 personality characteristics
were shared by each of the three person-concepts (e.g., caring.) According to the authors, because the spiritual and religious individuals have the most overlap in terms of personality characteristics, the moral person-concept can be seen as a similar, yet independent set of personality characteristics. Moreover, because the personality traits of principled, integrity, and consistency were highly rated in terms of characterizing the moral individual, the research of Blasi (1980), Colby and Damon (1992), and Hart and Fegley (1995) was in accord with these findings in terms of moral self-consistency being an important factor for moral functioning. Thus, the layperson does recognize that the moral personality is a distinct set of traits, which implies that the moral individual need not be highly religious or spiritual.

Finally, study 3 was conducted in order to determine people’s implicit views regarding how they view highly moral, spiritual, or religious individuals. A sample of 180 undergraduate students was randomly assigned to a similarity-sort task group for each of the person-concepts utilized in studies 1 and 2. In other words, this task required the participants to sort the top 50 prototypic characteristics into groups based on which traits were similar and dissimilar. As a result of hierarchical cluster analysis (HCA) and multidimensional scaling (MDS), separate clusters or categories and their underlying attributes were generated for each person-concept. With regard to the moral person-concept, six clusters were identified: principled-idealistic, dependable-loyal, has integrity, caring-trustworthy, fair, and confident. In terms of the religious person-concept, these clusters or categories were also identified: active in church and life-devout, committed-ethical, traditional, caring-trustworthy, steadfast, and dogmatic. Finally, the spiritual
person-concept was comprised of these clusters, as follows: devout, committed, meditative, contented, trustworthy, and caring.

According to Walker and Pitts (1998), these data from each of the three studies provide support for the notion that the personality of moral exemplars is distinctive from others. As such, the authors concluded that the general conception of moral exemplars, which is garnered by the layperson, coincides with the attributes that the moral exemplars ascribed to themselves in the above-mentioned studies conducted by Colby and Damon (1992), Monroe and Epperson (1994), and Hart and Fegley (1995).

Another notable example of the moral prototype methodology comes from the research conducted by Aquino and Reed (pilot studies 1 and 2, 2002) in which they sought to develop a measurement device that would reliably allow an individual to access his or her moral identity in order for him or her to rate the self-importance of it. In order for participants to do this, the authors surmised that people would need to view traits or characteristics that have been proven empirically to be related to the layperson’s conception of a moral person. Thus, Aquino and Reed utilized the prototype methodology to generate these moral characteristics.

A sample of 116 male and 112 female undergraduate business students from the University of Delaware was utilized for the purpose of identifying traits or characteristics that would reliably activate one’s moral identity (Aquino & Reed, 2002). First, the participants were asked to think about and write down a list of traits or characteristics that they thought would describe the personality of a moral individual. As a result, 376 “nonoverlapping moral traits, characteristics, or qualities” (p.1426) were identified. Next, the authors conducted a content analysis in order to combine similar traits.
Because 19 distinct traits were identified and because the authors wanted to precisely reduce the traits to ones that specifically activate one’s moral identity as opposed to a separate social identity, only those traits that were identified by 30% of the participants were kept. These traits are, as follows: caring, compassionate, fair, friendly, generous, helpful, hardworking, honest, and kind. Because these traits were similar to the ones generated by actual moral exemplars (Colby & Damon, 1992; Monroe & Epperson, 1994; Hart & Fegley, 1995; Walker & Frimer, 2007) and were similar to the ones generated by laypeople who were asked to describe their conceptions of the moral personality (Walker & Pitts, 1998), the authors concluded that the traits had content validity. However, in order to verify this further, Aquino and Reed conducted study 2 for the purpose of determining whether the nine traits were indeed content valid and would allow one to access his or her moral identity.

A sample of three groups of individuals consisting of master’s of business administration (MBA) students from the University of Chicago, high school students from South Florida, and undergraduate students from the University of Delaware was given a questionnaire that asked them to read the nine traits identified from study 1 and rate, on a 5 point Likert-scale, the degree to which they considered each trait a necessary one for someone to possess in order to be considered a moral person (Aquino & Reed, 2002). In addition, two comparison traits (i.e., selfish and ruthless) and a neutral trait (i.e., distant) were also included. Overall, because each of the nine moral traits—on average—was scored above the midpoint of the Likert-scale, the authors concluded that it was reasonable to include all of them as moral identity inducing stimuli. Because each of the nine traits identified by the authors was validated by prior research noted above, the
prototype methodology seems to work well when one seeks to identify core personality characteristics that exemplify a moral individual.

The four studies conducted by Lapsley and Lasky (2001), in which the layperson’s view regarding the moral personality was sought, also characterize well the moral prototype methodology. However, studies 1, 2, and 3 will only be reviewed. Similar to the studies conducted by Walker and Pitts (studies 1 and 2, 1998) and Aquino and Reed (pilot studies 1 and 2, 2002) in which participants were required to generate a list of characteristics that describe a moral individual and subsequently rate the degree to which those traits were essential for one to be a moral person, the research done by Lapsley and Lasky (studies 1 and 2) followed suit. Additionally, study 3 was utilized to assess the degree to which recognition and recall memory would support a moral prototype.

Regarding study 1, a sample of 73 undergraduate and graduate students from a large regional university located in the Midwest was given instructions that asked them to generate characteristics describing someone who has “good character” (p. 349). Additionally, the participants were asked to keep their responses to a minimum of 20 separate lines. Overall, a content analysis identified 175 distinct adjectives regarding traits describing a person who has good character. As a result of the traits identified in study 1, study 2 was designed to determine which traits were and were not indicative of a moral prototype (Lapsley & Lasky, 2001). As such, 121 participants were presented with a randomized list of the traits that were identified in study 1 and asked to rate on a 7-point Likert scale, which ranged from 1 (almost never true) to 7 (almost always true), the degree to which the traits described someone who has good character. Because these
traits would be used in study 3, the 20 highest rated traits (e.g., caring, moral, honest, responsible) and the 20 lowest rated traits (e.g., lucky, clean, patriotic, popular) were kept and identified as prototypic and nonprototypic of good character.

Lapsley and Lasky (2001) conducted study 3 for the purpose of determining whether a false recognition and recall memory task would also support the notion that there is a cognitive prototype associated with moral character. The authors surmised that the participants would falsely recognize more prototypic than nonprototypic characteristics that were not shown at the learning phase and equally recall presented prototypic traits and presented nonprototypic traits, which would support their hypothesis regarding the moral prototype and the way in which it influences information processing.

Eighty participants who were similar to the ones utilized in studies 1 and 2 in terms of demographics were presented with a memory test (Lapsley & Lasky, 2001). In the acquisition phase, the participants were given a questionnaire that contained 20 statements describing a person called “Pat.” Whereas 10 statements described Pat as an individual with good character (i.e., prototypic traits), the other ten described him using nonprototypic traits. Each of the statements was presented on one page in random order, which was subsequently followed by a tone that signaled the participants to switch to the next page. After this was done, the participants were required to engage in tasks that measured recall and recognition memory. In terms of the recall task, the participants were asked to verbally state every single statement that they could remember. According to the authors, no significant differences in terms of recall memory were expected with the presented items. With regard to the recognition task, the participants were shown 40 statements, which were comprised of 20 presented statements (i.e., 10 prototypic and 10
nonprototypic traits) and 20 statements that were not shown (i.e., 10 prototypic and 10 nonprototypic traits). As stated above, the authors hypothesized that significant differences would be found in terms of the participants falsely recognizing more prototypic traits that were not shown compared to nonprototypic traits that were not shown.

Overall, Lapsley and Lasky (2001) supported each of the abovementioned hypotheses. In terms of the recall task, there were no significant differences concerning recall memory when the participants were asked to verbally state presented prototypic and nonprototypic traits. On the other hand, the authors found a significant difference in terms of the participants falsely claiming that they had seen more nonpresented prototypic traits compared to nonpresented nonprototypic traits. According to the authors, these data “suggest that at least some morally relevant psychological processes are implicit, spontaneous, and automatic and that the conditions and consequences of prototype knowledge activation will have to play a role in understanding moral information processing” (p. 357). Ultimately, these data from Lapsley and Lasky support the findings from Walker and Pitts (1998) and Aquino and Reed (studies 1 and 2) concerning the notion that moral character can congregate around a set of distinct personality characteristics that are generated by the layperson, which may be understood and expressed implicitly or understood and expressed explicitly.

A moral prototype methodology also characterizes the 3 studies conducted by Walker and Hennig (2004) in which they sought to substantiate and extend previous findings (Walker & Pitts, 1998; Lapsley & Lasky, studies 1, 2, and 3, 2001; Aquino & Reed, studies 1 and 2, 2002) regarding the manner in which the average person produces
and rates personality characteristics related to his or her conception of the moral agent. More specifically, this study attempted to determine whether different types of moral personalities (i.e., just, brave, and caring) share personality characteristics that are generated by the layperson in addition to having unique ones, which is similar to the Walker and Frimer (2007) study in which they used the moral exemplar approach to answer a similar question. Ultimately, the goal was to determine, conclusively, whether there was more than a single moral prototype. Unlike Aquino and Reed (studies 1 and 2, 2002) and Lapsley and Lasky (studies 1 and 2, 2001), however, Walker and Hennig utilized a similarity-sorting procedure from Walker and Pitts (study 3, 1998) in order to understand better the extent to which moral conceptions are understood implicitly.

In study 1, a sample of 805 young, middle-aged, and older adults was randomly assigned to a just, brave, or caring personality group that required them to generate personality characteristics describing each (Walker & Hennig, 2004). The goal, according to the authors, was to examine the traits that are characteristic of each, which would be “suggestive of the core of morality” (p. 631). This procedure produced 3,309 traits for the just personality, 2,873 for the brave personality, and 3,208 for the caring personality. Similar to the studies conducted by Aquino and Reed (study 1, 2001), Lapsley and Lasky (study 1, 2001), and Walker and Pitts (study 1, 1998), a content analysis that combined similar traits and removed low-frequency traits was utilized in order to reduce the data. Overall, there were 113, 120, and 103 traits related to the just, brave, and caring personalities, and 50 unique traits for the just personality (e.g., has integrity, reasonable), 67 for the brave personality (e.g., heroic, faces danger), and 47 for the caring personality (e.g., good-hearted, nurturing). In addition, 15 traits were shared
between the just and brave personalities (e.g., honorable, courageous), 18 between the just and caring personalities (e.g., good listener, fair), and 8 between the brave and caring personalities (e.g., self-sacrificial, altruistic). Moreover, 30 traits were shared among each of the three types of personalities (e.g., moral, honest, empathic, humble, and optimistic). According to the authors, themes of “communal emotionality” (p. 632) and “personal agency” (p. 632) were replete within each of the three personalities, which demonstrates separate, yet similar personality characteristics.

Regarding study 2, a sample of 401 undergraduate students was randomly assigned to a just, brave, and caring group in order for them to rank on an 8-point Likert scale, which ranged from 1 being extremely inaccurate and 8 being extremely accurate, the degree to which the descriptor traits identified in study 1 were characteristic of each of the moral personalities (Walker & Hennig, 2004). In addition, 124 items from a personality inventory (i.e., Five-Factor Model of Personality) that measures extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness to experience) were also used for the purpose of generating a personality profile for each type of moral personality. Thus, the goal for this study was to extrapolate from the data a personality profile for each exemplar in addition to examining the relations among them.

First, in terms of the prototypicality ratings, the attributes identified in study 1 were deemed appropriate with regard to each moral personality. In other words, a majority of the traits for each exemplar were rated as quite accurate (i.e., a rating of 6) to extremely accurate (i.e., a rating of 8), which substantiates the finding from study 1 concerning the multifaceted nature of a moral prototype. Second, with regard to the relations among the moral personalities, it was discovered that just exemplar had higher
ratings regarding the traits than those traits shared with the caring or brave personality. According to the authors, these data provide evidence for a similar, yet independent moral personality.

It was also found that the unique descriptors regarding the brave exemplar had higher ratings than those descriptors that were shared with the just and caring exemplar, which implies that the brave personality is also similar, yet distinct from the other personalities. Additionally, it was discovered that the caring exemplar or caring personality was moderately associated with the other person-concepts. In addition, it was found that the trait moral was highly associated with the just personality, followed by the caring personality, and finally followed by the brave personality.

The final analysis in study 2 focused on the personality profiles for each moral personality (Walker & Hennig, 2004). These profiles were generated and examined with the Five-Factor Model of Personality (i.e., extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness to experience) and their underlying attributes. First, the caring personality was associated with “warm, agreeable, nurturing, and sympathetic” (p. 637). Second, the brave exemplar or personality was associated with being agentic, forceful, self-confident, friendly, and sociable. Finally, the just personality was associated with dependable, organized, open-minded, questioning, and reflective. In terms of these underlying attributes related to the Five-Factor Model of Personality, “the just exemplar was characterized predominantly by Conscientiousness and Openness, the brave exemplar by dominance/Extraversion, and the caring exemplar by nurturance/Agreeableness” (p. 643). As such, the authors concluded that these data provide evidence for differing conceptions of moral exemplarity.
Finally, a sample of 240 undergraduate students participated in study 3 for the purpose of determining whether moral conceptions are understood implicitly in terms of moral typologies (Walker & Hennig, 2004). The participants were asked to participate in a similarity-sorting task, which required them to be randomly assigned to a brave, caring, or just exemplar group and sort 60 descriptors traits based on which ones they thought were similar or different from one another. A combination of Multidimensional scaling (MDS) and Hierarchical cluster analysis (HCA) revealed clusters of attributes with underlying traits related to each moral personality. For the just exemplar, 5 dimensions and underlying traits for each were revealed: rational (e.g., logical, intelligent), conscientious (e.g., responsible, consistent), honest (e.g., truthful, sincere), and principled (e.g., moral, ethical), and fair (e.g., listens to all sides, non-discriminatory). In terms of the brave exemplar, 5 dimensions and underlying characteristics were also revealed: dedicated (e.g., driven, ambitious), intrepid (e.g., fearless, faces danger), self-sacrificial (e.g., willing, noble) heroic-strong (e.g., bold, gallant), and confident (e.g., assertive, secure). Finally, three dimensions and underlying attributes were generated with regard to the caring exemplar: loving-empathic (e.g., tender, compassionate), honest-dependable (e.g., honest, moral), and altruistic (e.g., generous, charitable).

According to Walker and Hennig (2004), the data obtained from studies 1, 2, and 3 provide support for the notion that different types of moral exemplars (i.e., brave, caring, and just) have similar and unique personality dispositions. Although this, of course, is the layperson’s view regarding what he or she considers moral exemplarity, the findings from this study support the research conducted by Walker and Frimer (2007) in which they concluded that actual moral exemplars describe themselves in similar and
distinct ways. As such, it seems that the moral personality is multifaceted in nature as opposed to singular and concrete.

A final example of the moral prototype methodology comes from the Walker (1999) study in which he sought to determine the extent to which participants’ descriptions of moral, spiritual, and religious exemplars would differ. More specifically, similar to the Walker and Hennig (2004) studies in which they tried to determine the perceived personality profiles of brave, caring, and just exemplars by utilizing analyses that examined the Five-Factor Model of Personality in terms of comparing those dimensions with traits generated by participants, Walker (1999) also took this methodology into consideration.

A sample of 120 young, middle-aged, and older adults who were recruited from undergraduate classes and personal contacts was collectively asked to complete a questionnaire requiring their generating of characteristics that they thought would characterize the personality dispositions of moral, religious, and spiritual individuals (Walker, 1999). These descriptions, in turn, were then entered into a program that identified valid personality attributes for the purpose of relating them to attributes associated with the Big-Five personality factors (i.e., extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness to experience). The participants produced characteristics for each exemplar, which were then subsequently compared and analyzed with the Five-Factor Model of Personality and its underlying attributes related to each factor.

In terms of the generated attributes and their relations to the Five-Factor Model of Personality, several primary distinctions and similarities among the three exemplars were
revealed (Walker, 1999). First, in terms of the moral exemplar, it was discovered that the most positive characteristics were related to the Conscientiousness (e.g., trustworthy, ethical, responsible) and Agreeableness (e.g., caring, kind, helpful) factors, with no significant differences in terms of the other three factors. Additionally, the undesirable characteristics were related to the Agreeableness (e.g., stubborn, critical) and Open to Experience (e.g., rigid, inflexible) factors, with few traits relating to the other factors.

Regarding the spiritual exemplar, the most positive characteristics were related to the Agreeableness (e.g., loving, caring, kind), Openness (e.g., reflective, aware, introspective), and Conscientiousness (e.g., moral, devoted, truthful) factors, with the other two factors being less prominent in terms of significant differences (Walker, 1998). With regard to negative characteristics, it was discovered that the Extroversion factor was the most prominent when compared to the other four factors.

Finally, with regard to the religious exemplar, the most positive characteristics were associated with Conscientiousness (e.g., faithful, moral, disciplined) and Agreeableness (e.g., kind, accepting, helpful) (Walker, 1998). In terms of undesirable traits, the authors discovered that a majority of the traits were associated with Openness (e.g., rigid, conservative) and Agreeableness (e.g., self-righteous, authoritarian), with very few terms being related to the other three factors. These findings from Walker (1999) substantiate and extend previous findings from Walker and Pitts (1998) and Walker and Hennig (2004) in terms of providing additional evidence regarding the average person’s view of divergent moral personalities or prototypes.

As opposed to the exemplar methodology, which is focused on discovering the unique personality dispositions that characterize actual moral exemplars, the prototype
methodology attempts to address and examine the comprehensive depiction of the moral personality in terms of the specific culture from which an individual comes (Monin & Jordan, 2009). According to Monin and Jordan (2009), “These two methods address related questions insofar as individuals are likely recognized by their community as moral leaders (and thus studied by students of the exemplar approach) to the extent that they match the templates associated with the moral ideal in their culture (as documented by proponents of the prototype approach)” (p. 6-7).

**Strengths and Weaknesses of the Moral Personality Approach**

In reviewing the aforementioned work comprising the Moral Personality approach, it seems that there are various strengths and weaknesses that should be addressed. An important strength appears to be the “top down” approach that it uses. In other words, this approach starts with the end in mind in terms of trying to understand the manner in which prior experience, cognitions, and knowledge guide a moral individual’s behavior. Classic examples that elucidate this strength further come from the studies conducted by Monroe and Epperson (1994), Colby and Damon (1992), Hart and Fegley (1995) and Walker and Frimer (2007) in which they sought to understand the life stories, cognitions, and underlying reasons regarding why people display moral exemplarity despite troubling circumstances and unique circumstances that may disrupt or alter their lives. In essence, this approach utilizes those who are high in moral functioning as opposed to those who are not.

A second strength is that certain findings support the possibility that this construct could be multifaceted. Because, it has never been resolved as to whether moral identity is dispositional, situational, or developmental, the research conducted by Walker and
Frimer (2007) examining those nominated for acts of care and those nominated for acts of heroism shows that differences do indeed exist in terms of the caring exemplars exhibiting significantly more optimistic themes in their life stories. In addition, the caring exemplars scored higher on dimensions of communion, secure attachments, intimacy, and sensitivity regarding the plight of other individuals. Another piece of evidence that supports the notion regarding the multifaceted view of moral exemplarity comes from Walker and Hennig (study 2, 2004), which examined the profiles for three different moral exemplars. To begin, the caring exemplar was seen as warm, agreeable, nurturing, and sympathetic. Next, the brave exemplar was viewed as being agentic, forceful, self-confident, friendly, and sociable. Finally, the just exemplar was associated with dependable, organized, open-minded, questioning, and reflective traits. In addition, the research from Walker and Pitts (1998) and Walker (1999) also supported the view that highly moral, spiritual, or religious individuals are perceived to have similar, yet distinct personalities. Unlike Lapsley and Lasky (2001) who considered the possibility that the moral personality may be singular as opposed to multifaceted, the abovementioned research demonstrates that morality may be extant within many different types of personality dispositions.

A third strength is that the notion of a moral prototype does seem feasible. The research of Walker (1999), Walker and Pitts (1998), Lapsley and Laskey (2001), and Aquino and Reed (studies 1 and 2, 2002) has demonstrated, through the use of free listing procedures that require the participants to generate traits that they think describe a moral individual, how laypersons have a general understanding that there are advanced moral identities or personalities that are fundamentally distinct from their own. First, Walker
(1999) discovered that the moral exemplar prototype was seen as being trustworthy, ethical, responsible, caring, kind, and helpful. Second, Walker and Pitts (1998) also discovered that the moral person-concept was viewed as being principled, dependable, caring, trustworthy, fair, and confident. Third, as a result of Laspsley and Lasky (2001) asking participants to describe someone who has good character, these traits, for example, were identified: caring, moral, honest, and responsible. Finally, Aquino and Reed (studies 1 and 2) had participants think about and write down characteristics that they thought would describe the personality of a moral individual. As a result, these traits were ultimately identified: caring, compassionate, fair, friendly, generous, helpful, hardworking, honest, and kind. Although there seems to be a plethora of evidence regarding the multifaceted nature of an advanced moral identity (e.g., moral exemplar, caring, exemplar, brave exemplar, spiritual exemplar, religious exemplar, just exemplar), the average person does seem to produce similar personality characteristics when required to describe one who is specifically a moral exemplar.

A final strength is that identifying the signature personality profile of the moral individual could guide moral education and educational practice in general. In essence, the integration and understanding of the moral self within various psychological models of development and cognition may help to increase the effectiveness of moral education. Laspsley (2008) stated that the integration of additional models within the moral self will ultimately help schools, families, and communities foster the proper development of morality. Additionally, he also stated that children will encounter situations that are morally significant. Thus, parental techniques, for example, should include helping children identify which events are related to morally accepted norms and values.
In terms of some of the weaknesses related to this approach of moral identity measurement, three need to be given consideration. First, this approach is extremely time consuming in terms of using interview-based methods for identifying moral and non-moral individuals. Because the interviewing process can last many hours or many days, participant fatigue and the high cost of conducting research could have implications where the results are concerned. Second, highly complex analyses from both quantitative and qualitative traditions are required. Furthermore, there is much variability in terms of interview protocols. In other words, there is not a standardized method that is utilized by researchers who adhere to this approach of moral identity measurement.

**Moral Centrality Approach: Moral Self-Importance**

According to Monin and Jordan (2009), the moral centrality approach deals with the perceived self-importance of moral concerns. As such, Monin and Jordan considered that this approach to moral identity measurement has been influenced by the research of Blasi (1980; 1993; 1995), who sought to explain how moral concerns become central to and prioritized by self-concept and self-understanding. Hence, Blasi was not just looking to identify those who possessed moral characteristics. Instead, he sought to study those whose lives were synonymous with moral concerns. In other words, he was looking for how individuals’ lives and moral concerns were synonymous; in essence, moral values and behaviors were not just characteristics or extensions of self—they were self.

Monin and Jordan (2009) regarded the joint efforts of Karl Aquino and Americus Reed as a fundamental example of the moral centrality approach. Aquino and Reed (2002) sought to extend Blasi’s seminal work (1980; 1993; 1995) by studying the self-importance participants attributed to moral identity. Similar to Blasi (1980; 1993; 1995),
Aquino and Reed presumed that greater importance attributed by the self to such a construct would ultimately increase the likelihood that moral reasoning would translate to moral action. Ultimately, Aquino and Reed created a measure of the self-importance of moral identity, called the Moral Identity Scale (MIS). Given the MIS’s role in advancing the moral centrality approach, more details regarding the scale follow.

The MIS is comprised of two factors relating to moral identity, with five questions corresponding to each (Aquino & Reed, 2002). The internalization scale addresses the extent to which one values moral traits, and the symbolization scale seeks to identify whether one’s actions demonstrate a commitment to moral self-expression or commitment (e.g., group membership, activities considered moral). First, participants are asked to review nine characteristics that may exemplify one who has a propensity for moral action. These characteristics include caring, compassionate, fair, friendly, generous, helpful, hardworking, honest, and kind. Aquino and Reed (2002, pilot studies 1 and 2) capitalized on the moral prototype approach as a means for identifying these characteristics. Similar to the participants in other studies conducted by Walker and Pitts (1998), Walker (1999), Lapsley and Lasky (2001) and Walker and Hennig (2004), the participants in the pilot studies (1 and 2) in which the MIS was developed did indeed generate similar characteristics (e.g., caring, honest, compassionate) related to a moral prototype when asked to participate in a free listing procedure task. Second, a visualization task is done in which participants are asked to imagine how a person with these traits would feel, act, and think. Because moral identity is one of the many identities that people have, the visualization task regarding thinking about a person who has these characteristics is essential to the measure because it makes one’s moral identity
accessible at that time, which would allow one to possibly rate the self-importance of that specific identity (Aquino & Reed, 2002). According to the authors, these traits cause a “spreading activation” (p. 1424) in terms of activating other moral traits in the cognitive network. Finally, participants answer each of the 10 questions on a 5-point Likert scale, with 1 meaning strongly disagree and 5 meaning strongly agree. Examples of questions from the internalization and symbolization scale are as follows: “It would make me feel good to be a person who has these characteristics” and “I am actively involved in activities that communicate to others that I have these characteristics,” respectively (Aquino & Reed, 2002, p. 1428). Ultimately, this measure is used to predict behavioral intentions, actual behaviors, or moral cognitions as Aquino and Reed supported with subsequent studies that they included in their 2002 publication.

**Notable Research using the Moral Identity Scale**

During the development of the Moral Identity Scale, Aquino and Reed (2002, studies 4, 5 and 6) sought to determine whether the scale would be predictive of moral cognitions and behavior. In order to determine whether the scale would be predictive of moral cognitions or a “moral spontaneous self-concept” (p. 1432), the authors utilized in study 4 a sample of 160 South Florida high school students to answer this question. First, the participants were asked to complete the Moral Identity Scale at time 1. After two months, the same participants were given seven weekly writing assignments, one of which required the students to answer the following question: “How would you describe yourself—discuss who you are as a person, what is important to you and what qualities or characteristics do you like/dislike about yourself” (p. 1433).
The authors discovered that higher scores on both the internalization ($M = 4.0$, $SD = 0.7$, $r = .39$, $p < .001$) and symbolization ($M = 3.0$, $SD = 0.7$, $r = .28$, $p < .001$) dimensions of the MIS were significantly correlated with judges’ ratings of whether the students’ self-descriptions contained moral traits and characteristics (Aquino & Reed, 2002). In addition, binary logistic and regression analyses provided further evidence for the predictive validity of the MIS scales.

In order to determine whether the MIS would have significant correlations with self-reported volunteer behavior and intrinsic satisfaction regarding those moral behaviors, study 5 utilized a sample of 300 University of Delaware alumni. They were asked to complete the MIS and answer a “yes” or “no” question regarding whether they have participated in activities that benefit humanity (e.g., mentoring, working at a food shelter, etc.) within the last two years (Aquino & Reed, 2002). In addition, if the participants had answered “yes” to the prior question, they were then asked to rate these 3 questions on a 5-point Likert (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree) scale: the degree to which they had intrinsic satisfaction while engaging in volunteer activities; the degree to which their participating was voluntary; and the degree to which they felt involved.

In terms of the first analysis, Aquino and Reed (2002) found that both the internalization ($M = 4.58$, $SD = 0.42$, $r = .19$, $p < .01$) and symbolization ($M = 3.12$, $SD = 0.69$, $r = .23$, $p < .001$) scales were positively and significantly correlated with self-reported volunteerism. Second, the authors also discovered that symbolization ($M = 3.12$, $SD = 0.69$, $r = .26$, $p < .001$) was positively and significantly correlated with intrinsic satisfaction regarding participation in volunteer activities. Third, both internalization ($M = 4.58$, $SD = 0.42$, $r = .38$, $p < .001$) and symbolization ($M = 3.12$, $SD = 0.69$, $r = .20$, $p$
were also found to be positively related to perceived freedom in terms of whether the volunteer behaviors were voluntary. Finally, Aquino and Reed found that the symbolization ($M = 3.12, SD = 0.69, r = .33, p < .01$) scale was positively correlated with the degree to which the participants felt involved when participating in volunteer activities. Similar to study 4, binary logistic and regression analyses also generated further evidence in terms of the predictive ability of the MIS.

Finally, Aquino and Reed (2002) conducted study 6 in order to conclude whether or not the MIS could count for actual donation behavior and the size of the donation. A sample of 160 high school students, who were described in study 4, was given an opportunity to participate in a food drive. Three months after the participants had completed the MIS and 1 month after they had completed the seven weekly writing assignments, the students’ teacher organized a food drive and recorded whether or not each student donated canned goods. In addition, the teacher also counted the number of cans donated by each student. Overall, the internalization ($M = 4.05, SD = 0.67, r = .25, p < .01$) scale was positively correlated with actual donation behavior and the number of cans donated ($M = 4.05, SD = 0.67, r = .28, p < .01$). Additionally, binary logistic and regression analyses also supported the predictive validity of the MIS. As a result of these promising findings from these studies, many other researchers decided to utilize the MIS in their research endeavors.

Other researchers have yielded notable findings with the MIS. An extremely succinct review of each will be provided. For instance, Hall and Derryberry (2010) utilized a sample of 120 undergraduate students from a large Southeastern university in order to determine whether or not significant differences would exist between explicit
racists and a low prejudice group in terms of various constructs like moral identity. They found that the internalization and symbolization scores of the MIS were significantly lower for a highly explicit racial prejudice group compared to a low overall prejudice group. In other words, those to whom morality is important were less likely to be explicitly racist. Thus, this result does provide additional evidence for the validity of the measure.

Reed, Aquino, and Levy (study 1a, 2007) utilized a sample of 242 undergraduate students, administration workers, and community residents for the purpose of determining perceptions of charitable acts in terms of whether giving money or time was considered more moral. The researchers used the MIS, and they utilized a scale that measures the extent to which a person believes giving time or money to a charitable organization is more moral or charitable. The authors discovered that participants who scored highly on the internalization measure of the MIS were more likely to state that the giving of one’s time to volunteer in various charitable endeavors was more moral, caring, heartfelt, and self-expressive than just giving money to that particular group or organization.

Further evidence for the validity of the measure comes from Reed and Aquino (study 1, 2003) in which they sought to determine the extent to which one’s moral identity would be related to one’s perceived moral obligation toward out-group members of society. In study 1, a sample of 137 undergraduate students enrolled in a marketing class at a northeastern university located in the United States was used. The researchers utilized the MIS, and they also utilized several questionnaires designed to assess perceived obligation to show concern for discriminated groups of people. The authors
discovered that higher scores on the internalization measure of the MIS were significantly correlated with more positive beliefs regarding relief efforts and help aimed at providing much needed aid to out-group members of our society.

One last important finding regarding the utilization of the MIS comes from the Sage, Kavussanu, and Duda (2006) study in which they sought to examine the extent to which one’s moral identity might predict prosocial and antisocial behaviors in soccer. A sample of 210 recreational and professional male soccer players was used in this study. The authors found that professional soccer players who scored higher on the internalization measure of the scale were more likely to engage in prosocial behaviors and less likely to engage in antisocial behaviors (e.g., fooling the referee, elbowing the opposition) on the soccer field. Overall, these finding do provide some support that the MIS is capable of predicting behavioral intentions, actual behaviors, and moral cognitions.

**Strengths and Weaknesses of the Moral Centrality Approach and the Moral Identity Scale**

One of the major strengths of the moral centrality approach is how it revolves around Blasi’s (1980, 1993, 1995) pioneering work to discover the degree to which moral features become centralized within the self. This unification of moral features leads to another strength: parsimony in measurement. That is, measurement involves a quantitative approach whereupon participants are merely asked to quantify the degree to which moral characteristics are fundamental to self. Furthermore, research under this approach involves all of humankind, not just exemplars or those nominated for their moral endeavors. Measurement from this approach has also utilized methods derived
from the moral personality approach, which is yet another strength. For example, in
developing the MIS, Aquino and Reed (2002, studies 1 and 2) relied on the moral
prototype method in generating the list of adjectives that participants are asked to
consider. Furthermore, the characteristics used are those that have been verified in moral
exemplar research to be possessed by moral exemplars. A final strength is that
measurements—particularly the MIS—have been shown to have documented
relationships with moral functioning (Aquino & Reed, 2002; Hall & Derryberry, 2010;
Reed & Aquino, 2003; Sage, Kavussanu, & Duda, 2006; Reed, Aquino, & Levy, 2007).

Though strengths exist, some important weaknesses need to be considered. The
majority of the weaknesses have to do with the measurement that has been preeminently
relied on under this approach, the MIS. Because participants may feel pressure to
respond in a certain way on the MIS, the role of social desirability is very plausible. For
example, it seems very difficult that participants would score too low on the MIS. A
good example of this comes from Aquino and Reed (study 5, 2002) in which they
reported extremely high means and very low standard deviations of the average score for
each question for both the internalization ($M = 4.58, SD = 0.42$) and symbolization ($M =
3.12, SD = 0.69$) scales of the MIS using 5-point Likert scales. In addition, in terms of
the average total score for each scale, Hall and Derryberry (2010) also reported extremely
high means and low standard deviations for the low racial prejudice group: internalization
($M = 24.03, SD = 1.24$) and symbolization ($M = 18.48, SD = 3.42$). Based on the
evidence, it seems that the internalization dimension of the scale is more susceptible to
less variability and higher scoring. Supporting this notion, Hall and Derryberry (2010)
made their data available, and a skewness analysis indicated that the internalization
scores of the MIS were highly negatively skewed, which means that the majority of scores were high as opposed to low. Hence, there is little variability in terms of the manner in which participants answer the questions, which certainly precipitates concerns about construct validity.

Further analysis of the Hall and Derryberry (2010) data also showed a significant positive correlation with the Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding Scale, an index used to measure social desirability, and the MIS symbolization scale score ($r = .24$, $p = .007$). As such, there is support that limited variability may be the result of social desirability. Another potential weakness of the MIS is the inconsistency of the Likert scale. Because some researchers prefer to use a 5-point scale as opposed to a 7-point scale, it is possible that limited variability may result from such inconsistent measurement. One final weakness to note deals with types of behaviors that the MIS is purported to predict. As opposed to complex moral behaviors (e.g., moral exemplar nominations for taking care of the poor) that have been analyzed by Monroe and Epperson (1994), Hart and Fegley (1995), Colby and Damon (1992), and Walker and Frimer (2007), the MIS (Aquino & Reed, studies 4, 5, and 6; Hall & Derryberry, 2010; Sage, Kavussanu, & Duda, 2006; Reed & Aquino, 2003; Reed, Aquino, & Levy, 2007) to date has only been used to predict simple cognitions, attitudes, and behaviors. Thus, the MIS does have some significant weaknesses that need to be addressed given its prominence in contributing to the moral centrality approach.

**Statement of the Problem**

The moral personality approach has enabled verification via the moral exemplar method that moral exemplars possess a distinct moral identity (Hart & Fegley, 1995;
Colby & Damon, 1992; Monroe & Epperson, 1994; Walker & Frimer, 2007). In the same vein, the moral personality approach has enabled verification via the moral prototype method that the moral identity of moral exemplars is logically distinct from others (Walker & Pitts, 1998; Walker, 1999). Although this is the case, such distinctions have not, to this point, been capitalized upon in measuring the moral self.

With regard to the moral centrality approach, it has enabled a willingness to consider quantitative measurement of moral identity (Aquino & Reed, 2002), and verification that such measurements can relate to moral functioning (Aquino & Reed, 2002, studies 5 and 6; Hall & Derryberry, 2010; Reed & Aquino, 2003; Reed, Aquino, & Levy, 2007; Sage, Kavussanu, & Duda, 2006). However, a variety of measurement limitations are associated with this approach such as social desirability and skewness. It seems like these limitations could be addressed by further capitalizing on the understanding that the moral personality approach has generated. In other words, it seems that moral identity could be more effectively measured if measurement of identity capitalized upon strengths associated with both the moral personality and moral centrality approaches.

**Purpose of the Study**

Thus, the purpose of the current study is to attempt to improve the Moral Identity Scale rather than replace it. Because the MIS does, to an extent, seem to predict certain kinds of moral functioning (Aquino & Reed, 2002, studies 5 and 6; Hall & Derryberry, 2010; Reed & Aquino, 2003; Reed, Aquino, & Levy, 2007; Sage & Kavussanu, 2010), it would be detrimental to the study of moral psychology to abandon a measurement device that has accounted for moral functioning. Additionally, it is quick to administer, which is
extremely attractive for researchers in the field, especially considering how the moral identity construct has been measured in the past (i.e., interview-based methods). Thus, a revision of the scale seems prudent.

The purpose of this study, then, is to determine whether a revised MIS (RMIS) can reduce skewness, decrease social desirability effects, and be a better predictor of moral functioning observed in everyday life. The RMIS will capitalize on the moral personality approach by requiring the participants to read and compare themselves with moral exemplars. First, the participants will read two short stories of actual moral exemplars (i.e., Tony and Virginia Foster Durr). Second, the participants will write down the characteristics that they share and do not share with the exemplars about whom they read and then complete the initial procedures of the MIS: review the nine moral characteristics and visualization of how a person with these traits would feel, act, and think. Third, information will be given regarding the rarity of the moral exemplars about whom they read. This will include the costs and benefits of being a moral exemplar, in addition to information stating the moral exemplars would score extremely high on tests of morality. Additionally, this information will stress that the average person does not fall into the exemplar category, which is perfectly normal. Fourth, they will be asked to complete the ten questions according to their own perspective on 7-item Likert Scale. Finally, a five-item quiz (i.e., recognition memory test) will be given to determine whether the participants actually read the stories (More information about the RMIS is available in the Methods section and Appendix G).

Because people do recognize that people who are moral exemplars typically possess personality traits that differ from the general population (Walker, 1999; Walker
& Pitts, 1998), when they read and compare themselves with the moral exemplars (Colby & Damon, 1992; Monroe & Epperson, 1994), the truth about their own morality may resonate with them because it would be difficult to compare themselves with people who are high in moral functioning. As such, hopefully this will force the participants to answer the questions honestly according to their own moral functioning, which may reduce skewness and the negative impact of social desirability. Additionally, the RMIS will utilize a 7-point Likert Scale (the MIS use a 5-point Likert Scale) to increase the variation in the scores, which may also reduce negative skewness. Finally, to address the influence of social desirability on scoring, the Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding (BIDR; Li & Bagger, 2007) will be utilized in this study. In addition, post hoc skewness analyses will also be conducted.

In addition, this study will attempt to determine whether the revised MIS is a better predictor of moral functioning than the original MIS. First, because those people who are considered moral exemplars consider all humans to be equally important (Colby & Damon, 1992; Monroe & Epperson, 1994), the Identification with all of Humanity Scale (IWAHS; McMarland & Brown, 2008) will be utilized. Second, because moral exemplars are typically viewed as empathic people (Aquino & Reed, 2002; Walker, 1999; Walker & Pitts, 1998), The Davis Interpersonal Reactivity Index (DIRI; Davis, 1980) will also be utilized to measure this construct. Third, because the moral self-concept has been associated with conscientiousness (Walker, 1999), the Ten-Item Personality Inventory (TIPI; Gosling, Rentfrow, & Swann, 2003) will be used to specifically assess this construct. Finally, in order to index actual moral behavior, an honesty indicator procedure taken from Derryberry and Thoma (2005) will be utilized.
Because the moral prototype method and the moral exemplar method have demonstrated that honesty is related to morality and because the index of honesty that will be used is regarded as a complex instance of moral behavior (Derryberry & Thoma, 2005), using a procedure that measures honesty will be beneficial to this proposed study.

**Hypotheses**

Overall, the hypothesis of this study is that the revised Moral Identity Scale—compared to the original Moral Identity Scale—will have a reduction in skewness, a reduction in social desirability effects, and an increase in the ability to predict moral functioning. The specific hypotheses of this study are, as follows:

1. Those completing the RMIS will score lower than control participants who complete the original MIS.
2. The RMIS will be less susceptible to social desirability than the original MIS.
3. Because more complex instances of moral functioning will be used in the current study, the RMIS will account for significant variance in these constructs while the original MIS will not.

**Method**

**Participants**

Participants included 150 college students from a large Southeastern university. These participants included 81 freshmen, 42 sophomores, 12 juniors, 14 seniors, and 1 individual who indicated other. Ages ranged from 18 to 45 with a mean of 19.59. The sample included 47 males and 103 females. For those participants who indicated their ethnicity, 21 were African American, 5 were Hispanic or Latino, 117 were White, 2 were Asian American, and 5 indicated other.
Materials

**Demographic Questionnaire.** A demographics questionnaire regarding the background of the participants was used in this study. The questionnaire included age, gender, college classification, major, ethnic origin.

**Social Desirability.** In order to address the effect of social desirability on scoring, the Impression Management factor of Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding (BIDR; Li & Bagger, 2007) scale was utilized. The Impression Management (IM) factor is comprised of 20 questions on a 7-point Likert scale, “with 1 denoting not true and 7 denoting very true” (Li & Bagger, 2007, p. 527). An example of questions from the IM factor are, “When I hear people talking privately, I avoid listening” (Li & Bagger, 2007, p. 527). In terms of internal consistency, Li and Bagger reported an overall Cronbach’s alpha of $\alpha = .80$. In this study, the Cronbach’s alpha of Impression Management was $\alpha = .76$.

**Moral Identity Scale.** In order to evaluate the extent to which a person values moral characteristics, the Moral Identity Scale (MIS; Aquino & Reed, 2002) was also utilized in this study. The MIS is comprised of two factors relating to moral identity, with 5 questions corresponding to each: The internalization scale addresses the extent to which one values moral traits, and the symbolization scale seeks to identify whether one’s actions demonstrate a commitment to moral self-expression or commitment (e.g., group membership, activities considered moral). First, participants are asked to review nine characteristics that may exemplify one who has a propensity for moral action. Second, a visualization task is done in which participants are asked to imagine how a person with these traits would feel, act, and think. Finally, participants will answer each
of the 10 questions on a 7-point Likert scale, with 1 meaning strongly disagree and 7 meaning strongly agree. Examples of questions from the internalization and symbolization scale are, as follows: “It would make me feel good to be a person who has these characteristics” and “I am actively involved in activities that communicate to others that I have these characteristics” (Aquino & Reed, 2002, p. 1428). Overall, both the internalization (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .83$) and symbolization (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .82$) scales of the MIS have high internal consistency reliability coefficients (Aquino & Reed, study 2, 2002). In terms of this study, Cronbach’s alpha of internalization was $\alpha = .36$, and Cronbach’s alpha of the symbolization scale was $\alpha = .81$.

**Empathy.** The Davis Interpersonal Reactivity Index (DIRI; Davis, 1980) is an index of dispositional empathy, which breaks down the construct of empathy into four separate but related factors. Although the index is comprised of 28 questions with four dimensions of 7 questions each, this study utilized only two dimensions: Perspective taking (PT) and empathic concern (EC). According to Davis (1980), the perspective taking (PT) dimension evaluates the extent to which one takes the perspective of other people. The empathic concern (EC) dimension evaluates whether one has genuine concern for people in distress. Each question is answered on a 5-point likert scale (A-E), with A being “Does not describe me well” and E being “Describes me very well”. Examples of questions from the perspective taking and empathic concern dimensions are, as follows: “Before criticizing somebody, I try to imagine how I would feel if I were in their place” and “When I see someone being taken advantage of, I feel kind of protective toward them” (Davis, 1980, p. 11). With regard to the internal consistency reliability of the entire scale, Hall and Derryberry (2010) reported a Cronbach’s alpha of $\alpha = .82$. In
this study, the Cronbach’s alpha of Perspective taking was $\alpha = .62$, and the internal consistency reliability of empathic concern was $\alpha = .74$

**Humanity Identification.** In order to evaluate the extent to which a person identifies with other groups of people, the Identification with all of Humanity Scale (IWAHS; McFarland & Brown, 2008) was utilized. The IWAHS is comprised of 9 questions with three different levels. For instance, an example of a question with three different levels is, as follows: How close do you feel to each of the following groups? a. People in my community, b. Americans, c. People all over the world? Each level is answered on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 being “not at all close” and 5 being “very close” (McFarland & Brown, 2008). According to McFarland and Brown, the average coefficient for internal consistency of this scale across samples was $\alpha = .85$. With regard to this study, the coefficient for internal consistency reliability was $\alpha = .90$.

**Conscientiousness.** In order to measure the degree to which one considers him or herself to be conscientious, the Ten-Item Personality Inventory (TIPI; Gosling, Rentfrow, & Swann, 2003) was used. The TIPI consists of 10 question designed to measure the BIG-Five personality traits. In terms of measuring conscientiousness, question 3 and question 8 were only analyzed. For instance, question 3 requires the participants to rate on a seven-point Likert scale (1 = disagree strongly; 7 = agree strongly) the degree to which they see themselves as dependable and self-disciplined. In terms of the internal consistency reliability of conscientiousness, $\alpha = .17$ in the control condition and $\alpha = .47$ in the experimental condition were found in this study.

**Revised Moral Identity Scale.** Just like the original MIS, the revised MIS is comprised of two factors relating to moral identity, with the same 5 questions
The internalization scale addresses the extent to which one values moral traits, and the symbolization scale seeks to identify whether one’s actions demonstrate a commitment to moral self-expression or commitment (e.g., group membership, activities considered moral). First, the RMIS requires the participants to read one story of an individual who assisted the Jews during World War II (Tony) (Monroe & Epperson, 1994) and one story of an individual who displayed moral exemplarity such as helping minorities and the less fortunate (Virginia Foster Durr) (Colby & Damon, 1992), respectively. Second, the participants write down the characteristics that they share and do not share with the exemplars about whom they read and then complete the initial procedures of the MIS: review the nine moral characteristics and visualization of how a person with these traits would feel, act, and think. Third, information is given regarding the rarity of the moral exemplars about whom they have read. For example, this includes the costs and benefits of being a moral exemplar, in addition to information stating that the moral exemplars would score extremely high on tests of morality. Additionally, this information stresses that the average person does not fall into the exemplar category, which is perfectly normal. Fourth, they are asked to complete the ten questions according to their own perspective. Finally, a five-item quiz (i.e., recognition memory test) is given to determine whether the participants actually read the stories (More information about the RMIS is available in the Methods section; see Appendix G for a copy of the RMIS). In terms of this study, Cronbach’s alpha of internalization was $\alpha = .81$, and Cronbach’s alpha of the symbolization scale was $\alpha = .83$.

**Index of Behavior.** In order to determine whether the original MIS or Revised MIS is a better predictor of moral behavior, an actual index of behavior was adopted from
the Derryberry and Thoma study (2005) in which participants were given a chance to demonstrate an act of honesty. The modified instructions from Derryberry and Thoma are presented, as follows: Prior to participation in the study and upon two subsequent times during the study, participants are informed that their involvement will be rewarded with five raffle tickets for a drawing for one of three cash prizes. Upon completing their involvement in the study, participants have the opportunity to claim remuneration from a research assistant. Once the research assistant verifies the participants' involvement, the research assistant states, "You are to receive 10 raffle tickets for your participation. Is that correct?" Participants who correct the mistake are presumed to have behaved honestly. Participants who keep the extra tickets are suspected of dishonesty. Participants who indicate uncertainty about how much was to be received are given 10 tickets. Those participants who receive the double remuneration are called 2 weeks later. They are told that an error had been made and that the purpose of the phone call was to find out who had been given tickets and how many they had received. Five different types of responses are recorded, which range from acknowledgment that 10 tickets were received to no recollection of the amount of remuneration received to acknowledgment that 5 tickets were received. Participants' responses are repeated to them for confirmation. A 4-point scoring system will be used: Those who do not claim their remuneration are assigned a score of 0, which indicates that no action was taken. Those who correct the research assistant are given a score of 1. Those who took the wrong amount but admit the actual amount of remuneration they received over the phone are given a score of 2. Those who took the wrong amount but fail to remember the amount or report a different amount on the phone are given a score of 3.
**Survey Software.** The demographic questionnaire, BIDR, MIS, Revised MIS, DIRI, and IWAI were installed on a Dell computer that is equipped with survey software.

**Procedure**

Participants were randomly assigned to either the control condition (original MIS) or the experimental condition (Revised MIS). In the control condition, they were asked to read and sign the informed consent document. After the document was read and signed, they completed—in order—the demographic questionnaire, BIDR, DIRI, IWAI, TIPI, and MIS. In the experimental condition, participants were also asked to read and sign the informed consent document before the study took place. At this point, participants then completed the demographic questionnaire, BIDR, DIRI, IWAI, TIPI, and Revised MIS. In addition, the participants were timed while they completed the RMIS. After each of the groups completed the study, the procedure from Derryberry and Thoma (2005) was utilized for the purpose of assessing honesty. Data collection was conducted at the Research of Ethical and Social Topics Lab and took no longer than 30-45 minutes for each experimental condition.
Results

Descriptive statistics for participants on all variables of interest can be found in Table 1. With the exception of the differing forms of the Moral Identity Scale, both groups scored similarly on all considered variables.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Control</th>
<th>Experimental</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Control</th>
<th>Experimental</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internalization</td>
<td>30.97</td>
<td>4.24</td>
<td>31.96**</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>30.04**</td>
<td>4.94</td>
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<td>Symbolization</td>
<td>21.51</td>
<td>6.57</td>
<td>22.49</td>
<td>6.24</td>
<td>20.58</td>
<td>6.78</td>
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<td>Honesty</td>
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<td>1.08</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conscientiousness</td>
<td>8.43</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>8.33</td>
<td>1.73</td>
<td>8.53</td>
<td>1.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Id. w/ All Humanity</td>
<td>-.004</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td>.013</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>-.021</td>
<td>1.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perspective Taking</td>
<td>24.44</td>
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<td>25.04</td>
<td>4.61</td>
<td>23.86</td>
<td>4.93</td>
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<tr>
<td>Empathic Concern</td>
<td>28.07</td>
<td>4.53</td>
<td>28.70</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>27.47</td>
<td>4.66</td>
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<tr>
<td>Impression Management</td>
<td>5.72</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>5.64</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>5.81</td>
<td>3.17</td>
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</table>

*Note:* * = significant difference between conditions; Internalization = Moral Identity Scale/Internalization Subscale, Symbolization = Moral Identity Scale/Symbolization Subscale, Honesty = Observed act of honesty, Conscientiousness = Ten Item Personality Inventory, Id. w/ All Humanity = Identification With All of Humanity Scale Residual Score, Perspective Taking = Davis Interpersonal Reactivity Index/Perspective Taking Subscale, Empathic Concern = Davis Interpersonal Reactivity Index/Empathic Concern Subscale, Impression Management = Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding/Impression Management Subscale.
To address hypothesis 1 (i.e., Those completing the RMIS will score lower than control participants who complete the original MIS.), a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted. This analysis was used to determine whether there was significant variation across Moral Identity Scale Internalization scores (i.e., MISINT) and Moral Identity Scale Symbolization scores (i.e., MISSYM) between the experimental and control conditions. This analysis can also address whether there are significant differences between the conditions for either scale. Multivariate tests reported a significant difference across MISINT and MISSYM scores between conditions \((F[2, 147] = 4.048, p = .019, \eta^2 = .05)\). Univariate statistics revealed that the control group scored significantly higher than the experimental group on MISINT \((F[1, 148] = 7.162, p = .008, \eta^2 = .05)\). Additionally, the control group scored higher than the experimental group on MISSYM, though the difference was not statistically significant \((F[1, 148] = 2.321, p = .13, \eta^2 = .02)\).

To address hypothesis 2 (The RMIS will be less susceptible to social desirability than the original MIS.), bivariate correlations were computed in each condition between both MIS scale indices and the Impression Management Scale of the Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding (BIDRim). In the control condition, significant correlations were observed between BIDRim and MISINT \((r = .283, p = .018)\) and MISSYM \((r = .309, p = .009)\). In the experimental condition, significant correlations were only observed between BIDRim and MISINT \((r = .254, p = .027)\). Skewness of MISINT and MISSYM scores were also observed in considering hypothesis 2. Overall, skewness is similar in both conditions for MISINT (control = -.999, experimental = -1.182) and MISSYM (control = -.256, experimental = -.194).
Given the relationships observed with BIDRim above, hypothesis 1 analyses were reconsidered. Specifically, a Multivariate Analysis of Covariance was conducted with BIDRim employed as the covariate in order to control for social desirability. Results indicate that BIDRim was a significant covariate ($F [2, 142] = 5.645, p = .004, \eta^2 = .07$). Differences observed at the multivariate level remained consistent with an increase in effect size ($F [2, 142] = 5.027, p = .008, \eta^2 = .07$). BIDRim was a significant covariate at the univariate level for MISINT ($F [1, 143] = 10.279, p = .002, \eta^2 = .07$) but not MISSYM. Differences observed between groups on MISINT remained consistent with an increase in effect size ($F [1, 143] = 8.487, p = .004, \eta^2 = .06$).

To address hypothesis 3 (Because more complex instances of moral functioning will be used in the current study, the RMIS will account for significant variance in these constructs while the original MIS will not), two different types of analyses were considered. Correlational analyses were first used to determine the extent to which MIS scores related to honesty, conscientiousness, identification with all of humanity, perspective taking, and empathic concern (See Table 2) in each condition. In instances where significant correlations with MISINT or MISSYM existed in either condition, linear regression was considered. Such instances (see Table 2) occurred for Conscientiousness, Identification with All of Humanity, Perspective Taking, and Empathic Concern. Thus, four separate regression analyses were conducted for each condition with each of these variables employed as the dependent variable. Each analysis consisted of three blocks: the first block included MISINT scores; the second block included MISSYM scores; and the third block included BIDR impression management (BIDRim) scores given the reported correlations between the Moral Identity Scale scores.
and BIDRim in consideration of hypothesis 2. The regression analyses were conducted hierarchically so that the contribution to variance of each independent variable could be observed.

Table 2

Correlation Matrix for Control and Experimental Conditions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>INT</th>
<th>SYM</th>
<th>HON</th>
<th>CON</th>
<th>IW AH</th>
<th>PT</th>
<th>EC</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>CON</td>
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<td>.139</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>IW AH</td>
<td>.121</td>
<td>.239*</td>
<td>.027</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>PT</td>
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<tr>
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<td>.010</td>
<td>.152</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Experimental</strong></th>
<th>INT</th>
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<th>CON</th>
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<td>.176</td>
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<td>.393**</td>
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Note: ** * p < .01 * p < .05; HON = Observed Act of Honesty, CON = Ten Item Personality Inventory, IW AH = Identification with All of Humanity Scale Residual Score, PT = Davis Interpersonal Reactivity
Index/Perspective Taking Subscale, EC = Davis Interpersonal Reactivity Index/Empathic Concern Subscale, INT = Moral Identity Scale/Internalization Subscale, SYM = Moral Identity Scale/Symbolization Subscale.

For TIPI Conscientiousness scores, no significant contributions to variance were seen for the three blocks in the control condition (See Table 3). Additionally, none of the employed independent variables was a significant predictor of TIPI Conscientiousness scores (See Table 3). In the experimental condition, significant contributions to variance were seen for the first and third blocks. Furthermore, MIS internalization was a positive and significant predictor across the three blocks, and BIDR impression management was a positive predictor in the third block (See Table 3).

For IWAH scores, no significant contributions to variance were seen in any of the three blocks in the control condition (see Table 4). Additionally, not one of the employed independent variables was a significant predictor of IWAH scores in the control condition (see Table 4). In the experimental condition, no significant contributions were seen in any of the three blocks. Additionally, none of the employed independent variables was a significant predictor.

For Perspective Taking, no significant contributions to variance were seen in the first two blocks for the control condition, though a significant contribution was seen in the third block (See Table 5). Additionally, BIDR impression management was a positive predictor of Perspective Taking in the control condition. In the experimental condition, a significant contribution to variance was seen in the first block blocks (See Table 5). MIS internalization was a significant and positive predictor of Perspective Taking in all three blocks (See Table 5).
For Empathic Concern, significant contributions to variance were seen in the first block for the control condition (see Table 7). MIS internalization was a significant and positive predictor in each of the three blocks. In the experimental condition, a significant contribution to variance was seen in the first block (see Table 7). MIS internalization was a positive predictor of Empathic Concern in each of the three blocks in the experimental condition.

Table 3

Summary of Linear Regression Analyses for TIPITIPI Conscientiousness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Control</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE B</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Block 1</td>
<td>MISINT</td>
<td>.065</td>
<td>.072</td>
<td>.109</td>
<td>.901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>(R^2 = .012, p = .371)</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block 2</td>
<td>MISINT</td>
<td>.029</td>
<td>.075</td>
<td>.048</td>
<td>.381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>(R^2 = .206, p = .148)</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block 3</td>
<td>MISINT</td>
<td>.012</td>
<td>.077</td>
<td>.021</td>
<td>.159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>(R^2 = .242, p = .293)</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MISSYM</td>
<td>.055</td>
<td>.037</td>
<td>.185</td>
<td>1.462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BIDRim</td>
<td>.081</td>
<td>.076</td>
<td>.136</td>
<td>1.059</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experimental</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE B</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Block 1</td>
<td>MISINT</td>
<td>.166</td>
<td>.046</td>
<td>.385</td>
<td>3.592</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(R^2 = .148, p = .001)</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block 2</td>
<td>MISINT</td>
<td>.156</td>
<td>.046</td>
<td>.362</td>
<td>3.388</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(R^2 = .180, p = .099)</em></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block 3</td>
<td>MISINT</td>
<td>.131</td>
<td>.047</td>
<td>.303</td>
<td>2.800</td>
</tr>
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</table>
\[(R^2 = .228, \ p = .037)\]  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MISSYM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.059</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.073</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIDRim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.072</td>
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<td>.228</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.128</td>
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<tr>
<td>.037</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:**  
MISSINT = Moral Identity Scale/Internalization Subscale, MISSYM = Moral Identity Scale/Symbolization Subscale, BIDRim = Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding/Impression Management Subscale.

**Table 4**  
*Summary of Linear Regression Analyses for IWAH Scores*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Block</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE B</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>MISINT</td>
<td>.035</td>
<td>.037</td>
<td>.114</td>
<td>.948</td>
<td>.347</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(R^2 = .013, \ p = .347)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>MISINT</td>
<td>.013</td>
<td>.038</td>
<td>.043</td>
<td>.341</td>
<td>.734</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MISSYM</td>
<td>.033</td>
<td>.019</td>
<td>.218</td>
<td>1.739</td>
<td>.087</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(R^2 = .056, \ p = .087)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>MISINT</td>
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<td>.039</td>
<td>.020</td>
<td>.159</td>
<td>.874</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>MISSYM</td>
<td>.029</td>
<td>.020</td>
<td>.192</td>
<td>1.481</td>
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<tr>
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<td>BIDRim</td>
<td>.034</td>
<td>.039</td>
<td>.110</td>
<td>.861</td>
<td>.393</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(R^2 = .066, \ p = .393)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Block</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE B</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>MISINT</td>
<td>-.023</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(R^2 = .011, \ p = .368)</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>MISINT</td>
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<td>.025</td>
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<td>-.896</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MISSYM</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.018</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.021</td>
<td>.984</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(R^2 = .011, \ p = .984)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>MISINT</td>
<td>-.019</td>
<td>.026</td>
<td>-.089</td>
<td>-.725</td>
<td>.471</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MISSYM</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.019</td>
<td>-.003</td>
<td>-.021</td>
<td>.983</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BIDRim</td>
<td>-.023</td>
<td>.041</td>
<td>-.069</td>
<td>-.560</td>
<td>.578</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(R^2 = .016, \ p = .578)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Note: MISINT = Moral Identity Scale/Internalization Subscale, MISSYM = Moral Identity Scale/Symbolization Subscale, BIDRim = Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding/Impression Management Subscale.

Table 5

Summary of Linear Regression Analyses for Perspective Taking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Control</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE B</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Block 1</td>
<td>MISINT</td>
<td>.270</td>
<td>.178</td>
<td>.181</td>
<td>2.882</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(R² = .033, p = .134)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block 2</td>
<td>MISINT</td>
<td>.237</td>
<td>.189</td>
<td>.159</td>
<td>1.253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(R² = .037, p = .585)</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block 3</td>
<td>MISINT</td>
<td>.119</td>
<td>.181</td>
<td>.080</td>
<td>.658</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(R² = .167, p = .002)</td>
<td>MISSYM</td>
<td>-.019</td>
<td>.090</td>
<td>-.026</td>
<td>-.212</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experimental</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE B</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Block 1</td>
<td>MISINT</td>
<td>.301</td>
<td>.111</td>
<td>.301</td>
<td>2.720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(R² = .091, p = .008)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block 2</td>
<td>MISINT</td>
<td>.316</td>
<td>.112</td>
<td>.316</td>
<td>2.833</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(R² = .104, p = .303)</td>
<td>MISSYM</td>
<td>-.084</td>
<td>.081</td>
<td>-.116</td>
<td>-1.037</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block 3</td>
<td>MISINT</td>
<td>.270</td>
<td>.114</td>
<td>.271</td>
<td>2.362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(R² = .133, p = .126)</td>
<td>MISSYM</td>
<td>-.077</td>
<td>.080</td>
<td>-.107</td>
<td>-.964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BIDRim</td>
<td>.273</td>
<td>.176</td>
<td>.176</td>
<td>1.546</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Note: MISINT = Moral Identity Scale/Internalization Subscale, MISSYM = Moral Identity Scale/Symbolization Subscale, BIDRim = Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding/Impression Management Subscale.

Table 6

Summary of Linear Regression Analyses for Empathic Concern

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Control</th>
<th></th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE B</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Block 1</td>
<td>MISINT</td>
<td>.477</td>
<td>.159</td>
<td>.341</td>
<td>2.993</td>
<td>.004</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\( (R^2 = .116, p = .004) \)

| Block 2 | MISINT | .410 | .168 | .293 | 2.440 | .017 |

\( (R^2 = .136, p = .226) \)

| Block 3 | MISINT | .392 | .172 | .280 | 2.271 | .026 |

\( (R^2 = .139, p = .605) \)

| MISSYM | .102 | .083 | .147 | 1.223 | .226 |
| BIDRim | .089 | .171 | .064 | .520 | .605 |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experimental</th>
<th></th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE B</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Block 1</td>
<td>MISINT</td>
<td>.324</td>
<td>.104</td>
<td>.341</td>
<td>3.116</td>
<td>.003</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\( (R^2 = .116, p = .003) \)

| Block 2 | MISINT | .313 | .105 | .329 | 2.979 | .004 |

\( (R^2 = .124, p = .426) \)

| MISSYM | .061 | .076 | .088 | .801 | .426 |
| BIDRim | .078 | .169 | .053 | .461 | .646 |

Note: MISINT = Moral Identity Scale/Internalization Subscale, MISSYM = Moral Identity Scale/Symbolization Subscale, BIDRim = Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding/Impression Management Subscale.
A fifth linear regression analysis was conducted in which an omnibus variable of sociomoral functioning was created. This variable accounts for high performance relative to the sample in each of the five indices of sociomoral functioning: honesty, conscientiousness, identification with all of humanity, perspective taking, and empathic concern. For each of the five variables, z scores were created. The created z scores were then converted to t scores in order to eliminate negative scores. The t scores of the five variables were then multiplied by one another. No significant differences were observed between conditions on this variable.

For the omnibus variable, a significant contribution to variance was seen in the third block in the control condition. Additionally, BIDR impression management was a positive predictor of the omnibus variable in the control condition. In the experimental condition, a significant contribution to variance was seen in the first block. Furthermore, MIS internalization was a positive predictor of the omnibus variable in each of the three blocks for the experimental condition.

Table 7

*Summary of Linear Regression Analyses for Omnibus Variable*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Control</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE B</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Block 1</td>
<td>MISINT</td>
<td>12965678.04</td>
<td>6689740.334</td>
<td>.229</td>
<td>1.938</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(R² = .052, p = .057)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block 2</td>
<td>MISINT</td>
<td>8931932.274</td>
<td>6969120.899</td>
<td>.158</td>
<td>1.282</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MISSYM</td>
<td>6121813.298</td>
<td>3454632.592</td>
<td>.218</td>
<td>1.772</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(R² = .095, p = .081)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block 3</td>
<td>MISINT</td>
<td>5605598.728</td>
<td>6880185.987</td>
<td>.099</td>
<td>.815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MISSYM</td>
<td>4166199.547</td>
<td>3438921.262</td>
<td>.148</td>
<td>1.211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(R² = .167, p = .025)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BIDRim</td>
<td>16315669.43</td>
<td>6840593.624</td>
<td>.288</td>
<td>2.385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Experimental</strong></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>SE B</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block 1</td>
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<td>14608889.08</td>
<td>3411390.590</td>
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<td>4.282</td>
</tr>
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<td>(R² = .203, p = .000)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block 2</td>
<td>MISINT</td>
<td>14341427.36</td>
<td>3444130.819</td>
<td>.442</td>
<td>4.164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(R² = .209, p = .482)</td>
<td>MISSYM</td>
<td>1773606.287</td>
<td>2508247.357</td>
<td>.075</td>
<td>.707</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block 3</td>
<td>MISSYM</td>
<td>13562504.86</td>
<td>3560141.634</td>
<td>.418</td>
<td>3.810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(R² = .217, p = .380)</td>
<td>BIDRim</td>
<td>4884808.718</td>
<td>5524429.086</td>
<td>.097</td>
<td>.884</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: MISINT = Moral Identity Scale/Internalization Subscale, MISSYM = Moral Identity Scale/Symbolization Subscale, BIDRim = Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding/Impression Management Subscale.
Discussion

The purpose of this research study was to attempt to improve the quantitative measurement of the moral identity construct. Given the promise yet noted flaws of the Moral Identity Scale (Aquino & Reed, 2002), it seemed beneficial to the study of moral psychology and ethics to attempt to improve the precision of this scale. The Moral Identity Scale is quick to administer, which is tremendously attractive for scientists and moral psychologists in this arena, especially considering how the moral sense of self has been measured in the past (i.e., interview-based methods). As such, an attempt to revise or tweak the scale – rather than create a new one – in a manner that incorporates other traditions and approaches to the measurement of the moral self seemed sensible. The current study proposed various assertions pertaining to the Revised Moral Identity Scale (i.e., RMIS) and the Moral Identity Scale (i.e., MIS): the Revised Moral Identity Scale—compared to the original Moral Identity Scale—would have a reduction in skewness, a reduction in social desirability effects, and the capacity to account for more complex instances of moral functioning.

Three hypotheses were proposed in the current study. First, it was hypothesized that those participants who completed the RMIS (i.e., experimental group) would score lower than control participants who completed the original MIS. This hypothesis was supported as a significant difference was observed in terms of the control group scoring higher than the experimental group on Moral Identity Scale Internalization scores (MISINT). In addition, although the difference between the groups was not statistically significant, the control group scored higher than the experimental group on Moral
Identity Scale Symbolization scores (MISSYM). Differences observed for both indices remained even after controlling for social desirability.

Second, it was hypothesized that the RMIS would be less susceptible to social desirability than the original MIS. This hypothesis was not supported. In the control condition, significant correlations were observed between impression management and MISINT and MISSYM. In the experimental condition, significant correlations were only observed between impression management and MISINT. Additionally, negative skewness was seen in the control and experimental conditions for MISINT and MISSYM.

Third, it was hypothesized that, because more complex instances of moral functioning would be used in the current study, the RMIS would account for significant variance in these constructs while the original MIS would not. This hypothesis was supported for the most part. In the experimental condition, positive and significant correlations were observed among scores on the MISINT scale and conscientiousness, perspective taking, empathic concern, and created omnibus variable accounting for sociomoral functioning overall. Furthermore, the significant contribution to conscientiousness variance, perspective taking variance, empathic concern variance, and omnibus variable score variance from the MISINT scale of the experimental condition in the conducted regression analysis also supports the hypothesis. As such, a significant amount of variance in the dependent variables was accounted for by the MISINT. In the control condition, a positive correlation was seen between MISINT and empathic concern. In addition, positive correlations were observed among MISSYM scores and conscientiousness, identification with all of humanity, and empathic concern. MISINT
was a significant predictor in each block of empathic concern for the control condition. Although positive correlations were observed among MISSYM, conscientiousness, identification with all of humanity, and empathic concern, MISSYM failed to account for significant contributions to variance in any of the dependent variables. Though this may have been a surprise, MISSYM failed to account for significant differences in the dependent variables. To further support hypothesis three, a significant contribution to variance of perspective taking and the omnibus variable score was seen in block three of the control condition where impression management was an extremely significant predictor and accounted for a large majority of the variance. As such, social desirability seems to significantly influence the degree to which MISSYM predicts moral outcomes. These findings also support the notion that the RMIS accounts for significant variance in the abovementioned moral constructs while the original MIS does not. Additionally, these findings give some credence to hypothesis 2 regarding the original MIS being more susceptible to social desirability.

Overall, this study provides some insight into the complexities that exist when trying to quantitatively measure the moral identity construct. First, as stated above, both the MIS and RMIS are susceptible to social desirability, and both are negatively skewed. However, the RMIS produces lower scores and is better at predicting the indices of sociomoral functioning used here. These findings present quite the conundrum. How does it happen that both measurements are susceptible to social desirability and both are skewed, yet one performs better in terms of scores and prediction? One possible explanation is that, although MISINT was significantly correlated with impression management in the experimental condition, both MISINT and MISSYM were
significantly correlated with impression management in the control condition. In addition, MISINT in the experimental condition had a lower correlation with impression management than MISINT and impression management in the control condition. As such, it may be that the RMIS is less susceptible to the influence of social desirability than is the MIS, yet still the RMIS is susceptible.

Another possible explanation the social desirability bias is that perhaps most measures associated with measuring a hypothetical construct related to morality are susceptible to social desirability. In other words, people do not want to be viewed negatively by others as research has illustrated (Skowrons & Carlston, 1987). Thus, although the RMIS was positively and significantly correlated with social desirability (i.e., impression management), the influence of impression management is not as harmful. Ultimately, the story about which the participants read on the RMIS forces them to consider their actual moral values. The original MIS, however, does not. Ultimately, the RMIS has lower scores, accounts for significant variation in moral constructs, and is less susceptible to social desirability. It is an improvement, needless to say. Future research will have to continue to examine other ways to reduce the biased views that participants have about their morality relative to the exemplars.

A second finding from this study that needs to be addressed is the nature of MISSYM construct. According to a study conducted by Aquino and Reed (2002), the internalization ($M = 4.05, SD = 0.67, r = .25, p < .01$) scale was significantly correlated with actual donation behavior and the number of cans donated ($M = 4.05, SD = 0.67, r = .28, p < .01$) in a study that utilized actual behavioral outcomes. In addition, Sage, Kavussanu, and Duda (2006) conducted a study in which they examined the extent to
which one’s moral sense of self might predict prosocial behaviors in a soccer game. The authors discovered that the players who scored higher on the internalization measure were more likely to engage in prosocial behaviors and less likely to engage in antisocial behaviors. Given these findings and the findings of this study, it seems like the internalization scale is more effective in predicting socio-moral outcomes. Regardless of the utility of the symbolization index, the revisions made to the MIS may totally change its structure. There is a significant correlation between symbolization and internalization in the control condition, and this relationship is nonexistent in the experimental condition. In other words, measurement of the symbolization construct on the RMIS may not be an accurate measurement of moral centrality. Additionally, it is possible that symbolization measures that which is concerned with social perception and moral behavior due to its association with social desirability. Ultimately, it may be that the revisions of the MIS result in only one useful construct associated with the extent to which a person considers morality central to his or her self-concept.

A third finding from this study is that the RMIS is more useful than the MIS. However, though the internalization index of the experimental condition was more effective than the internalization index of the control condition in terms of predicting constructs of relevance, it is important to note that neither of the indices from either group actually predicted the behavioral outcome of honesty. As a result, it is difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of the internalization index of the experimental condition in predicting actual behavior. Ultimately, there were some problems with the honesty index, which may have made it extremely difficult to accurately measure that specific construct. First, the small number of students who picked up the remuneration in this
study made it difficult to measure honesty. Second, one of the problems with a measurement like the one used in this study (Derryberry & Thoma, 2005) is it is difficult to say whether the students who were considered deceitful were actually being deceitful intentionally since the remuneration being claimed was rather miniscule and not very substantial (i.e., raffle tickets vs. a significant amount of money). In other words, because college students’ lives are replete with homework and social distractions, it is possible that they actually forget or simply did not pay attention to how many tickets that they were to be given. As such, it is recommended that future studies using the RMIS use other measures of actual behavior.

The last finding from this study is how the RMIS is more stable than the MIS in terms of internal consistency reliability. In regard to the MIS scale, the Cronbach’s alpha of internalization is $\alpha = .36$ for the control condition and $\alpha = .81$ for the experimental condition. As such, this means the index is much more stable for the experimental condition. Although this finding is promising and substantiates contentions made about the original MIS, these findings concerning low alphas for the MIS, unfortunately, have not been seen in prior research that utilized this scale of moral centrality. As a result, it is hard to determine whether the low alphas are due to conditions associated with the sample or due to the index itself. Ultimately, it is a much more consistent index in the experimental condition, which is promising.

**Future directions**

Although the RMIS is less susceptible to social desirability than the original MIS, both conditions had a similar negative skew that has been seen in prior research. As mentioned above, Aquino and Reed (study 5, 2002) reported extremely high means and
very low standard deviations of the average score for each question for both the internalization ($M = 4.58$, $SD = 0.42$) and symbolization ($M = 3.12$, $SD = 0.69$) scales of the MIS. In addition, Hall and Derryberry (2010) also reported extremely high means and low standard deviations for a low racial prejudice group: internalization ($M = 24.03$, $SD = 1.24$) and symbolization ($M = 18.48$, $SD = 3.42$). The revisions to the MIS did not appear to alleviate skew and the scales’ relationship with a social desirability index. However, controlling for social desirability did not impact the differences in scores between groups nor did doing so prevent the Internalization index of the RMIS from predicting relevant constructs of sociomoral functioning (as was often the case for the Internalization index of the MIS). Ultimately, future research needs to further evaluate the findings concerning social desirability and skew from this current study and test whether there are additional ways to limit these trends.

One final note of interest is regarding the predictive capabilities of the symbolization index. As stated above, the original symbolization index in combination with the internalization index only accounted for only one additional positive correlation that was not found by the revised internalization index by itself. As such, future research needs to explore whether the symbolization offers further utility in predicting sociomoral outcomes beyond the internalization index itself. One way to address this, perhaps, is to change the order in which the Questionnaires are given. In other words, because this current study presented the dependent indices before the presentation of the experimental manipulation (i.e., MIS and RMIS), presenting the manipulation first may force the participants to answer honestly on the additional indices of interest. However, of course,
this may prime the participants to answer low on the other questionnaires, which may give rise to a high positive skew.

Limitations

The current study has limitations beyond those already noted. First, the sample used in this study included a plethora of female students and underclassmen. As a result, generalizability of the results may be a concern. Second, a sample solely made up of participants from Kentucky, such as the one used in the current study, may be more rural, of lower socioeconomic status, and be overly representative of first-time college students than the general population. Third, another limitation of this study was the failure to counterbalance the dependent measures of interest. Finally, the Cronbach’s alphas for conscientiousness are low in this current study. This is not surprising given the fact that it is only two items. As such, future studies need to utilize more precise indices of conscientiousness.

Conclusion

This study provides support that the efforts placed here to improve the Moral Identity Scale as a quantitative measurement of moral identity were worthwhile. Furthermore, because the symbolization scale of the original MIS only accounted for one additional positive correlation (i.e., IWAH) that was not accounted for by the internalization scale of the RMIS, it may be prudent to adopt a new measure of moral centrality that only uses the internalization scale. This, naturally, may be pleasing to scientists in the moral domain because it would be even quicker to administer than the ten question measure that is currently utilized. At the same time, doing so may limit the measurement of that which is comprised by one’s moral identity and therefore only
measure a part of moral identity. In closing, although this study lends some support to the abovementioned hypotheses stated earlier, one should realize that this is one study and one sample from a specific part of the United States. As such, it may not generalize to the general population, and the results found in this study regarding the improved precision of measurement that the RMIS offers may be tentative at this point. Ultimately, researchers around the country and the world should continue to improve the quantitative measurement of the moral sense of self in order to further the progress of research in this moral domain. Though this study was a small step in that direction, it was a necessary and fruitful one.
References


behaviors. *Journal of Marketing*, 71, 178-193


Appendix A

Demographic Questionnaire

DIRECTIONS: Please respond to the following questions by circling the number beside the most appropriate response, checking the appropriate selection, or filling in the blank.

a. Are you: 1. male  2. female

b. How old were you on your last birthday: _____

   4. Senior  5. Other (please name) ___________

d. What is your major? _______________

e. What is your ethnic origin (i.e., Caucasian, Native American, African American, Asian American, Latino, etc.)? _______________
Appendix B

Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding (BIDR)

Using the scale below as a guide, write a number beside each statement to indicate how much you agree with it.

1 ------------ 2 ------------ 3 ------------ 4 ------------ 5 ------------ 6 ------------ 7

Not True Somewhat Very True

True

_____ 1. My first impressions of people usually turn out to be right.
_____ *2. It would be hard for me to break any of my bad habits.
_____ 3. I don’t care to know what other people really think of me.
_____ *4. I have not always been honest with myself.
_____ 5. I always know why I like things.
_____ *6. When my emotions are aroused, it biases my thinking.
_____ 7. Once I’ve made up my mind, other people can seldom change my opinion.
_____ *8. I am not a safe driver when I exceed the speed limit.
_____ 9. I am fully in control of my own fate.
_____ *10. It’s hard for me to shut off a disturbing thought.
_____ 11. I never regret my decisions.
_____ *12. I sometimes lose out on things because I can’t make up my mind soon enough.
_____ 13. The reason I vote is because my vote can make a difference.
_____ *14. My parents were not always fair when they punished me.
_____ 15. I am a completely rational person.
_____ *16. I rarely appreciate criticism.
17. I am very confident of my judgments.
18. I have sometimes doubted my ability as a lover.
19. It’s all right with me if some people happen to dislike me.
20. I don’t always know the reasons why I do the things I do.
21. I sometimes tell lies if I have to.
22. I never cover up my mistakes.
23. There have been occasions when I have taken advantage of someone.
24. I never swear.
25. I sometimes try to get even rather than forgive and forget.
26. I always obey laws, even if I’m unlikely to get caught.
27. I have said something bad about a friend behind his or her back.
28. When I hear people talking privately, I avoid listening.
29. I have received too much change from a salesperson without telling him or her.
30. I always declare everything at customs.
31. When I was young I sometimes stole things.
32. I have never dropped litter on the street.
33. I sometimes drive faster than the speed limit.
34. I never read sexy books or magazines.
35. I have done things that I don’t tell other people about.
36. I never take things that don’t belong to me.
_____ *37. I have taken sick-leave from work or school even though I wasn’t really sick.

_____ 38. I have never damaged a library book or store merchandise without reporting it.

_____ *39. I have some pretty awful habits.

_____ 40. I don’t gossip about other people’s business.
Appendix C

Moral Identity Scale (MIS)

Listed below are some characteristics that may describe a person:

- Caring, compassionate, fair, friendly, generous, helpful, hardworking, honesty, and kind.

The person with these characteristics could be you or it could be someone else. For a moment, visualize in your mind the kind of person who has these characteristics. Imagine how that person would think, feel, and act. When you have a clear image of what this person would be like, answer the following questions.

Answer the following questions according to the following scale:

1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree.

1) It would make me feel good to be a person who has these characteristics.
2) Being someone who has these characteristics is an important part of who I am.
3) A big part of my emotional well-being is tied up in having these characteristics.
4) I would be ashamed to be a person who has these characteristics.
5) Having these characteristics is an important part of my sense of self.
6) I strongly desire to have these characteristics.
7) I often wear clothes that identify me as having these characteristics.
8) The types of things I do in my spare time (e.g., hobbies) clearly identify me as having these characteristics.
9) The fact that I have these characteristics is communicated to others by my membership in certain organizations.
10) I am actively involved in activities that communicate to others that I have these characteristics.
Appendix D

Davis Interpersonal Reactivity Index (DIRI)

The following statements inquire about your thoughts and feelings in a variety of situations. For each item, indicate how well it describes you by choosing the appropriate letter on the scale at the top of the page: A, B, C, D, or E. When you have decided on your answer, fill in the letter on the answer sheet next to the item number. READ EACH ITEM CAREFULLY BEFORE RESPONDING. Answer as honestly as you can. Thank you.

ANSWER SCALE:

A               B               C               D               E

DOES NOT                               DESCRIBES ME
DESCRIBES ME                             VERY
WELL                                      WELL

1. I daydream and fantasize, with some regularity, about things that might happen to me. (FS)

2. I often have tender, concerned feelings for people less fortunate than me. (EC)

3. I sometimes find it difficult to see things from the "other guy's" point of view. (PT) (-)

4. Sometimes I don't feel very sorry for other people when they are having problems. (EC) (-)
5. I really get involved with the feelings of the characters in a novel. (FS)

6. In emergency situations, I feel apprehensive and ill-at-ease. (PD)

7. I am usually objective when I watch a movie or play, and I don't often get completely caught up in it. (FS) (-)

8. I try to look at everybody's side of a disagreement before I make a decision. (PT)

9. When I see someone being taken advantage of, I feel kind of protective towards them. (EC)

10. I sometimes feel helpless when I am in the middle of a very emotional situation. (PD)

11. I sometimes try to understand my friends better by imagining how things look from their perspective. (PT)

12. Becoming extremely involved in a good book or movie is somewhat rare for me. (FS) (-)

13. When I see someone get hurt, I tend to remain calm. (PD) (-)

14. Other people's misfortunes do not usually disturb me a great deal. (EC) (-)

15. If I'm sure I'm right about something, I don't waste much time listening to other
16. After seeing a play or movie, I have felt as though I were one of the characters. (FS)

17. Being in a tense emotional situation scares me. (PD)

18. When I see someone being treated unfairly, I sometimes don't feel very much pity for them. (EC) (-)

19. I am usually pretty effective in dealing with emergencies. (PD) (-)

20. I am often quite touched by things that I see happen. (EC)

21. I believe that there are two sides to every question and try to look at them both. (PT)

22. I would describe myself as a pretty soft-hearted person. (EC)

23. When I watch a good movie, I can very easily put myself in the place of a leading character. (FS)

24. I tend to lose control during emergencies. (PD)
25. When I'm upset at someone, I usually try to "put myself in his shoes" for a while. (PT)

26. When I am reading an interesting story or novel, I imagine how I would feel if the events in the story were happening to me. (FS)

27. When I see someone who badly needs help in an emergency, I go to pieces. (PD)

28. Before criticizing somebody, I try to imagine how I would feel if I were in their place. (PT)

NOTE: (-) denotes item to be scored in reverse fashion

PT = perspective-taking scale
FS = fantasy scale
EC = empathic concern scale
PD = personal distress scale

A = 0
B = 1
C = 2
D = 3
E = 4

Except for reversed-scored items, which are scored:

A = 4
B = 3
C = 2
D = 1
E = 0
Appendix E

Identification with all of Humanity Scale (IWAHS)

1. How close do you feel to each of the following groups?

1 = not at all close
2 = not very close
3 = just a little or somewhat close
4 = pretty close
5 = very close

a. People in my community
b. Americans
c. People all over the world

2. How often do you use the word “we” to refer to the following groups of people?

1 = almost never
2 = rarely
3 = occasionally
4 = often
5 = very often

a. People in my community
b. Americans
c. People all over the world

3. How much would you say you have in common with the following groups?

1 = almost nothing in common
2 = little in common
3 = some in common
4 = quite a bit in common
5 = very much in common

a. People in my community
b. Americans
c. People all over the world

Please answer all remaining questions using the following choices:
1 = not at all
2 = just a little
3 = somewhat
4 = quite a bit
5 = very much

Who believes that identification with all humanity is ... 49

4. Sometimes people think of those who are not a part of their immediate family as “family.” To what degree do you think of the following groups of people as “family?”

a. People in my community
b. Americans
c. All humans everywhere

5. How much do you identify with (that is, feel a part of, feel love toward, have concern for) each of the following?

a. People in my community
b. Americans
c. All humans everywhere
6. How much would you say you care (feel upset, want to help) when bad things happens to
   a. People in my community.
   b. Americans.
   c. People anywhere in the world.

7. How much do you want to be:
   a. a responsible citizen of your community.
   b. a responsible American citizen.
   c. a responsible citizen of the world.

8. How much do you believe in:
   a. being loyal to my community.
   b. being loyal to America.
   c. being loyal to all mankind.

9. When they are in need, how much do you want to help:
   a. people in my community.
   b. Americans.
   c. people all over the world.

*Note: When administered in other countries, that country's name may be substituted for "Americans."
Appendix F

Ten-Item Personality Inventory (TIPI)

Ten-Item Personality Inventory (TIPI)

Here are a number of personality traits that may or may not apply to you. Please write a number next to each statement to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with that statement. You should rate the extent to which the pair of traits applies to you, even if one characteristic applies more strongly than the other.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disagree strongly</th>
<th>Disagree moderately</th>
<th>Disagree a little</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Agree a little</th>
<th>Agree moderately</th>
<th>Agree strongly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I see myself as:

1. □ Extraverted, enthusiastic.
2. □ Critical, quarrelsome.
3. □ Dependable, self-disciplined.
4. □ Anxious, easily upset.
5. □ Open to new experiences, complex.
6. □ Reserved, quiet.
7. □ Sympathetic, warm.
8. □ Disorganized, careless.
Appendix G

Revised Moral Identity Scale (RMIS)

Instructions: At this point, you are going to be presented with short stories regarding two real-life individuals who have been shown to lead extremely moral lives in terms of helping Jews during World War II (i.e., Tony) or helping fight for racial equality (Virginia). You will be presented with their background information, in addition to the ways that they thought and the manner in which they led their lives. Please read each story very carefully as you will be given a quiz to check your recall of information for each individual. Following your reading of these stories, specific directions will be given.

**BACKGROUND AND ACTIVITIES OF TONY, A DUTCH RESCUER**

Tony did not want to attend university and avoided a scene with his social-climbing mother by enrolling in the military. His mother’s social connections got Tony assigned to an elite division of cavalry officers composed primarily of aristocrats who
shared Tony’s support for the Dutch monarchy. This military assignment was to change Tony’s life once war began.

After World War II had broken out, the Dutch government and the Dutch Army as a whole surrendered to the Germans because they were too powerful. As a result, the Germans held them for about a month or so. Then they decided it was too complicated. So, they let them go. They thought that because the Dutch were Germanic, they would eventually join the German effort. By the time Tony and his unit were released, they had already hidden some weapons and a motorcycle. And that’s when they—some 80 Army officers—started a very primitive, nonviolent little resistance movement. However, the Germans managed to get an address list for all of them. They went to everybody’s home during curfew. Tony was one of the lucky three who was not at home that night. He was spending the night with a girlfriend. He got a quick call from somebody saying, “Don’t ever go home again because they want to pick you up.”

The other 77 officers were all executed. So that changed the situation. Up until then, it was almost a game, this little resistance movement. But the executions suddenly showed them the total realities of what the German occupation was going to be like. Because of this, Tony knew that he had to help others (i.e., Jewish people) who were being killed by the Nazi regime.

The determination to help Jews was never a question for rescuers like Tony. Helping Jews was a given, emanating from Tony’s sense of himself in relation to others. Although helping the Jews would be dangerous, Tony considered it a controlled risk. Tony thought that you have to think of your fellow man, not just yourself, for when you
save your fellow man, you save yourself, too. And beyond this, Tony had risked his life to save other people in nonwartime situations (He had, for example, rescued 17 people from drowning in the Pacific Ocean after he came to the United States).

Tony did not think that he did anything special. He thought it was something that everybody normally should be doing. That is, he thought that everyone should help one other. In Tony’s own words, “It’s common sense and common caring for people. We live in one world. We are one people. Working together, basically we are all the same.”

BACKGROUND AND ACTIVITIES OF VIRGINIA, A HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVIST

Virginia Foster Durr came from a wealthy family who thought white people were better than African Americans. Although this was her situation, she decided to live a life fighting for the welfare of minority groups. As a youngster, she rebelled against her parents in terms of considering all people equal. As a result, she was the least popular figure in her household. While in college, financial distress, racial discrimination, and unpopularity resulted in her dropping out of Wellesley College. After she had moved back to her hometown, Virginia met her future husband, attorney Clifford Durr.
After they had gotten married, the couple moved to Washington, D.C. While her husband worked for President Roosevelt, she teamed up with the Woman’s National Democratic Club. Her activism for human rights became her primary interest.

Shortly thereafter, she considered the poll tax, which was used on African Americans at this time, extremely hateful. As such, she worked side by side with various politicians to garner support for her legislation. Ultimately, this resulted in the eventual establishment of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Additionally, her work eventually gained enough notoriety to end the poll tax.

Eventually, she and her husband become founding members of the Southern Conference on Human Welfare. Because of Virginia and Clifford’s controversial positions on issues of race, they vehemently tried to stop institutionalized racism. The Durrs provided legal advice to African Americans and also supported the Freedom Riders and the Voting Rights Act. In December 1955, Virginia and her husband bailed Rosa Parks out of jail. Rosa Parks, of course, was taken to jail for refusing to give up her seat to a white person on one of the segregated buses. Shortly thereafter, she organized the Montgomery bus boycott.

Virginia also gave her support to groups that sought to pass legislation regarding the banning of nuclear weapons. Overall, her life’s work included being a relief worker during the Great Depression, and a political lobbyist who sought to gain equal rights to everyone during the civil rights campaign. *PLEASE TURN THE PAGE FOR FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS
**Instructions:** Now, I would like you to write down the personality traits or characteristic that you think you share and do not share with Tony and Virginia in the appropriate column. Please limit your response to 1 full page.

| Personality traits and characteristics that I **SHARE** with Tony and Virginia: | Personality traits and characteristics that I **DO NOT SHARE** with Tony and Virginia: |
Listed below are some characteristics that may describe a person:

- Caring, compassionate, fair, friendly, generous, helpful, hardworking, honest, and kind.

The person with these characteristics could be you or it could be someone else like Tony and Virginia. For a moment, visualize in your mind the kind of person who has these characteristics. Imagine how that person would think, feel, and act. If you think about someone like Tony or Virginia Foster Durr, you need to understand that these people are extremely rare. That is, most people are not like they are. Although people like this benefit humanity and make the world a better place in which to live, there are many disadvantages associated with this lifestyle. For example, they may fear for their lives due to the extent of their actions, have nonexistent social lives, or lack the means to properly take care of the people they serve or their families. When you have a clear image of what this person would be like, answer the following questions according to your personality characteristics.

Although people like Tony or Virginia Foster Durr would probably indicate “strongly agree” to most of the questions, do not feel bad if this is not the case for you. Remember: people like Tony and Virginia are rare. So, most of us would answer differently than they would.

Answer the following questions according to the following scale:

1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = disagree somewhat, 4 = undecided, 5 = agree somewhat, 6 = agree, 7 = strongly agree.

1) It would make me feel good to be a person who has these characteristics.
2) Being someone who has these characteristics is an important part of who I am.
3) A big part of my emotional well-being is tied up in having these characteristics.
4) I would be ashamed to be a person who has these characteristics.
5) Having these characteristics is an important part of my sense of self.
6) I strongly desire to have these characteristics.
7) I often wear clothes that identify me as having these characteristics.
8) The types of things I do in my spare time (e.g., hobbies) clearly identify me as having these characteristics.
9) The fact that I have these characteristics is communicated to others by my membership in certain organizations.

10) I am actively involved in activities that communicate to others that I have these characteristics.

*PLEASE TURN THE PAGE FOR FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS

**Tony and Virginia Foster Durr Quiz**

**Instructions:** This is your final task. You are going to be presented with 5 questions over the two short stories. Thank you for your participation.

1. Whom did Virginia Foster Durr bail out of jail?
   a. Rosa Parks
   b. Martin Luther King Jr.
   c. Malcolm X
   d. None of the above

2. During World War II, in which Army unit did Tony serve?
   a. German
   b. Dutch
   c. Italian
   d. United Kingdom

3. Besides helping the Jews during World War II, Tony also rescued 17 people from
   a. A house fire
   b. An automobile accident
   c. Drowning in the Pacific Ocean
   d. None of the above

4. Virginia Foster Durr’s husband was a/an
   a. Engineer
   b. Attorney
   c. Physician
   d. Teacher
5. Virginia Foster Durr dropped out of

a. Bryn Mawr College
b. Bates College
c. Yale University
d. Wellesley College
Appendix H

Figure 1
Appendix I

Human Subjects Review Board Approval

In future correspondence, please refer to HS12-061, October 5, 2011

David Baker
c/o Dr. Derryberry
Psychology
WKU

David Baker:

Your research project, The Relationship between Personality Constructs and Self-Concept, was reviewed by the IRB and it has been determined that risks to subjects are: (1) minimized and reasonable; and that (2) research procedures are consistent with a sound research design and do not expose the subjects to unnecessary risk. Reviewers determined that: (1) benefits to subjects are considered along with the importance of the topic and that outcomes are reasonable; (2) selection of subjects is equitable; and (3) the purposes of the research and the research setting is amenable to subjects’ welfare and producing desired outcomes; that indications of coercion or prejudice are absent, and that participation is clearly voluntary.

1. In addition, the IRB found that you need to orient participants as follows: (1) signed informed consent is required; (2) Provision is made for collecting, using and storing data in a manner that protects the safety and privacy of the subjects and the confidentiality of the data. (3) Appropriate safeguards are included to protect the rights and welfare of the subjects.

This project is therefore approved at the Expedited Review Level until October 5, 2012.

2. Please note that the institution is not responsible for any actions regarding this protocol before approval. If you expand the project at a later date to use other instruments please re-apply. Copies of your request for human subjects review, your application, and this approval, are maintained in the Office of Compliance at the above address. Please report any changes to this approved protocol to this office. A Continuing Review protocol will be sent to you in the future to determine the status of the project. Also, please use the stamped approval forms to assure participants of compliance with The Office of Human Research Protections regulations.

Sincerely,

Paul J. Moore
Compliance Manager
Office of Compliance
Western Kentucky University

cc: HS file number Baker HS12-061