Amy Chapman

Research Report #5

28 June 2014

Maclean, A.M., Walker, L.J., Matusba, M.K. (2004). Transcendence and the moral self:

identity integration, religion, and the moral life. *Journal for the scientific study of religion, 43*(3).

1. **Need.** There has been no study assessing the possible correlation between identity integration, religious orientation, and moral reasoning. Need to see moral functioning in broader sense of personality.
2. **Purpose.** To see if there are any connections between identity integration, religious orientation, and moral reasoning in young adults (per Marcia et. al., 1993).
3. **Sample.** 60 Canadian undergraduates studying psychology. Diverse population. Half indicated no religious affiliation; other half was widely spread among various religious traditions.
4. **Methods.** Participants individually interviewed; interviews were audiotaped. Participants were then given self-reported surveys to “balance” the interviews. Used Blasi’s scale for identity integration to measure that construct. Participants were asked to recall a moral dilemma they had faced. The I/E Revised Scale and the Quest Scale were used to assess religious orientation. Self-Report Altruism Scale used. A second coder was used to assess 25 of the interviews with 80% agreement reported.
5. **Results.** Moral reasoning positively correlated with identity integration, but not to quest or religious scales. Identity integration positively correlated with intrinsic religious scales. Moral reasoning strongest predictor of altruism; others not strongly correlated. Demographic and religious orientation variables were not significant.
6. **Conclusions.** Morality becomes more important as moral reasoning is developed. Identity integration possibly measuring internalization of moral reasoning and identity. Identity integration and intrinsic religious orientation correlated with altruism.
7. **Limitations. “**Accuracy of self-reported morality is dubious at best.”
8. **Implications.** Need research on other variables which could account for differences; also need samples of more than just college students.