

# **Integrative Analysis of Ethical Intelligence and Moral Intelligence: New Conceptual Models and Developments in Education**

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# Integrative Analysis of Ethical Intelligence and Moral Intelligence: New Conceptual Models and Developments in Education

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## Abstract

### Keywords:

moral intelligence; ethical intelligence; integrative review of literature

This study proposes an integrative analysis of the moral intelligence and ethical intelligence concepts in order to understand the chronological and conceptual evolutions of a new type of intelligence, which will later on serve as a base for the operationalisation of the concept. The methodological approach consists in an integrative literature review, which is generally defined as a form of research that reviews, critically analyses and synthesises representative studies on a topic in an integrated way, allowing for the emergence of new frameworks and perspectives. This research examines the literature for a period of 185 years (up to 2021) aiming to develop chronological taxonomies in order to provide an overview of the meanings associated with the concepts of ethical and moral intelligence. The results of the integrative review consist in chronological taxonomies of the concepts, that are complemented by conceptual maps of the ethical / moral intelligence. The conceptual maps emphasise the functional relationships between the constituent elements of ethical / moral intelligence, as well as the applied values in the area of education.

## Zusammenfassung

### Schlüsselworte:

moralische Intelligenz; ethische Intelligenz; integrative Literaturrecherche

Diese Studie schlägt eine integrative Analyse der Konzepte der moralischen Intelligenz und der ethischen Intelligenz vor, um die chronologischen und konzeptionellen Entwicklungen einer neuen Art von Intelligenz zu verstehen, die später als Grundlage für die Operationalisierung des Konzepts dienen wird. Der methodische Ansatz besteht in einer integrativen Literaturrecherche, die allgemein als eine Forschungsform definiert wird, die repräsentative Studien zu einem Thema auf integrierte Weise überprüft, kritisch analysiert und zusammenfasst, wodurch neue Rahmen und Perspektiven entstehen können. Diese Forschung untersucht die Literatur für einen Zeitraum von 185 Jahren (bis 2021) mit dem Ziel, chronologische Taxonomien zu entwickeln, um einen Überblick über die Bedeutungen zu geben, die mit den Konzepten der ethischen und moralischen Intelligenz verbunden sind. Die Ergebnisse der integrativen Überprüfung bestehen in chronologischen Taxonomien der Konzepte, die durch konzeptionelle Landkarten der ethisch-moralischen Intelligenz ergänzt werden. Die konzeptionellen Landkarten betonen die funktionalen Beziehungen zwischen den konstituierenden Elementen der ethischen/moralischen Intelligenz sowie den angewandten Werten im Bildungsbereich.

## 1. Introduction

A thesis on ethical/moral intelligence that proposes new conceptual models and developments in the field of education can be considered significant due to the imperative of translating ethical decisions and moral precepts from the sphere of academic debates into the real world. We will call it intelligence because this concept encompasses a framework of skills. At the same time, it represents a language, and because we are interested in the practical dimension of the concept, in this study, the focus will be on the literacy process of people in terms of understanding and functioning in relation to this concept.

The analogy with functional illiteracy can help us in this proposed direction. We know the letters and can read, but we do not understand the textual and metatextual elements, we do not decipher in a logical manner the structure and content of the work. In this way, we can consider that ethical illiteracy is also manifested by the fact that we know words like love, justice, authenticity, we can read them and develop coherent sentences that contain them, but we do not always understand them in relation to each other, we do not observe them in their evolution towards actions made following a process of analysis and decision. We tend, as individuals of the human species, to function

gregariously and do what the world does, and many times our surroundings do not have a positive influence on our individual functioning. Therefore, it is considered here that practical philosophy has two dimensions: the orientation towards topics of immediate and current interest - artificial intelligence, cloning, war, gender identity, respectively the method - from academic discourse of meditation type to active discourse.

An integrative analysis of ethical intelligence (EI) and moral intelligence (MI) represents a first step towards transforming the discourse on values from the spectrum of business storytelling and branding into a moral education approach at the organisational level. At the personal level, ethical/moral intelligence supports the process of self-understanding, is a motivational factor and has the capacity to produce extended effects on groups through role modelling. In the field of education, ethical/moral intelligence is part of a holistic education, being the characteristic that ensures the development of human consciousness as a whole.

## 2. Theoretical foundation

When it comes to intelligence in general, a diversity of theoretical models and approaches to the concept can be accessed in the literature. There is no unified view of how this component of our cognition is defined, but we can trace how the way scientists have conceptually defined intelligence has evolved. The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines intelligence as "the ability to learn or understand or to deal with new or trying situations" (Merriam-Webster, n.d.), while the Explanatory Dictionary of the Romanian Language defines it as "the ability to understand easily and well, to notice what what is essential, to solve new situations or problems based on previously accumulated experience." (Dexonline, n.d.)

At the beginning of the last century, the first initiatives to measure intelligence appeared, and the first type of intelligence considered was cognitive intelligence. The creators of the IQ test are Alfred Binet and Theodore Simone, two psychologists, who at the beginning of the 20th century created the first model by which they could measure intelligence in the case of children with special learning needs in the French education system. Binet states in *Modern ideas about children*: "With practice, training, and above all method, we manage to increase our attention, our memory, our judgement, and literally to become more intelligent than we were before." (1975/1909, pp. 106-

107). One of the researchers who created a scale that would be widely used is the Romanian-American psychologist David Wechsler, who created the WISC model, in which correlations with other tests valid at the end of the first half of the 20th century are analysed. Wechsler defined intelligence by testing kids through items that refer to "global capacity to act purposefully, to think rationally, and to deal effectively with his environment" (Wechsler in Littell, 1960, p. 134).

One of the most prominent figures of contemporary pedagogy, the Swiss psychologist and biologist Jean Piaget, would shift the focus from IQ to the stages of psychological development. Coincidentally, Piaget began his career collaborating with Theodore Simone in the latter's laboratory. Piaget proposes in *Genetic Epistemology* that intelligence be analysed in relation to developmental stages, namely sensory-motor, preoperational, concrete operations, and formal operations (1971). Although the theory is very successful in pedagogy, Piaget also fails to create a unified perspective on human intelligence.

In the 1980s, one of the most comprehensive works in the field of intelligence appeared, namely *Perspectives of the Mind* by Howard Gardner, a work containing the *Theory of Multiple Intelligences*. It foresees the way intelligence research would evolve until today: "we must say, once and for all, that there is not, and never can be, a single, irrefutable and universally accepted list of human intelligences. There will never be a master list of three, seven, or three hundred intelligences that will be adopted by all researchers." (Gardner, 2022, p. 196). Moving from a paradigm in which cognitive intelligences were relational only to language and logic allows the author to reproduce in the original list from 1983 seven intelligences: linguistic, musical, logical-mathematical, spatial, physical-kinesthetic, interpersonal and intrapersonal, and from 1995 to add an eighth intelligence, the naturalistic one, and consider the suggestion of an existentialist intelligence (Gardner, 1999). Daniel Goleman argues that EI may be even more important than cognitive intelligence and argues that a new quotient can be measured by looking at a person's ability to emotionally self-regulate, express their emotions, and relate to others (Goleman, 1995). Goleman also introduces the concept of social intelligence through a book published in 2006, titled in this way.

A first test to measure emotional intelligence, however, was proposed by a trio of researchers: John Mayer, Peter Salovey and David Caruso (2001). The test is called MSCEIT (Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test). The focus on this new intelligence is due to the attempts to negotiate between Western and Eastern philosophies in the second half of the last century that begin to allow a transition from Western pragmatism to a holistic view of the individual that corresponds to a better representation of the body triad -mind-spirit. It is worth mentioning the EQ-i model, which introduces the concept of "emotional quotient", developed by Reuven Bar-On (2011). It contains six scales: the self-perception scale, the self-expression scale, the interpersonal scale, the decision-making scale and the stress management scale.

After the development and theorization of cognitive intelligence, multiple intelligences (linguistic, musical, logical-mathematical, physical-kinesthetic, spatial, interpersonal, intrapersonal, naturalistic), emotional intelligence and social intelligence, another intelligence appears that can be compared to the new intelligence that was suggested to Gardner, "the intelligence of big questions". As it was not introduced into the body of multiple intelligences, but visibly represented a direction of interpretation of one of the specifically human capacities, existential intelligence does not return under the same name, but appears, when moving into the 21st century, another approach to theoretical models of the mental faculties: spiritual intelligence. Zohar and Marshall (2000) not only propose a new type of intelligence, but even build an integrative model for those discovered before, we mean here IQ and EQ.

General conclusions about intelligence refer to the widely accepted idea that they refer to one's ability to encounter a problem and solve it optimally. We see that the differences between theories are not necessarily produced by the process itself through which intelligence is manifested, nor by the result obtained, but rather by the dimension processed: information, emotion, spirit.

Although there is a general tendency to think of terms like "clever" or "smart" as synonyms for "intelligent", there is almost a general consensus that an intelligent person is by no means necessarily "wise." As David Brooks says: "You can be knowledgeable with other men's knowledge, but you

can't be wise with other men's wisdom." (2019, p. 131). At this point a new dimension enters the discussion: knowledge. Could we say that knowledge is the content of intelligence, while understanding is the content of wisdom? Although we cannot say that intelligence contains "knowledge", although it is based on its processing, we can say about understanding that it is the content of wisdom, according to the Explanatory Dictionary of the Romanian Language, wisdom is a "superior ability to understand and judge things." (Dexonline, n.d.) However "to judge" can mean "to think", but also to form an opinion about someone and to associate a characteristic with the judged object. Traditionally, morality tends to be associated with wisdom, usually a moral decision is a wise decision, it is a "right judgement".

A welcome deepening in terms of understanding the distinct meanings acquired by the notions of "ethics" and "morality" is provided by Isabel Baptista, based on an analysis of Paul Ricoeur's philosophy: "ethics tends to take priority over the second (moral), characterised by a theoretical dimension related to the questioning of "whys", foundations, goals and principles that guide behaviour, such as good, virtue, truth or justice. While the second, morality, tends to privilege the decision about what and how, thus identifying itself with the normative universe of prescriptions and rules of conduct." (Baptista, 2007, pp. 28-29).

Related to the evolution of morality, what is important to note is that from the perspective of sexual selection, considering the case of the peacock, evolution prioritizes reputation (creating a tail that does not allow flight easily endangers the survival of the male). Therefore, within biology, reputation maintenance and enhancement become the most desirable goals of an individual within a species. As Joyce would say: "If a good reputation means sharing food indiscriminately with the group, then an indiscriminate food-sharing trait will develop; if a good reputation means wearing a pumpkin on your head, then a pumpkin-wearing trait will develop." (Joyce, 2007, p. 33).

What does it mean to respect ethical premises and moral principles? At a first level, nothing more than preserving an "impeccable" reputation. Therefore, the fact that we feel shame about something we have done indicates a primary capacity for moral responsibility. Even if it is based on the avoidance of ostracism, one of the most fundamental fears for Homo Sapiens

Sapiens, which, according to Brown (2021), although it represents psycho-emotional pain, activates the same neural networks as physical pain, shame symbolises awareness of wrongdoing and submission to norms intra-community.

### 3. Research methodology

#### 3.1. General objective and research questions

The objective of this study is to analyse the literature produced on "ethical intelligence" and "moral intelligence" concepts from the perspective of the definitions and the chronological evolution of the concepts. The following research questions were formulated and based on them we propose to develop an analysis of ethical intelligence:

- What are the areas of study interested in researching ethical/moral intelligence content, which is the evolution of this concept through time?
- What are the main items of ethical/moral intelligence that can be integrated in a conceptual structure with the aim of creating a starting point for further research on this matter?

#### 3.2. Research hypothesis

The working hypothesis is that, in the specialised literature, there is a lack of consensus regarding the definition of this new type of intelligence, that there is no clear perspective on the chronological evolution of the use of key terms, that the areas of study are varied and offer narrow perspectives to the context addressed and that the inter-changeable use led to the production of two lines of research that did not assimilate each other (one line of discussion about ethical intelligence, another line about moral intelligence). This study proposes the development of an integrative theoretical model, starting from the analysis of the literature produced in both lines of study.

#### 3.3. Research design

This study is based on the integrative review of literature research methodology. This research model allows for critical analysis and synthesis of the literature produced on a given topic in order to propose new research models and directions. According to Richard Torraco: "They are also used to review new emerging topics that generate a growing body of literature that may include contradictions or a discrepancy between the literature and observations about the issue, which are not addressed in the literature." (Torraco, 2016, p. 1).

#### 3.4. Procedure

The coverage of the literature will be pivotal, our aim being exclusively to analyse the definitions, theoretical models and the relevance of creating a new type of intelligence, therefore not opting for an exhaustive, exhaustive selective, representative or central approach. The steps of the integrative literature review, including filters (inclusion and exclusion criteria) are outlined below (PRISMA, Page et al., 2021):

- The first filter applied in the selection of literature consists in the elimination of materials that address the theme of "ethical intelligence" with the meaning of "ethical intelligence services". At the same time, studies on ethical dilemmas within programs that develop the concept of artificial intelligence and studies on the ethics of intelligence tests will be excluded.
- Studies that are not accessible in English, Romanian and Portuguese were excluded.
- Articles presenting experimental or semi-experimental, qualitative or quantitative research, which do not propose new theoretical models or integrative visual schemes, which do not extend and validate previously proposed models, were excluded.

The taxonomy of sources will include a conceptual model and a diachronic model, both represented by visual schemes. The public to whom this integrative study is addressed is represented by practitioners (professionals, especially in the field of education), the aim being to enrich the perspective of the formative valence and development of moral/ethical intelligence.

To make a diachronic taxonomy regarding definitions of ethical/moral intelligence, the Google Books platform will be used, with the advanced search option.

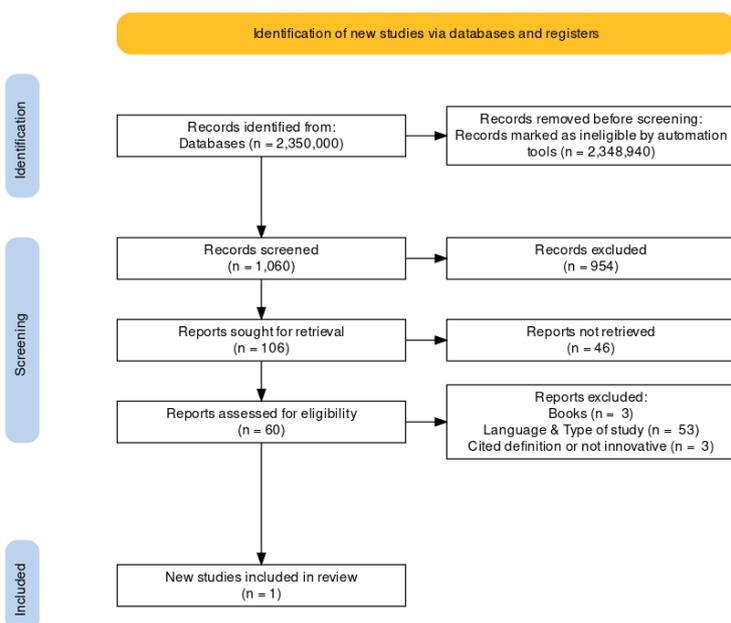
In the first stage, the keywords "ethical intelligence" will be entered, and the search will be filtered according to the following criteria: 1. XIX century; 2. The 20th century; 3. XXI century. For each century, 10 relevant sources will be chosen that contain the phrase in the content or in the titles of the chapters, not as official titles or subtitles of the works.

In a second stage, the keywords "moral intelligence" will be entered, and the search will be filtered according to the following criteria: 1. XIX century; 2. The 20th century; 3. XXI century.

For each century, 10 relevant sources will be chosen that contain the phrase in the content or in the titles of the chapters, not as official titles or subtitles of the works.

The Google Books platform was used to create a conceptual taxonomy. In the first stage, the phrase "ethical intelligence" will be introduced and all papers with "ethical intelligence" in the title or subtitle will be selected for analysis. In a second stage, the phrase "moral intelligence" was introduced and all works with "moral intelligence" in the title or subtitle were selected for analysis (Fig. 1 and Fig. 2).

Figure 1. PRISMA 2020 for the inclusion of articles relevant to "Ethical intelligence".

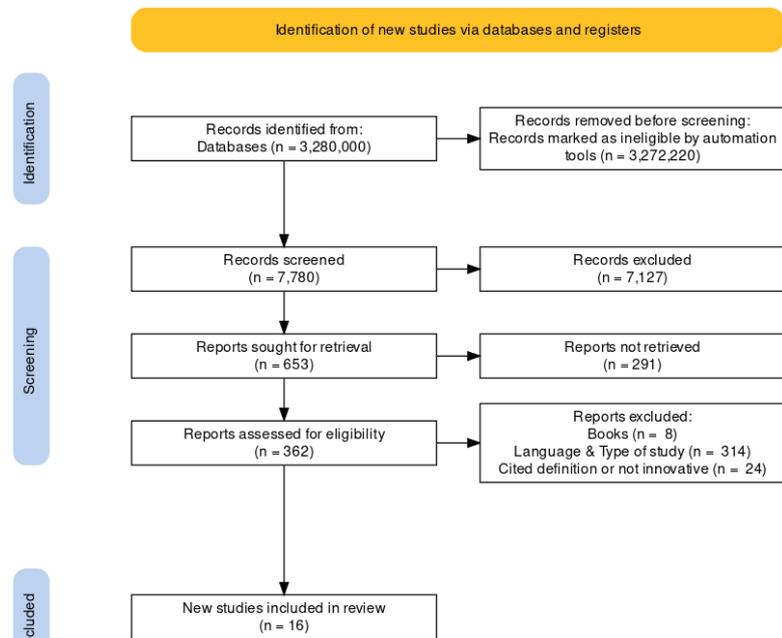


To complete the conceptual taxonomy, the Google Scholar platform was used (with the advanced search option and the My Library function), and the phrases "ethical intelligence" and "moral intelligence" were entered, respectively, and the doctoral theses were chosen, articles and publications that propose visual models and integrative schemes starting from moral/ethical intelligence, critical analyses, conceptual extensions, validations/invalidations of already existing sources.

English language sources are used, because in Romanian there is no material generated by Google Scholar or Google Books as a result of the search for "ethical intelligence" or "moral intelligence". In Portuguese, for "inteligência Ética" no results are generated, while for "inteligência moral" three results

are generated, two articles being published in Portugal and one in Brazil. The following figures show the search, screening and inclusion of articles according to PRISMA 2020 (Page & McKenzie & J.E., Bossuyt & Boutron & Hoffmann & Mulrow, et al., 2021).

Figure 2. PRISMA 2020 for the inclusion of articles relevant to "Moral intelligence".



## 4. Results

The results of the integrative studies are presented through figures related to diachronic taxonomies and conceptual taxonomies.

### 4.1. Diachronic taxonomy

*Diachronic taxonomy of sources that define or mention ethical or moral intelligence through 19th, 20th and 21st century.*

Based on the 60 analysed sources, covering 185 years, in the interval 1836-2021, the diachronic taxonomy was elaborated, visually represented by 6 figures (Fig. 3-8). This taxonomy contains exclusively works, publications, studies and articles that mention or define ethical intelligence, respectively moral intelligence, without being materials specifically intended to deepen these notions. The critical analysis of the sources will be carried out in relation to the sources specifically intended for the concepts, organised chronologically in Figure 9 for books and Figure 10 for articles.

Figure 3. Definitions and mentions of Ethical Intelligence During the Nineteenth Century.

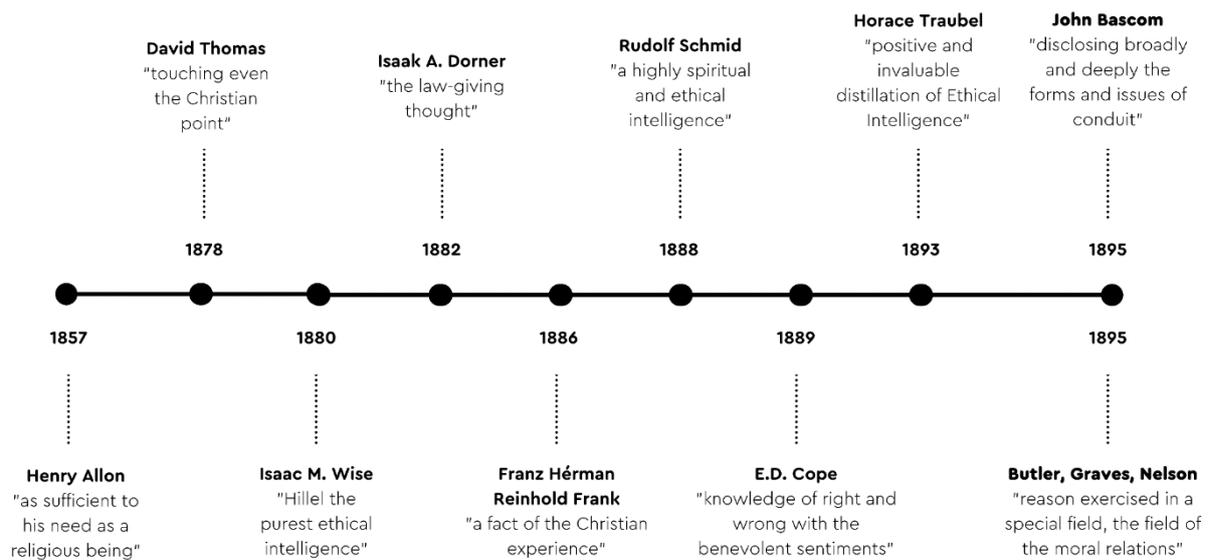


Figure 4. Definitions and mentions of Ethical Intelligence During the Twentieth Century.

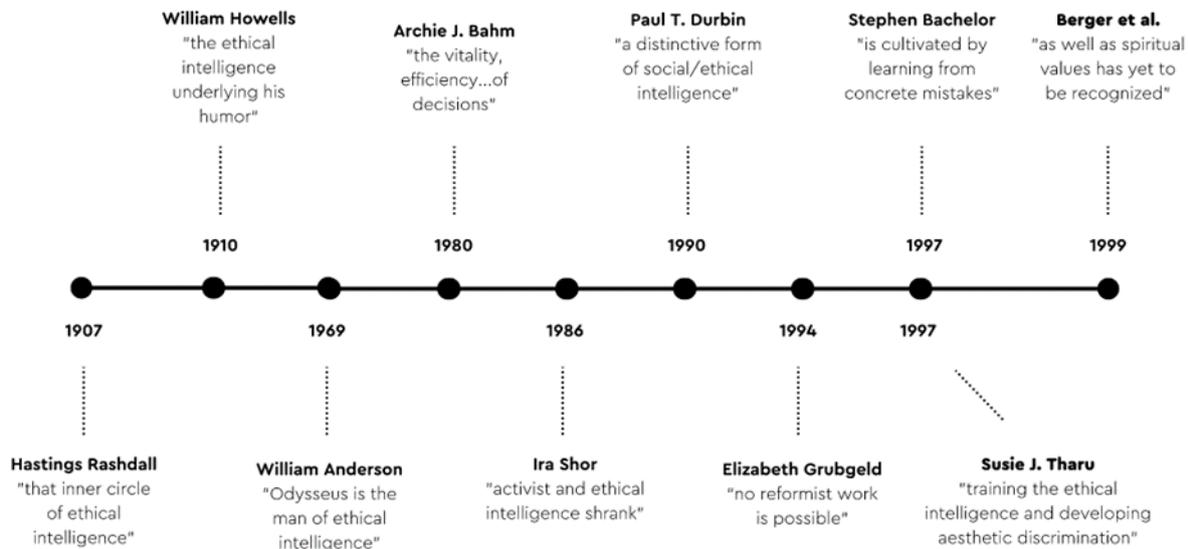


Figure 5. Definitions and mentions of Ethical Intelligence During the 21st Century

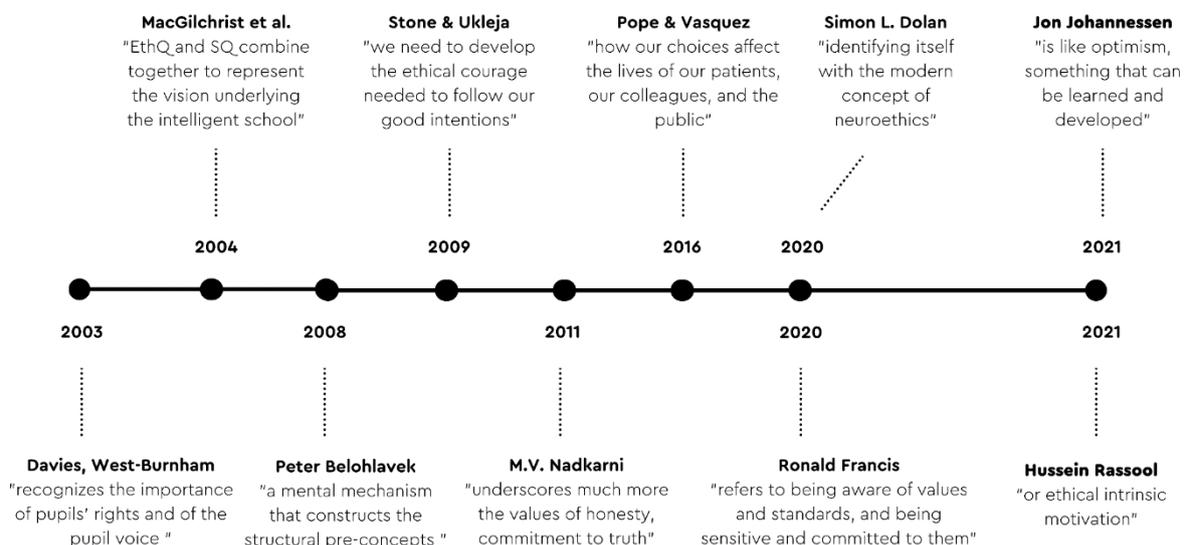


Figure 6. Definitions and mentions of Moral Intelligence During the Nineteenth Century

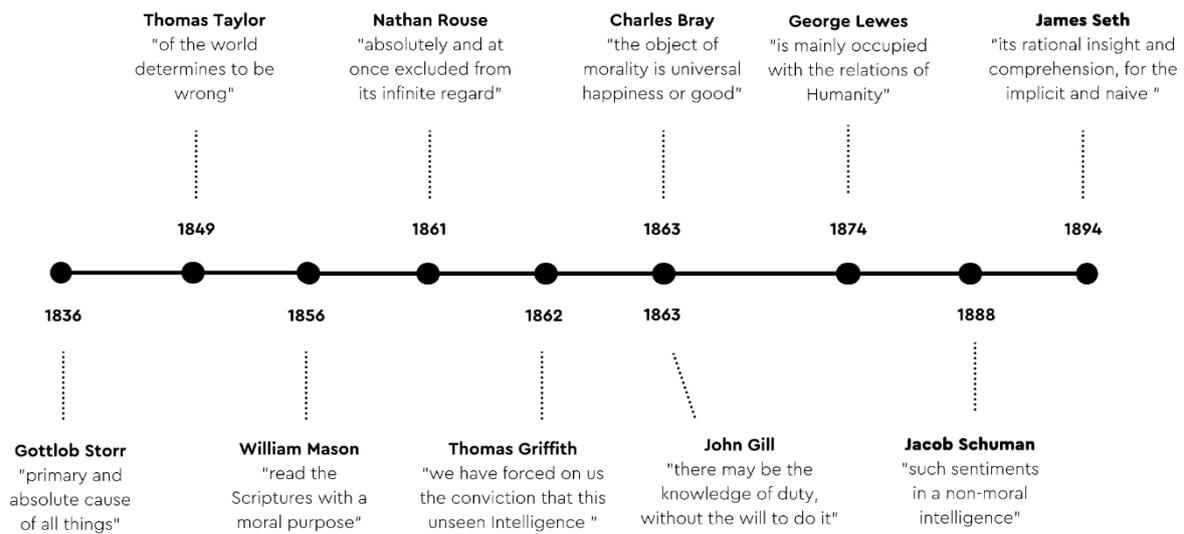


Figure 7. Definitions and mentions of Moral Intelligence During the Twentieth Century.

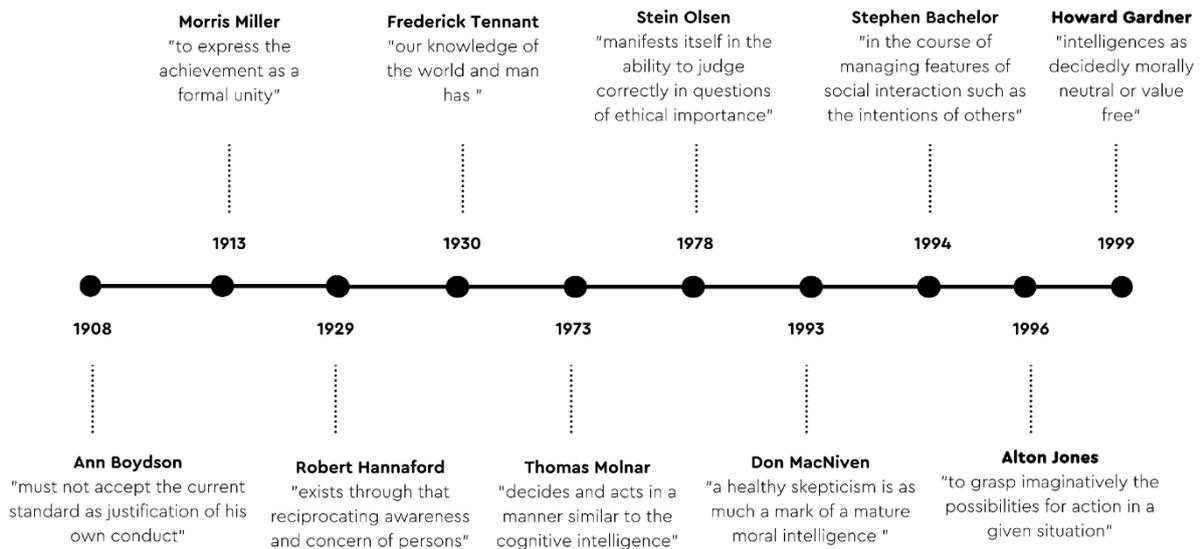
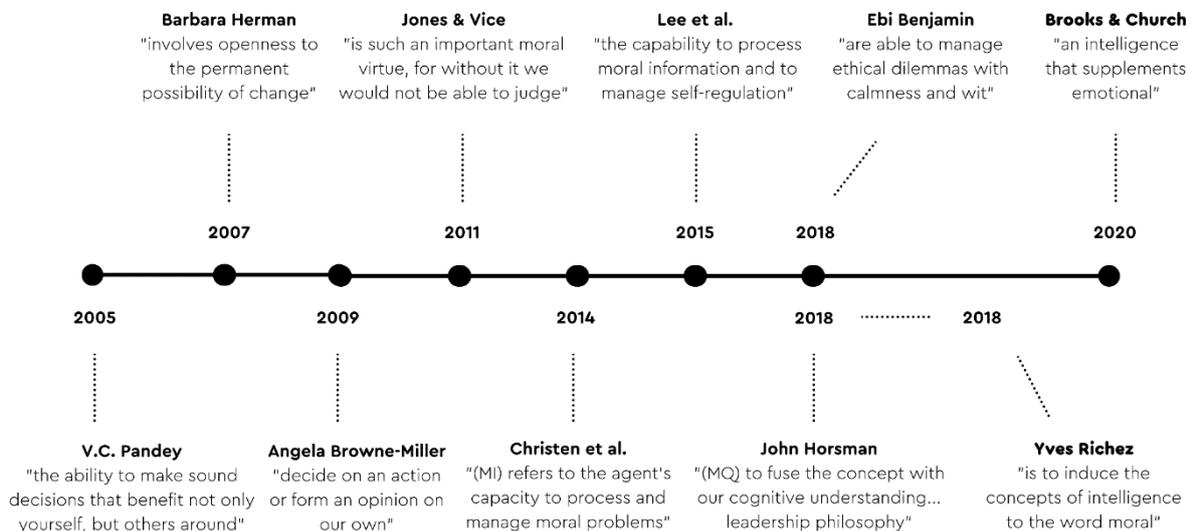


Figure 8. Definitions and mentions of Moral Intelligence During the 21st Century.



*Diachronic taxonomy of sources specifically intended for the study of ethical, respectively moral intelligence*

In this stage, books, articles, publications and scientific journals that have as their main theme the study of ethical/moral intelligence will be analysed.

Sources that mention the key terms in the title or subtitle were selected and only those that propose new/original definitions, theoretical models and visual schemes were included in the present analysis.

Figure 9. Books dedicated specifically to ethical/moral intelligence.

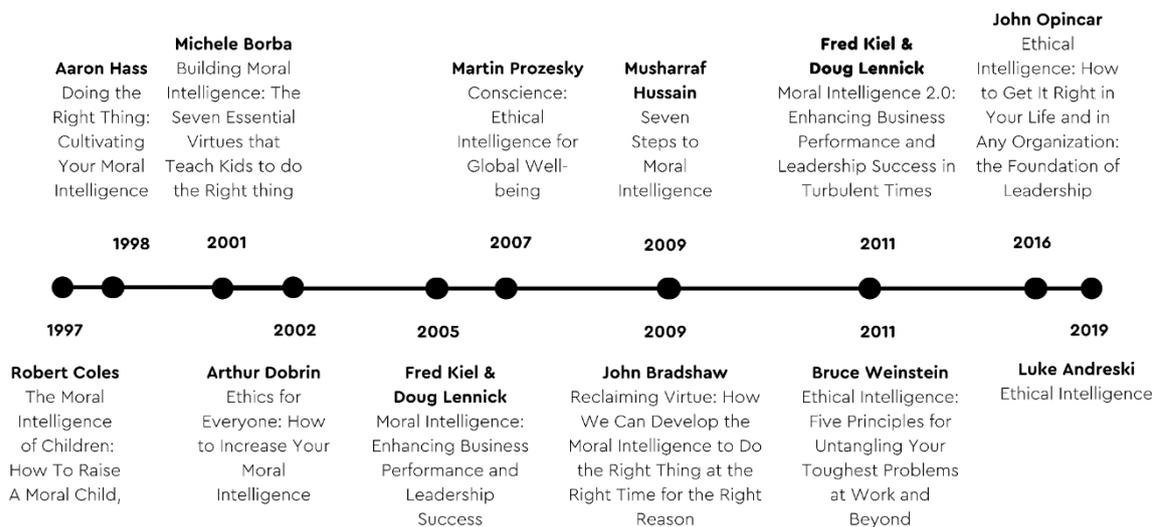


Figure 10. Articles, publications, works specifically dedicated to ethical/moral intelligence (selected).

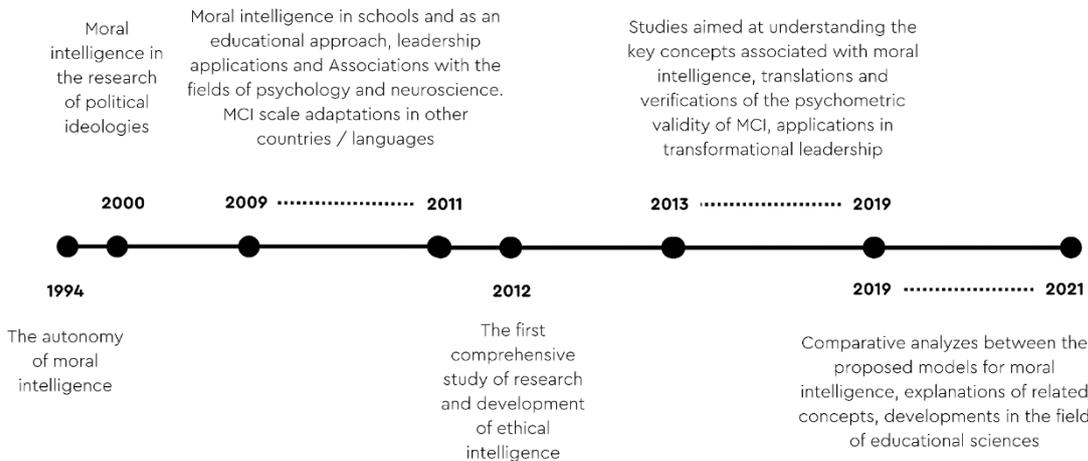
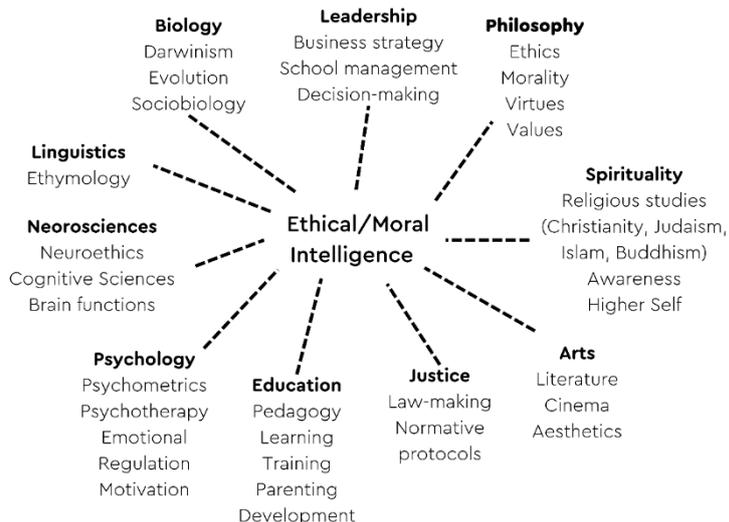


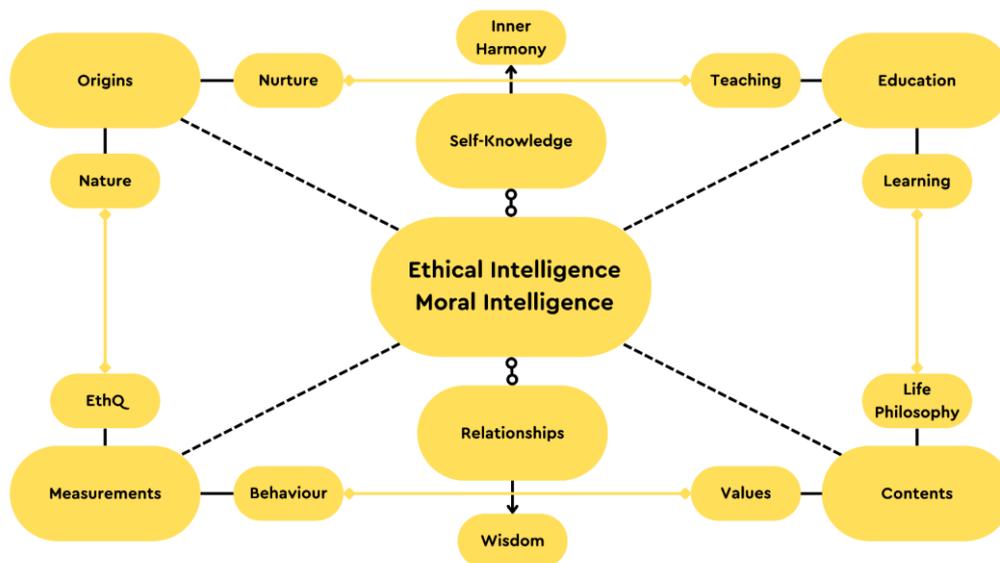
Figure 11. Conceptual taxonomy - areas of interest in ethical/moral intelligence. Author Andrei G. Stupu.



#### 4.2. Conceptual taxonomies

Two representative schemes were made for the conceptual taxonomy. The first (Fig. 11) illustrates the areas of interest in the application and research of ethical/moral intelligence. The second (Fig. 12) is developed as a conceptual map of ethical intelligence from the perspective of the main elements it has in its content, proposes functional associations between them and defines the goals of the development of this type of intelligence.

Figure 12. Conceptual Taxonomy - Map of Ethical/Moral Intelligence. Author Andrei G. Stupu.



## 5. Discussion and conclusions

Starting from the field of educational sciences and educational management, Neil Hawkes defines ethical intelligence as "Ethical intelligence is the ability to ethically self-regulate your behaviour. This transformative dimension is a person's capacity to be self-led, acting appropriately by making wise choices, when meeting the daily multidimensional challenges, which are experienced in our complex world." (Neil Hawkes, online)

Carrying out an integrative review of literature on the topic of ethical and moral intelligence will prove useful considering the fact that up to now there is no study that unitarily assimilates the works addressed separately to "ethical intelligence", respectively "moral intelligence". Also, the chronological placement of the "invention" of the concept varies from one author to another, with most pointing to 2005 as the reference point for the introduction of the concept of "moral intelligence", others going all the way back to Mesopotamia and Ancient Egypt. As we saw, "modern" research on this topic began at the end of the last century, and the first explicit mentions can be found starting up to 200 years ago.

The conceptual map represented in Fig. 13 opens up new directions in educational and philosophical research through its items directly related to the following research questions to be analysed in future research: Where does ethical/moral intelligence come from? Are its origins in our genetic background and conditioned by our brain function, or is it a product of

the environment we are born into? If both are involved, what are the weights for each? Is ethical/moral intelligence improved through education? What are the methodologies proposed by the pedagogues? What are the ways to train adults to develop ethical/moral intelligence? Can ethical/moral intelligence be measured? If so, do we measure it psychometrically and define a coefficient, or can it only be measured phenomenologically by observing the consequences of a person's ethical or unethical decisions?

The present research begins by exploring two themes of study, ethical intelligence and moral intelligence respectively. It subsequently demonstrates, through the integrative research of the literature regarding both directions of study, by making diachronic and conceptual taxonomies that the two refer to the same concept. This approach is unique, being the first time that a scientific paper systematically approaches various sources for a time span of 185 years with the aim of identifying definitions, developments, theoretical models and practical applications of the concept of ethical/moral intelligence.

Most authors speak of a moral crisis and a decay of human behaviour (Boss, 1994; Hass, 1998). In our study, this moral degradation is explained by the lack of identifying and assuming a life mission, a meaning that guides the individual towards a level of development that allows him to generate a positive impact on others.

It is imperative that the fundamental role of ethical/moral intelligence in the authentic development of the human being be recognized, no longer confused with theoretical memorization and the gross lack of practicability of concepts. It requires a group self-knowledge and harmonisation of the common objective, a pertinent definition of the team's mission and vision, followed by the integration of servitude, the fundamental idea that one without the other is unable to accomplish its work and to produce, as a result, value for oneself and for the community.

Viewing the main moments in the history of the study of intelligences can help us outline the importance of this intellectual dimension, but as we can see, the fields of study of the concept of intelligence vary. Considering the field in which the present work falls, namely, educational sciences, the literature included in this analysis also addresses speculative theoretical models, which associate a series of concepts with the purpose of defining intelligences, from functionality, to psychological archetypes, to temperament, talents and even dimensions of spirituality that are difficult to quantify. However, the latest research in the field of neuroscience, the field of study that investigates intelligence by observing the brain dynamics and functionality of individuals in relation to cognitive tasks, can give us an overview of the augmentation of capabilities. Can we have a problem with a brain intervention or a pill to increase intelligence without education and learning? As challenging as this assertion is for educational scientists, it is also valuable at this point in the study of intelligences, because it opens up a new transdisciplinary horizon.

Among neuroscientists there are still disagreements about how we define intelligence, but most tend to agree with Jensen, who says that "Intelligence is surely not the only important ability, but without a fair share of intelligence, other abilities and talents usually cannot be fully developed and effectively used... It [intelligence] has been referred to as the "integrative capacity" of the mind." (Jensen, 1981, p. 11). The book *The Neuroscience of Intelligence* integratively analyzes the most important developments in the field of neuroscience related to intelligence. The general conclusions of Richard Haier's exhaustive work help us to have an objective picture of the state of evolution of intelligence research and to discard a number of myths based on outdated research or erroneously popularised by the media. The most important ideas would be that intelligence testing

is a valid method, that genes have a significant impact on the development of intelligence, and that "intelligence genes" are beginning to be discovered, that intelligence is processed by networks throughout the brain, with no single centre of intelligence, that developments in neuroimaging can contribute to understanding intelligence.

The diachronic and conceptual taxonomies proposed in this study represent a valuable resource for further ethical/moral intelligence research endeavours. The research questions proposed by the study are in themselves directions of analysis and deepening for researchers in various fields, with experts in educational sciences, psychology, neuroscience and philosophy at the centre of attention. Integrative research on ethical intelligence, respectively moral intelligence continues to develop not only a proposal for a new time of intelligence, but contributes to the vast collection of works from all fields concerned with the development of human potential. To achieve greater clarity on the concept, a series of efforts to integrate all intelligences in a relational model and a definition of ethical/moral intelligence from the perspective of its functionality and manifestation are prioritised. But perhaps the most important reconceptualization is related to the very name of this intelligence, the two directions of study, divided between morality and ethics having to be brought together under a comprehensive name.

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values of human-animal interactions and the multidimensional study of community-oriented volunteering.

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