

MORAL EDUCATION

&

THE ETHIC OF CARE

by

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Judy Silver

1949 – 2008

Rest in Peace

Abstract

This thesis proposes that moral development, specifically teaching students to be caring and compassionate, should be a goal of high school education. The research sought evidence of moral education taught explicitly within the public high school system of Canada's English-speaking provinces using four indicators: graduation requirements, provincial governments' purposes of education, high school curricula and school division mission statements. Findings reveal that although departments of education and school boards express concern for students' moral development in educational goals and supplementary programming, there is very little follow-through to the classroom and students. No graduation requirements or courses were found pertaining to moral education. Using key search terms it was also determined that any related curriculum content, embedded in other subjects, constitutes only minor portions of courses. Recommended is an increase in mandatory moral education at the high school level, focusing on interpersonal relations and the ethic of care.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Objectives

Morality is an extremely broad term that encompasses many elements and conjures up different thoughts as people interpret the word in their own way. In this thesis, the specific moral behaviours investigated involve interpersonal relations defined in terms of caring about one another with kindness, compassion and empathy, regardless of ideologies. This research is concerned with finding evidence in high school curricula of moral education that has the intention of building character, instilling social responsibility and developing certain moral behaviours that encompass “the ethic of care.”

Since the moral fiber of a society is critical to its well-being, so too should be the importance of developing the character, the morals and the virtues of its future citizens; that being today’s youth. The purpose of this thesis is to determine the extent to which moral education exists and, if so, the ways in which it has officially been incorporated into philosophies and teachings at the high school level.

Moral education can take many different forms, using an endless array of teaching strategies and practices. Moral development can be facilitated through the teacher’s personal influence, tacit behaviour, didactic discussion, hidden curriculum, extra-curricular activities, student committees, individual school values and indeed practically any aspect of school life. In such cases, however, students’ moral development is being left almost to chance or in trust. Such trust, however, is just that, trust; resting only on the

presumption that moral lessons or moral messages are being sufficiently presented to our children at school. Regardless of what method of delivery is better, the purpose of this thesis is to identify formal moral education programs and overt concern for moral development in the curricula of nine English-speaking provinces.

Today, educators and the public alike typically consider language arts and mathematics to be among the important subjects for all to study and practice, while long ago Greek philosophers argued that one must also place the practice of being good and virtuous as a priority. Can the subject of moral development be found within Canada's current education system? There is a time and place in curriculum for each subject and skill to be the main focus of development. When is it moral education's turn? I suggest that, perhaps, there is a lack of concern for moral education as a formally taught subject. To research this question is worthwhile since most people would agree that everyone deserves and would like to preserve as much as possible a kind, caring and compassionate community and world in which we can live. The audience that teachers have the ability to reach, the messages that we have the opportunity to send, and the possible influence that teachers have over students are, together, invaluable. Could Canada's high school education program, in fact, be missing teaching such an important link to a brighter future and a safer society?

In general, the research described in this thesis is exploratory in nature as it forms a search for explicit evidence of deliberate attention to moral education and the promotion of moral development within the Canadian public high school system. The research will attempt to identify explicitly stated concern for the moral development of today's youth in the goals of education as stated by a broad sample of provincial

departments of education and in the mission statements of a wide selection of local school divisions from across a large part of English-speaking Canada. The research objectives also include identifying evidence of formal teaching of moral education in high school curricula and related experiences as part of graduation requirements. All of these efforts are in search of expressed commitment to the development of moral - that is honest, caring, kind and compassionate - citizens.

Research Questions

Specifically, the purpose of this thesis is to search for evidence of claims and mandates regarding the teaching of moral education and the promotion of moral development within the Canadian public high school system. This will be accomplished by investigating the topic from four different angles:

- 1) In how many provinces is moral education mandatory?
Graduation requirements will be researched.
- 2) Is moral education or development included in each province's goals, priorities and/or philosophy of education?
Documents from each provincial department of education will be researched, except for Francophone Quebec.
- 3) Does moral education exist, in the form of either complete courses or explicitly and significantly embedded within other subjects?
Course titles and curriculum guide outlines will be researched.
- 4) Is there a commitment from school divisions throughout Canada to foster the moral development of their students?

School division mission statements will be researched.

The first of the four research questions involves assessing the extent to which Canadian provinces specify requirements for moral education, namely by including moral education as an explicitly specified part of a province's high school graduation requirements. To a large extent, departments of education hold the power to shape teaching, since they design the curricula and ultimately decide which subjects are mandatory for all students to take. Has the Canadian public high school education system placed any real value on moral development? By definition, graduation requirements explicitly set priorities for all students. Consequently, this sends a message to society implying which subject areas are most important and supposedly beneficial for a person to learn. It is through this question that the research can determine the value that has publicly been placed on moral education by means of identifying the extent to which it is included in graduation course lists compared to other compulsory subjects.

The second of these four research questions entails reviewing provincial government statements of goals and purposes of education. Several current public documents will be examined in search of what 9 out of the 13 provincial and territorial departments of education have to say about the priorities and intentions of public schooling. As many documents will be searched as required until each province's goals and philosophy have been clearly expressed and it can be determined whether or not there is a call for moral education.

The third research section investigates the extent to which Canadian provinces include formal teaching of moral education in high school curricula. Specifically, this means identifying any explicitly designated courses in moral education that are available

for students to take. In addition, the intention of this portion of the research is to determine whether there are any elements of moral education embedded within another subject. A search was conducted of course titles and outlines found in provincially designed curriculum guides. Both mandatory and elective courses were included in the search in order to determine how much opportunity there truly is for a student to receive formal teaching in moral education at the high school level.

Last, but not least, the fourth research question is designed to investigate the extent to which school divisions indicate concern for moral development. School divisions often write a mission statement describing the philosophies shared by the schools within their jurisdiction. These mission statements convey to parents, students, teachers, and community members the local schools' priorities and belief systems all summed up in what are usually only a couple of sentences. These statements can potentially shape teaching and learning, in the same way that graduation requirements do, since the purpose of an organization's mission statement is to bring theory to fruition. It would be very telling and revealing if concern for moral development ranked so high among priorities as to land a prestigious spot in a mission statement, thus implying the school board's intention is to see the concern embodied in the teaching practices of the classroom or school.

Rationale

The main reasons being proposed in this thesis, as to why moral education should play a critical role in schooling, are as follows:

- to counteract the crime and violence many fear in society today;

- to improve the code of conduct of society in general, including respect for each other and property;
- to help more people lead happy, fulfilling lives; and
- to inspire more people to care that this world becomes a more peaceful, kind and compassionate place.

The rationale for this thesis is that moral education can help counteract some of the dispiriting issues facing society today.

This sentiment is shared by many different parties including philosophers from long ago, global leaders and peacekeepers as well as local communities of present day. Buber, for instance, believed that teaching should include for our students a “search of a meaningful and responsible life” (Scudder in Hyman, 1971, p. 197). On a worldwide scale, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) endorses this belief and has designated the years 2001 through 2010 as the “International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence.” Part of this international project is the promotion and implementation of peace education in classrooms around the world. On a smaller, local scale a similar belief can also be witnessed by school values such as those documented in West St. Paul School’s handbook: “Take care of yourself, take care of each other and take care of this place” (Seven Oaks School Board, 2008). This school sets a strong example of following through with this moral message by reminding all students to live up to their motto, as it is frequently stated in the opening announcements of the day. I contend that all people and all schools should live up to this ethic of care.

Moral Education and Moral Development

The two terms are similar but not exactly one and the same. They relate to each other as does the pair of terms teaching and learning. At times the terms are used interchangeably, when at other times they are not. In essence, moral education represents the teaching of the subject while moral development refers to the result of studying and learning it. If moral development is the goal or the end, moral education is the means. Moral development can occur, regardless of whether teachings are formal or informal, blatant or discreet. Moral education typically refers to the effort or actions on the part of the teacher. Moral development is the motive, main goal and intended result of moral education. The interdependency explains why this thesis contains both terms.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The literature review is a significant chapter. It comprises a vast collection of authors and other references with the intention of examining the extensive topic of moral education from many different angles. To establish a strong base for the research as well as to provide for a deeper understanding of moral education and the ethic of care, the following chapter discusses varying definitions of moral education, types of ethics, philosophies of moral and ethical behaviour, opinions on both the importance and lack of moral education, in addition to connections of moral development to happiness and to character. The literature review also contains a selection of other relevant issues with respect to teaching morals. This chapter finishes by taking a look at the limited scholarly

research that exists pertaining directly to any of the four research questions of this thesis; all requiring a focus on evidence of, or studies conducted regarding, the need for moral education and the ethic of care to be taught at the high school level.

Moral Education Defined

Moral education is an immensely broad topic since the term morality, itself, represents an endless array of elements. Let us examine several different definitions and perspectives on what could be included under the heading of morals and moral education.

We begin with the official definition according to Webster's Dictionary:

¹moral \`mor-əl\ *adj* **1 a** : of or relating to principles of right and wrong in behavior . . . **d** : sanctioned by or operative on one's conscience or ethical judgment <a ~ obligation> *syn* MORAL, ETHICAL, VIRTUOUS, RIGHTEOUS, NOBLE *shared meaning element* : conforming to a standard of what is right and good
²moral *n* . . . **2 pl a** : moral practices or teachings: modes of conduct **b** : ETHICS (1980).

Due to global conditions, political agendas and historical events, there are times when certain moral issues are more salient and prominent than others but the big picture of morals and ethics does not change significantly over time. So, the general sense of morality as a concept is both ambiguous and constant at the same time. On one hand, moral issues and standards reflect society and evolve over time. On the other hand, regarding the ethic of care in particular, the underlying hope of a society is that people are kind and considerate of one another and that everyone cares about the well-being and safe-keeping of others. In these ways, morality transcends all time (Gardner, 1999, p. 247).

In Canada, Ontario's Royal Commission on Learning of 1994 actually articulated the ethic of care as part of moral education: "basic moral values, such as a sense of caring and compassion, respect for the human person and anti-racism, a commitment to peace and non-violence, honesty and justice" (Osborne, 1999, p. 25).

There is a growing group of educators who have added moral activism to the agenda. As described by Kielburger, founder of Free the Children, moral development can be aided by having students participate in real-life morality projects. He explains that people can be empowered by developing and practicing ethical leadership. His educational resource books include *Take Action: A Guide to Active Citizenship* (2002) and *Take More Action* (2004). The Manitoba School Improvement Program (1991) represents another group of educators who suggest students learn about morality by focusing on social justice through activist activities.

In general terms, the subject of moral education can cover so many elements. What is in a name? There are many similar types of educational programs that promote personal growth and touch on morals from slightly different angles and viewpoints: moral education, character education, citizenship education, peace education, human rights education, democracy, multiculturalism, environmental responsibility, and social justice, amongst others. Regardless of the name or which personal and social attributes are included in each program, the goal of any type of moral teaching is to help contribute to a more positive, safe, healthy and caring society. Given that the scope of moral education is extremely broad, for the purposes of this research the strands of morality to be examined have been prioritized and narrowed down. The exact terms that were searched for amongst course titles, curriculum contents and school division mission statements

included the following indicators (including root words and other forms of the words below):

- caring
- compassion
- kind
- empathy
- respect
- considerate
- ethical
- moral
- character education
- peace
- non-violence
- human rights
- humanitarian
- social responsibility
- fair play
- the golden rule.

Finally, within the broader scope of moral education, it is primarily the relational aspect of the ethic of care that is the focal point of this study.

Complex Definition May Prevent Implementation

The broad spectrum of moral education means that defining it is a difficult task. It seems practically impossible for educators to come to a consensus about what to include in moral education or to arrive at a definitive definition thereof. Straughan describes moral education as a combination of “personal and social education” (1988, foreword). At the same time, however, he recognizes that the specific elements of morality cannot easily be defined (1988, p. 80) because the “scope of moral education...is vast” (Straughan, 1988, p. 117). Because of this, Straughan cautions educators that “the basic question of what exactly we are trying to achieve in this area...will never be satisfactorily answered by concentrating exclusively upon methodological matters or by tinkering with terminology” (1988, foreword). Many authorities encourage moral educators to continue delivering a well-rounded subject, even without consensus on a detailed definition. Purpel downplays the significance of needing to be too definitive and instead urges us to consider “broad boundaries of the culture’s moral stance” (1989, p. 28). In *Human Values in the Classroom: Teaching for Personal and Social Growth*, Hawley (1973, p. 118) cautions educators not to allow themselves to be prevented from teaching moral education due to the lack of consensus on a clear definition or on the most effective means of program implementation. It would be counter-productive to be so bound by the need to agree on an exact definition or a perfect teaching practice that any and all opportunity to work on moral development would be completely forsaken.

The Importance of Moral Education as an Aim of Schooling

Over 2500 years ago, Confucius was one of the first thinkers to emphasize the moral aspect of education. Even though he was not a strong influence in the ‘West,’ Confucius was the originator of ‘the golden rule’: “What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others” (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999, p. 223). The ancient Confucians were also among the first to be concerned with a “holistic view” of morality (Gardner, 1999, p. 34), recommending many ways in which one should strive for virtue through self-improvement.

Beginning approximately 400 years BC, the great trio of ancient Greek philosophers - Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle - began to influence our thinking and lay the foundation for many of the beliefs that Western civilization still subscribes to today. All three men were teachers in their own way, sharing one common area of interest in particular, that which encompassed the importance of virtue and ethics. Aristotle believed that establishing morals is an educational process and a practical one at that, as he insisted “knowledge of virtue is sought not solely for itself but in order to inform praxis and in order that we become virtuous and good, not by knowing what the virtues are but by cultivating them in practice” (London, 2001).

The discussion above represents only a very small portion of the founding beliefs of morality and is by no means meant to establish historical background. It is meant only to indicate influence on the development of western civilization. Over time countless ethical theories have been developed that speak to the importance of moral education. Throughout time, from the Middle Ages to present day, philosophers and religions from

around the world constantly attempt to define the underpinnings of morality. The *Discourse on Ethics* section of this thesis will highlight some of the more renowned and influential theories.

Jumping ahead to the 19th century, the “Annual Report of the Normal, Model, Grammar, and Common Schools in Upper Canada for the Year 1856” contained the hopeful words of Superintendent Brown: “I trust that the period is not far distant when the intelligence of the youth who are now training in our common schools, to fill the various walks of life, will place the Province (Canada) in the proud and safe position to which an educated and moral population must ever elevate its country” (1857, p. 140). In this report, various school superintendents make clear their belief in the importance of moral education. Murray stressed the importance of developing in the students “the foundation of a sound moral and intellectual character” (1857, p. 175). Mills stated that one of the primary goals of education was to produce “moral greatness” within people (1857, p. 195). Ferguson wrote about education responding to societal needs, as he explains citizens’ pride in sharing and living in a “civilized community” (1857, p. 182). It was stipulated that a teacher’s responsibilities included the obligation to “pay the strictest attention to the moral and general conduct of his pupils . . . inculcating the principles of TRUTH AND HONESTY . . . governing them by their affections and reason To cultivate kindly and affectionate feelings among his pupils; to discountenance quarrelling, cruelty to animals, and every approach to vice” (1857, p. 237). The report concluded with an analogy comparing moral development within education to elements of nature and to taking care of the environment, by identifying education as the “great

moral agent in the amelioration of . . . character, as . . . agents necessary to the amelioration of the soil of the earth” (1857, p. 283).

Witnessing the destruction of World War II, like many other countries, Canada pledged to make a difference in terms of the education. As stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 26 - 2), a commitment to the moral education for youth around the world was officially taken on by practically all countries, including Canada:

Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace. (United Nations, 1948)

This is not to say that every member country followed through with their promise, but that the intentions and concern for moral education as an aim of schools were both clearly stated and shared around the world.

The Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) submitted its definition of “principles and general objectives of education” to the International Bureau of Education. Comprised within this *World Data on Education* “moral and civic development” has officially been stated as one of the major goals of Canadian schooling (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2001, database).

There are countless books and articles that speak to the importance of moral education as an aim of the schools. Regardless of one’s philosophies, it would be difficult

to deny that moral development is one very important purpose of education. To follow is a selection of what experts have to say on the topic.

A pioneer of moral education, Dewey urges us not only “to conduct education ethically but to work toward the education of moral citizens” (in Noddings, 2002, p. 77). Hansen recognizes that teaching has always been “at one and the same time an intellectual and a moral endeavor” (2001, p. 826). Fenstermacher’s four pillars of good schooling includes “cultivating the exercise of reason,” and “fostering moral discernment and right action” (2000, p. 9). In the book entitled *Educating Hearts and Minds*, the authors identify the dual purpose of education to include “academic development and character formation, which includes both personal values and civic competencies” (DeRoche & Williams, 2001, p. 16). These authors recognize that there are many ways of implementing such objectives, so many, in fact, that it would create enough discussion to form its own thesis. Purpel (1989) calls for a curriculum of justice and compassion in his book entitled just that: *The Moral & Spiritual Crisis in Education: A Curriculum for Justice & Compassion in Education*. In this same book, Freire and Henry recognize “the importance of education as part of the wider practice to know, to care, and to struggle for a more just and better world” (in Purpel, 1989, p. xviii).

The Perceived Lack of Attention to Moral Education in Contemporary Schooling

Moral education: to be or not to be? To what extent should moral education be explicitly taught in high school? This thesis calls for more moral education but, of course, there is another side to this discussion. Adversaries may have considerable reservations about the various arguments made throughout this study. For instance, one point of

contention against a moral education movement is the fear that proponents expect far more from schools than schools can possibly deliver. One may also oppose Noddings plea for moral education to supersede the subject of mathematics, seeing math competence as nonetheless a necessary attribute for any citizen today. One may wish that schools were actually much more academic than they already are. Putting the two kinds of schooling against each other creates great concern. One may feel that certain promoters of moral education, such as Kohn, are not that persuasive when turning what should be “both” into an “either-or.”

Granted that all of the above arguments make valid points, but such a debate is not the agenda of this thesis. Rather, in support of the hypothesis, the literature review is comprised of a collection of authors and other references who agree that schools might not be taking moral education seriously enough.

For much of the 20th century, critics and commentators have argued that schools have not paid sufficient attention to moral education. During this period, a variety of global events brought mistrust and competition between countries, affecting which subjects would be emphasized in the North American education system. While the Cold War and the fear of Communism led schools to put more emphasis on education for democracy, other events did quite the opposite. Triggered, in large part, by such events as Russian space successes, North American education began to focus on “the preparation of students in science and mathematics . . . gradually moving teachers and schools away from their traditional role as moral educators” (DeRoche & Williams, 2001, p. 6). The 1960’s marked the beginning of an era of pluralism. Focusing primarily on acknowledging individuality and diversity inadvertently caused a lack of consensus on

which values should be taught by schools. This resulted in not enough of the subject being taught at all.

Kohlberg encouraged educators to realize that “we are in need of an educational reform far more significant than any we have known, a reform that draws its inspiration not from technological advance but from the moral ideals of justice, democracy, and community” (Power, Higgins, & Kohlberg, 1989, p. 306). Even so, during the second half of the 20th century, schools began to emphasize teaching academic content more than ever before, which, consequently, meant that again less attention would be placed on moral education. In his well-known book, entitled *Technopoly: The Surrender of Culture to Technology*, Postman expressed that there is an obvious lack of concern for the humanities. Postman was very concerned that society’s priority, as well as that of the education system, seems to be aimed at becoming adept at using technology and machines, thus sacrificing the development of human potential. In another book, entitled *The End of Education*, Postman described the term metaphysical to mean a higher purpose, a deeper meaning and a reason as to exactly *why* one would want to learn. He strongly argued that school must have a metaphysical purpose, something much larger than the technical learning that the North American education systems focus on all too often.

Noddings alerts educators to the deficiencies of the present day school system. Criticizing over-liberal education and over-attention to technological advances, Noddings also criticizes our shallow educational response to deep social change (2005, p. 1). Noddings offers the observation: “I do not judge people by their mathematical talent, nor do I believe that mathematics through calculus is somehow necessary for good

citizenship” (2005, p. 29). Similarly, Kohn criticizes what he sees as the undue emphasis that is placed on academics in the schools. In his book, *What Does it Mean to be Well Educated?*, he urges educators to think about what he calls a ‘superficial’ claim that one “must be familiar with, say, *King Lear* in order to be considered well educated” (2004, p. 5). In trying to answer this question, Kohn asks us to rethink the true purposes of education. At the same time, he reminds us that Noddings rejects “the deadly notion that schools’ first priority should be intellectual development” (2004, p. 2) and insists that “the main aim of education should be to produce competent, caring, loving, and lovable people.” An advocate of incorporating the ‘ethic of care’ into schools, Noddings criticizes the status quo: “In schools we talk about concern for others and enforce some rules of polite conduct, but we do not identify the best in students and work actively to bring it out” (2005, p. 104).

In *Bringing in a New Era in Character Education*, Damon shares this concern for a lack of moral education and goes as far as labeling education to this point as a “failed experiment with separating the intellectual from the moral” (2002, back cover). An article entitled “Character and Academics: What Good Schools Do” insists that educators must make an explicit commitment to moral education and adds the caution that “though there has been increasing interest in character education among policy makers and education professionals, many schools hesitate to do anything that might detract from their focus on increasing academic performance” (Benninga, Berkowitz, Kuehn, & Smith, 2006, p. 448).

Many other leading educators have written about the lack of attention to moral education in contemporary schooling. DeRoche and Williams recognize that “the social

malaise that we are experiencing calls for a reexamination of what schools . . . are teaching our children and young people about life and living” (2001, p. 5). In their book, *The Public Purpose of Education and Schooling*, Goodlad and McMannon argue “for greater attention to the moral civil arts” (1997, p. 157). Purpel writes that “the failure of the education system is both cause and effect of a crisis in the culture’s capacity to synthesize a coherent moral and spiritual order” (1989, p. 28). Similarly, in his book, entitled *Teaching Peace*, Lasley discouragingly points out that “young people learn not to care for others because they are not taught how to care The messages they receive relate to self-gratification rather than to emancipation from personal needs and wants . . . the enculturation process of American children fails to provide the type of understandings children need to think beyond themselves” (1994, p. 7). Whether the problems stem from the breakdown of families and communities, or whether this is simply the symptom of a deeper problem, this literature suggests the need to teach selflessness, nonaggression and responsibility. In *Human Values in the Classroom: Teaching for Personal and Social Growth*, Hawley warns educators of ‘social entropy,’ a gradual deterioration of values that he recognizes is occurring in both the general society and in schools (1973, p. 118).

The current lack of morals in society and lack of concern thereof is of growing concern around the world. Former president of the Czech Republic, Havel, stated with much trepidation: “Without a global revolution in the sphere of human consciousness, nothing will change for the better in the sphere of our being as humans, and the catastrophe toward which this world is headed – be it ecological, social, demographic or a general breakdown of civilization – will be unavoidable” (1990).

The Need for Moral Education at the High School Level

As Osborne states, “even senior students sometimes have to be reminded how to behave or how to treat other people” (1999, p. 57). Gardner argues that all the way up to graduation, “K-12 education should enhance a deeper understanding” of such principles as “goodness” and “morality” by “preserving the traditional goals of a ‘humane’ education” (1999, back cover).

All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten is a classic satirical book about some interesting idiosyncrasies of life, recognizing that the most important fundamental values are learned early in our education. Fulghum writes: “Wisdom was not at the top of the graduate-school mountain, but there in the sandpile” (p. 4). He reminds us to play fair, share, not to hit, or take things that aren’t yours, and more:

Everything you need to know is in there somewhere. The Golden Rule and love and basic sanitation. Ecology and politics and equality and sane living. Take any one of those items and extrapolate it into sophisticated adult terms and apply it to your family life or your work or your government or your world and it holds true and clear and firm. (1986, p. 5)

It is unfortunate that teaching such fundamental basics in school seems to decrease so significantly after primary school. The following authorities support the notion that moral education should continue throughout high school.

Noddings argues that teenagers “have the capacity to be deeply concerned for others, and schools rarely give them a chance to practice the skills needed to develop this capacity” (2005, p. 104). She promotes “high schools in which part of every day should be directly devoted to centers and themes of care” (2005, p. 105). Noddings is adamant

about the importance of moral education as an aim of schools and she stresses that “teenagers need to be confirmed in their budding altruism” (2005, p. 104). Kohn advises educators that “from preschool to high school children should learn and be encouraged to practice why caring, sharing, helping, and empathizing” are all important (DeRoche & Williams, 2001, p. 53).

There is a noticeable difference between most high school and elementary report cards. In primary school moral factors are frequently included as part of the assessment, whereas on most secondary school report cards reference to moral development is practically non-existent. Noddings points out the dangers of such exclusion. If any subject matter is not part of the students’ grades or credits it will “inevitably have second-class status” (2005, p. 25).

I personally recall my own elementary school report card stating “respecting others’ property,” yet my high school report contained nothing of the sort. An elementary report from a randomly chosen school division contains an impressive ‘social development’ section including such items as:

- respects feelings of others;
- demonstrates responsibility; and
- shares and cooperates during play.

Another elementary school report card included the following items:

- accepts responsibility;
- displays self control;
- works/plays cooperatively; and
- respects others.

In fact, on this particular elementary school report card, placed even before the academic performance section, was a section evaluating ‘teamwork skills’ and ‘personal skills.’

Based on unofficial, personal observation, it appears that middle school report cards often differ in terms of the amount of character traits that are included and evaluated. Unfortunately, however, many if not most high school report cards contain absolutely no mention or evaluation of moral development.

Examination of the *Ontario Provincial Report Card* (1998), revealed that “cooperation with others” and “conflict resolution” are included in the “Learning skills” section of assessment for grades 1 through 6. At the high school level, however, the province touches only slightly on the personal development areas of “teamwork” and “community involvement” but again there is nothing that specifically addresses moral development.

The rare occurrence of character building traits being evaluated, or even mentioned, on a secondary report card could be due to the fact that as students mature the school system becomes primarily subject-oriented. What might this pattern imply? Of course it is due to the fact that academics become more important in high school, but the two do not have to be mutually exclusive. This does not have to mean that moral education should diminish based on age. I would argue that people of all ages need to continue to develop in a moral direction. The risk of excluding moral development from the assessment process is that this implies that other subjects and skills are more important. This sends a biased, skewed, even inaccurate message of certain priorities and expectations to students, parents, and society in general. As a consequence, and frighteningly enough, this may also negatively affect people’s behaviour patterns.

Discourse on Ethics

Although the following theories originated very long ago, and even though many ethical concepts have been developed between then and now, it is worthwhile to step back in time for a moment to understand certain philosophies due to their strong influence in terms of forming present-day, western beliefs.

Where Confucianism defined virtue by emphasizing interpersonal relationships, the ancient Greek philosophers defined virtue by emphasizing ethical behaviour which they believed begins within one's psyche, mind and soul.

Long before any modern day educators ever attempted to define morality, Aristotle identified what the Greek philosophers believed were the most virtuous characteristics a person should develop. He began with what his teacher, Plato, prescribed as moral virtues which included self-control and justice. Next, Aristotle combined these traits with intellectual virtues to put together the characteristics of a well-rounded, moral person. 'Aristotelian ethics' states that neither consequences nor duties but character should be the focal point of ethical theory. Aristotle insisted that to be truly virtuous one could not simply study what virtue is but must act accordingly. 'Virtue ethics' evolve within a person as one builds character. *The Nicomachean Ethics*, written by Aristotle, discusses character-based moral values. He described ethics as a practical science, mastered by doing rather than reasoning alone and then practicing to become better, just as one must do for any other subject. Aristotle also identified certain actions, such as murder, as unconditionally wrong, which represents an area of his philosophy that does

not allow for moral relativism. Another factor involved in virtue ethics depends on how a person defines and believes in oneself, as Aristotle explained that moral development can also be improved through self-efficacy.

‘Deontological ethics’ focuses on the rightness of all actions regardless of consequences. During the Age of Enlightenment, Immanuel Kant, one of the foremost philosophers of the 18th century, referred to this obligation of unconditional actions as the categorical imperative. Based on fundamental duties, also known as universal law, this type of ethics is concerned with “means” of all moral actions as opposed to “ends” (Kant, 1785/2005, p. 18). Here, one must act morally, based on principle, at all times regardless of any circumstances that may otherwise alter one’s motivation or goal. In order to become a virtuous person, Kant promoted cultivating “the disposition to help others” (1785/2005, p. 20). Kant also identified the importance of respect for others as an integral part of morality and specified that others are to only and always be considered as ends over and above any personal means (Piquemal, 2004, p. 4). Deontology is both “art and science which has for its object the doing on each occasion what is right and proper to be done” (Bentham, 1992, p. 249).

Another well-known theory of ethics, known as consequentialism, states that actions must be based on the rightness of consequences. In this case, for the most part, the end justifies the means. Here, a course of action may be modified in order to achieve certain results that are presumably more ethical than the prescribed actions.

Utilitarianism, a form of consequentialism, also contends that how moral an action is depends on the overall utility of the outcome. Utilitarians, such as Bentham and Mill, are concerned with achieving the greatest amount of good for the greatest number of people.

To illustrate these two opposing views of ethics, consequentialism and deontology, consider the following extreme example. Begin with the assumption that both a consequentialist and a deontologist would consider killing as immoral. If an emergency situation presented itself, a consequentialist might agree that a person may have to risk one's own life and be sacrificed in order to save the lives of others, whereas a deontologist would not take one life for any other. The reasoning stems from different philosophies, but both decisions are equally moral.

In the 20th century, Buber referred to a "commitment to reciprocity" in ethical relationships (in Piquemal, 2004, p. 4). Here the emphasis is placed on "I-Thou . . . in contrast to I-It," the inadequacy of the latter being the focus on one's personal experience rather than on one's relations (Piquemal, 2004, p. 4). Levinas articulates the requirement that one is to be cognizant of what he calls the difference between giver and receiver (in Piquemal, 2004, p. 2). Within this theory, caring for another, for instance, is completely separate from caring about one's self. One specific condition of Levinas's philosophy is that truly ethical relations begin with non-reciprocal expectations (in Bergo, 2007).

Another philosophy focuses primarily on what is known as 'common sense morality.' This theory can be used to justify positions on controversial issues, inevitably varying greatly from individual to individual. It does not suggest that there is some common morality but operates on more of a case by case basis. Moral responsibility refers to one's obligation to behave morally. Depending on a person's belief system it is felt that this can be accomplished either with innate feelings, practiced behaviour, or critical thinking. In this view, Noddings draws an important distinction between natural caring and ethical caring (1984, p. 81). Here, Noddings distinguishes between moral

decisions that stem from one's wanting to do the right thing compared to one's feeling obligated to do the right thing. The former conditions she calls natural caring, the latter ethical.

Noddings (2006, p. 230) also speaks of the possibility that "the propensity to care is biologically inherent in the female." Gilligan's book, *In a Different Voice*, speaks of this same notion of a woman's seemingly natural need to nurture and sustain relationships. Gilligan began working alongside Kohlberg, a psychologist of moral reasoning, and is known for her contribution to the field of character-based ethical philosophy. She modified her area of expertise when she extended the stages of moral development in a different direction by pointing to differences between male and female ways of caring. Like all ethical theories, Gilligan's views are controversial while at the same time offer many logical points to consider. Gilligan writes that "women's sense of integrity appears to be entwined with an ethic of care, so the major transitions in women's lives would seem to involve changes in the understanding and activities of care" (1982, p. 171). Believing so strongly in the power of a women's sense of relation, Gilligan contends that it is actually "the activities of care through which she judges her worth" (1982, p. 171). Gilligan's work in this area of theory, based on the importance of relationships, is often known as the ethics of care. Even though it shares part of the same name and subject matter, this theory is not meant to be confused with the title or purpose of this thesis.

There are many other theories of ethics and combinations thereof. Certain behaviours can even be considered both ethical and unethical by different societies and cultures. In addition, it is important to realize that many aspects of morality can be

subjective and difficult to define. Consider the variety of philosophies that comprise this discourse on ethics. Following the theory of deontology, for instance, one should do what is right even if it means incurring some sacrifice to oneself or to those to whom one is close. Conversely, following the theory of the ethics of care one should do what is right by considering the interests of those who are close to us over and above the interests of complete strangers. This is just one example of a principle within a philosophy that does not seem entirely moral. Arguments both for and against the different schools of thought could be made. It seems an impossible task to even attempt to determine if any one theory could be claimed to be better than another. It should be emphasized that there is no intention to suggest that any one theory is more or less moral than another. The differences are of kind not of degree.

A dissertation entitled *Education For Goodness Sake* (Alexander, 1983, abstract) asked the question: “Is ethical philosophy relevant to the theoretical understanding of moral education?” and answered in the affirmative. Before delivering any moral education program, educators need to research various philosophies and pedagogies in an effort to ensure effective implementation and teaching.

This thesis, *Moral Education & The Ethic of Care: Portraits Across Canada*, does not subscribe to, nor favour, any one theory of ethics over another, but merely lays a foundation for deeper understanding. For best results, in order to nurture the goodness in people, an integration and synthesis of all morally and pedagogically defensible philosophies and programs is suggested (Althof & Berkowitz, 2006, p. 513). Regardless of the philosophy one chooses to follow, this thesis is founded on the belief that, first and foremost, every person should cultivate a capacity to care, that is, to care in terms of

being kind and compassionate and to care about the well-being and safe-keeping of others.

Separating the Church from the Subject

Even though historically, religion does get most of the credit for including moral education in the public school system, it is also completely possible to separate religion from the subject. The point of this section is simply to clarify that there is no connection implied between religion and the type of moral education being researched for this thesis. Since the beginning of public education, ‘religious and moral instruction’ was often considered as one subject (Upper Canada Chief Superintendent of Schools, 1857, p. 234). Today, religion is rarely allowed in the public school classroom, and moral education is seen as separate from the teachings of any church. It is entirely possible for people to maintain equally high moral standards with or without religion. While the two subjects, morality and religion, can be, and often are related, so too, and just as easily, can they be separated. A prime example of this secular view can be represented by the 18th century Age of Enlightenment, when intelligence ruled ethical and other decision-making as opposed to any religious or other influence, and when actions were guided by reason over revelation. Note, however, that Enlightenment thinkers themselves, such as Voltaire, believed that religion was still necessary for many people, since they considered only a minority truly capable of intellectual moral reasoning. At that time, Bentham also acknowledged that the two subjects can be considered separately. In his book on deontology and utilitarianism, Bentham clarified that “the field of Ethics, not the field of Religion, is the field here undertaken to be surveyed” (1992, p. 170). Similarly, this thesis

is completely secular in nature, which should not be taken as an argument against religion, but instead as an argument that moral education can be completely independent of it.

Still, caution must be exercised when implementing or delivering any form of moral education. There are parents, ranging from Christian evangelicals to devout Muslims to secular humanists, who may not be sure they want schools involved in teaching their children moral values, in anything but the most basic, banal sense. This same most basic sense, however, may very well be enough to make a difference and improve the moral quality of individuals and of society in general.

Moral Education as a Response to Societal Issues

At the risk of sounding unusually alarmist to some, according to Lockwood, character and moral education address concerns arising from what she calls “the erosion of society” (1997, p. 4). This she describes as stemming from the “dissolution of the two-parent family, the demise of traditional values, and a general lack of discipline” (p. 10) worsening to also include “random acts of violence, urban terror, and high rates of drug and alcohol abuse” (p. 6). Recently, a community newspaper debated this topic: “The Great Depression of the 1930's spawned much greater poverty than what we see today in Canada. These evil actions were not at all common then” (Western Standard, 2006). Many individuals, families, cultures and communities have paved their own way out of poverty using a strong work ethic and optimism while maintaining their moral values. Although not everyone agrees with the following correlation, it may very well be that a

safe community or society is reflective of the level of morals of its people. For instance, if one person vandalizes another's property, this shows disrespect and a lack of moral values, regardless of the reason why this person is behaving in such a way. If someone harms an innocent person in any violent manner, it is clearly an immoral act. Perhaps, many of society's problems are a byproduct of the moral fiber that seems to currently be lacking and since no other party seems to be fixing the problem it might have to be the schools that need to pick up the broken pieces, or at least help improve the situation. Much of this section of the literature review is to argue that we need moral education to counter, what feels to many of us as, a rising incidence of crime and an unsafe society to live within.

Twenty years ago, Quebec's department of education (Gouvernement du Quebec, 1988, p. 15) alerted us to what is described as "the moral crisis" of society indicative of "widespread and continual violence" most noticeable over the past decade. Providing a rationale for developing their secondary school Moral Education course, the Quebec government warned us that not allocating any attention to this subject would add to the "the trivializing of everything that is even more disturbing than the escalation of violence" (1988, p. 16). This statement implies that there may seem to be an escalation of violence occurring at the same time that many basic aspects of moral citizenship and behaviour, such as common courtesies and respecting authority, seem to be becoming increasingly trivialized. There may in fact have been more violence or general lawlessness throughout history than there is today, and crime statistics may not always bear an argument for a rising tide of violence, but based on general observations and

sentiments of many citizens it is time to re-examine the state of the moral fiber of our society.

According to Statistics Canada (2008), the number of youth charged with homicide last year was a discouraging 81% higher than adults being charged with the same crime. The exact numbers were 2.9 youth charged per 100,000 people compared to 1.6 adults. In fact, the rate of youth charged for all types of ‘crimes of violence’ was approximately 79% higher than the adult population in our country (826.8 youth/461.9 adults). In order to identify crime rate changes over time, however, statistics would have to be examined for a number of years. Although the above statistics are representative of only one year and are not meant to be compared with the past, the numbers are still indicative of adult compared to youth crimes in the most recent and therefore the most pertinent year. Sadly, all 10 provinces reported violent crime rates that were higher among their youth than of their adult populations. Could this mean that people tend to mature and improve their behaviour with age, or could this mean that crime rates are higher today among the younger generation, indicating that such behavior may be on the rise? If this is any indication of the future, we need to recall Piaget’s warning to educators, in his classic book, *The Moral Judgement of the Child*, that “child morality throws light on adult morality” (1977, p. 8).

Where is the connection between morality and crime? Gilligan (1982, p. 65) asks an important question: “The concern about hurting others persists as a major theme...to the question *why be moral?*” Gilligan then responds by stating that “in morality lies a way of solving conflicts so that no one will be hurt” (1982, p. 65). The Pan-Canadian Consensus was formed in 2000, which included individuals from over thirty education,

justice and community organizations to work together to convey the message that “schools can work with communities to prevent crime and violence” (2006). This large educational focus group insists that teaching against violence and nurturing healthy, caring environments at school can “promote respectful, responsible and caring relationships” (Pan-Canadian Consensus, 2006) as a response to societal and community issues.

According to the organization named Vision of Humanity, Canada was ranked 8th on the first ever Global Peace Index (2007, rankings). The United States ranked 96th. The ‘level of violent crime’ or, using their more positive terms, ‘absence of violence’ is one of the 24 ‘global peace index indicators’ ranking ‘peace’ in each country. One of the main findings of the Global Peace Index is that “schooling” actually correlates with peace (PR Newswire, 1996). It is empowering that education can make a difference; however, it is equally concerning that schools seem to be missing the opportunity to teach peace. The United States, for instance, offers education to all yet ranked very low on the Global Peace Index. Vision of Humanity warns educators of this current dichotomy: “There is a positive relationship between education and peace, . . . education is an essential element of creating and sustaining peace, however teaching peace is not currently a core part of the education curriculum in most nations” (2007, *Peace & Sustainability: Uses of the Global Peace Index - Enhance Education*).

The mission of the Vanier Institute of the Family (VIF) focuses on the importance and strengths of families in Canada (1965). In an article titled “The Rise in the Number of Children and Adolescents Who Exhibit Problematic Behaviors,” VIF blames “schools and neighborhoods that no longer are effective communities, hence inadequate collective

supervision” as one of the main reasons why we may be experiencing more violence in society (Ambert, 2007). The study argues that “since the 1950s, our society has facilitated the evolution of an environment, herein called the enabling environment, which favors the development of problematic rather than prosocial behaviours” and includes school as part of this problem. Doctors Benson and Engeman also fear that the “astounding crime rate is largely due to lack of ethics, which, in turn, is due to lack of ethical instruction in the school and other opinion-forming institutions” (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999, p. 221).

It is not only educators and philosophers who are concerned about a lack of moral education in schooling. Many outside organizations are being created in order to develop moral education programs of their own, then offering their resources and support to schools for implementation in the classroom. The Campus Climate Challenge, a coalition of youth groups from across North America working together to protect the environment, also supports the cause of moral education as a response to societal issues and the reduction of violence in particular: “We can also unite under a single belief of non-violence and love in order to eradicate the evils that are holding humankind back from achieving greater peace and justice for all” (2008).

The Peace Learning Centre (2006) is an organization that promotes and assists teaching conflict resolution, responsibility, and character education. The work of this organization is expanding at the high school level as well as in the juvenile justice system, which again supports the idea that there is a connection between moral education and the creation of a non-violent society. Roots of Empathy is a growing Canadian based organization that promotes moral education, but only up to the middle years level. Rachel’s Challenge is an exemplary high school moral education program that, although

originating outside of Canada, could just as well be introduced to our school system here at home. The mission of this program is to initiate action, based on the premise that “students have the power to make permanent, positive, cultural change in their schools and communities by accepting the challenge...to start a chain reaction of kindness and compassion” (2008).

Such programming stems from a sense that we need to counteract the violence troubling so many people in society today. Albeit subjective and sensationalizing, tracking newspaper headlines from every province across the country, on a regular basis, provided enough disheartening information for me to realize that, sadly, rarely a day goes by without horrific, tragic events occurring that are much too violent, horrendous and frightening to recite. It is quite likely that what lay behind the discouraging statistics and news stories is a prevalence of poor parenting, poverty, inequality, and a plethora of other social issues. Even though it may be these unfortunate circumstances that lead to destructive behaviour, and even though schools are not to blame for these concerns, it could be education that plays a part in treating the problem. As stated in the rationale section, this thesis proposes that moral education can help counteract some of the negative affects that such conditions have had on society.

This is not to suggest that the state of society is the schools’ creation, rather, as the old adage says: “If you are not part of the solution, you are part of the problem.” Regardless of the reasons for society’s bleak conditions, however, I do believe any hope for improvement calls for increased efforts on everyone’s part, for instance, business government, police, parents, and, yes, schools. Part of the solution, however, may lie in the teaching of understanding, kindness and empathy to all citizens. Education can

certainly do its part to help show the light, pass on the message of how people and communities are supposed to behave, and keep the moral people moral. Schools could do all of this, hoping that the morally committed population will continue to grow. Noddings claims that “people who feel cared for and who have learned to care for others will be less likely to engage in violent acts” (2002, p. 38). Lockwood also acknowledges that: “Teaching virtues and values in (public) schools will lead to the betterment of behavior and society as a whole” (1997, p. 1). Nelson Mandela, former President of South Africa, goes as far as proclaiming: “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world” (ThinkExist, 1999).

Smart vs. Good

There are, and have been, many highly intelligent people in this world who have been completely evil and inhumane. What is the goal of education: to help people become smart or to help people become good? This could very well be a false dichotomy as schools could fulfill both purposes. Lickona reassures us that “moral education is not a new idea. It is, in fact, as old as education itself. Down through history, in countries all over the world, education has had two great goals: to help young people become smart and to help them become good” (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999, p. 220).

Perhaps, these two terms are *not* quite as opposite, in terms of educational objectives, as they may at times appear to be. For instance, perhaps one who is truly smart is concurrently empathetic. A dissertation on the topic of moral education confirmed a “natural connection between moral and cognitive development” (Gossett,

2006, p. 24). Hansen reminds us that “pioneering thinkers in education associate intellectual growth with moral growth” (2001, p. 833). It is in fact a widely supported theory that the ability to reason and act morally develops with the level of cognitive development, as Piaget, Kohlberg and Dewey, among others, all agree.

Although some believe that the order begins with thinking, which leads to knowing, which ought to lead to doing, Arendt, on the other hand, warns us of the possible dichotomy and block that exists between truly thinking and merely knowing (2003). She uses the most evil examples of menaces to society and relates their immorality to not knowing how to think. Regardless of how much information and how many skills a person may have been taught (or learned), Arendt believes that even the most evil acts can be attributed to people not having been taught (or learned) how to think. According to Arendt, how a person thinks affects how he or she will act. Although it is impossible to expect to ever arrive at a consensus definition of right versus wrong, Arendt maintains that “if the ability to tell right from wrong should have anything to do with the ability to think, then we must be able to ‘demand’ its exercise in every sane person” (2003, p. 164). Arendt pleads with educators to teach students how to think so that they will never engage in any further horrors, such as participating in genocide or other violent acts (Coulter & Wiens, 2002, 15). The horrific story of the Holocaust provides a sad example of the possibility of being intelligent in a certain regard while being truly evil at the same time. This is a combination educators should learn how to ward against. “It is just as important to make students good as it is to make them smart,” affirms Lockwood (1997, p. 60).

Moral Education & Happiness

There has always been a connection proposed between morality and happiness. Aristotle believed that “the aim of ethical inquiry is a practical one . . . we want to know what virtue is so that we may become good ourselves and thereby do well and be happy” (London, 2001). The ancient Greek philosophers believed that the two traits were one in the same: “they did not allow virtue and happiness to be regarded as two distinct elements of the highest good” considering their unity to be a “logical connection” (in Kant, 1785/2005, p. 128).

Similarly, identified by Kant, happiness “always presupposes morally right behavior as its condition” (1785/2005, p. 128). It is even possible that “virtue produces happiness . . . distinct from the consciousness . . . as a cause produces an effect” (1785/2005, p. 128). Those who follow Kant’s concept of happiness in life believe one can truly reap the benefits of moral development, since they consider “the distribution of happiness in exact proportion to morality” (1785/2005, p. 128). This theory has the potential of making a significant difference in students’ lives and futures, as well as in society in general. Hence, the inclusion of moral education is important in that it could lend a very worthy cause to the purposes of education, that being to help teach people to create their own happiness.

Bentham’s utilitarianism is founded on the famous phrase: “The greatest happiness of the greatest number” (in Mill, 1962, p. 7). Also known as “The Greatest Happiness Principle,” this theory of ethics holds that “actions are right in proportion as

they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness” (Mill, 1962, p. 257).

Of course, the Dalai Lama connects the ethic of care and happiness: “If you want others to be happy, practice compassion. If you want to be happy, practice compassion” (ThinkExist, 1999). The Dalai Lama claims that “love and compassion are necessities, not luxuries. Without them humanity cannot survive” (ThinkExist, 1999).

Kohlberg referred to the highest level of moral reasoning as “the domain of ideals and the good life” (1984, p. 4). Noddings urges the public school system to promote and support “the establishment of happiness as an aim of education” (2003, p. 7).

Moral Education & Character Education

Many educators and leaders of the character education movement of the 1990’s signed a “Character Education Manifesto” which called for the school to become a “community of virtue fostering values . . . responsibility, hard work, honesty, and kindness” (DeRoche & Williams, 2001, p. 15). DeRoche includes civic education as an integral part of character education, which includes “self-discipline,” “respect for individual worth and human dignity” as well as “concern for the well-being of others” (DeRoche & Williams, 2001, p. 18). Another definition of moral education was derived from a group known as the Character Education Partnership who developed “six pillars of character – trustworthiness, responsibility, caring, respect for others, fairness, and citizenship” (DeRoche & Williams, 2001, p.14). Character education in the 1990’s took on a more “holistic” spin than it did at its inception (DeRoche & Williams, 2001, p. 11),

including “one important aspect of moral development... socialization – helping the young live cooperatively, caringly, and civilly” (DeRoche & Williams, 2001, p. 12).

Both moral and character education, for instance, promote prosocial behaviour. Both share the same goals: “transforming everyday, casual rudeness to polite conduct – and on a larger scale – seeing youth choose prosocial, ‘moral’ behaviour, no matter what the situation” (Lockwood, 1997, p. 10), “ranging from everyday ‘niceness’ to nothing less than the overhaul of contemporary . . . society” (p. 7). While both terms have behaviour-oriented objectives, the slight difference between the two is that moral education tends to focus more on ethical judgment while character education tends to focus more on personality traits.

Many authorities want more character education to be taught in schools. Kohlberg argued that with the right efforts it is possible for character education to actually accelerate moral development. The development of moral reasoning, he claims, takes place over six stages, over the course of a person’s cognitive growth. Addressing the desired transition “from *is* to *ought*” (1981, p. 103), Kohlberg considered it critical that an aim of character education be to advance each student to the highest level of moral reasoning. In their book, *Building Character in Schools*, Bohlin and Ryan consider the teacher’s work to be “nurturing character” (1999, p. 138). Gardner endorses Emerson’s adage: “Character is higher than intellect” (1999, p. 248) and urges educators to adjust teaching practices to reflect this viewpoint and to persist with such efforts. Former President of the United States, Clinton, in his State of the Union address, January 23, 1996, called for an increase in moral education: “I challenge all our schools to teach

character education, to teach good values and good citizenship” (DeRoche & Williams, 2001, p. 14).

Many educators write about the connection between character education and moral education. In *An Integrated Approach to Character Education*, Rusnak writes about the importance of promoting character growth in students and of teaching them how to know right from wrong. Throughout the book, he reinforces the point that it is the teachers’ responsibility to shape how their students think, feel and act. The Character Education Partnership recommends character education be a part of “all aspects of school life” (Althof & Berkowitz, 2006, p. 510). Goodlad considers one of the goals of school to be for students to learn “the judgment to evaluate events and phenomena as good or evil; a commitment to truth and values; the ability to use values in determining choices; moral integrity; an understanding of the necessity for moral conduct; and a desire to strengthen the moral fabric of society” (1994, p. 51).

Through the ages, educators and philosophers have linked character to morality, hence the modern day connection between moral education and character education. In his book entitled *Guides for the Journey*, Creamer touches on the origin of the term ethics: “In philosophy, ethics is the study of moral principles. The term comes from the Greek work ethos which in the plural means character” (1996, p. 198). Mill recognized the connection between character education and ethical development as he explained that utilitarianism “could only attain its end by the general cultivation of nobleness of ‘character’” (1962, p. 262).

Let us be clear on the intention of character education in schools. In terms of semantics and as a comparison, consider the concept of values clarification. Here students

clarify their values using a much less morally stringent set of criteria for assessing the adequacy of values. This is a strategy that most schools have long since moved beyond. Since character education is not called character clarification, the title itself implies that the purpose is to improve one's personality traits and that it is not meant to be a neutral statement about one's characteristics. Osborne reminds educators that moral education is very different than values education. While the former depends on establishing a set of moral principles and the ability to make moral judgment, the latter is based more on preferences that are relative to the individual (1984, p. 88). In fact, moral education is a specific and primary element of character education. An organization called the Character Education Partnership goes by the motto: "helping schools develop people of good character for a just and compassionate society" (2008). According to this source, the definition of character education is to create learning environments "that foster ethical, responsible, and caring young people" (Character Education Partnership, 2008).

"Moral excellence" is one of the ways that Webster's Dictionary defines character (1980), which again supports the connection between the often interchangeable titles of character and moral education.

Related Research

Regardless of the name or definition, there is a wealth of research relating to the topics of moral, character, citizenship, social justice, and similar types of education. A significant amount of research has also been completed on precisely what is included in each type of moral education and how effective each one is. There is an abundance of

information on the need for moral development as well as on the pedagogies of how best to attain such an objective. Infused into basic curriculum, organized as a separate program or course, simply modeled through teaching, reasoned by students, or promoted through general school themes; all of these practices are amongst a variety of effective ideas for the implementation and teaching of moral education. Specific subject areas, schools, provinces, and grades levels (especially elementary) have previously been researched in terms of some sort of character or moral education, although such research has been very limited in scope. Special projects have been evaluated. Curriculum guides have been researched, although, none have compared Canadian provinces with respect to the same defining qualities in the way that this thesis proposes to do. It appears school divisions' mission statements have not yet been reviewed for the educational claims they make. No research has been done that compares provincial graduation requirements, particularly in terms of moral education components. Barely any research has been done to determine the role that moral education actually plays throughout the overall education of today's youth. There is practically no research available that has determined whether or not teachers do, in fact, practice what they preach and actually deliver moral education in the classroom, even though it has been acknowledged as being so important. The latter concept could make for an interesting follow-up to this thesis.

The dissertation related most closely to this thesis is entitled *The Effect of Teaching Critical Thinking by Infusion, With Focus on Transfer of Skills, on the Moral Judgment and Critical Thinking of Secondary School Students* (Hagelskamp, 2000). Although this research pertained to a particular teaching practice it did provide information on moral education at the high school level. The author complained that

“there seems to be inadequate time in the school day to give sufficient attention” to students in regards to the “facilitation of their moral and ethical growth” which is considered one of schools’ “primary functions” (abstract).

Another study bears the title *The Relationship of Moral Reasoning to Moral Action in Inner City High School Students* (1993, abstract). The research was related to this thesis in that it combined moral and high school education and extended the findings to include the effectiveness of teaching methods.

In another relevant dissertation, the researcher completed a factor analysis of the questionnaire: “What Should Students Know before They Graduate from High School?” In this research, the respondents included community residents, school personnel, students, and recent graduates. From this survey of public opinions, the author determined that the answer to what students should learn in high school could be broken down into four categories, two of which included “social responsibility (moral education)” and “social integration” (Matsuda, 1988, abstract).

The author of another noteworthy dissertation, entitled *Education For Goodness Sake*, suggests “moral-values education is an appropriate way of promoting the ‘good life’ as a central education aim” (Alexander, 1983, abstract).

Hughes and Sears (1996) have completed research that is probably the closest in nature to a portion of the methodology of this thesis. Similar to this thesis, these authors reviewed public documents of provincial departments of education looking for evidence of directives for explicit teachings using a pre-defined set of terms. Although the focus was citizenship education some of the same key indicators matched with moral education terminology, such as setting the goal for students to become “skilled at taking action to

make their communities, nation, and world a better place for all people” (1996, p. 5).

Upon searching the public polls of the Canadian research organization, Angus Reid Global Monitor, it appears that no surveys have been conducted regarding moral education in our country. No local poll results were available on morality, ethics, care, compassion, Canadian schools, graduation, nor the golden rule. The empirical research that had been completed related primarily to education as an election issue, with no information about any specific concerns. The closest any Angus Reid poll came to this thesis topic was entitled “Canadians Evaluate Education System” (August 31, 2004). It merely asked the public whether they were satisfied or dissatisfied about their province’s education system, but once again it did not ask nor offer reasons as to why they feel the way they do, nor does it ask what people feel should be taught.

The annual Phi Delta Kappa (PDK) American public opinion Gallup polls contain the data that best relates to this thesis. The surveys that PDK administers constitute empirical, scholarly, scientific research that sometimes raises particular questions about the call for moral education and what, precisely, would be included in such learning. As an advocate of public education, this organization’s goal is to obtain the opinion of the general public on issues that may improve the quality of education. Some of the results that pertain to the call for moral education dated back to the 1970’s. The 1976 PDK Gallup poll of the public’s attitudes toward the public schools determined that: “The overwhelming majority of parents expect public schools to contribute to children’s moral development.” In the 1993 Gallup poll, participants were asked whether or not they thought it would be possible to agree on “a set of basic values that would be taught in the local public schools?” The response was an overwhelming *yes* by 73% of respondents. A

sample list was then arrived at and included such values as honesty, caring, and the golden rule. Another PDK poll determined that character was ranked number two out of ten purposes of school, second only to basic skills. This time the list of characteristics was described as “honest, responsible, dependable, loyal, and a person of integrity” (DeRoche & Williams, 2001, p. 17). PDK has identified that “the past two decades have shown that the public strongly supports character or moral education in the public schools” (DeRoche & Williams, 2001, p. 4).

A 1996 MetLife study recommended that schools teach values along with “the principles of right and wrong” (DeRoche & Williams, 2001, p. 5). In a similar public opinion poll, by Poplin and Weeres in 1992, it was determined that people are asking schools to teach “honesty,” “integrity,” “care,” and “justice” (DeRoche & Williams, 2001, p. 5). From the abundance of studies and literature that they reviewed, DeRoche and Williams concluded: “it is apparent through polls, through leaders, and through organizations that the public wants the schools to actively engage students in value formation and character development” (2001, p. 5). The support is undeniable. In addition, “it is apparent that school personnel, parents, and especially students support school and community efforts to foster consensus values and to implement character education programs” (DeRoche & Williams, 2001, p. 5).

Conceptual Framework

This conceptual framework links the literature review to the methodology of this research, as this section contains information that pertains to both sections of the thesis. The findings of this research are divided into four sections, corresponding to the four

research questions. These sections are further broken down in order to illustrate every province's inclusion of moral education as described for each section of the research.

First, it is important to establish a framework, that is, a structured set of categories, within which all findings can be placed so as to better observe themes, patterns, and trends in the field of moral education.

The morals one lives by and the behaviours one chooses can be shaped by character, principle and choosing right from wrong. One's conduct can also be dependent on the society and country in which one lives as well as by the rules of one's culture or community. Acknowledging the various influences, this thesis comprises many elements of moral education, with a particular emphasis on the ethic of care. Although some of the terms from the pre-determined list are distinctly more closely related to the ethic of care than others, all of the terms are important aspects of the caring side of morality as one value has the capacity to build upon another. Smeyers advises educators that it is possible to see "both the justice and care saliencies in a moral problem and to integrate them in moral deliberation" (1999, p. 238). He raises the question: "Indeed, how could we teach children about kindness without teaching them certain things about fairness?" The reverse is an equally fair question, that is, how could we teach children about fairness without teaching them about kindness? A structure is necessary, however, at this point in the research to focus on precisely what part and how much of the findings are directly related to the ethic of care. Classifications within the framework are supported by beliefs of leading educators and philosophers, past and present, whose ideas were used to establish the literature review. Although all facets of morality are inter-related, the list of search words will be further organized into three different areas of morals: relational,

principle or societal, otherwise known as ecological (see Table 1). Categories for the framework are based on moral reasoning but are not fixed to any particular ethical theory.

Let us begin with an examination of relational moral values, for it is within this category that the ethic of care primarily belongs. For some, the ethic of care encompasses many other elements of morality, for instance: “Care should be the wider moral framework into which justice should be fitted” (Held in Smeyers, 1999, p. 238). Justice, in this case, pertains to the principles and rights and wrongs of morality which to some can be affected by how much one cares and what one cares about. Others, however, such as Gilligan, see justice and care as very different from each other. For the purposes of this research, the ethic of care pertains directly to feelings of empathy, compassion, kindness and other aspects of morality that may involve respectful interpersonal relations, all typically derived from emotion and sentiment. The ethic of care can arguably be amongst the strongest of forces that drive one’s thoughts and actions. A large part of morality calls upon the ethic of care, but this means more than simply trusting feelings from the heart. As Piquemal explains, “an ethical relationship with a relational other is defined as an ethic of responsibility” (2004, p. 2).

“Caring is a relation” (Smeyers, 1999, p. 235). These morals refer to the inner, heartfelt feelings that drive one to do what one does: care, compassion, empathy, being kind and considerate. The instances that fit within this category are of utmost importance to this research. Lonergan believes in the potential of the ethic of care when he asserts that “human beings have a ‘primordial sympathy’ for one another” (in Creamer, 1996, p. 175). In his classic philosophical treatise, Buber is adamant that by mere nature, “the basic word I-You establishes the world of relation” (1970, p. 56). Clearly, this is opposite

of society's tendency toward the less caring "I-It" mindset. As a proponent of relational ethics, Buber placed this area of moral education far above the moral principle category. He believed that "a rule model was neither possible nor desirable" (Scudder, 1968, p. 199) as he feared that could only tend to "make teaching the impartial application of predetermined principles." As discussed in the literature review section on the discourse of ethics, in a manner similar to Buber, Levinas also refers to the significance of relationship: "the I approaches the infinite by going generously toward the you" (1987, p. 72).

Lonergan places a condition on the relation category of morality by specifying the requirement of "a shift in the criterion one uses for making decisions from personal satisfaction (what is good for me) to communal values (what is good for others)" (in Creamer, 1996, p. 184). Similarly, Mill writes of the importance of interpersonal relationships and suggests one should "love your neighbour as yourself" (1861/1979, p. 17).

It is not until the third of Kohlberg's six stages of moral development that interpersonal relations really come into play (1984, p. 174). From the pre-defined list of search terms, Kohlberg places the term "respect" in this category. "Being good...having good motives, showing concern about others...caring for others" are all also part of this morality factor (Kohlberg, 1984, p. 174).

Apart from any criticisms of Gilligan's work, her theory on the female position within the ethic of care provides another case for placing many aspects of morality in the relational category since Gilligan believes that it is relationships that essentially form the foundation of moral behaviour. An article published by a women's only college, tells

readers that “Gilligan’s work highlights that people think about other people in a humanly caring way” (Sweet Briar Institute Department of Psychology, 2007). As discussed in the *Discourse on Ethics* section within the literature review, according to Gilligan, “underlying an ethic of care is a psychological logic of relationships, which contrasts with the formal logic of fairness” (1982, p. 73). The ethic of care, therefore, is clearly positioned in the relation category while, conversely, fairness would be outside of this classification in a morality framework.

Noddings also emphasizes the importance of teaching the relational aspect of morality: “To have as our educational goal the production of caring, competent, loving, and lovable people is not anti-intellectual. Rather, it demonstrates respect for the full range of human talents. Not all human beings are good at or interested in mathematics, science, or British literature. But all humans can be helped to lead lives of deep concern for others” (1995, p. 675).

Long before our time, Aristotle spoke highly of the significance of interpersonal relationships as a form of a code of ethics to live by. “Civic friendship,” as it was called by Aristotle, is “the goodwill and mutual affection that makes each citizen enter sympathetically into the concerns of his fellow-citizens and willingly exert himself on the whole community’s behalf” (Pangle, 2006). Note, however, that Aristotle limited this theory to specifically include only citizens, thereby excluding any outsiders or foreigners. Pangle’s article explains the potential positive impact of the relational moral category by detailing how Aristotle believed that civic friendship “unites a healthy community rises above simple utilitarian friendship...and creates civic harmony.” On its own, however,

the term utilitarianism fits the criteria of principle based morals, which will be discussed once this category of the framework has been defined.

The other two categories of the framework represent secondary findings that lie somewhere outside the ethic of care. Those terms also stand for important components of moral education yet touch on different aspects and are based on different foundations and philosophies. Piquemal recommends that effective teaching requires a combination of categories: “What is needed is a relational stance guided by ethical principles” (2004, p. 9). Though not experienced by everyone in the same way, it may be such instances of morality as kindness and care that result just as likely from interpersonal relationships and emotion than from principles of right and wrong, thereby placing these two terms in the relational category. The second category, on the other hand, represents moral reasoning and subsequent actions that are all based on what ought to be rather than on relations. These are rules a person chooses to live by because they believe that they should, or are supposed to, or are obliged to. Someone who chooses to always be honest, for instance, would be a prime example of living morally by one’s principles. Fairness is recognized by Gilligan as another aspect of morality that is based solely on principle (1982, p. 27).

To assist in clarifying the selection of the framework category for the term ethics, let us examine its typical usage and standard definition. In general terms, ethics are primarily principle-based behaviours typically guided by moral codes of conduct, either written or unwritten, to be abided by. According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary (2008), the definition of ethical, a derivative of ethics, includes “conforming to accepted standards of conduct.” Appropriate conduct assumed within the definition of ethics is part

of “the discipline dealing with what is good and bad and with moral duty and obligation . . . a set of moral principles” (Merriam-Webster dictionary, 2008).

Also based on principle are some of the philosophies of morality discussed in the *Discourse on Ethics* portion of the literature review. Although different in concept, both consequentialism and deontological ethics emphasize principles derived from belief systems rather than from interpersonal relationships. The following explains why these two different philosophies could actually both be placed in the same category of principle based morals. Kant’s theory of deontology is based on the categorical imperative, which means that a moral person is one whose actions are governed by a fixed set of pre-determined morally based principles regardless of consequences, results or the need to consider any other relational factors (1785/2005, p.18). Utilitarianism, on the other hand, is a form of consequentialism and, as the name implies, is based on consequences and utility or usefulness. In particular, utilitarianism strives to attain the greatest good for the greatest number (Mill, 1962, p. 7). It should be noted that agreeing on what constitutes ‘good’ is an issue in itself, even among utilitarians. In any case, the actions selected for the means may at times or under certain conditions seem less than moral in order to attain a certain but more moral end. Some of the actions, therefore, may be different from those who follow the principles of deontology. Nonetheless, however, one’s actions are still led by guiding principles more than by interpersonal relationships, thus also categorizing this theory as a principle based form of morality. Although both theories are founded on different perspectives, they both maintain high moral standards and require as much principle based moral responsibility as each other. Hence, it will be the principle that one

acts on or lives by that will be categorized into the morality framework, as opposed to analyzing a possible rationale or philosophy behind the principle.

The third category of morality, which concerns all of society, deals with what will be called ‘ecological’ based moral values. Ecological morals place emphasis on the interdependence among all people as opposed to solely within individual relationships. By definition, ecology is “concerned with studying the relationships between human groups and their . . . social environments” (The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 2000). This category is meant to exemplify morality working on a larger scale. These are societal principles, that is, rules for all of us to live by. Such moral values are part of how we live together as a society and how we behave or are affected as a collective group. Specific examples of this category would include volunteering for a worthy cause and other community efforts. Terms from the pre-defined list that would fit in this category include humanitarianism and social responsibility. “Education of the social sense,” as Levesque termed it (1947, p. 85), involves the “ability to see, to judge and to think with reference to society” and requires both intellect and ethics.

Kohlberg’s stages of moral reasoning are also defined and structured in terms of actions being relational, principle or societal based. The six stages will be briefly outlined to serve as a guideline to further establish the morality framework for the findings of this research. In the first and lowest stage, Kohlberg believes the reason why one does what is morally right is “to avoid breaking rules backed by punishment” and for “obedience” itself (1984, p. 174). At this point of moral reasoning, one does not yet consider one’s relation to others, and actions are entirely principle based. Kohlberg’s second stage centers on individualism where each individual respects and accepts others regardless of

differences, although still without any reciprocity or relation. The third stage includes “living up to what is expected” and the “desire to maintain rules and authority” (1984, p. 174). Respecting authority is meant to be, but is not, a guaranteed moral value or behaviour, nor are the results or consequences necessarily moral as there have been many negative examples of evil dictators and other people of bad character who have abused their position of authority in very immoral ways. Such misuse of one’s position should not, however, take away from the good intentions that are implied by the original moral reasoning behind respecting authority that is, to pay respect to those who are supposed to be protecting us, teaching us and caring for us: officers of the law, teachers, and elders. At this stage actions begin to become more considerate of others. This shows a connection to the relational based moral category.

The first few levels of development of moral reasoning Kohlberg has labeled as “the deontic domain of the right and obligatory” (1984, p. 4). At this level the theory states that there exists an “imperative of conscience to meet one’s defined obligations” (1984, p. 175), as per Kant’s categorical imperative. This shows a connection to the principle based moral category.

Kohlberg also describes a mix of both deontological and consequential ethics in this fourth stage of moral reasoning. Here, exceptions in principles are allowed accordingly, which is part of consequentialism, in “cases where they conflict with other fixed social duties” (1984, p.175). Societal moral standards and values lead to the next category of the conceptual framework. Kohlberg recognizes this category of morality as the “shared conventions of societal agreement” that contribute to one’s moral reasoning (in Gilligan, 1982, p. 27). Components of Kohlberg’s fourth stage of moral development

also fit within this classification as he states that at this level: “Right is also contributing to society” (1984, p. 175). This shows a connection to the ecological based moral category.

The fifth stage incorporates a partial form of utilitarianism in that it is “based on the rational calculation of . . . the greatest good for the greatest number,” combined with a sense of obligation to a “social contract,” that is concern for the “welfare of all” (1984, p. 175). The highest of all of Kohlberg’s stages of moral reasoning is the acceptance of “universal ethical principles” and “a sense of personal commitment to them” (1984, p. 176). Considering the search list for this thesis, “human rights” is the term that matches Kohlberg’s explanation of this level of ecological morality. Another example Kohlberg uses to define this stage includes a phrase that emerged during the research: “respect for the dignity of human beings” (1984, p. 176).

In Canada, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms encompasses many instances of ecological ethics as does the United Nations Charter. Here, the people of the United Nations which includes Canada, as a participating member country, pledge to “live together in peace with one another as good neighbours” and to “reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person” (United Nations, 1945).

Based on all of the above viewpoints and definitions, the following framework was established and was used to categorize the findings of all four research questions.

Table 1

Framework of Search Terms Categorized by Moral Reasoning

Relational morals	Principle morals	Ecological morals
Care	Ethical	Human rights
Compassion	Fair play	Humanitarian
Empathy		Social responsibility
Kind		

Not everything fits easily or perfectly into a category, however. Respect, for instance, is connected to principle in a variety of contexts, such as respect for property and respect for the law. Flinders, the author of an article entitled “In Search of Ethical Guidance,” puts respect, as in respect for others, in the relation category (1992, p. 101). There are other terms that also fit into more than one category of the morality framework, depending on context (see Table 2). Kohlberg considers the golden rule to be relational in nature, explaining that it consists of “mutual interpersonal expectations” (1984, p. 174). Mill, on the other hand, refers to principles being required for the golden rule to operate and calls this “the ideal perfection of utilitarian morality” (1861/1979, p. 17). Peace is another example of a term that overlaps categories, depending on its meaning. In one case, it may refer to the peace that is maintained within a relationship. In another case, peace may refer to a manner of reacting, such as conflict mediation, hence an aspect of morality based on principle. In yet another case, it may refer to global issues and world peace or peacekeeping efforts, thus fitting into the ecological morals category. The next

table contains these and other terms from the research list, all of which overlap and fit into more than just any one moral classification.

Table 2

Search Terms That Fit Into More Than One Moral Category

Relational morals	Principle morals	Ecological morals
Peace	Peace	Peace
Moral	Moral	Moral
Respect	Respect	
Character education	Character education	
Golden rule	Golden rule	
Considerate	Considerate	
	Social justice	Social justice
	Non-violence	Non-violence

Additional words that were identified as a result of the research but that were not in the original list of pre-determined search words can also be categorized into the framework to shed light on any further extensions of moral education that are being offered in a curriculum (see Table 3). Justice, for instance, is described by Mill as “a name for certain moral requirements which...stand higher in the scale of social utility... than any others” thus classifying this notion at the societal level, that is in the ecological category (1861/1979, p. 62). Another example was worded as living in harmony with one

another. According to Webster's Dictionary (1998), the definition of harmonious includes "living in peace and friendship," which would put this educational objective in the relational morals category. A host of other instances of morality emerged from the research, consisting of terms that fit into all sections of the morality framework.

Table 3

Additional Terms That Emerged From Research

Relational morals	Principle morals	Ecological morals
Live in harmony	Honesty	Nurture a healthy society
	Truth	Positively influence future
	Trustworthy	Anti-discrimination
	Integrity	Justice
	Honourable	
	Sense of right and wrong	
	Contribute to a just society	
	Help others	
	Worth of human beings	
	Treat all with dignity	
	Value human dignity	
	Teach against vandalism	
	Teach against bullying	
	Service learning	

Relational Morals	Principle Morals	Ecological Morals
	Unacceptable use of weapons	
	Violence prevention	
	Respect the feelings of others	
	Respect law	
	Respect authority	
	Respect property	
	Responsibility for actions	
	Maintain a safe community	
	Polite	
	Courteous	
	Make the world a better place	

There were findings which emerged that were debatable in terms of their actual connection to moral education. Volunteer requirements, for instance, would need further clarification to determine if in fact the participation required is in a moral direction. Such cases were set aside in a fourth and separate category so that mention could be made of any extra, unexpected and questionable instances of moral education found while the research was being conducted.

The framework was later consulted for the discussion and implications of each of the four research questions, as it was used to aid in the analysis of findings. It was designed and intended to help narrow in on authentic evidence of the ethic of care in

particular as a part of the much larger picture of morality. Emerging patterns were sought amongst terminology and categories of morality as well as locations throughout the country as the research attempts to identify the inclusion of the ethic of care in high school programming across Canada.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Overview of Design

This exploratory inquiry will consist of a broad search for evidence of moral education and the promotion of moral development at the high school level. Specifically, the research will look to provincial departments of education and school divisions across the country investigating the topic from four different angles:

- graduation requirements;
- provincial governments' statements of the primary goals of education;
- course titles and curriculum outlines; and
- school division mission statements.

The Character Education Partnership states that it requires a concentrated effort from all levels of the school system in order to achieve results. The methodology's research questions will follow the beliefs of this educational organization: "it is the intentional, proactive effort by schools, districts, and states to instill in their students important core, ethical values that we all share, such as caring, honesty, fairness, responsibility, and respect for self and others" (Character Education Partnership, 2008).

Materials

The first research question will review each province's most recent list of official graduation requirements. Second will be the examination of the main pages of provincial department of education websites. The most visible and publicly posted goals of education, missions, visions, and philosophies of education will be sought and assessed in terms of the inclusion of moral education. Next, question three will explore high school course titles and curriculum guides, therefore lists of all courses that each province has to offer become part of the material to be researched. The curriculum guides of three subjects in particular are to be reviewed, these being social studies, language arts and physical education. It is not that other subjects don't include moral content but these courses were selected because the nature of the subjects lends itself more to including moral education than do some other curricular areas such as mathematics or sciences. As well, the curriculum guides of any courses appearing to potentially contain elements of moral education will be examined in greater detail. For all curricula researched the particular material required will consist of the outlines, rationale, framework or general outcomes that are described in the introductions of the curriculum guides. Only curricula designed for high school grades ten through twelve, that have been written by a provincial department of education and that are currently available for use within the Canadian public school system, will be included as part of the research material. Finally, in pursuing question four I will take a close look at publicly documented school division mission statements along with any accompanying visions, philosophies of education or other related statements. Material included in the research for this section will consist of

the appropriate documents from three school divisions in each province within English-speaking Canada.

Procedure

It was possible to access most of the required material by use of the internet. All material was thoroughly examined, primarily with the use of local website search engines, in an attempt to find certain key words that identify evidence of moral education. As explained in earlier sections, moral education takes a variety of forms. The focus of this thesis, however, is the ethic of care, in addition to several other terms as described in the definition section of the literature review. In keeping with this definition of moral education, the following terms are key indicators that were identified during the main part of the research procedures:

- care;
- compassion;
- empathy;
- respect;
- kind;
- considerate;
- ethical;
- moral;
- character education;
- peace;
- non-violence;

- human rights;
- humanitarian;
- social responsibility;
- fair play; and
- the golden rule.

Root words and variable forms of the above terms were also considered during the searches. All four research questions used this list of search terms to clarify intent of moral education.

Answering research question one, recent listings of graduation requirements were obtained from each province and searched in their entirety for the inclusion of courses that pertain specifically to moral education. Outside of completed coursework, if any additional requirements or credits relating to moral development are stated as mandatory, this material was also reviewed and becomes part of the research.

Question two, regarding provincial goals and purposes of education, required the examination of a selection of public documents. The material that consisted of statements detailing provinces' visions or beliefs in education and that was clearly posted on department of education websites was reviewed in search of evidence of directives for moral education.

To respond to question three, curriculum guides were examined for content related to moral education and the ethic of care. It was the course outlines, course rationales, and general student learning outcomes that were reviewed, as opposed to each and every specific objective. This procedure made for a more feasible exploration than attempting to sort through minute details of entire curriculum guides. It also raised the

bar so that only substantial inclusions of moral education were identified amongst the material. This, in turn, prevented less significant contributions to moral development from being included in the findings.

Question four entails the review of school division material. As with curriculum guides school divisions were also researched, based on a sample size of three per province. An exception to this was Prince Edward Island, which consists of only two English-speaking jurisdictions. A listing of local school jurisdictions was obtained from each province's teachers' organization or department of education. From these directory listings two school divisions were selected at random in each province, in addition to the criterion for inclusion which requires all capital cities form part of the research. Findings resulting from this research question were recorded for the most part in raw form, that is, exactly as found. Usually made up of only one or two sentences, mission statements tend to be brief enough to record in their entirety. Brief summaries were then made to communicate any evidence of commitment or concern for the moral development of students.

The Nature and Intention of the Research

This thesis is an exercise in qualitative research. Using such official material as government-written documents, curriculum guides, graduation requirements, and school division mission statements brings credibility to the research, since all findings will be derived from trustworthy, primary source documents. The study will be cross-sectional in nature in that the research is intended to represent random portraits from coast to coast

across Canada. The methodology is not empirical, thus no statistical calculations were tabulated with the findings. Samples sizes are too small to qualify for accurate generalizability. Instead, transferability is best suited for this type of research of limited sample size with detailed findings. To do this, findings were broken down into a detailed conceptual framework, considering a variety of different perspectives and angles. This was done so that educators, government leaders and other stakeholders can become more informed about the extent of, or perhaps lack of, moral education at the high school level throughout Canada. In this way, educators, administrators, school boards, and departments of education can use the findings to: (a) compare themselves to other schools, school divisions, or provinces; (b) gain a new awareness of what others are doing in the field of moral education; and (c) recognize areas in which they may want to improve.

Limitations

The scope of this thesis is limited to a search for the explicit mention of moral education. Obviously, moral education can be conducted very effectively through the use of informal methods as well. In the grand scheme, moral education can take many different forms, using an endless array of teaching strategies and practices. The argument as to what are the most effective means to enhance moral development, and corresponding recommendations for implementation, are outside the scope of this research.

The need for moral education does not discriminate. Moral development is critical for every person, culture, nation and economic class in every era. Due to feasibility and accessibility constraints, however, the scope of this research was limited to the nine Canadian English-speaking provinces.

Neither graduation requirements, provincial goals of education, course titles, curriculum outlines nor school division mission statements will be included in the findings for Quebec. Since French is the primary language of instruction, it is difficult to access all of the required information and then accurately and thoroughly translate all of the terminology.

The three territories will also be excluded from the study since, although they need moral education just as much as anywhere else, the Northern areas of the country are different in many aspects from the more populated, urbanized provinces. Another reason for such a limitation is that the territories tend to organize their schools using a different arrangement. Because there are far fewer schools in these areas, they are often run independently or by the superintendent themselves. Divisional, communal mission statements would not exist and would make that part of the research inconsistent with the other provinces' grouped information. In addition, many of the curricula that territories use, have been borrowed from nearby provinces and will therefore already be examined in this study. Yukon resources include many courses designed by British Columbia, for instance, while Nunavut uses Alberta's curricula, with their own adaptations. The North West Territories is part of the Western and Northern Canadian Protocol and share common curricula and projects with their prairie and northern territory partners.

Another condition of the research is based on the criteria that only moral education pertaining to the secondary level, defined as grades 10 through 12, is relevant to the findings. In addition, all curriculum guides, graduation requirements and mission statements included in the study consist of current documents only. Any written document that has expired or has been replaced by a newer version was not considered in the research.

Chapter 4: Findings

Question #1: Portraits of Moral Education in Graduation Requirements

Findings for this section of the research were clear and distinct. There are no courses in any of the provinces that are entirely or specifically designed to teach moral education, let alone the ethic of care. Obviously, therefore, no such courses exist that are mandatory for graduation.

Many courses do contain elements, lessons, even entire units, that cover certain aspects of moral development or address ethical issues. Usually, however, such cases are scant at best, taking up only a portion of a curriculum's content. Although some courses are consistently required across the country, such as social studies which is taken up to grade eleven in all provinces, many other courses are required only up to a certain grade level and if taken further become optional credits. This scenario means that some courses being reviewed would not be taken by all students. Because such courses are not entirely about moral education and not officially mandatory to graduate, criteria for inclusion are not satisfied and no findings can result. Any evidence of moral education that was found

in such courses can be considered later for the findings of research question #3, regarding curriculum content.

Let us now examine the provinces that came closest to delivering moral education programs. At first glance, Ontario appears to show concern for moral development since it is the only province that requires students to engage in volunteer work in order to graduate from high school. In Ontario it is mandatory for students to complete at least 40 hours of community involvement. The question remains, however, what conditions must be met for the volunteer placement? If students must help someone in a time of need, for instance, this may teach morals by principle. If the goal, however, is to have students make a contribution of time and effort or learn responsibility, the result may be more along the lines of developing citizenship as supposed to morality or ethics. It may be difficult to make any clear cut distinction. If students are simply completing any miscellaneous task, this may not teach any form of moral education whatsoever. Defining terms for the volunteer hours are not stipulated. Due to such ambiguity, this finding cannot be taken as evidence of the province promoting the ethic of care.

The Atlantic Canada Framework for Essential Graduation Learnings in Schools comes the closest of all portraits in terms of moral education being part of graduation requirements. This framework stipulates educational outcomes that are to be achieved by students of all four Atlantic provinces. This document is cross-curricular and contains learning objectives that are embedded within curriculum content of many subject areas. Students are to be assessed on these learnings and are to be able to accomplish all skills before graduation (Atlantic Provinces Education Foundation, 1994). Previously, the outline of the Atlantic Framework consisted of six sections which included topics on

human rights and critical thinking on ethical issues, representing the Citizenship and Personal Development units, respectively. These learning objectives speak to the concern for the development of both ecological and principle based morals. Recently a seventh Essential Graduation Learning has been added to the list, entitled Spiritual and Moral Development, as found in a document belonging to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador (n.d., p.16). This unit indicates greater support, on behalf of the departments of education of the Atlantic provinces, for more moral education as this section specifies the expectation that high schools are supposed to develop students' moral values and improve students' ethical conduct. Although these required learnings are goals to be attained before graduation, still no official high school credit is attached, meaning that covering and assessing these learnings cannot be assured. This segregation is what distinguishes these outcomes as "essential" learnings, as opposed to mandatory learnings or graduation requirements.

Quebec is the only province that has actually officially designed a mandatory ethics course. The government of Quebec has recently established an ethics program for all students at all levels, from elementary through high school. This could be due to the historical influence that the Roman Catholic Church and Catholicism more generally have played in Quebec education. The department of education in Quebec is so committed to this endeavor that the subject is required for all students and actually replaces option courses that students would have previously been able to choose to take. The complete program consists of both "religious culture" and ethics, although the structure is such that both topics can be taught separately. The primary intentions of this concept of moral education are to "socialize" young people in a variety of ways

(Gouvernement du Quebec, 2005, p. 4). The Quebec department of education extends the definition of ethics to include not only codes of conduct or morals based on principle, but to also focus on critical thinking and decision making about ethical issues: “questioning and judging what would be preferable to do in a given situation, with regard to oneself, to others and to the effects of our actions on community life” (Gouvernement du Quebec, 2005, p. 7). To begin with, the rationale is to have students practice making “ethical choices,” appreciate “common values,” be aware that “individual choices affect the community” (Gouvernement du Quebec, 2005, p.6). The program is also designed to have students gain an “appreciation of different views of the world and of humans,” reflect on moral issues, learn how make “enlightened choices,” work toward “the common good,” learn the “codes of conduct for life in society,” as well as practice critical thinking in an effort to “ponder their own view of humanity” (Gouvernement du Quebec, 2005, p. 7). The goal is that students should “progressively become more aware of the effect of their actions on others” (Gouvernement du Quebec, 2005, p. 7). While most objectives in this list encompass principle-based and larger picture, ecological-based morals, the last objective is aimed at improving relational morals. Another goal of this ethics program is that it will result in “learnings that foster living in harmony with others” (Gouvernement du Quebec, 2005, p. 6), thereby again developing relational morals. The Quebec government believes that such learning is “essential for social peace,” signifying the importance of ecological morals. In addition, the rationale provided for this program states that “the development of respect . . . is a key advantage for all of society” (Gouvernement du Quebec, 2005, p. 9). This province’s department of

education believes that teaching morals to all individuals has the potential to make a positive impact on the future and society in general.

Clearly, Quebec is more concerned than other provinces with the moral education of high school students. No other province offers, let alone requires, a course on morality or the ethic of care.

Question #2: Portraits of Moral Education in Provincial Goals of Education

The findings for this section form a portrait of each provincial government's most clearly publicized current educational goals and philosophies and should not be taken as completely exhaustive. Most departments of education warn that viewpoints and recommendations are not fixed over time but instead are ever-changing or at least subject to change. As well, government websites typically display disclaimers alerting educators to use the given information carefully and wisely. Most department of education websites advise readers that information contained therein is not intended to offer absolute solutions nor guaranteed performance results. The content found on these websites tends to stem from philosophies upheld by the respective department of education, as opposed to originating from empirical research. The following portraits are meant to provide a sense of what each provincial government supports in terms of any significant endorsement of moral education and the ethic of care.

It must be noted that all Anglophone provinces speak highly of the importance of moral education and see the moral development of students as important. All provincial governments are concerned about values that the public school system is producing

within students. The emphasis placed on certain aspects of moral development, however, varies from province to province. In some cases, relational morals are the focus, while in others, principle or ecological morality is emphasized. Combinations of categories from the morality framework are common amongst most of the provinces' educational statements.

All provinces were researched, beginning with the west coast and travelling east, to explore what each government holds as educational priorities or values. Quebec was omitted from this section of findings since not all of the documents are available in English.

British Columbia's description of the goals of education contains a plan for social development. The British Columbia department of education declares that students at every grade level, up to and including grade 12, are to "develop a sense of social responsibility" (Government of British Columbia, 2000). The province has an entire working document entitled "Performance Standards for Social Responsibility . . . intended for use in the context of ongoing classroom and school activities" (Government of British Columbia, 2001). Social responsibility is a broad concept but British Columbia's department of education has defined it to include a variety of moral development topics from both the principle and ecological moral categories. Teaching students to solve problems in peaceful ways, for instance, is one of their components that represent the development of morals based on principle. Also appropriate to this category of the framework are teaching against vandalism and bullying, as well as having students participate in service learning. Protecting human rights is another part of the program in this province, which this time emphasizes ecological and societal level morals.

Interpersonal relations, however, are not specifically identified in the social responsibility program. Nothing was found on the government's official website when word searches of the terms moral education and character education were conducted. This department of education alerts readers that current policies may differ from those described in the latest published documents. Still the most recent mission statement of British Columbia's department of education does not include directives for moral education, at least not in the way that this thesis requires: "The purpose of the British Columbia school system is to enable all learners to develop their individual potential and to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to contribute to a healthy, democratic and pluralistic society and a prosperous and sustainable economy" (Government of British Columbia, 2000). The province has also established a set of common core of essential learnings, but these are academic in nature and, like the mission statement, do not include any elements of the ethic of care.

The province of Alberta explains its philosophy of education in terms of a set of values including: "respect, integrity, trust, openness, caring" (Government of Alberta, 2005, p. 2). Together these values encompass both relational and principle morals. Integrity, for instance, fits within the principle category and caring, of course, is relational. Also pertinent to this research is Alberta's well-titled resource known as "Heart of the Matter," a program consisting of both character and citizenship education. This endeavor is described as "a deliberate effort to encourage ethical behaviours and personal qualities that our society values, such as respect, responsibility, fairness, empathy and self-discipline" (Government of Alberta, 1995). Honesty, another aspect of

principle based morality, is also part of Alberta's definition of character education (Government of Alberta, 2005).

The department of education of Alberta personalizes what character is supposed to look like by using certain, empowering clauses for students to live by:

I am polite, courteous and caring I treat all people with dignity I protect property and our environment truthful and trustworthy I behave in an ethical and honourable manner my actions consistently match my words I respect the feelings of others I act with kindness and compassion I treat people with the kindness and consideration with which I would like to be treated I think, speak and act to make the world a better place. (Government of Alberta, 2003, p. 203)

Here again, these lists of qualities and behaviours provide a message about the importance of developing both relational and principle morals. One particular component of the program is directed by the Society for Safe and Caring Schools and Communities which itself focuses on teaching specific ethical topics including: "living respectfully, managing anger, dealing with bullying, resolving conflicts peacefully and courteous behaviours" (Government of Alberta, 2005, p. 45). This is yet another instance of moral education with a focus on principles. The Alberta department of education insists that these teachings of principle morals are to be infused and integrated into all subjects at all levels. Attributes of the program include social and behavioural expectations as well as community involvement on the part of the students. The document explains: "It is a way of nurturing these attributes by promoting, modeling, teaching, expecting, celebrating and

consciously practicing them in everyday actions. It is woven throughout the school day for all students, through classroom instruction, extracurricular activities, school policies and practices” (Government of Alberta, 2005). Within the document, important questions are posed to teachers: “Why is it important to teach children to care? How can caring be incorporated into the curriculum? What might a curriculum that included themes of caring look like and how would it be implemented?” (Government of Alberta, 2005, p. 46). The department of education of Alberta offers another resource for teachers on the topic of moral development entitled Supporting the Social Dimension. This supplementary document is intended for use with students in grades 7 through 12 and its purpose is for students to learn social competencies: “encouraging the development of responsible, caring. . . members of society” (Alberta Learning, 2002, p. 5). Similar to its sister program, the Heart of the Matter, this resource recommends activities “linked to academic subjects that reinforce social competencies” (Alberta Learning, 2002, p. 5). The program provides useful information for the implementation of moral education into a teacher’s practice: “an explicit focus on social competency development and its assessment, consistent and continuous instruction across grade levels, a context that promotes social and emotional learning across the curriculum” (Alberta Learning, 2002, p. 5). In addition, the department of education of Alberta is currently developing a project specifically designed for moral education at the high school level. As part of the Alberta Initiative for School Improvement, this plan has the goal of reducing the incidence of violence among students by infusing in them the values of respect, responsibility, care and trust, all in an effort to improve moral decision making.

Many factors of moral development play a part in the philosophy of the province of Saskatchewan (Government of Saskatchewan, 2007, p. 2):

- understand and relate to others;
- act on the belief that each individual is worthwhile;
- develop a sense of responsibility toward others;
- assume responsibility for one's own actions;
- respect the rights and property of others;
- act with honesty, integrity, compassion and fairness;
- work toward greater social justice;
- assume responsibility for dependent persons;
- respect law and authority; and
- maintain a safe and healthful community.

Here the department of education has included relational, principle and ecological morals, covering all categories of the morality framework, in their conception of education. "Destination School Plus" is the title of a Saskatchewan guidebook designed to promote positive school leadership, which includes the role and conduct of students. Within this document it is emphasized that "school leaders are characterized by their compassion" as it asks educators to "think about what it means to be compassionate" (Government of Saskatchewan, 2007, p. 3). Another instance of moral education is shown in the purpose of the program since a main part of it is to help develop "caring students" (Government of Saskatchewan, 2007, p. 7). In another document the province explains how the principles of its core curricula are all based on six "Common Essential Learnings," of which personal and social development is a part (Government of

Saskatchewan, 2007, p. 7). Yet another government of Saskatchewan document is related to moral education, this time entitled “Caring and Respectful Schools.” In addition to its original purpose as an anti-bullying campaign, the premise of this policy is “to ensure that schools and school divisions across the province have policies and practices in place that promote care, respect and safety” (Government of Saskatchewan, 2007, p. 4). The program also consists of a violence prevention component, which encompasses important principle based morals (Government of Saskatchewan, 2007, p. 26). Within a related educational resource is a section specifically regarding character education:

Saskatchewan schools are being called upon to play a role in the character formation of children and youth. Parents and families have the primary responsibility for helping their children develop good habits and a sense of right and wrong. This is a responsibility shared with schools and the community. Character education within schools, in the broadest sense, is the deliberate effort to help students understand and act in ways that are consistent with a core set of ethical values...character education of students is designed to:

- promote cooperative relationships and mutual respect;
 - foster the capacity to think, feel and act morally; and
 - develop classrooms and schools as moral communities that are based on fairness, caring and participation and support the character development of each individual student...teaching students to cooperate and to help others.
- (Government of Saskatchewan, 2007, p. 25)

This was another document written by the government of Saskatchewan that displayed an explicit commitment to moral education, focusing on both relation and principle morals inclusive of the ethic of care.

The department of education of Manitoba has not publicly posted its goals, purpose or philosophy anywhere within the government's website. It also appears that there are no official documents published by this department specifically regarding the concern for the moral development of students. This province does, however, have an official "Safe Schools Charter" (Government of Manitoba, 2008). This is not structured as a curriculum or program but comes in the form of a code of conduct. Components of the charter address the unacceptable behaviour of bullying and use of weapons, both being examples of principle based morals.

A document written by the government of Manitoba identifies "one of the goals of education is to prepare individuals to participate as active and responsible citizens" (Government of Manitoba, 2008). Attesting to a connection between moral and citizenship education is an article entitled "Moral Education and Character Education: Their relationship and Roles in Citizenship Education." Here the authors write that "outcomes overlap and cut across the fields of moral, character and citizenship education" (Althof & Berkowitz, 2006, p. 495). Manitoba offers grants under the name of Innovation in Citizenship Education. In order to receive these monetary incentives, students or schools must contribute toward social justice on either a local, regional, national or even global level. Social justice is a term that, depending on its context, overlaps both principle and ecological moral categories.

In 2007, Ontario's Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat designed a character development initiative which clearly promotes the teaching of the ethic of care. The document specifies that "parents, schools and communities share the responsibility for and the benefits of developing our young people as caring, empathetic and involved citizens" (Government of Ontario, 2008, p. 5). To implement this philosophy in schools, Ontario's department of education has established a program entitled "Finding Common Ground: Character Development in Ontario Schools, K – 12" (Government of Ontario, 2008, p.1). It is a pedagogical supplement designed to be embedded in all aspects of schooling by school boards and administrators throughout the province. Key beliefs and principles are based on a definition of character development that describes it as "a cornerstone of a civil, just and democratic society, a foundation of our publicly funded education system" (Government of Ontario, 2008, p.3), linking this to the teaching of principle based morals. This government uses one of Buber's classic expressions to endorse the rationale of such programming: "Education worthy of its name is essentially education for character" (Government of Ontario, 2008, p. 2). The agenda also includes stressing the Ontario Human Rights Code, thereby covering an aspect of ecological morals. A document detailing sub-curricular concepts identifies elements of what the Ontario department of education recognizes as "interpersonal development" to include: "thoughtful and non-violent problem-resolution, social responsibility, working cooperatively with others and caring about others" (Government of Ontario, 2008, p. 11). Here, there is strong evidence of this provincial government's support for moral education, specifically the development of both principle and relational morals.

As part of the Atlantic Provinces Education Foundation's (1994) Essential Graduation Learnings, students' personal development and moral development are among the main educational goals. As stated in the findings for graduation requirements, there are objectives that these governments see as priorities to be accomplished by graduation: all students should be able to "reflect critically on ethical issues" (p. 10) and understand "human rights" (p. 9). These educational goals pertain to all four Atlantic provinces and are representative of the principle and ecological categories of the established morality framework. This is evidence of the existence of concern for moral education on the part of these four departments of education. Next, let us examine the goals and purposes of education of each of the maritime provinces individually.

The mission of public education as stated by the Government of New Brunswick is to have "each student develop the attributes needed to be a lifelong learner, to achieve personal fulfillment and to contribute to a productive, just and democratic society" (Atlantic Provinces Education Foundation, 1994, p. 3). The closest this comes to moral education is the reference to students' contributions to a just society. This is indicative of another connection to the principle moral category.

The mission of public schooling as stated by the department of education of Prince Edward Island is to "provide for the development of children so that each may take a meaningful place in society" (Atlantic Provinces Education Foundation, 1994, p. 3). Next, the Government of Prince Edward Island (n.d.) states its goals of education, which includes having students develop "a respect for community values, a sense of personal values, and a responsibility for one's actions . . . a sense of stewardship for the environment . . . and an appreciation for the worth of all individuals." In addition,

“respect for the individual” is part of this province’s basic principles of education (Government of Prince Edward Island, n.d.). Together this covers many moral teachings including ecological and principle based values as well as global consciousness.

The mission of public education as stated by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador is to “enable and encourage every individual to acquire, through lifelong learning, the knowledge, skills and values necessary for personal growth and the development of society” (Atlantic Provinces Education Foundation, 1994, p. 3). Here, the skills and values required for the development of society have been left undefined and open to interpretation hence moral education cannot be confirmed. Newfoundland’s Safe and Caring Schools program, however, contains a Violence Prevention Initiative through which it promotes elements of moral education. Here students are taught the importance of living in “safe, caring communities where there is respect for each other, and violence is unacceptable” (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2006, p. 4). The intention is to promote caring communities under the belief that maintaining such environments fosters “respectful, responsible and caring relationships” (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, n.d.). The values held within these educational goals include all categories; relational, principle and ecological morals.

The mission of the department of education of Nova Scotia includes a goal of moral development which is for students to become “responsible and caring educated persons” (Atlantic Provinces Education Foundation, 1994, p. 3). This province then uses a unique version of the classic motto of the “3 R’s” of education to represent its philosophy, one that is directly related to moral education. Rather than the traditional basics of reading, writing and arithmetic, this time the three R’s stand for terms of

morality: “respect . . . responsibility . . . rights” (Nova Scotia Department of Education, 2001, p.2). Here, the term respect has a principle based focus, as it is meant to include students showing “respect for the rights, property and safety of themselves and others” (Nova Scotia Department of Education, 2001, p.2). “Social responsibility” is another element of moral education that is to be promoted in this province (Nova Scotia Department of Education, 2001, p.2). In addition, it is stated that “a comprehensive education must offer a balanced program that includes opportunities to explore the . . . moral aspects of society” (Nova Scotia Department of Education, 2003, p. A-3). In the government of Nova Scotia’s Goals of Public Education it is written that a sound education “forms the basis for students to become healthy and caring persons, having a respect for self and others and a desire to contribute to society as productive citizens” (Nova Scotia Department of Education, 2003, p. A-3). In terms of the morality framework, these statements once again cover all three categories, that is, relational, principle and ecological based moral values, specifically including the ethic of care.

National trends are summarized in the concluding chapter of this thesis, which will also explore connections between each provincial government’s goals of education, its graduation requirements and its curriculum content.

Question #3: Portraits of Moral Education in Curricula

In each of the nine English speaking provinces, three different high school subjects were reviewed: social studies, language arts and physical education. As was explained in the methodology section, these subjects were selected, not because others

don't contain elements of moral education but because the nature of these courses provides more opportunities to cover moral development and moral issues than any other subject area. Curriculum documents, frameworks and foundations were searched for evidence of moral education and the ethic of care using a list of sixteen different pre-determined defining terms. All courses were for use in grade 10, 11, 12, or some combination thereof.

Curriculum guides from three subject areas per province, from each of nine provinces, were reviewed in search of evidence of moral education. A visual representation through the use of charts may help illustrate the findings that represent portraits from across the country. Indicators were categorized according to the established morality framework. This structure aids in clarifying the type of moral education that is supposed to be taught in each subject area or province, be it relational, principle, or ecological based. A check mark in the following charts indicates confirmation that a certain term did in fact appear in the curriculum in question. A variety of different perspectives will then be considered.

Table 5

Search Terms Found in Provincial Curricula – Principle Morals

Principle morals	Provinces																												
	BC			AB			SK			MB			ON			NS			NB			Nfld			PEI				
	S	L	P	S	L	P	S	L	P	S	L	P	S	L	P	S	L	P	S	L	P	S	L	P	S	L	P		
S	A	E	S	A	E	S	A	E	S	A	E	S	A	E	S	A	E	S	A	E	S	A	E	S	A	E	S	A	E
Ethical	√	√	√	√			√	√					√			√	√	√	√	√		√	√	√	√	√	√		
Fair play			√			√						√			√												√		
																		-			-						-		

Note. Dashes indicate no curriculum guide available or no such course offered.

SS=Social Studies course. LA=English Language Arts. PE=Physical Education.

Table 6

Search Terms Found in Provincial Curricula – Ecological Morals

Ecological morals	Provinces																													
	BC			AB			SK			MB			ON			NS			NB			Nfld			PEI					
	S	L	P	S	L	P	S	L	P	S	L	P	S	L	P	S	L	P	S	L	P	S	L	P	S	L	P	S	L	P
Human rights	√	√		√			√	√		√			√			√	√		√	√		√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Humanitarian				√									√																	
Social respons.	√	√	√				√					√				√			√			√			√	√	√			
																		-			-									-

Note. Dashes indicate no curriculum guide available or no such course offered.

SS=Social Studies course. LA=English Language Arts. PE=Physical Education.

To explain the procedure in general, terms that are checked off in the table as being included in curricula may have appeared as little as once or, on the other end of the spectrum, several times. An actual frequency tally could be misleading since a word may appear only once though it represents an entire section. In British Columbia's high school physical education courses, for instance, Personal and Social Responsibility is the name of one of three main sections of the curriculum. This indicates that this topic of morality is valued, in this course, by this province as much as the other large sections of Movement and Active Living. The opposite can also be true, that is, a term may appear several times though it is rather insignificant in terms of the substance of the curriculum. Further investigation might show that the term is used very loosely or only for suggested material, resources or activities. In this case, the term may turn out to be a very small component or may not actually ever become an active part of the course. Thus, the following tables of terms simply indicate whether or not each term was found in certain curricula as opposed to how often.

Another issue that arises in regards to the findings is semantic in nature. Some words can be taken out of context; therefore close attention had to be paid in order to validate evidence of a search term being used in curriculum for the purpose of moral education. Moral, for instance, would only be included in the findings if its use implies some form of moral development or moral issue. Obviously, it would not be included as evidence of moral education if the word was merely used, for instance, as a moral of the story. The decision would then depend on what the moral of the story is. Unfortunately, the context meant for search words is not always evident in a quick review of the curriculum.

Several additional words and phrases related to morality, although not part of the original search term list, were found to be pertinent and supplementary to the findings. These terms stood out as noticeable in that they were connected to moral education and the ethic of care in particular. Let us take a look at some of the highlights found in each of the three subject areas reviewed throughout the provinces. At times, additional courses that were identified while researching curricula will also be recognized as exemplifying instances of moral education currently taking place.

The grade 11 and 12 language arts curricula of British Columbia speak of developing positive attitudes which include respect and interacting with others ethically. The learning outcome of students being able to assess ethical issues was also included in these curricula. Sub-themes of morality and social justice were suggested but were not part of the core objectives. Resources were recommended that support prosocial attitudes and the exploration of human rights issues. British Columbia's social studies program includes the topics of human rights and peacekeeping. One of the learning outcomes requires that students demonstrate ethical behaviour and in several units throughout the course this includes honesty, fairness, respect and empathy. The prescribed learning outcomes for British Columbia's grade 11 and 12 physical education curricula include a large section called Personal and Social Responsibility, making up one-third of the entire course at each level. Part of this component involves respect as well as service and volunteer work in the school and community. The course also specifically covers ethics in sports. In addition to the practical portion, this province's physical education curricula include a unit called Emotional and Social Development for students between the ages of

sixteen to eighteen, which aims to help students focus less on self and more on consideration of others.

As in British Columbia, Alberta's physical education curriculum includes service and volunteer work in both the school and community. It covers the conventional but ever-important fair play component as well as having students all the way through grade 12 show respect and interact positively with others. This province's social studies curriculum contains much more with respect to moral education and the ethic of care than its physical education curriculum. Topics include humanitarianism, human rights and quality of life. These grades 10 through 12 courses are strong in their emphasis of peace: global peace, peace treaties, peacekeeping and peaceful coexistence. This province is concerned with the development of positive attitudes in students, including respect, understanding and responsibility. The terms dignity and worth of self and others also appear in Alberta's social studies curriculum. The English language arts senior high curriculum consists of five general outcomes, one of which is respect for others. Here many related factors are involved, for instance, respecting others to strengthen community, using language to show consideration for others, as well as considering moral and ethical perspectives. Alberta includes a mandatory course entitled Career and Life Management which is designed to "develop behaviours and attitudes that contribute to the well-being and respect of self and others, now and in the future" (Government of Alberta, 2002, p. 6). According to the pre-established framework's categorical guidelines, developing respect for others qualifies as teaching relational morals.

Saskatchewan's language arts program also includes the teaching of respect as a goal. In addition to this learning outcome, a list of words that relates directly to moral

education and the ethic of care appears in this curriculum: virtue, happiness, truth and trust. In fact, students are to explore a whole range of human virtues as well as understand the importance of social responsibility and personal integrity. In this same document there is a brief section named Justice and Fairness which contains a guiding question to pose to students. This course asks students to think critically about issues such as ensuring justice and fairness for everyone in society, as well as to think about the difference between legal and moral justice. This course also includes a sub-theme entitled Conflict and the Search for Peace. Both Manitoba and Saskatchewan suggest that the teacher use emotional appeals when reading literature to touch on the topics of empathy, compassion and honesty. The social studies curriculum for Saskatchewan includes the topic of human dignity. The grade 10 course includes moral and ethical debates while the grade 11 course examines issues of human rights. Also at the grade 11 level, students explore the concepts of moral vision and justice. The physical education curriculum of this province contains a large component dealing with social skills and covers the topic of caring for others. Volunteer requirements also exist at the grade 12 level, however, details would again have to be expanded in order to determine whether or not the volunteer opportunities are geared toward moral education. In addition, the goals of the course include the development of positive attitudes and social behaviour. This document contains a foundational objective that is to develop compassionate and empathetic students who can make positive contributions to society. It aims for students to be able to recognize the importance of sincerity and virtues that support a peaceful society. In addition, this curriculum guide includes the words respect, empathy, patience and feelings. Saskatchewan offers another course that covers topics in moral education. This

province's high school elective psychology curriculum contains units on conflict resolution, aggression and violence, as well as social justice. Questions posed to students within this course require critical thinking on subjects such as reducing violent behaviour and characteristics of peaceful societies.

Manitoba's grade 11 history course includes many topics that can be considered part of moral education such as minority rights, gender equity, respecting the law and Canada's international role as a peacekeeper. Manitoba's social studies curriculum also places heavy emphasis on human rights and citizenship, which was previously indicated as sharing outcomes that overlap with moral education. This province's physical education program has a strong component of moral education as one of the five units is entitled Personal and Social Management. Although this title in itself is not necessarily the same as moral education, the curriculum does show that the content is directly related. The curriculum speaks of developing students' values of honesty, responsibility, justice, respect, care, empathy, understanding, consideration, generosity, commitment, as well as staying true to family, community and the beliefs that contribute to the quality of life. Social development and safety of others are also topics that can be found in this course, in addition to having students play fairly and be sensitive to the needs of others. This physical education curriculum guide confirms the importance of formal moral education. It explains how research indicates that traditional academic programming has not significantly improved behaviours and that effective programming should include the development of both personal and social management skills in order to change inappropriate conduct. Learning outcomes of Manitoba's grade 11 and 12 language arts curricula speak of having students think about and respond to ethical questions in

addition to the objective of developing students' empathy for others. In addition, the curricula include using language to foster respect and empathy as well as evaluating ethical values portrayed in readings. Manitoba also offers an elective grade 12 World Issues course which covers a unit on quality of life and much more that is relevant to questions of moral education. This curriculum includes topics on human rights and world peace.

Ontario's language arts program includes the terms fairness and social justice. The course addresses what it means to disagree respectfully and to have consideration for the feelings of others. The curriculum also suggests that students analyze text with the intention of identifying moral values and exploring moral dilemmas. The curriculum suggests a link to the province's supplementary violence-prevention program and recommends that teachers address the emotional impact of violence. Ontario offers a wide variety of social studies courses, two of which are especially relevant to any consideration of moral education. Twentieth Century History: Global and Regional Perspectives, a grade 11 course, discusses world conflict and human rights. These are ecological moral issues as are the topics covered in the grade 12 option, Canadian and World Politics, which teaches about rights and responsibilities as well as analyzing ways in which Canada settles conflict. The province's grade 11 and 12 social studies curricula identify the difference between economic and moral or ethical decision-making. It connects morality and criminal conduct, linking it as a factor in the section on Theories of Crime. The curriculum also speaks of the importance of maintaining peace between countries as well as Canada's role as a leader in humanitarian causes. A grade 12 course entitled Social Challenges and Social Structures examines the cycle of violence in

relationships. Similarly, Ontario's grade 12 physical education program requires students to work on reducing conflict in their personal lives. As with this province's social studies course, the physical education curriculum engages students in ethical decision-making. It refers to students understanding factors that promote harmony among people, such as respect and empathy. It also speaks of the importance of honesty, responsibility and fair play. Conflict management appears in this physical education curriculum as well as its counterpart, conflict resolution, which actually appears in several physical education curricula, as in Ontario, Newfoundland and Manitoba. Ontario also offers other courses which contain topics relevant to moral education. Philosophy, available for both grades 11 and 12, touches on the concept of good versus evil. Other topics in this course include the making of a just society, refining critical thinking skills, and applying ideas to contemporary societal issues which all fall into the ecological morals category. The Philosophy course contains an Ethics unit where ethical questions and moral problems are examined, as are theories of the good life. There, the connection between ethics and other subjects is also explored. The course, Parenting and Human Development, gives moral development nearly as much attention as intellectual development. Learning outcomes include themes of non-violence, empathy, moral thinking and a code of moral behavior. This course uses the terms respect, moral and peace. Preparing for the Challenges of the Future is another course that touches on ethics and honesty. Managing Personal (and Family) Resources touches on empathy, as does Issues in Human Growth and Development. The latter also includes the terms moral and violence. Two other courses offered by the province of Ontario, titled Individuals and Families in a Diverse Society and Challenge and Change in Society, both discuss the subject of violence.

New Brunswick offers a World Issues course that addresses the subjects of global peace and human rights. Part of the rationale for this course is to make students aware that all individuals have the potential to make a difference, in terms of some positive impact in their life or in the world. Another Maritime province, Nova Scotia, has an elective grade 12 social studies course entitled Global History that covers social perspectives and the pursuit of justice. In Newfoundland's social studies program, there are five main strands of which empathy is one. This unit covers the virtues of honesty, empathy and a sense of justice, as well as concern for the welfare of others. This province stresses the connection between the inner-directed qualities of personal development and outer-directed qualities of participatory citizenship. The rationale for this province's social studies program identifies this subject as a place for the development of moral values. Newfoundland's grade 11 social studies course is entitled Global Issues. It examines such issues as peace and security, human rights, quality of life and the resolution of global problems. The grade 12 Canadian Issues course provides opportunities for students to apply moral principles necessary for the improvement of social conditions. The curriculum guide speaks of improving students' moral decision-making abilities and of the development of such moral values and principles as truth and charity. This course also stresses the importance of peaceful persuasion and of human rights in Canadian society. Learning objectives included in this social studies course call for students to learn that each individual can contribute to a better world by valuing and promoting world peace. Prince Edward Island's social studies course is reviewed below as part of the Atlantic Framework.

All of the Atlantic provinces share curricula in many subject areas in the inter-provincial Atlantic framework, making many of the findings for these provinces very similar. Aside from the provinces' own additions, which were reviewed above, the social studies and languages arts curriculum guides in particular are essentially the same for all Atlantic provinces. In social studies these provinces have students reflect critically on ethical issues, seek peaceful solutions, and learn about social responsibility. Respect, human rights, human dignity and justice are also terms that appear in this curriculum. The Atlantic framework high school language arts program tells the teacher to promote empathy and, like the social studies program, study human rights as well as requiring students to think critically about ethical issues. Students are also expected to interact with each other with sensitivity and respect. At the grade 11 level, in particular, the goal is to have students develop empathy for and gain a better understanding of others. At the grade 12 level, a related learning outcome is that students consistently show concern for the needs, rights, and feelings of others.

Newfoundland is the only Atlantic province that has a physical education curriculum guide that is readily available. There the physical education program appears to be geared to moral development in several ways, including such objectives as shaping students' development of both moral values and ethical conduct in pursuit of peace, social justice, respect for what is sacred, and dignity in human life. This physical education curriculum requires students understand that their actions should be chosen for the good of others and not only for oneself. Students are expected to demonstrate positive social interaction, conflict management and, of course, fair play. Newfoundland's physical education program includes a section entitled Personal-Global Orientation which

asks students to engage in socially responsible behaviour within both the school and community as well as to demonstrate socially and emotionally mature attitudes. This course also specifically covers the topics of caring, human rights and moral development (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, n.d.).

It should also be noted that outside of the three main subject areas, some evidence of moral education was found in other curricula. New Brunswick offers an elective course entitled Personal Development and Career Planning that includes dealing with feelings and anger-management strategies. Newfoundland's Arts Education Curriculum also expresses concern for the moral development of students. One of the aims of this course is to have students develop a more empathetic view of the world and an appreciation for relationships among people.

The next part of this section of research findings deals with the different contexts in which each of the search words is used. In view of the reality that words often have multiple meanings, it is necessary to investigate more precisely the connotations of some of the terms commonly found in curriculum guides and other documents of a similar nature.

Respect was used in many ways, such as students being required to: show respect, respect themselves and others, respect each others' rights to hold different opinions, respect diversity, analyze language and images that convey respectful or disrespectful perspectives and attitudes, develop attitudes of respect, respect the dignity and worth of self and others, as well as respect for the environment.

Empathy included empathizing with characters in literature, using imagery to create empathy, and fostering empathy for others.

Considerate also had a variety of meanings, including: being considerate of others, providing feedback to peers in a considerate manner, analyzing language and images that convey considerate or inconsiderate perspectives and attitudes, in addition to presenting ideas in a considerate manner.

Ethical comprised the following usages: presenting examples of ethical versus unethical behaviours, students interacting ethically with each other, assessing and debating ethical issues, identifying the ethical stance communicated by a text, and using ethical judgment.

Moral was found throughout curricula in such contexts as: developing themes around the topic of morality, identifying moral perspectives, teaching morality through literature, along with many other similar variations.

Peace ranged from inner peace to global peace: resolving differences peacefully, contributing to a peaceful coexistence, exploring international peacekeeping, examining peace treaties, reviewing the United Nations' role in maintaining world peace.

Non-violence encompassed issues involving the negativity surrounding violent behaviours of individuals as well as the potential negative consequences of too much violence shown by forms of media.

Human rights issues included studying: the Holocaust, genocide, justice, basic human rights and quality of life, racism, sexism, prejudice and the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights.

Social responsibility covered a broad spectrum of topics: individual behaviour, community involvement, social justice and specific societal concerns.

Portraits began with 3 subject areas per province, however, as noted in Tables 4 through 7, three curriculum guides were not available for research, resulting in a sample size of 24 instead of 27 curriculum reviews. High school physical education curriculum guides are missing from the Atlantic framework for all provinces except Newfoundland. Unfortunately, such programs' exclusion from the research will affect the completeness of the findings and the potential to draw exact parallels between provinces. On the other hand, considering that the purpose of this thesis is for transferability, that is for awareness and comparisons of educational practices as opposed to statistical inference or generalizability, these few incomplete portraits will not undermine the findings.

The findings can be examined from a variety of different angles. Let us first take a look at the total number of times each term appeared amongst all of the curricula that were reviewed, subject areas and provinces combined.

Table 8

Number of Curricula (n=24) Containing Search Terms

Search terms - relational	Number of curricula
Care	3
Compassion	2
Empathy	14
Kind	1

Search terms - principle	Number of curricula
Ethical	19
Fair play	5

Search terms - ecological	Number of curricula
Human rights	16
Humanitarian	2
Social responsibility	10

Search terms – blended categories	Number of curricula
Respect	23
Moral	8
Considerate	6
Character education	0
Peace	11
Non-violence	4
Golden rule	0

Several patterns emerge from an examination of the three charts. *Respect* is the term used most often, appearing in all but one of the curriculum guides, frameworks or foundation documents that were reviewed. *Ethical* comes a close second, appearing in nineteen of the twenty-four curricula that were reviewed. The third most used term is

human rights, followed by *empathy*, then *peace* and *social responsibility*. *Moral* and *considerate* are next, while the remaining terms appear less than a handful of times. It should be noted that two of the predetermined defining terms did not appear in any curriculum document that was reviewed; these being *character education* and the *golden rule*, nonetheless, the sentiment of do unto others as you would have done to you seems to be pretty widespread. Although the word *moral* appeared many times throughout curricula, the complete term, *moral education*, was not found anywhere.

Next, we turn to a general overview of terms related to moral education and the ethic of care as they appear in each of the three subject areas that are the concern of this research.

Table 9

Number of Search Terms (n=16) Found in Subject Areas

Category	Social studies	Language arts	Physical education
Relational morals	1	3	3
Principle morals	1	1	2
Ecological morals	4	2	2
Blended categories	5	5	5
Totals	11	11	12

Physical education gives particular attention to the ethic of care, probably because it is a non-academic subject. *Fair play* is the term to be expected in such a subject. In

addition, in all provinces combined, as many as twelve of the sixteen terms were included in physical education curricula. This level of inclusion of terms representing moral education surpasses that of language arts and social studies, which are often assumed to be the primary subjects to include such topics. This pattern may depend on the definition of “ethics” and “morals.” Physical education is, almost of its very nature, concerned with personal behaviour, whereas language arts and social studies are more oriented to the intellectual analysis of issues. The behavioural aspect of this subject could also be the reason why principle based morals are more commonly referred to in physical education curricula than in the academic subjects. It seems to make sense that relational morals are more commonly used in language arts and physical education curricula compared to social studies and then that ecological morals are more commonly used in social studies due to the focus on human rights within societal and world issues.

Now, let us examine search term findings from a different angle. This time the results indicate the number of provinces in which each term appears in curriculum guides, considering all subject areas combined.

Table 10

Number of Provinces (n=9) That Use Search Terms

Search terms - relational	Number of provinces
Care	3
Compassion	1
Empathy	9
Kind	1
Search terms - principle	Number of provinces
Ethical	9
Fair play	5
Search terms - ecological	Number of provinces
Human rights	9
Humanitarian	2
Social responsibility	8

Search terms – blended categories	Number of provinces
Respect	9
Moral	5
Considerate	5
Character education	0
Peace	9
Non-violence	2
Golden rule	0

Empathy, respect, ethical, human rights and *peace* are the terms which appear in curriculum documents written by each of the nine provinces in one subject or another.

Social responsibility is next, being included in eight out of the nine provinces' curriculum documents. The words *considerate, moral* and *fair play* appear in more than half of the provinces, however, the other terms appear much less frequently.

Alberta and Ontario are the only provinces which include the term *humanitarian* in any of the subjects. Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Newfoundland are the only provinces to have included *care*.

Alberta is the only province to use the word *kind* in any of the searched curriculum documents, while Saskatchewan is the only province to include the term *compassion*.

British Columbia is the only province to include *respect*, *ethical* and *social responsibility* in all three of the subject areas. Ontario is similar in that the terms *respect* and *ethical* are included in all of the subject areas, along with the term *anti/non-violence*.

Newfoundland includes the ethic of *care* in their curricula. This province also uses the words *respect* and *ethical*, in addition to *human rights*.

As previously discussed, the term *respect* is the most commonly used of all terms regardless of curriculum or province. It should also be noted that this term is included in all three subject areas in five of the nine provinces studied: British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario and Newfoundland.

Next, we take a look at a cross-examination of search terms used in provincial curricula. Here the number of appearances is broken down into greater detail according to both the morality framework and subject area.

Table 11

Number of Provinces (n=9) That Use Search Terms by Subject Area

Search terms – relational	Social studies	Language arts	Physical education
Care	0	0	3
Compassion	0	1	1
Empathy	3	8	3
Kind	0	1	0

Search terms – principle	Social studies	Language arts	Physical education
Ethical	7	9	3
Fair play	0	0	5

Search terms – ecological	Social studies	Language arts	Physical education
Human rights	9	6	1
Humanitarian	2	0	0
Social responsibility	5	2	3

Search terms – blended	Social studies	Language arts	Physical education
Moral	3	4	1
Respect	8	9	6
Considerate	1	3	2
Character education	0	0	0
Peace	8	1	2
Non-violence	1	2	1
Golden rule	0	0	0

In social studies curricula the term pertaining to moral education that is found most commonly is *human rights*, as it is used in every province. *Respect* and *peace* both appear in eight of the nine provinces. *Ethical* is next, showing up in seven different provinces' social studies curricula, then *social responsibility* in five. Other search terms

appear in only as many as three provinces. Some of the terms do not appear in any social studies curriculum, including the words *care*, *compassion* and *kind*. Once again, this table indicates that more ecological terms are found in social studies curricula than in the other subjects.

Language arts curricula have the strongest showing of all three subject areas in regards to terms being used of a relational kind. The specific terms that have the highest results in language arts are *respect* and *ethical*, which appear in all nine provinces' language arts curricula. *Empathy* is the second most commonly used word, as seen in eight provinces' curriculum guides. *Human rights* is next, being included in six provinces' high school language arts documents. Other search terms appear in language arts programs in less than half of all provinces. Terms that are not used in any provincial language arts program included *care* and *humanitarian*.

As shown in Table 9, physical education curricula across the nine provinces include most of the sixteen search terms. The most commonly used search term appears in physical education curricula in six different provinces, that being *respect*. Predictably in this subject area, *fair play* is the most commonly used term of all words in the search list. Other terms, however, appear in only one, two, or at most three provinces' physical education curricula.

It should also be noted that, as in other subject areas, some of the terms are not used in any province. For the physical education curricula these terms are *kind* and *humanitarian*.

Another arrangement of the findings is derived from observing the total number of search terms that are found within each province's curricula, considering all three subject areas combined.

Table 12

Total Number of Search Terms (n=16) Per Province, All Categories

BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	NS	NB	Nfld	PEI
9	10	11	9	10	6	6	9	6

The province with the strongest showing from this perspective is Saskatchewan. This province includes eleven out of the sixteen search terms somewhere in a combination of all subject areas. Alberta and Ontario are second, each using ten of the terms in its courses, followed by British Columbia, Manitoba and Newfoundland. The three other Atlantic provinces were found to have less than half of all search terms being used throughout their curricula. As previously mentioned, however, one curriculum document was unavailable for each of these three Atlantic provinces: Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island (see Tables 4 through 7). Unfortunately, such programs' exclusion from the research will affect the completeness of these findings and limits true comparisons with other provinces.

Identifiable from Tables 4 through 7 are all of the terms used by each province, in some combination amongst the three subject areas. The following table (see Table 13) details exactly which terms are used by each province across subjects. Here the numbers from Table 12 are broken down by category, that is, by the kind of moral education being referred to in each province's curricula, be it relational, principle, or ecological in nature.

Table 13

Summary of Terms Used By Each Province in Curricula

Province	Category	Terms
British Columbia	Relational	empathy
	Principle	ethical, fair play
	Ecological	human rights, social responsibility
	Blended	moral, respect, peace, considerate
Alberta	Relational	empathy, kind
	Principle	ethical, fair play
	Ecological	humanitarian, human rights
	Blended	moral, respect, peace, considerate
Saskatchewan	Relational	care, compassion, empathy
	Principle	ethical
	Ecological	human rights, social responsibility
	Blended	moral, respect, peace, non-violence, considerate

Province	Category	Terms
Manitoba	Relational	care, empathy
	Principle	ethical, fair play
	Ecological	human rights, social responsibility
	Blended	respect, peace, considerate
Ontario	Relational	empathy
	Principle	ethical, fair play
	Ecological	human rights, humanitarian
	Blended	moral, respect, peace, non-violence, considerate
Nova Scotia	Relational	empathy
	Principle	ethical
	Ecological	human rights, social responsibility
	Blended	respect, peace
New Brunswick	Relational	empathy
	Principle	ethical
	Ecological	human rights, social responsibility
	Blended	respect, peace

Province	Category	Terms
Newfoundland	Relational	care, empathy
	Principle	ethical, fair play
	Ecological	human rights, social responsibility
	Blended	moral, respect, peace
Prince Edward Island	Relational	empathy
	Principle	ethical
	Ecological	human rights, social responsibility
	Blended	respect, peace

The variety of tables illustrated in this section of findings has depicted several different perspectives regarding evidence of moral education found in curricula. National trends of curriculum content will be summarized in the concluding chapter of this thesis.

Question #4: Portraits of Moral Education in School Division Mission Statements

Three school divisions were selected from each of the nine provinces that are part of this research. Prince Edward Island only has 2 school divisions, which means that a total of 26 instead of 27 school divisions were reviewed. As outlined in the methodology section, school divisions in the capital cities of each province were explicitly included. If available, school division goals, beliefs, and/or vision statements were reviewed in order

to determine the extent of concern for moral development. Only current statements of at least the 2007-2008 school year were used and only those that have been publicly distributed as a statement of each school division's educational philosophy. What follows describes the findings that have been directly retrieved from such documents. Also noted is whether or not the topic of moral development was found within the priorities that a school board has enunciated. As well, expressions of support for the ethic of care have been identified.

It was found that 18 out of the 26, or approximately 69% of the school divisions selected for this research expressed a commitment to the moral development of students, be the version of morality relational, principle or ecological. Conversely, this also means that 8 out of 26, or just under a third of all school divisions that were examined, did not mention moral education in any shape or form. There was at least one school division in each province that endorsed the teaching of moral education. There were 10 mission statements in particular that specifically included either the ethic of care or empathy, representing all but the provinces of British Columbia and Nova Scotia.

In British Columbia, the Greater Victoria School District believes that education can affect society, as shown by the statement "all individuals have the capacity to learn and the power to positively influence the future" (2008). Here, this school division is referring to ecological morals as the impact the board speaks of is on the larger, societal scale. It is notable that this same school division is also concerned with relational morals. Certain aspects of moral behaviour are pinpointed as the division promotes "that it is essential to treat all individuals with dignity and respect" (2008). Dignity would actually

fit within principle morals, while respect, in the context that has been used in this statement, would be placed within the relation category of moral education.

Neither the Central Okanagan School District's mission statement nor the accompanying vision statement includes any mention of moral education or development. Instead, they are more focused on aspects of learning and success while also concentrating on developing contributing citizens: "To educate students in a safe, inspirational leaning environment where every student develops the knowledge and skills to be a lifelong learner and a healthy productive member of our global society. School District No. 23 is a progressive leader in education which sets the standard for educational excellence and ensures that every student has opportunities to succeed" (Central Okanagan School Board, 2007). This school board focuses on productivity and success in the workforce without any mention of moral education.

The mission of the Vancouver School Board (1999) is "to enable students to reach their intellectual, social, aesthetic and physical potential in challenging and stimulating settings which reflect the worth of each individual and promote mutual respect, cooperation and social responsibility." Although there is no mention of "moral," this combines all three categories of the moral development framework. Mutual respect can be classified as an element of relational morals, cooperation as an element of principle morals and social responsibility of ecological morals. Next the school board narrowed its focus even more toward one component of morality in particular. In 2004-2005, the Vancouver School Board highlighted social responsibility as one of its two main focuses of students' development, alongside literacy. It then established an educational plan for

the district designed to improve students' performance and achievement in both areas. With this effort this school division is focusing on ecological morals.

In summary, a portrait of British Columbia's school division mission statements showed that two out of the three school divisions examined show commitment to the moral development of their students. These two school boards indicate a specific concern for both ecological and relational aspects of moral education, with the focus of the latter category being respect.

In Alberta, the mission statement of the Edmonton Public Schools Board contains no mention of any form of moral development whatsoever. Instead, it speaks of student success, partnership in education, as well as policy and structure:

The mission of Edmonton Public Schools . . . is to ensure that all students achieve success in their individual programs of study. It is the belief of Edmonton Public Schools that parents, students and community members are committed as partners and accept their respective responsibilities in education. The mission is being accomplished through exemplary staff performance, program diversity, measured student achievement of outcomes and decentralized decision making. (2004)

The mission statement of the Calgary Board of Education is: "Educating Tomorrow's Citizens Today" (2006), which upon further examination contains no mention of moral development. Instead, it is concerned with accountable use of tax payers' dollars. There is also no mention of moral development in this school division's description of its philosophy of education as it focuses on talent development and engaged learning: "The Calgary Board of Education is the dynamic learning community

of choice. We provide quality leaning opportunities and options. Our learners take ownership by discovering and developing their potential, passions and gifts. They take their place as lifelong learners and make a significant contribution within a complex, changing world” (2006). The values that have been laid out by the Calgary Board of Education for its schools to live by are threefold: “Students come first; Learning is our central purpose; and Public education serves the common good” (2006). To some the phrase ‘serving the common good’ may be referring to moral development, to others this may mean something completely different. In terms of explicit wording, like Edmonton, the Calgary school board does not publicly express any commitment to the moral development of its students.

Battle River School Division represents the area around the city of Camrose, Alberta. In 2006, it renewed its belief and mission statements. One of these belief statements insists that “Character education is an essential component of a child’s development” (Battle River School Board, 2006). Every school within the division is to develop individual programs that provide character education. Among other things, the term character education can include the development of relational morals. The accompanying mission statement attests to this connection: “Battle River School Division (which means all of us) in partnership with parents and the community will ensure that each student acquires the necessary knowledge, skills, and core values to be a caring, productive member of our democratic society. It is essential that we be caring and supportive partners if we want students to be caring and productive citizens” (2006). This school board uses the word caring three times within its mission statement. It also

explains how providing and modeling a caring atmosphere on the schools' part helps promote and pass on the message that students become caring individuals.

In summary, only one out of the three school divisions examined in Alberta expresses commitment to the moral development of its students. This school division indicates a specific concern for relational aspects of moral education with a focus on both character education and the ethic of care.

The motto of Saskatoon Public Schools is: "Caring to learn – Learning to care" (Saskatoon Public Schools Board, 2005). Although it could be just a slogan, it appears to speak clearly of the ethic of care. This division has developed a specialty program recommended for all of its schools, entitled Building Moral Intelligence and entirely comprised of moral education (Saskatoon Public Schools Board, 2005):

Reading, Writing and Responsibility? Learning shouldn't be just academics.

This unique program gives students a chance to strengthen their self-esteem and moral development practicing empathy, conscience, self-control, respect, kindness, tolerance and fairness. The goal of this program is to build strong students who are confident in themselves and their decision making skills – because important life skills can be taught in classrooms, and a good EQ (emotional quotient) will assist you in life just as much as a good IQ.

This program encompasses both relational and principle morals. The division also offers anti-bullying programs and peer mediation training as well as a character education program that takes moral development to the societal, that is the ecological level. The school board explains that the latter program "empowers students to become responsible

members of society by encouraging ethical development...because conscience is just as important as science” (Saskatoon Public Schools Board, 2005).

The mission of Regina Public Schools is “to instill the value of knowledge, the dignity of effort and the worth of the individual” (Regina Board of Education, 2003). The division states that it supports the development of additional programs both inter- and extra-curricular that would “demonstrate the value of human dignity” (2003). Here morals based on principle are introduced. Next, the school division recognizes that “it is important to nurture a commitment to excellence in learning, with an emphasis on academic achievement and personal, moral and ethical development,” a well-rounded statement regarding the significance of moral education (2003). The mission statement is further broken down into specific values which include: “I respect” and “I am responsible” (2003). The former has been defined by this school board as referring to all interactions involving interpersonal relationships, and the latter as a “cornerstone of a healthy society” (2003). The board expands on its commitment “to the development of personal, social and community responsibility” and clarifies once again that this begins with “human interactions” (2003). This statement reveals a commitment to relational morals that is extended to the macro level, thereby forming the concept of ecological morals. In this way, the Regina school board endorses a view of moral education that considers the potential that each individual can have in terms of making a difference on a larger scale.

The Good Spirit School Division is responsible for the rural communities surrounding Yorkton, Saskatchewan. Its mission statement is: “Excelling through student learning” and vision: “Together inspiring passion for learning” (Good Spirit School

Board, 2008). Although the mission statement does not, this school division's values do show commitment to the moral development of its students by fostering both "integrity," "equity" and "empathy." Integrity classifies as part of the principle moral category. Depending on the context of the word, equity could come from either the principle or larger, ecological moral category, while empathy refers to the relational moral category. Empathy is the word in this list that shows the most direct concern, on the part of this school division, for the ethic of care.

In summary, a portrait of Saskatchewan's school division mission statements shows that all three school boards express commitment to the moral development of their students. All three show concern for teaching relational aspects of moral education, two of these referring specifically to the ethic of care. All three of the framework categories, relational, principle and ecological morals, are evident somewhere in the portrait of this province.

In Manitoba, the Winnipeg School Division's mission statement is as follows: "to provide a learning environment that promotes and fosters the growth of each student's potential and provides an opportunity for the individual student to develop the knowledge, skills, and values necessary for meaningful participation in a global and pluralistic society" (Winnipeg School Board, 2008). This school board "believes each student must be given the opportunity to develop the values, attitudes, and moral principles that enable them to become responsible citizens who relate to others in an empathetic and moral manner" (2008). This school division thus specifies that both relational and principle morals are to be promoted.

A second school division within the province of Manitoba also concentrates on the moral development of its students: “The Seven Oaks School Division is a Community of Learners, everyone of whom shares responsibility to assist children in acquiring an education which will enable them to lead fulfilling lives within the world as moral people and contributing members of society” (Seven Oaks School Board, 2008). This statement clearly refers to the importance of moral development in general and could encompass both relational and principle morals.

The third Manitoba school board also shows concern for the moral development of its students. The Louis Riel School Division “aspires to develop caring, literate and capable people who value learning and strive to reach their potential as they pursue the common good” (Louis Riel School Board, 2008). Here the educational philosophies contain the relational ethic of care itself. The mission statement continues to explain that the schools of this division are to strive to “develop responsible global citizens through respectful partnerships between home, school and community” (2008).

In summary, a portrait of this province’s school division mission statements shows that all three of the school divisions examined in Manitoba express commitment to the moral development of students. Again, all three indicate a specific concern for relational aspects of moral education, emphasizing the terms empathy, care and respect.

In Ontario, the Toronto District School Board is responsible for more students than any other school board in Canada. Among its objectives of education is a statement that comes closest to but may or may not, depending on context, show support for moral education. In this school district it is a goal for all students to acquire the “values they need to become responsible members of a democratic society” (Toronto District School

Board, 2008). Such connotation may, however, refer instead to students becoming responsible voters or hard-working employees. Without further details, no official evidence of moral education is proven. Toronto's school district also has a value statement which outlines what the board believes its schools should stand for: "a strong public education system; a partnership of students, family and community; the uniqueness and diversity of our students and our community; the commitment and skills of our staff; equity, innovation, accountability, and accessibility; and learning environments that are safe, nurturing, positive, and respectful" (2008). Although it happens to contain some key words, this statement refers to the environment that these schools are to offer its students, as opposed to the part these schools might play in promoting the moral development of the students themselves.

The Greater Essex County District School Board (2008) mission statement states that its schools provide "learning opportunities which support, challenge, and inspire all students to achieve their full potential and enable them to participate meaningfully in their communities." This school division's motto is: "Building Tomorrow Together" (2008). The values this school division deems necessary to help actualize these goals includes many elements of moral development: "We, the members of the school community believe it is important to be caring, trustworthy, responsible, fair, diligent, respectful, self-disciplined" (2008). These values include several of the thesis search terms, consisting of both relational and principle morals. Under the title of character education, which can be considered as one segment of moral education, this school division has designed a diverse personal development program for its high school students. The following topics have been defined to be within the scope of what this

division considers character education to include: Students Against Violence in Relationships; CPR Training, which teaches people to be able to help others; as well as a Drinking and Driving Prevention program, a legal issue which crosses over to moral decision-making. The subject matter of these programs, as well as character education in general, all fit within the principle moral category of the morality framework. In keeping with its theme and commitment to character education, this school board reminds us of the famous words of Dr. Martin Luther King: “We must remember that intelligence alone is not enough. Intelligence plus character – that is the goal of a true education” (in Greater Essex County District School Board, 2008).

Bluewater District School Board is another Ontario school division that believes strongly in the importance of the moral development of students. Using its motto as a guideline, “Learning for a lifetime” (Bluewater District School Board, 2006) this school board considers character development as one of the primary foundations for learning: “Research indicates that education is at its best when it focuses on supporting the development of the whole student. School environments, where civic responsibilities and academic achievement thrive, are our focus.” This description begins with a citizenship orientation, but the school board then continues its educational goals in a very morally oriented direction:

Effective character development is embedded in the total life of the school and community, and impacts on students’ success during the school years and beyond. It must be intentionally infused in our policies, practices, programs, and interactions. Character development in schools plays an

essential role in addressing the cognitive, affective, and behavioural domains of the whole student. (2006)

The Bluewater school division defines character development to include ten specific, personal attributes which touch on many aspects of moral development: “respect, honesty, responsibility, trust, teamwork, self-discipline, commitment, caring, integrity, dependability” (2006). From this list, “respect” could be either relational or principle based, “honesty” would be principle based, as is “integrity,” while “caring” is clearly a relational based moral quality.

In summary, two out of the three school divisions examined in Ontario express commitment to the moral development of students. Both of these school divisions indicate a specific concern for the relational aspect of moral education, specifically including the ethic of care. It should be noted that both of these school districts use the terms character education or development as an umbrella heading for the components of moral education that are taught there.

In Atlantic Canada, the Halifax Regional School Board uses a unique word to display its concern for moral development: harmonious. The full mission statement reads that it will “ensure that each student develops passion for learning, for achieving personal success, and for building a harmonious global community” (Halifax Regional School Board, 2007), positioning this long term goal in both the relational and ecological categories of the morality framework. To help bring this mission statement to fruition, a monthly recognition award is awarded by the board to educators who implement and practice this belief in the classroom or school. In addition, the Halifax school division believes that “individuals are accountable for their decisions” and that “honesty and

respect are fundamental to healthy relationships” (2007). The former statement refers to a sense of justice in terms of principle based morals. The latter uses the words honesty, also a principle based moral according to the conceptual framework, then extends the topic to the deeper, relational level by referring to interpersonal relationships.

The Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board “fosters a caring, dynamic, and creative environment that provides educational opportunities, promotes a love of learning, respect for others, and challenges all persons to develop their full potential to become confident, versatile, lifelong learners and thinkers” (2005). The word caring, as used in the above context, refers to the environment offered by schools rather than the development of it as an expectation of students. On the other hand, the clause “respect for others” qualifies this mission statement as evidence of moral education, within the relational category.

The mission statement of the Chignecto-Central Regional School Board (2007) does not mention any aspect of moral development: “We develop lifelong learners in a student-centered environment with high expectations for all.” The overriding beliefs of the school division, however, which have been written alongside their mission statement, do include elements of morality. Here the board clarifies that “everyone must be treated with dignity and respect,” therein promoting morals by both principles and relation (2007).

In summary, all three of the school divisions examined in Nova Scotia express commitment to the moral development of their students. All three of them also indicate a specific concern for relational aspects of moral education, with an emphasis on respect.

The mission statement of Fredericton, the capital city of New Brunswick, contains no mention of moral development. School District 18 (2008) merely states that the division “exists to provide the education that meets the developmental needs of children in the most effective manner representing the values of the community,” without clarifying what such needs or values may be.

The city of Moncton’s mission statement is little different in expressing no overt commitment to the moral development of students. The intention of the school board of School District 2 (2005) is to enable students “to be responsible members of society by providing quality public education.” This would have to be expanded further for the term responsible to fit into the moral development framework.

By contrast, the school division of St. Stephen and surrounding area located in Charlotte County, New Brunswick, clearly expresses concern for moral development. Its mission statement says that School Division 10 aims “to nurture the students so that they have critical thinking skills, appropriate and relevant knowledge, inquisitive minds and independent spirits, with empathy, sense of teamwork and respect for citizenship” (2008). Empathy is the key word here, indicating that this mission statement qualifies as evidence of a school division promoting relational morals.

In summary, one out of the three school divisions examined in New Brunswick expresses commitment to the moral development of its students, specifically referring to the ethic of care.

The vision of the school division of St. John’s, Newfoundland is “to challenge and develop the learning and achievement capabilities of each student in a safe, caring, and socially just learning environment” (Eastern School District, 2008). Once again,

although the word caring is used in this statement, it is not so much about the students' development as it is about the environment provided by the schools and educators. There is no actual mention of concern for the moral development of students. In addition, a further search of the strategic issues and current goals of this division found that neither speaks of moral education.

Similarly, Nova Central School District asserts that "it is essential for the mission to focus on the opportunities available to students graduating high school" (2008, p. 7). The school board does not mention moral development in either its vision statement or in its discussion of strategic issues. In contrast, elements of morality do appear in the values that the Nova Central School District stands by: "accountability, caring, courage, fairness, honesty, openness, perseverance, respect" (2008, p. 6). This suggests that both principle and relational morals are being promoted. "Caring," the school board explains, means that "each person is concerned for the well being of others" (2008), thus clearly showing commitment for the teaching of relational morals. "Respect," the school board explains, means that "each person acknowledges and considers the opinions of others" (2008). Promoting such values can develop principle based morals, which also applies to the words "honesty" and "fairness" (2008).

The third school division that was reviewed in Newfoundland was the Labrador School Board, which has written a very specific, academically oriented mission statement focused on achieving "a two per cent improvement in results in English Language Arts, Mathematics and Science and a two per cent improvement in graduation rates" (2008, p. 5). Clearly, here there is no sign of commitment to moral education. There is also no mention of any such commitment in the accompanying vision statement: "a learning organization which graduates all students from a safe and supportive environment

enabling them to maximize their potential” (2008, p. 5). The values that the Labrador School Board stands by are as follows: “balance, consistency, reflection, respect, teamwork” (2008, p. 4). In this case, however, the values indicated pertain to a school atmosphere provided by educators as opposed to passing these values on through teaching or expecting such values to be exhibited by students.

In summary, only one out of the three school divisions examined in Newfoundland expresses commitment to the moral development of its students. This one division does indicate a concern for relational aspects of moral education including, specifically, the ethic of care.

When it comes to school divisions promoting the moral development of students Prince Edward Island is the most consistent of all Canadian provinces. There are only two school divisions in this small province, split by the east and west sides. Both school divisions are clearly devoted to the moral development of the students.

The Eastern School District asserts in its mission statement that it is “committed to excellence in education. In partnership with the community, we will provide a safe and caring learning environment in which all students have the opportunity to reach their potential and to face the future with confidence” (2007, p. 8). Although, there is no inclusion of moral development in this statement there is strong evidence of this school board’s conviction for the impact moral development may be able to make, as shown by the fundamental values that have been identified as important.

Among other things, the Eastern School District of Prince Edward Island believes in the:

unique dignity and worth of every human being; that caring individuals nurture a healthy society; that all individuals have power to positively influence their future; that individuals are responsible and accountable for their actions and decisions; and that the educational program should provide each student the best opportunity to learn, to develop personally and to experience success. (2007, p. 8)

The first clause, which refers to the dignity and worth of human beings, fits the category of developing principle based morals. The next clause mentions “caring,” and this time not merely about schools providing a caring environment, but about teaching students the relational morals of being a caring individual. Within the same clause, this statement also speaks of the significance and potential the ethic of care has with respect to affecting all of society as well as the future, adding a larger scale, ecological moral component. The last part of the statement refers to the importance of personal development which, in context with the other clauses, may very well include moral development in either the relational and/or principle form.

The other half of the province also shows concern for the moral development of students. The mission statement sets the tone: “The Western School Board is a supportive and progressive community committed to providing quality educational experiences focusing on the total development of all students for life long learning and responsible community membership” (2008, p. 1). The accompanying belief statement details precisely where the school board’s priorities lie: “We believe it is our role to encourage

and support students as life long learners, responsible, ethical decision makers and stewards of our natural resources” (2008). It should be noted that this latter statement regarding the ethical treatment of the environment is seldom addressed in school division mission statements. The conduct and ethical decision-making referred to in this school division’s statements imply the fostering of principle based morals.

In summary, both school divisions in the province of Prince Edward Island express commitment to the moral development of their students. Half of the province emphasizes a specific concern for the relational aspect of caring while the other half professes to teach ethical decision making, both being commendable efforts.

Using these school division mission statements, comparisons from province to province as well as trends across Canada will be the focus of the concluding chapter of the thesis.

Chapter 5: Discussion & Implications

In this concluding chapter, evidence of moral education is summarized by a final examination of the various portraits that were reviewed across Canada. Consistencies and contradictions between the findings for all four research questions, as well as emerging patterns and national trends are all identified. Additional areas of interest are also noted including evidence of directives to promote interpersonal relationships, character education, social responsibility and global consciousness, keeping the primary focus of the discussion on the ethic of care.

Research Question #1: Moral Education in Graduation Requirements

Apart from the intensive work that has been done to develop the course on ethics in Quebec, no province in Canada requires high school students specifically study the subject of moral education, let alone the ethic of care.

The only components of moral education that might be covered en route to graduating from high school are elements of relevant curriculum content found throughout this research. Such examples are small in scope, often forming only part of a course's rationale, learning outcomes, content, or suggested activities. Very rarely does any element of moral education comprise a whole unit of study and, again other than in the province of Quebec, moral education never comprises a complete course.

There are no courses included in graduation requirements anywhere in Canada that focus solely on interpersonal relationships, character education, social responsibility, or global consciousness. Using terms from the morality framework, no graduation requirements in any province focus distinctly on developing relational morals, principle morals, or ecological morals. The Atlantic Canada Framework for Essential Graduation Learnings speaks for all four Maritime provinces in identifying intended learning outcomes that all students are to achieve before graduating. Included in the list of objectives is examining human rights and critical thinking about ethical issues. The skills are written as being required for graduation, however, the delivery is intended to be cross-curricular, meaning that these general learning outcomes are not specifically attached to any certain course or official credit and are therefore not technically

mandatory. In terms of graduation requirements, the only pattern that does exist throughout Canada is an absence of moral education and any significant teaching of the ethic of care.

Research Question #2: Moral Education in Provincial Goals of Education

It is evident that all nine English-speaking provinces see the development of principle based morals within students as an important goal of public schools. Considering the other categories of the morality framework developed in this thesis, five of the nine provincial departments of education address relational morals in their public statements of goals and purposes, while eight address ecological morals. The governments that most clearly show concern for teaching relational moral values are Ontario, Saskatchewan, Alberta, Newfoundland and Nova Scotia. The provinces that provide the most evidence of endorsing larger scale, society or community level morals are Ontario, Saskatchewan, British Columbia, Manitoba and all four Atlantic provinces.

Of all provincial departments of education, Ontario provides the most explicit evidence of concern for moral education. It includes all categories of the morality framework in its educational priorities. Ontario's department of education also holds expectations of consistency within its public school system in that moral education is to be taught throughout all grade levels and subjects with the aid and support of a specifically designed supplementary curriculum. Among many elements of morality, this program, known as The Heart of the Matter, includes such topics as developing empathy and preventing violence.

The Saskatchewan government also covers all three areas of the morality framework within its goals of education. This province speaks of teaching students to learn to take responsibility for one's actions, to have respect for the property of others and for justice, as well as to show integrity and compassion. In addition, maintaining a safe community along with violence prevention and helping others are supposed to be taught in the schools within this province.

Alberta has created a pledge for all students to learn to live by. It speaks of each individual's commitment to being ethical, honourable, respectful, kind, compassionate, empathetic, courteous, trustworthy, and of one's responsibility to make the world a better place.

All provincial governments promote more than one of the moral categories within their current educational priorities. Alberta addresses both relational and principle based morals, while British Columbia, Manitoba, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island all address principle and ecological morals. Saskatchewan, Ontario, Newfoundland and Nova Scotia speak to all three categories of morality. The strong showing on the part of the maritime provinces is assisted by their shared Atlantic Framework of Essential Learnings which includes aspects of moral education.

Regarding the four main themes of moral education, five provincial governments convey the significance of developing interpersonal relationships, six of teaching social responsibility or social justice, three of character education and two of global consciousness. British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Ontario, Manitoba, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia are the departments of education that state the importance of promoting social responsibility. Alberta, Saskatchewan and Ontario value character education as a

priority. Manitoba schools are supposed to speak to students about social justice at the global level. Prince Edward Island is also very clear about teaching an awareness of global consciousness, in this case in the context of protecting the environment.

Very importantly, since this particular finding is directly related to the title of this research, it is the departments of education of Ontario, Saskatchewan, Alberta, Newfoundland and Nova Scotia that most evidently promote the ethic of care.

Research Question #3: Moral Education in Curricula

One third of the curricula, in the subjects of language arts, social studies and physical education that were reviewed from across the country, use the term *moral* in some capacity (see Table 7). This figure, however, is based on a total of only five provinces (see Table 7). All provinces use the term *ethics* or *ethical*, as found in most of the curriculum guides that were researched, 19 out of 24 to be precise (see Table 5).

Although all elements of morality are inter-related, the focus of this research is on relational ethics, as this is where teaching the ethic of care fits within the morality framework. Out of all 16 search terms, 10 represent relational morals. These are the words that help identify teachings of, or concern for, the ethic of care. These 10 key words can be found in both the relational category itself, along with the blended category (see Tables 1 and 2). Each province has used anywhere from 3 to 7 of these relational terms somewhere in their curriculum guides (see Tables 4 and 7).

Language arts and physical education curricula contain a higher usage of relational moral terms than do social studies courses (see Tables 4 and 7). Language arts

more commonly contain the terms *ethical*, *empathy* and *respect* than is the case in other subjects. The moral focus in social studies tends to be more ecological in nature since much of the content deals with societal, rather than individual, issues. Social studies uses the terms *peace* and *human rights* and speaks of *social responsibility* and *global consciousness* more than the other subject areas do.

Four different search terms, *empathy*, *ethical*, *respect* and *peace*, were identified in at least one curriculum from every province. Compared to all other terms in this study, it was found that the words *respect* and *ethical* were used in the greatest number of curriculum guides throughout the country (see Tables 5 and 7). However, there is no evidence of the terms *character education* or the *golden rule* currently being used in any curriculum anywhere at all.

The ethic of care appeared in the curriculum guides of only three provinces. It should be noted that all three of these curricula were physical education courses, in the provinces of Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Newfoundland.

The term *care* or *caring* did not appear in any curriculum for either language arts or social studies courses in any province across the country.

Research Question #4: Moral Education in School Division Mission Statements

Of the 26 school division mission and vision statements that were reviewed, 17 speak of a commitment to teaching relational morals, with representation coming from all nine provinces. This research is limited to the portraits that were examined, which consisted of three school divisions per province. Different results may have been

produced had a different or wider selection of school divisions been reviewed.

Nonetheless, the following are highlights of some of the more significant findings of this section:

- Ten school divisions use the words *caring* or *empathy*;
- Ten school divisions speak of teaching *respect*;
- Five school division mission statements contain either the term *moral* or *ethical*;
- Five school divisions promote principles of dignity and/or worth of human beings;
- Four have programs specially designed for *character education*;
- Four focus on *social responsibility*; and
- Four promote global consciousness.

Next, these same findings are broken down in greater detail by identifying the provinces of the school divisions responsible for making the above references to moral education in their mission statements. School divisions from every province except British Columbia and Nova Scotia use the words *caring* or *empathy*. Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Prince Edward Island emphasize the terms *moral* or *ethical*. School divisions in half of the provinces show concern for teaching *respect*, either in a relational or more general principle form. The provinces of British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island write about promoting the principles of dignity or worth of human beings. School divisions in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Ontario include *character education* in their various official statements. British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Prince Edward Island specifically mention the importance of teaching *social responsibility*. British Columbia along with Manitoba and Nova Scotia, all promote global consciousness.

The context of ecological moral values took on a different slant in the findings of such evidence in school division mission statements compared to in the curriculum review section. When used in curricula, ecological moral values are primarily about awareness of world issues, global peacekeeping and human rights. School divisions, on the other hand, speak of the individual's potential to make an impact or contribution to what may be a more moral society. Seven different school divisions, out of 26, refer to the importance of teaching this macro level of morality with phrases that speak of the individual's ability to have a 'positive influence on the future,' to 'nurture a healthy society' and to 'build a harmonious global community.'

The most comprehensive overall portraits come from the provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. Here every one of the school division mission statements that were reviewed indicates a commitment to some aspect of moral education.

Finally, in seven out of nine provinces, school division mission statements address the responsibility that the education system has, that is, to develop in students the ethic of care.

General Discussion & Implications

Considering highlights of all research questions simultaneously produces the following chart.

Table 14

Number of Provinces with Evidence of Moral Education

Research question	Moral education in general	Care, empathy, compassion	Moral, ethical	Interpersonal relations	Character education
Grad requirements	0	0	0	0	0
Governments	9	5	6	5	3
Curricula	9	3	9	9	0
School divisions	9	7	3	9	3

All provincial departments of education speak of the importance of moral education, as do a selection of school divisions in every province, yet it is not a part of any province's graduation requirements, except in Quebec. Apart from this province, moral education, or any derivative of it, does not even exist as a course available for students to take. This inconsistency raises the question of provincial governments and school boards not following through, not putting their beliefs into action, and not seeing their purpose through to reality. This inconsistency is also evident throughout much of

the country between guiding philosophies that call for moral education and the specification of graduation requirements that completely omit any key mandatory teachings of care, empathy, morals, ethics, interpersonal relations and character education. This presents mixed messages to students, parents, community and society as to the purpose and goals of education as well as to what one should strive to be. If moral education is truly a priority, as it is said to be by all nine provincial departments of education, then philosophy should follow through to implementation and be part of graduation requirements in some manner.

Very noticeable amongst the findings, when considering all four research questions combined, is the contradiction that exists between governments stating that moral education is important and then not making it a separate subject anywhere, except again in Quebec. The government of Quebec advises teachers that the implementation of a course on ethics will “call for significant changes in pedagogical . . . practices” (2005, p. 12), but that these changes are both worthwhile and overdue. Perhaps, other provincial departments of education could use Quebec’s curriculum as a guide to design more moral education courses.

Considering the curricula that were reviewed, it should be stressed that there is no sign of character education being embedded within other courses (see Table 14.) It is rarely mentioned by departments of education or school boards either. This discrepancy is again troublesome since such development is critical for further moral development and for high level moral reasoning. The literature review indicated that many leading educators and theorists speak of the importance of character education, typically as a part of moral development, yet the subject is clearly missing from curricula and graduation

requirements. Damon, a professor of education and Director of the Stanford Center on Adolescence, says schools have an obligation to promote character, including the virtues of honesty and respect and that "public schools must accept the mandate of educating for character" (2005). Character education needs to make a formal comeback in high schools across the country.

Looking again at the findings presented in the summative chart (see Table 14 of this chapter), it should also be noted that there is no sign of the traditional expression: "the golden rule." This classic expression was not found in any province's graduation requirements, not in any statements reviewed from the departments of education, not in any of the curricula that were researched, and not in any of the school division mission statements. The literature review brings to our attention that Mill, a philosopher of ethics, then a century later Kohlberg, a psychologist of moral reasoning, both use the golden rule as a term in defining ethical theory and stages of moral development, respectively. Although, some consider the golden rule to be religious in origin, literature reassures educators that the golden rule transcends time and can unite religions (Damon, 2005). This strengthens the argument for teaching moral education and the golden rule separate and apart from ideology. The literature review also referred to a certain Phi Delta Kappa American Gallup poll which revealed that the public is calling for schools to return to teaching the values that the golden rule encompasses. On the positive side, although as a search term the golden rule was not found throughout the research of this thesis, it does not necessarily mean that the concept was not taught.

What about moral education as a general concept within curriculum content? Although it appears to be embedded somewhere in the content of at least one course in

every province (see Table 14), within any given curriculum the proportion of the element of moral education is typically quite minimal. In rare cases there are entire units on some topic that has implications for moral education, at other times there are suggested learning outcomes or specific objectives that have to do with moral development or moral issues, but, more often than not, the search terms make up only a very insignificant amount of any curriculum. As it stands, teachers might not happen to cover the small parts of courses that do raise moral questions. Inevitably, all implementation decisions would be left to the discretion, personality and didactic motives of the teacher. Another difficulty is that some of these courses are not offered every year or at every school. Perhaps such shortages support an argument for introducing complete, stand-alone courses on the subject of moral education. Still, unless marked as mandatory for graduation not all students would take the course and, therefore, many would still not benefit from what they could have learned from it.

Provincial governments may have to begin the call for implementation of moral education into the public high school system by mandating that specific courses or programs be delivered. Merely referring to the importance of moral development is not enough to ensure that such teaching actually takes place. It may have to be a top down approach by means of directives from the departments of education in order for school boards and administrators to follow through with the agenda.

The various departments of education could develop support programs that are meant to be integrated both into courses of study and throughout the school by following, for instance, Ontario's Heart of the Matter design or some of the moral education aspects from the Atlantic Framework of Essential Learnings. Mandatory implementation of such

moral and character education programming could be insisted upon schools by provincial governments. This, then, would be as good as delivering separate courses in morals or ethics in terms of the subject becoming part of graduation requirements. However, if it remains optional for such supplementary programs to be implemented, it becomes left to chance that the moral teachings will ever actually reach students. If no credit is attached to such learning, as Noddings warned of in the literature review, the subject may not be taken seriously enough; not by students, nor parents, nor teachers. Also, if a subject is not embedded within an official curriculum it tends to be ignored or treated as less important. Without making it compulsory in some way, any optional or supplementary moral education programs may never really be implemented as intended.

The literature review indicated that moral education is commonly considered as important. Strong concerns were revealed regarding the lack of moral education and also identified was a need for such development to be continued at the high school level. The words used in many official documents regarding commitment to the moral development of students are enlightening and empowering, although it is possible that they are just that; words. The possibility exists that these “moral” words are used so lightly that, in reality, there is practically no specific meaning at all. Is it possible that they are just words that committees put on a page because they are “good” and dignified by tradition but rarely carry over in to the classroom? It would be very misleading if some of the statements are the kind of conventional rhetoric that departments of education or school boards use and then think no more about. Mills and Donnelly recommend that curriculum closely follow educational philosophy: “The curriculum involves putting into action a system of beliefs. Therefore, when we engage in inquiry about curriculum, we examine

beliefs as well as our actions in the classroom” (2001, p. xviii). In support of this suggestion, one particular article from the *Canadian Journal of Education* concluded quite appropriately: “Bringing practice into line with the advanced thinking represented in policy documents may require a concerted research and development initiative that goes well beyond the sparse and disconnected character of past endeavours” (Hughes and Sears, 1996, p. 7). As the Character Education Partnership was noted as stating in the literature review section in Chapter 2, designing moral education courses requires an intentional, concentrated, and proactive effort from many parties. This would include departments of education, school trustees, administrators, teachers, parents and community members joining together to build programs that address the most pressing ethical issues of concern in both the local area and larger society. All of these stakeholders should work together to first design courses on moral development and then ensure that the curriculum makes it to the forum of the classroom.

Apart from courses on the subject, graduation requirements could consist of specific experiences that students must prove to have completed. Have students:

- write stories or journals, non-confidential in nature, depicting instances of choices of right over wrong;
- take part in service-learning and charity work, using specific volunteer opportunities to help others;
- join philanthropic or charitable organizations to come to the aid of those in need;
- involve themselves in the community, clean up garbage, remove graffiti, and care for the neighbourhood;

- work with the justice department, law enforcement agencies, local political representatives, or neighbourhood watch to discuss concerns and assist in improving the safety of the community.

All of the above are examples of morally based activities that could become mandatory at the high school level. If complete, stand-alone courses on morals, ethics or character development are not designed then any of these experiences could quite feasibly serve as credits or components required to graduate. Such sample activities promote moral development and pass on the message of what we value as educators and community leaders. Practicing the ethic of care, in particular compassion and empathy, should involve helping others and doing things are not just about or for oneself. Graduation requirements such as these may help build an appreciation for more moral behaviour as this clearly states that learning to be a more considerate, caring person is just as important as learning mathematics or studying language arts.

Assuming that teachers are competent at handling moral issues in an appropriate and sophisticated manner, they could work on implementing moral education at the classroom or school level, with such efforts as:

- integrating moral and ethical content into curriculum whenever there is time, flexibility and permission to do so;
- developing classroom and school activities that deal with moral issues or moral reasoning;
- expecting moral behavior on the part of all students, following through with this expectation and appropriately dealing with immoral conduct;
- selecting and using resources that contain moral issues;

- reviewing qualitative research and conducting ongoing, action research of their own on the topic of effective moral development;
- reading government and school board documents to be consistent with the system and its values as identified by the leaders of the school, the division and the province;
- contributing to the school's moral atmosphere by consistently exemplifying moral conduct to all students. Osborne reminds educators that moral behaviour "must be practised as well as preached. . . . If we put moral education in the curriculum . . . then it must also pervade the hidden curriculum" (1984, p. 96).

Many organizations and educators suggest an integrated approach to moral education which blends various facets of moral development together, including character, citizenship, human rights and peace education. To reach students with different learning styles and belief systems, it is recommended that teachers use a variety of teaching practices including cognitive reasoning and emotional methods of instruction. In-servicing on teaching practices and pedagogy that involve moral education would, of course, be one of the most effective means to prepare teachers in this area.

Teacher training is a suggestion for implementation at the university level. Faculties of education at Canadian universities could begin by offering courses such as teaching moral education, moral development of children and guiding ethical thinking. Some North American universities already offer such teacher training. Professor Glaze from the University of Missouri presents internationally for teachers' professional development on topics of moral education. Her title is Professor of Character Education. Universities in Boston, New Jersey and Illinois also have departments of character education (Rutgers, 2007). This area of study could potentially expand in Canadian

faculties of education until it becomes an option for a teachable subject, a field of specialization, or even eventually a mandatory requirement for all new teachers.

To see a plan of increased moral education through to implementation, all levels of stakeholders, including departments of education, school boards and administrators, should work together to develop policies, curriculum and other moral and character education programming.

Where are the parents? This condemning phrase can be heard all too often these days. Truly, it ought to be up to the parents to instill strong moral values in their children. The question needs to be asked however, are some parents falling short of their responsibility? Teachers cannot undertake this huge endeavor on their own. Because of the strong influence that parents tend to have over their children, schools absolutely need the partnership and assistance of parents when it comes to the moral development of the next generation. As the African proverb clarifies, *it takes a village to raise a child*. The context of this message is recognized in a statement made by the Government of Prince Edward Island: “Only with the support and active participation of the family and other segments of the community will it be possible for the public education system to fulfill its mandate” (n.d.), a mandate that includes elements of moral education. The Nova Scotia Department of Education also speaks of the importance of parental involvement and neighbourhood values: “A sound education provided in partnership with the home and the community forms the basis for students to become healthy and caring persons” (2003). It would be very helpful, therefore, in this endeavor, to impress upon parents the importance of moral development and its potential impact on society. Even more than a century ago, a former Superintendent of Upper Canada Schools, Oliver wrote that the

school system's intention was to "increase the interest of the parents in the intellectual and moral culture of the children" (Upper Canada Chief Superintendent of Schools, 1857, p. 207). Ideas to help work toward implementation in this area include the following suggestions:

- Involve parents by hosting seminars on the topic of the importance of morals and caring, to be presented by guest speakers, community members and teachers;
- Involve parents by distributing informational pamphlets explaining that moral development is one of the primary purposes of education;
- Involve parents by communicating reminders of the impact of morals in society along with helpful tips on how they can do their part to work on instilling higher moral values in their children from home. For instance, always set an example for the child to follow, show compassion and care for others both inside and outside the home, live by a policy of honesty and expect this in the child's behaviour consistently.

One positive implication of the findings stems from this very same term emerging from several searches: 'honesty.' Valuing 'human dignity' also appeared in several different instances of evidence of moral education. Actually, several relevant additional terms emerged in curricula, mission statements and government philosophies of education across the different provinces (see Table 3). Some very thought-provoking words and clauses were used implying that there are indeed more instances of moral education occurring in the classroom, both in curriculum and otherwise, than is suggested by the limited scope and structured search list that was used to complete this research. Honesty, in particular, is an important virtue that should be researched further, as this may be a characteristic from which one's morals often begin to grow.

Specific findings regarding curricular evidence of the ethic of care, including empathy and compassion, are on the low side compared to most other word search results (see Table 14). The majority of instances found throughout curricula pertained more to the element of ‘respect’ than to any other search term. Although this aspect of morality is very important, moral education should not be one dimensional. Separate from all other search terms, there should be an increase in teaching the importance of caring along with how to develop an appreciation for and ability to care for others.

Many institutions develop supplementary curricula and offer an abundance of resources to schools and teachers of all different grade levels. It is time to follow the lead that many of these concerned groups are taking. All sharing the same general purpose, here is just a sampling of organizations that are actively supporting and participating in moral education. This year, 2009, will see the 35th Annual Conference of the Association for Moral Education. Another organization, Education for Peace invites educators, administrators, parents, as well as academic and civic leaders to get involved and “to question our most profound conceptions of ourselves, our relationships with others, and to develop new ways of envisioning our world and building our communities” (2008). The literature review section listed more of these groups and sources that are contributing to the advancements being made in the area of moral education which includes Rachel’s Challenge, the Peace Learning Center and the Journal of Moral Education. Another organization to work with would be Roots of Empathy. The idea here would be to expand their programs to the high school level, continuing their clear and focused goal of “increasing empathy” (Roots of Empathy, 1996).

Next, in considering what ought to be taught in the field of moral education, the literature review section referred to the ongoing debate over trying to arrive at a common definition. Even leading philosophers recognize this impossibility of achieving consensus:

From the dawn of philosophy, the question concerning the *summon bonum*, or, what is the same thing, concerning the foundation of morality, has been accounted the main problem in speculative thought, has occupied the most gifted intellects and divided them into sects and schools carrying on a vigorous warfare against one another. And after more than two thousand years the same discussions continue. . . . (Mill, 1861/1979, p. 1)

Agreement on a subject so vast may never happen and waiting for it might stop moral education from ever making it to the classroom. The amount of controversy inherent in all of this should not be underestimated. However, in general, it is more important that people treat each other with care and respect than it is to agree on the philosophy behind their actions. Debates would be endless, especially on extreme issues where moral reasoning differs depending on one's consequentialist, utilitarian, or deontological ethical theory or on one's religion or even on one's political ideologies. Whether one acts from the heart or out of a sense of obligation, although one reason is more compelling than the other, can also be secondary to the actions one takes. For all educators to agree on an absolute set of skills or beliefs is an unrealistic expectation. Improving and strengthening morals is better than no such development at all. It is possible to find many aspects of morality that most people, including educators and parents, would agree are essential for a safer and kinder society. It is essential that,

beyond all definitions, people choose moral actions over immoral, respect over disrespect and caring over not caring.

Basic questions could form the starting point of a curriculum for moral education. Should there be violence? No. Should we care about others? Yes. Should one respect the property and feelings of others? Yes. In general, apart from extreme instances such as self-defense or preventing the immoral acts of another, then the answers are clear. After the foundation has been laid, the next step of implementation could consist of teaching students about the diverse ethical theories along with discussions that require moral reasoning on issues that would obviously target higher levels of moral development. What is most important is that we teach people to think critically and act morally and that somehow they learn how to care.

Thinking of the bigger picture, research also indicates that schools should take moral education to the next level. Montessori asserts that “establishing peace is the work of education” (2004). According to the Global Education Network, “just as we teach literacy and numeracy today, we must teach students to...examine the nature of violence and learn ways for us all to live more peacefully” (2008, p. 2). The United Nations supports this opinion. The educational division advises us: “Here’s what has to change, to move to a world where real peace has a chance . . . belief that peace is possible and can be learned” (Global Education Network, 2008, p. 1). To prove commitment to the cause of promoting safe societies, the United Nations sends a message of concern about the devastation of violence by designating the years 2001 through 2010 as the Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World. For a long time now the United Nations has been asking the education system to take up this challenge and do

its part to contribute at all levels, promoting and teaching the same disapproval of violence to our students. Several organizations and leading educators, incorporated in the literature review, suggest that moral education can be used as a response to many of society's most concerning issues. Frederico Mayor, Director General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization makes a very strong statement regarding this belief: "If we really want to decrease and eradicate poverty . . . if we want to go to the root of the problem of social frustration . . . of violence, if we want to have peace and security . . . the solution . . . education, education, education" (1996).

We are also advised by the Dalai Lama, best known for his plea for peace throughout the world, to take action if improvements are wanted. It is not alright to stand by and watch conditions of anger, violence and disrespect worsen. As this world leader insists: "In the present circumstances, no one can afford to assume that someone else will solve their problems. Every individual has a responsibility to help guide our global family in the right direction. Good wishes are not sufficient; we must become actively engaged" (ThinkExist, 1999).

Conclusion

Though at times the responsibility of salvaging the moral foundation of society is enough for a teacher to be frightened or discouraged, or both, it may be at these same times that school has become the last frontier and saving grace for many of society's problems. This research clearly indicates that moral development is considered to be a goal of education, as seen in public statements made by departments of education and school divisions of every province. Subsequently, this philosophy should transfer to, and be evident in schools, classrooms and teaching practices. Although the research also concludes that the extent of moral education is currently less than optimal, the hope is that more is yet to come. It is time for parents, teachers, administrators, school boards and governments to contribute to the evolution of the purpose of education by initiating a "shift in paradigms, to undo current moral boundaries and to allow us to move towards a more just and caring humane society" (Tronto in Smeyers, 1999, p. 245). The ethic of care begins with each person. Noddings (2002, p. 38) urges educators that "as we begin the 21st century, we must make human relations the first priority of our intellectual and moral efforts."

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