Defining Moral Leadership: Perspectives of 12 Leaders

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Abstract

The purpose of this qualitative study was to hear the voices of contemporary moral leaders regarding their definitions of moral leadership and the actions and behaviors that frame this type of leadership. Participants for this phenomenological study were selected by graduate students using a researcher-developed rating scale. Participants included six females and six males. Data were analyzed using content analysis. Findings indicate participants defined moral leadership as leading by example, taking a stand, speaking out, calling forth the best in others, and/or following one's own and/or prescribed definitions of right and wrong. The participants identified certain qualities as constituting moral and ethical characteristics. These include humility, listening, and personal truthfulness as well as actions related to justice. Based on the findings of this study, recommendations for future research suggest focusing on a more diverse group of identified moral leaders.

Introduction

Although much theoretical literature is available on the concept of the moral and ethical leader, little has focused on exploring the experiences and beliefs of identified, contemporary leaders. These considerations led to a search for an understanding of how moral leaders might define moral leadership and what behaviors and actions they believe constitute moral leadership. Thus, the purpose of this study was to hear the voices of those who have put actions to their words, and focused their lives on the areas of civil rights, peace advocacy, and/or service to the poor and voiceless.

Context

A literature search, using online university library resources such as *First Search, World Cat*, and *Silver Platter,* was used to explore the contextual basis for a working definition of moral leadership. The result of this search was a myriad of literature focusing on various definitions of leadership and applications to practice. What was most evident was that there was no one commonly accepted definition of leadership (Hickman, 1999; Northouse, 2001; Rost 1995).

Since this research focused on ethical and moral leadership, those categories were also explored. A

much more limited body of work was found. For example, Kanungo and Mendonca (1998) maintain moral and ethical leadership is behavior that influences followers' values, beliefs, and behaviors so organizational objectives can be achieved through the followers.

Most theorists agree leadership is about influence, for good or for ill (Bass, 1985; Bennis, 1984; Greenleaf, 1977, 1996; Hickman, 1999; Luke, 1991; Northouse, 2001; Ramey, 1991). Roepke (1995) states that his evaluation of leadership examines what he calls the essentials: human values, moral responsibility, and idealism.

One research study that investigated a related topic, Colby and Damon's (1992) article *Some Do Care: Contemporary Lives of Moral Commitment,* indicates people can be change agents or transformers, in any situation or organization. Graham (1998) indicates Kohlberg's (1976) and Gilligan's (1982) models of moral development can be equated with transformational and servant leadership. Therefore, what ultimately evolved, for the purpose of this study, was a definition of leadership that is reflective of both transformational and servant leadership models (Bass, 1985; Covey, 1990; Greenleaf, 1977, 1996; Hickman, 1999; Northouse, 2001; Peck, 1993; Ramey, 1991; Spears, 1998). Thus, moral leaders are defined as those who have a positive, lasting effect or influence on others and/or the world (Roepke, 1995).

Servant Leadership

Robert K. Greenleaf has been one of the most influential writers on the subjects of management and leadership and introduced the concept of servant leadership. To answer the question, "Who and what is servant leadership?" Peck (1993), says servant leaders are those who first serve and then lead. According to Greenleaf (1977; 1996), in order to test the effectiveness of a servant leader, one might ask questions such as the following: (1) Do followers become wiser and better people?, (2) Are followers moving toward becoming servants?, and (3) Will the least served in society be benefited?

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership (Bass, 1985; Covey, 1990; Hickman, 1999; Northouse, 2001) is a reciprocal leadership style. According to Yukl (1994), transforming leadership is a process in which leaders and followers assist each other to reach greater levels of morality and motivation. For Yukl, effective transformational leaders have a number of common attributes including seeing themselves as change agents, being risk takers, believing in people and caring about the needs of others, being open to learning, believing in disciplined thinking and analysis, and being visionaries.

Bass (1985) feels moral leadership better serves the well-being of an organization in that:

> *"Moral leadership helps followers to see the real conflict between competing values, the inconsistencies between espoused values and behavior and the need for realignments in values, changes in behavior, or transformations of institutions....[However] the transformational leader may be a breaker and changer of what society has regarded heretofore as right and wrong."* (pp. 182-84)

In describing transformational leadership, Covey (1990) uses words such as developer, mentor, value clarifier, and exemplar. These leaders cultivate collaborative relationships based on mutual interests (win-win). Because Covey believes transformational leadership builds on the human need for meaning, he also uses words like purpose, values, love, morals, ethics, mission, and principles to further clarify this type of leadership. Finally, Covey says that becoming a transformational leaders requires vision, initiative, patience, respect, persistence, courage, and faith.

A Call for Moral Leadership

There is a need for moral leaders in all areas of the culture; Nair (1994) states there is a widely held view that leaders, especially those in business and politics, have lost their moral purpose and sense of idealism. Roepke (1995) claims the most pressing need in society today is the need for moral leadership.

Gaudiani (1997) notes many citizens no longer have faith in their leaders, and the media have discovered unethical leaders in unlikely places such as among the clergy and college and university presidents. King (1997) adds that although many hope for moral leadership, unfortunately, there are too many examples of leaders who appear to pursue objectives that are not moral. Corporate leaders continue to ask themselves how they can move away from complex organizational charts and how they can organize to encourage shared goals. Briskin (1996) agrees corporate structures can be problematic for individual employees--obstacles to the soul.

Bennis (1984) sums it up nicely: "Where have all the leaders gone? They are, as a paraphrase of that haunting song reminds us, 'long time passing.'" He adds that the leaders most often respected are dead--F.D.R., Churchill, Eisenhower, Schweitzer, Einstein, and that "Gandhi, the Kennedys, Martin Luther King, all lie slain, as if to prove the mortal risk in telling us that we can be greater, better than we are" (p. 42).

Kanungo and Mendonca (1998) claim it is a leader's ethical conduct guided by moral principles and integrity that gives legitimacy and credibility to the vision of the organization. They add that without ethical leadership, the organization is a structure without a soul; organizational leaders need to be more sensitive to their moral obligations to the larger society. Ciulla (1995) states that

there is little discussion in the literature regarding ethics in the practice of leadership. She adds, for the most part, discussion of ethics in the leadership literature is fragmented, and there is little reference to other works on the subject. Rost (1995), confirms these beliefs, and adds that this type of literature is not a high priority among ethicists or among leadership scholars. Researchers, critics, and writers often present important questions and problems, but just as often, they do not provide answers or ways to resolve the issues. Although many writers discuss moral leadership, few present suggestions from the viewpoint or perspective of identified moral leaders.

This article seeks to add to the literature on moral leadership by hearing the voices of contemporary moral leaders as they articulate their definitions of moral leadership and the actions and behaviors that frame this type of leadership.

Research Project

Design

Merriam (2002) notes the philosophy of phenomenology is a foundation for all qualitative research. However, phenomenological studies focus on the essence of shared experience (Creswell, 1998). The phenomenological approach was used for this study to attempt to discover the fundamental beliefs of moral leaders regarding their definitions of ethical and moral leadership.

Researchers who use phenomenological analysis need to identify and set aside their "taken-for-granted orientation" by "bracketing that life world" (Holstein & Gubrium, 1994, p. 263). The researchers acknowledge a bias toward liberal thinking, but have attempted to bracket this thinking by using reflexivity or self reflection (Krefting, 1999; Seale, 1999).

Research Questions

The findings presented in this article are part of a larger study in which 12 participants were asked ten open-ended questions about various aspects of leadership (Appendix A). For the purposes of this article, two questions were selected, which led to two primary objectives: (1) to discover how those identified as contemporary moral leaders define ethical and moral leadership and (2) to identify the behaviors and actions the leaders believe are moral and ethical.

Instruments

Participants were selected by a group of graduate students (n=57) using a researcher-developed moral leadership rating scale (Appendix B). The rating scale included the definition of moral leadership used to guide the study and short portraits of 39 public figures selected from a

variety of fields including medicine, politics, the military, religion, education, journalism, psychology, law, entertainment, and business. None of the public figures was identified by name. Students rated the public figures from least moral and ethical (1) to most moral and ethical (6) based on their portraits. Based on the results of the rating scale, 21 potential participants were identified.

Participants

The final group of participants included six females and six males, all of whom are white. Their ages range from 40 to over 70. Two of the participants are Protestant and ten are Catholic. Although both African-American and Jewish individuals were included in the survey portraits, and several from each group were identified as potential participants, none of the individuals from either group was available to be interviewed.

Ten of the participants are writers who often use this forum for consciousness raising regarding social justice issues, and they all raise consciousness through teaching and speaking. Several of the participants have paid a price for their work, including bombings, death threats, and jail sentences.

Brief profiles of the 12 participants are presented in Appendix C. Profiles are presented to place their responses in the context of how they have lived their lives. Although all participants are public figures, names, as well as identifiable characteristics (e.g., specific affiliations, locations), have been removed for publication.

Data Collection

Letters were sent to potential participants. The letters were followed by one or more telephone calls. Four prospective participants did not respond, and as anticipated, several of the well-known personalities declined to participate. Thus, of the 21 potential participants, 12 were available for interviews.

All the interviews (both face-to-face and phone) were audio taped. In addition, during the interviews, the researchers wrote notes about the answers of the participants to later develop tentative ideas regarding categories and relationships (Maxwell, 1996). The interviews lasted from 30 to 50 minutes. The variation in length of interview time did not appear to be related to whether the interview was by telephone or face-to-face. The researchers ensured the telephone and face-to-face interviews were consistent by using the same interview questions and allowing the participants as much time as they wished to respond to each question. Interview tapes were transcribed verbatim.

Data Analysis

Content analysis was the central technique used to identify the issues and themes that the participants emphasized in their responses (Berg, 1995; Maxwell, 1996). First, the transcripts of the leaders' interviews were reviewed on a line-by-line basis. Then, for the responses to the questions, units of information (words, phrases, and concepts) that met the following requirements were identified: (1) information that contributed to the meaning of each research question, (2) phrases or words that could stand on their own as pieces of data, and (3) meaningful to the extent that they could be interpreted similarly by individuals other than the researchers. After the units of information were identified, they were coded and grouped into subcategories based on their common content or theme. The labels for the subcategories were chosen based on the participants' own words and utterances (e. g., participation, encouragement, consciousness raising). The subcategories were grouped into broader or core categories. Thematic connections and recurring patterns began to emerge from sorting the data into categories and subcategories.

Trustworthiness

Dependability or reliability, according to Miles and Huberman (1994), is "whether the process of the study is consistent, reasonably stable over time and across researchers and methods" (p. 278). This study employed methodological triangulation to enhance dependability. A qualitative researcher who was familiar with the study provided feedback regarding methodology, coding procedures, and reliability procedures and verified that the subcategories and core categories accurately reflected the information conveyed by the participants. The recording, preservation, and transcription of the audiotapes served as another determinant of dependability; the transcripts were "preserved unobscured" (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Additionally, the verbatim responses of the participants were often included to convey precise interpretations (Milinki, 1999).

Credibility, as defined by Maxwell (1996), is the correctness of a description, conclusion, explanation, or interpretation. Denzin and Lincoln (1994), in their discussion of verisimilitude, ask whether a particular text has a relationship to some agreed-upon opinion or opinions. The results of this study are in agreement with a large body of previous research in the area of leadership, particularly servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1977, 1996; Peck, 1993; Spears, 1998) and transformational leadership (Bass, 1985; Hickman, 1999; Northouse, 2001). Furthermore, the researchers gathered data from journals, books, records, and other publications--either written by or about the participants--that are in agreement with the responses of the participants. The participants' responses often revealed shared perceptions, and researchers can have more confidence in their

interpretations if there are shared perceptions (Gay & Airasian, 2000).

Findings

This section is a narrative description of the answers the participants provided to the interview questions: How do you define ethical and moral leadership? and What behaviors or qualities constitute the moral and ethical? The participants are labeled with a single title (e. g., religious leader, professor, lawyer, or doctor), although most of them have participated in many disciplines. For example, even though those labeled religious leaders were individuals with religious titles--Bishop, Sister, Reverend, and Father, many of them might easily have been categorized in multiple areas such as educator, professor, writer, publisher, editor, lecturer, public speaker, activist, advocate, or others as indicated in their biographies.

In response to the question "How do you define ethical and moral leadership?", the participants focused on four areas. These areas include: (1) leading by example, (2) taking a stand and speaking for others, (3) calling forth the best in others, and (4) following one's own and/or prescribed definition of right and wrong.

Moral Leadership by Personal Example

Four of the participants indicated the personal examples of leaders are very important and moral leaders should always be aware of the effects of their actions. Participant B, peace and justice advocate, said that the first definition of leadership has to do with power and influence, and leaders must always be aware of how the use of power affects others. He added that the examples of leaders should not be contradictions; rather, leaders should "walk the talk."

Participant D, coordinator of a house for the homeless, maintained that leadership judgments about issues or people depend not only on how acts affect human life but how they affect the life of the planet as well. Participant G, advocate for peace education, defined leadership as being guided by example and added leaders must live their beliefs, "live the talk," and at the same time, remain aware of how their actions and behaviors affect and lead others. As she stated,

> *"I think an ethical and moral person leads by example and occasionally, by speaking. I think for me, it means sort of not being afraid to take a stand on questions of ethics or morality, on questions of behavior, questions of decency, and questions, especially for me, of justice. Not being afraid, because leadership requires that you speak up, also that you live it. So I would say by your example as well as your words and that's what I define as leadership."*

Participant H, professor and feminist theologian author, agreed and stated, "I would define

ethical and moral leaders as people whose leadership is designed to enhance justice and well being of those who might be affected by the leadership or who might look to the leader for some kind of example." She continued, "Beyond that, the leadership will have a kind of personal truthfulness. I think personal truthfulness is an important element and again, and a lot of established institutions almost preclude people being generally truthful about what's going on."

Moral Leadership by Taking a Stand/Speaking Out

Another component that five of the participants considered to be part of the definition of moral leadership is the idea that leaders must take a stand. Participant G stated leaders must take a stand on moral and ethical questions of behavior, decency, and justice. Participant K, author, preacher, and activist, commented that leadership is often very different from moral leadership. He believes leadership often has to do with success, talent, intelligence, money, hard work, and power; whereas, moral leadership is about,

> *"Somebody who wakes us up, who makes us think, who asks the questions that are right there or under the surface but no one else is asking. Who points to the moral contradictions of society…They point to the unexamined issues, often the neglected people…people who are being left out, who are being marginalized, who are being forgotten."*

Participant B stated that speaking out is a moral imperative particularly for those of privilege. He used himself as just such an example: "I am in a position of privilege, an able-bodied, white, male, straight, North American, Roman Catholic priest--I must be in solidarity with others," and he added that moral leaders must speak the truth even if it is not popular. For example, Participant B has worked to involve Catholics in corporate responsibility movements such as challenging tobacco companies about investments, challenging Exxon on global warming, and challenging Boeing on human rights issues.

Two of the participants suggested that in order to do this, leaders may sometimes need to break rules, even laws. As an example, Participant L, professor and peace and justice activist, suggested leaders must break laws if these laws perpetuate situations that are systemically wrong and may need to question when "God's laws appear to conflict with men's laws." She believes these leaders are prophetic voices who will subvert the status quo, be paradigm shifters in order to lead in the changing of the rules and/or laws. In a similar vein, Participant A, lecturer and feminist author, said moral leaders "must do what must be done when it must be done regardless of the social strictures around us that either make that impossible or make it questionable." She cited the example of Jesus healing on

the Sabbath even though this action broke the law. She calls these actions "following the law above the law."

Moral Leadership by Calling Forth the Best in Others

Four of the participants defined moral leadership as calling forth the best in others. For example, Participant J, coordinator of a national lobby, stated moral leaders might be compared to leaders of jazz bands: they stand in the middle, listening, knowing the skills of all of the members as well as their own skills, and therefore, they call forth the value and the talents of each person; this leads to harmony. Participant D similarly commented that moral leaders promote the growth of individuals and their actions should lead toward community building as well. Another standard for moral leadership came from Participant B who stated "authority lies at the heart of authentic leadership, and moral leadership is the exercise of power to elicit respect, trust and obedience"--or as he defines obedience—"appropriate response." He added these behaviors lead to justice, truth, and integrity. Participant F, an activist, concurred and stated this quite simply: "moral leadership draws people into acting in a moral way and moves toward justice, love, and humility."

Moral Leadership by Following One's Own and/or Prescribed Definitions of Right and Wrong

Several of the leaders suggested moral leadership is about knowing what is right and wrong and then following one's conscience. As an example, Participant L stated moral leaders have an instinctive personal knowledge of right and wrong and then act out of that conscience. As she put it, "One who is a moral and ethical leader is one who acts out of conscience and integrity, one who consciously lives within the broad framework of what is understood to be ethical behavior."

Participant J agreed and commented that moral leaders are grounded in the knowledge of right and wrong and this might be one's religious foundation situated in experience that leads to appropriate acts of conscience. Participant E, physician advocate for the poor, said that once leaders understand what morality means to them, then leadership simplifies this definition and they live their lives this way not because they are righteous but because they are "supposed to." Further, Participant C, civil rights attorney, said he acts out of what seems right to him and moral leaders always know the difference between right and wrong. Participant A calls this following of conscience "following the lodestone of the heart."

Furthermore, integrity is a word Participant L, Participant B, and Participant I, used in their definitions of moral leadership. Ten Commandment type of behavior is a description several of the participants, including Participant D, Participant I, and Participant H, mentioned as a starting place for moral

leadership. Participant C suggested moral leaders treat others as they would like to be treated; Participant I called this type of leadership "Golden Rule" behavior or "relating to others as we want others to relate to us."

In response to the second question "What behaviors or qualities constitute the moral and ethical?", often the participants' answers to this question were intertwined with their definitions of moral leadership. Specifically, they discussed two areas in response to this question--qualities or attributes and actions.

Qualities/Attributes

The qualities the leaders mentioned as constituting the moral and the ethical included kindness, humility, listening and dialogue, religious beliefs, and personal truthfulness. Participant E stated that kindness is a moral quality, and Participant F called humility another moral quality. Participant J said, "An attribute of moral behavior is listening to individuals and to groups and then entering into dialogue with them." Several leaders maintained religious beliefs lead people to moral behavior. As an example, Participant E commented that faith in one's religion helps to define morals and ethics and this aids in following what is right. Participant K used the example of a friend of his who is a member of congress who thinks about what his conscience and his faith tell him, and then decides to do the right thing.

Personal truthfulness is another attribute two leaders mentioned. Participant B commented, "Moral leaders must try to have their private persons match their public personae so they will not be hypocrites." Participant H concurred and said personal morality and truthfulness are important elements "because they really are examples of how people will conduct relationships to society generally."

Actions

The participants discussed actions as well as attributes in their answers about moral and ethical behavior. The actions included acting for justice, loving, considering, being fair, respecting others, not harming or hurting others, and building community and relationships. Acting for justice is an action mentioned by three of the participants, Participant B, Participant F and Participant H. Participant F noted moral action follows the words of the prophet Micah who said to live a good life people must "act justly, love tenderly, and walk humbly."

Several participants discussed the importance of loving, considering, being fair, and respecting others. As an example, Participant G remarked, "Loving one's neighbor, regarding the value of each

person, and then acting that out is an important moral action." Participant C agreed and said quite simply; "love your neighbor, and be fair." Respecting others is an action that Participant D mentioned, and Participant A said that moral action always examines the needs of others. Not harming others is important according to Participant B: "try to do no harm and try to do as much good to others as possible." Participant G agreed and stated moral action means people do not harm others by bad examples, judgments, and gossip. Additionally, Participant J, Participant D, and Participant H, suggested moral action helps to build community and relationships.

Discussion

The findings of this study revealed the participants defined moral leadership as leading by example, leading by taking a stand and speaking out, leading by calling forth the best in others, and leading by following one's own or prescribed definitions of right and wrong. More specifically, the participants perceived certain behaviors or qualities as constituting moral and ethical characteristics. These included kindness, humility, listening and dialogue, religious beliefs, and personal truthfulness as well as actions related to justice, love, consideration, fairness, respect for others, not harming or hurting others, and building community and relationships. Several participants said moral leaders are change agents, risk takers, even rulebreakers or lawbreakers. They discussed the importance of taking a stand and speaking out, making their ideas public and consequently taking risks, and being voices for others. The participants also expressed the importance of having consistent values and behaviors.

These results are in agreement with a large body of previous research in the area of leadership, particularly servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1977, 1996; Peck, 1993; Spears, 1998), and transformational leadership (Bass, 1985; Covey, 1990; Hickman, 1999; Northouse, 2000). These leadership models advocate similar concepts such as service to followers and others; empowering others to grow; being change agents, risk takers, and even rule breakers; and having consistent values and behaviors. Further, these leadership models promote concern for the least privileged of society, leading others to higher order needs and greater morality, and leading for community building.

Consistent with the participants' perceptions, the leadership models indicate that empowering others to grow is important, and they include such concepts as caring for the soul, dialogue and listening, and reflection and analysis (Briskin, 1996; Greenleaf, 1977, 1996; Scott, 1994). Another common aspect is the recognition of the importance of being change agents, risk takers, even rule breakers. These belief systems endorse leaders who follow their consistent inner beliefs even if others disagree and suggest transformational leaders may even be breakers of rules and changers of what

society previously regarded as right and wrong (Bass, 1985; Ramey, 1991; Yukl, 1994). Another similarity between the current study and the leadership models is that moral leadership involves consistency between values and behaviors, an integration of personal values and organizational behavior (Briskin, 1996; Covey, 1990; Ramey, 1991).

The participants' definitions of moral leadership and their beliefs about attributes and qualities of moral and ethical behavior validate the importance of the concepts advocated in current leadership models. Furthermore, the findings help to provide answers to such questions as those posed by Ciulla (1995), who maintained there is a need for research into leadership ethics in order to help answer questions such as, "What sort of person should lead?" and "What are the moral responsibilities of leadership?" (p. 18). The findings of the current study are especially relevant because perceptions are from the vantage point of identified moral leaders.

Also, these participants have common characteristics such as winning awards and being social justice advocates, so they may well serve as examples of the type of moral leadership advocated by Roepke (1995) who asserted the most pressing need in society today is the need for moral leadership. Murphy and Enderle (1995) stated examples are instructive in any endeavor including ethical leadership, and with regard to ethical leadership, "examples may be inspirational: they may open new horizons and show what is possible, based on accomplishments already realized" (p. 117).

Regarding examples of moral leadership, it is interesting to note there are a number of parallels and some contrasts when this study is compared to the Colby and Damon (1992) study entitled *Some Do Care: Contemporary Lives of Moral Commitment*. The 23 participants in the Colby and Damon study represent a diverse group including people who are highly educated as well as some who have no more than a grade school education; they also represent both the wealthy and the poor. The 12 participants in the current study are a less diverse group. All would be considered highly educated, although there is quite a range regarding wealth. The 23 participants in the Colby and Damon study represent a number of religious groups. On the other hand, all of the participants in this study are Christians. It should be noted, however, that although Colby and Damon presented 23 "moral exemplars," they devoted full chapters to five Christians.

There are interesting comparisons as well regarding the areas of service and interest. Participants in both studies work in the areas of poverty, peace, civil rights, education, health care, medical ethics, and business ethics. Some areas addressed by the participants in the Colby and Damon study, which were not addressed in the current study, include journalism, foster care, the environment,

and philanthropy. Areas of interest to the participants in this study (not discussed in the Colby and Damon study) include gender justice issues and church justice issues.

In addition, the participants' perceptions regarding attributes and qualities of moral and ethical behavior such as kindness, honesty, and concern for others are consistent with and build on a previous study by Dalton and Petre (1997). These researchers found that university student leaders, chosen for their high level of moral leadership, had personal characteristics similar to the moral leaders in this study, including their commitment to service and altruism and their ability to inspire peers to serve. Further, consistent with these results, Murphy and Enderle (1995), investigated the attributes of four CEOs, who are well known for their ethical stances, and found they also had some of these attributes, including openness and honesty, concern for others, and moral commitment based on religious values. It is interesting to observe that different types of leaders--the moral leaders of the current study, Colby and Damon's "moral exemplars," Murphy and Enderle's CEOs, and Dalton and Petre's student leaders--share common attributes.

It is worthy of note that the definitions of moral leadership and the qualities attributed to moral leaders provided by the participants showed that profession and gender appear to be relevant to some responses. As an example, all five of the participants who defined moral leadership by saying that leaders must take a stand were religious leaders. It might be deduced that this stance is associated with their spiritual education or background. In addition, the two participants who indicated leaders might sometimes need to break rules or laws were women. Perhaps this could be explained because women often have found themselves in situations of oppression. Additionally, the three participants who suggested moral action helps to build community and relationships were women. One possible explanation for this might be that women are often regarded as the relationship builders of families and other settings. The remaining responses did not appear to be affected by profession or gender. For instance, both a physician and a religious leader stated religious beliefs lead people to moral behavior.

Certainly, this study is not generalizable in the usual quantitative sense; however, concepts discussed by the participants may have transferability or fittingness to certain other settings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The sample of participants might be viewed as both a limitation and a strength. The homogeneous nature of the sample may be considered a limitation; however, the participants' lives and deeds are strengths. An in-depth examination of the lives of the participants and their answers to the questions indicate that their actions are consistent with their comments. For example, the

participants have shared characteristics such as winning awards for their social justice advocacy in areas such as poverty, peace, civil rights, education, medical ethics, business ethics, and gender issues. Therefore, they may serve as examples of the type of moral leadership advocated by Roepke (1995).

Conclusions

The implications and recommendations for practice regarding this study stem from several challenges and questions. One challenge is the need for moral leaders in the areas of the workplace and in government, and this need is urgent because of the conflicting influences of culture and mores (Elshtain, 1999; Tappan, 1998). Nair (1994) stated there is a widely held view that leaders, especially those in business and politics, have lost their moral purpose and sense of idealism, and Rost (1995) maintained that society now often thrives on materialism and renounces spirituality and the common good.

Another challenge is the need for more study and literature in the area of ethical and moral leadership. Kanungo and Mendonca (1998) stated that ethical leadership is vital in an organization, and it is often the leader's ethical conduct guided by moral principles that gives credibility to the organization. However, Ciulla (1995) maintained that there is little discussion in the literature regarding ethics in the practice of leadership. Rost (1995) agreed with Ciulla that there is a lack of literature on the subject of ethics and leadership and claimed that although leaders and their collaborators need a body of literature on the ethics of leadership, that literature does not exist. One implication of this study is that it provides some assistance regarding these challenges and questions. For example, the findings from this study will add to the literature in the area of ethical and moral leadership. This new thinking, from the perspectives of selected, identified moral leaders, regarding ethical and moral leadership includes new definitions for moral leadership and a new set of real-life examples of moral leaders--the participants themselves.

Another way that this study provides some answers to the questions and challenges is related to the participants themselves who have certain commonalities. The participants were selected because they all fit the definition of moral leaders used in the study. Furthermore, all of the participants have focused on the areas of civil rights, peace advocacy, and/or service to the poor and voiceless. In other words, they are social justice advocates. Further, nine of the participants are writers who often use this forum for consciousness raising regarding social justice issues, and the others raise consciousness through teaching and speaking. Several of the participants have paid a price

for their work including bombings, death threats, and jail sentences.

Based on the findings of this study, there is a need for more research regarding moral leadership. This would include studies with a more ethnically diverse sample, a more religiously diverse sample, and a more politically conservative sample. In addition, a series of studies focusing on specific disciplines (e.g. health care, business, education) might be relevant.

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Appendix A

Interview Protocol

Introduction: *I am interested in learning about moral leadership. Your perceptions about this topic are very important and may provide answers not only about your own formation but also concerning if and how individuals can be educated to be moral and/or ethical leaders.*

Questions

1. How do you define ethical and moral leadership?

2. What behaviors would you say constitute the moral and the ethical?

3. Do you consider yourself to be a leader with moral and ethical characteristics?

4. What and who led you to became the ethical/moral leader that you are?

    What were/are your primary influences? For example: family, friends, faith, mentors, education, peak events.

5. Whom do you hold in high esteem for moral and ethical leadership?

    Please describe this person or persons.

6. Do you consider yourself a change agent, one who helps to change environments in a positive way?

7. How do you empower others to be change agents?

8. Do you believe that people can be educated to be ethical and moral? What programs   or courses might you suggest that universities could use to assist undergraduate and graduate students to reach a greater moral potential?

9. For what would you most like to be remembered at the end of your life's mission? For example, Martin Luther King, Jr. said he would like to be remembered as a "drum major for justice."

10. What awards have you received for your work? Which award or recognition do you most value?

Appendix B
Leadership Rating Scale

Portraits of Leaders

Please consider this definition of moral leadership: the moral leader is one who has a **positive, lasting effect or influence on others and/or the world.** Using this definition, read the following portraits of leaders and rate their effect or influence on the negative/positive continuum. You may recognize some of the people; however, try to make your determinations using only the information provided by the portraits. Thank you.

Negative   1_____2_____3_____4_____5_____6_____   Positive

1. _____	21. _____
2. _____	22. _____
3. _____	23. _____
4. _____	24. _____
5. _____	25. _____
6. _____	26. _____
7. _____	27. _____
8. _____	28. _____
9. _____	29. _____
10. _____	30. _____
11. _____	31. _____
12. _____	32. _____
13. _____	33. _____
14. _____	34. _____
15. _____	35. _____

16. _____

17. _____

18. _____

19. _____

20. _____

36. _____

37. _____

38. _____

39. _____

Appendix C

Brief Profiles of Participants

Participant A is a Sister of St. Benedict who is a teacher, lecturer, and author. She is currently the Executive Director of a Research and Resource Center for Contemporary Spirituality in the Northeast. Her work includes activism for many peace and justice issues including the role of women in the church and society.

Participant B is a Franciscan priest who is a peace and justice advocate, lecturer, and author. His writing and lecturing topics address biblical spirituality for the first world society, corporate responsibility, and the use of money to promote positive social change.

Participant C is a civil rights attorney, university visiting law instructor, and author who co-founded a Law Center in the Southeast. He and other Center members have participated in over 50 federal civil rights cases over the past 25 years.

Participant D is a civil rights and peace activist and author who is the founder and current coordinator of, a house of hospitality for homeless families in a large city in the Southeast.

Participant E is a physician, author, and Assistant Dean at a medical college at large, private university in the South. He is an advocate for the poor and founder and medical director of a free walk-in health care clinic for the homeless.

Participant F is an Auxiliary Bishop of a large northern city. He is a peace and justice activist, author, and past president of a charity providing food internationally and founding president of another charity located in the United States. He has traveled to Iran, Iraq, Haiti, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Vietnam, and Hiroshima on behalf of peace and justice issues.

Participant G is an Adrian Dominican Sister who has been a university instructor and has worked for peace and justice issues and in community service in a large, southern city. She has served as legislative aide to a Congressman and currently is the chairperson of the board of a foundation for peace.

Participant H is a feminist theologian, author, and university professor at a Midwestern theological seminary. Her lectures, writings, and courses address issues such as the interrelation of Christian theology and history to social justice issues.

Participant I is a retired CEO of a large corporation and is co-founder of two non-profit organizations designed to help feed the hungry population of South Florida.

Participant J is a Sister of Mercy who has served since 1992 as National Coordinator of a National Lobby in Washington, DC. The goal of her organization is to lobby and educate for social justice with a primary focus on how United States policy and legislation affect those who are poor.

Participant K is an author, preacher, pastor, and activist. He is co-founder of a community in inner city Washington, DC which addresses peace and justice issues and examines the connection between and among faith, politics, and culture. He also is Editor-in-Chief of the associated magazine,

Participant L is a Medical Mission Sister who is a songwriter, author, peace and justice activist, and professor at a private seminary in the Northeast. Her courses and lectures address issues such as justice, hunger, homelessness, poverty, gender, liberation, and reconciliation, and she is a fund raiser for children with AIDS and for abused and disadvantaged children in Connecticut.