

Jane Eyre's Unwavering Moral Compass: Five Dimensions of Integrity

Budiarto¹

budiarto@stibaiec-jakarta.ac.id

English Literature Department, Sekolah Tinggi Bahasa Asing IEC Jakarta

Suhendar

suhendar@stibaiec-jakarta.ac.id

English Literature Department, Sekolah Tinggi Bahasa Asing IEC Jakarta

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Abstract: This article investigates the profound moral integrity of Jane Eyre, the central character in Charlotte Brontë's enduring novel Jane Eyre. Grounded in a qualitative descriptive textual analysis, the study explores how Jane's internal motivations, emotions, beliefs, goals, and actions consistently manifest a principled moral identity throughout her life. Key scenes and dialogues, particularly those involving ethical and emotional conflicts with figures such as Mr. Brocklehurst, Mr. Rochester, and St. John Rivers, were meticulously examined. The analysis focuses on five core dimensions of moral integrity: unwavering adherence to personal values, authentic emotional honesty, steadfast resistance to external pressures, profound moral courage, and consistent alignment between belief and behavior. Utilizing interpretive frameworks from Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), Blasi's Theory of Moral Identity (1984), and Speech Act Theory (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1979), the study reveals Jane's remarkable moral strength, as she consistently refuses to compromise her values, even when faced with love, authority, or personal comfort. Her integrity is evident in her evolving thoughts, speech, and actions, demonstrating continuous moral growth from childhood to adulthood. This research offers a clear framework for analyzing character-based moral development, contributing significantly to the fields of literature, psychology, and education, and providing a valuable model for interdisciplinary character analysis in literary texts.

Keywords: *Moral Integrity, Jane Eyre, Character Development, Self-Determination Theory, Moral Identity, Speech Act Theory.*

INTRODUCTION

Charlotte Brontë's Jane Eyre, first published in 1847, stands as a towering landmark in Victorian literature, a testament to the enduring power of a narrative that transcends its historical setting. This novel meticulously chronicles Jane's arduous journey from an orphaned, subjugated childhood to a mature, self-possessed adulthood, a trajectory marked by relentless hardship, profound moral testing, and ultimately, triumphant self-assertion. What renders Jane Eyre particularly compelling and a perennial subject of academic inquiry is its innovative use of first-person retrospective narration. This narrative technique grants

readers unparalleled access to Jane's innermost thoughts and reflections, allowing for an intimate observation of her internal struggles with concepts of right and wrong, justice and injustice. Through this lens, the novel meticulously traces the intricate development of Jane's moral character as it is forged and refined through a series of critical life moments, including her formative, often traumatic, experiences at Gateshead, her disciplined and character-building schooling at Lowood, her challenging service at Thornfield, her period of moral exile, and her eventual, transformative reunion with Edward Rochester. The novel's enduring appeal, its profound resonance across generations and cultures, stems not merely from

¹ Corresponding author

its compelling plot or vivid characterizations, but, crucially, from its deep and nuanced exploration of moral development, identity formation, and the unwavering pursuit of integrity in the face of societal pressures and personal adversity. This makes *Jane Eyre* an exceptionally rich and fertile ground for interdisciplinary analysis, offering insights that extend far beyond the confines of literary study alone.

Despite the vast and extensive body of literary criticism dedicated to *Jane Eyre*, a significant gap persists in the systematic, theory-driven examination of *Jane Eyre's* moral integrity that comprehensively integrates psychological and linguistic perspectives. While numerous studies have laudably explored and highlighted *Jane's* agency, her remarkable resilience, and her consistent moral resistance against oppressive forces, very few have successfully combined the rigorous theoretical frameworks of motivation and identity psychology with the precise analytical tools of linguistic analysis, particularly focusing on dialogue and emotional coherence, to construct a truly holistic and deeply nuanced understanding of her character. This lacuna in existing scholarship points directly to a critical research problem: how do *Jane Eyre's* complex internal motivations, her authentic emotional expressions, her deeply held beliefs, her aspirational goals, and her decisive actions consistently manifest and reflect a coherent, principled moral identity throughout the entirety of the novel? This study aims to precisely address this critical question by offering a highly structured, qualitative descriptive analysis of *Jane Eyre's* moral integrity. The analysis will meticulously focus on how her spoken words (dialogue) and her private thoughts (narrative monologue) align seamlessly with, and exemplify, five precisely defined key dimensions of integrity. The profound importance of this research is multi-faceted. Firstly, it promises to significantly deepen our academic understanding of character development within literary texts, moving beyond superficial plot analysis to

explore the intricate psychological and linguistic underpinnings of moral formation. Secondly, it seeks to provide a clear, practical, and adaptable framework for educators, particularly those teaching ethics through literature, enabling them to effectively guide students in analyzing and understanding moral agency within fictional narratives. Thirdly, for researchers across disciplines, this study offers a robust model for interdisciplinary character analysis, demonstrating how the convergence of literary, psychological, and linguistic methodologies can yield richer, more comprehensive insights into complex human behavior and moral decision-making as depicted in literature. Ultimately, this research contributes to a broader understanding of how literary works can serve as powerful vehicles for exploring universal ethical dilemmas and the timeless human quest for integrity.

Comprehensive Background and Theoretical Underpinnings

This study fundamentally conceptualizes moral integrity not as a monolithic trait, but as a dynamic and multi-faceted construct. It encompasses a steadfast adherence to personal values, an unwavering emotional clarity, a robust internal motivation, a courageous capacity for decisive action, and the coherent, continuous development of identity. Within this framework, moral integrity is precisely defined and examined through five distinct, yet interconnected, dimensions: first, adherence to personal principles, which signifies acting in accordance with one's deeply held ethical convictions, often at considerable personal cost; second, emotional honesty, referring to the authentic expression of feelings without self-deception, fostering genuine self-awareness; third, resistance to external pressures, involving the resolute rejection of coercion from authority figures, societal norms, or even romantic entreaties when these conflict with one's core inner values; fourth, moral courage, defined as the willingness and fortitude to act decisively under adversity to preserve one's moral agency and uphold one's convictions; and fifth, consistency between

belief and behavior, which expresses a harmonious alignment between stated values and actual lived conduct across different life stages.

To construct a robust and analytically sound foundation for this intricate analysis, concepts are meticulously drawn from three distinct yet complementary academic fields: psychology, literary theory, and linguistics. A cornerstone of the psychological framework is Self-Determination Theory (SDT), as developed by Deci and Ryan (2000). SDT is crucial for its nuanced distinction between intrinsic motivation (actions driven by personal values and inherent interest) and extrinsic motivation (actions prompted by external rewards or coercion). This theory is particularly pertinent to *Jane Eyre*, as it helps illuminate how Jane's most pivotal decisions—such as her refusal of Mr. Rochester's proposal despite her deep affection, or her rejection of St. John Rivers' missionary marriage offer—are demonstrably driven by her internal moral compass rather than by social expectations or external pressures. In later formulations of SDT, the concept of integrated regulation further describes how externally derived values can become internalized and align with one's core identity, thereby increasing moral autonomy.

Another critical psychological lens is Blasi's Theory of Moral Identity (1984), which posits that moral integrity emerges when an individual's core values become deeply integrated into their self-concept, thereby guiding consistent moral behavior even in the face of significant situational challenges. Jane's early and persistent resistance to Mrs. Reed's unjust authority, and her later principled conduct at Thornfield, serve as compelling textual evidence of a continuous moral self that remains unyielding despite shifting circumstances. Furthermore, the concept of emotional honesty and affective coherence is vital. As argued by Arvanitis and Kalliris (2020), integrity often arises when emotional experience aligns harmoniously with moral cognition and intention. Jane's consistent display of emotional clarity, whether

expressing love, grief, or fear, without hiding behind societal expectations, is a hallmark of her integrity, allowing her decisions to be both heartfelt and reflective.

From the field of linguistics, Speech Act Theory, initially formulated by Austin (1962) and further developed by Searle (1979), provides indispensable tools for analyzing how language itself plays a pivotal role in moral agency. This theory suggests that speech acts—such as refusals, confessions, or declarations—function as performative acts imbued with significant moral implications. In literary applications, this theory allows for an examination of how protagonists utilize dialogue to perform and assert their identity and autonomy. Jane's speech, particularly in moments of refusal or when articulating her inner truth, serves as a powerful assertion of her spiritual equality and moral identity within the narrative.

Moreover, the study draws on feminist literary studies, which frequently interpret *Jane Eyre* as a powerful narrative of moral resistance against Victorian patriarchy. Scholars such as Gilbert and Gubar (1979) emphasize how Jane embodies a new form of female agency, consistently refusing to subordinate her moral conscience to external authority, whether it be Brocklehurst's hypocritical authority at Lowood or St. John's rigid religious duty. This perspective underscores Jane's assertion of autonomy in a society that often sought to limit women's roles. The contemporary relevance of identity is further illuminated by Charles Taylor's concept of authenticity, which suggests that identity is formed through engagement with moral demands beyond the self, including religious commitment, social justice, and love rooted in mutual respect. Finally, insights from studies on trauma and ethical decision-making highlight how moral integrity can be forged and strengthened through adversity. Johnson (2023) argues that Jane resolves internal tensions between passion and principle by reaffirming her self-worth and moral values, rather than compromising under emotional pressure, a process of cognitive

reconciliation that explains her deliberate and reflective departure from Thornfield and subsequent return to Rochester. These interwoven theoretical lenses collectively enable a nuanced and comprehensive interpretation of Jane Eyre's moral journey, demonstrating how she exemplifies moral integrity as a narrative, a complex character, and an enduring ethical role model across the span of her life and in her every utterance.

The existing body of literature provides a robust foundation for a deeper, theory-based examination of Jane Eyre's moral integrity. While previous scholarship has consistently highlighted Jane's agency and her remarkable moral resistance, there remains a notable absence of studies that systematically integrate psychological theories of motivation and identity with linguistic analysis of dialogue and emotional coherence. This research aims to fill this critical gap by synthesizing these diverse analytical approaches. The core research variables, derived directly from the theoretical framework, include the five dimensions of moral integrity: adherence to personal principles, emotional honesty, resistance to external pressures, moral courage, and consistency between belief and behavior. These variables will guide the textual analysis, allowing for a detailed exploration of how Jane's internal states, moral decisions, and speech acts align to form a cohesive moral identity.

Specifically, the literature on Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000) will inform the analysis of Jane's intrinsic motivations, examining how her choices are driven by personal values rather than external rewards or coercion. This will involve scrutinizing instances where Jane acts autonomously, such as her decision to reject St. John Rivers' marriage proposal, a choice that, despite offering security and purpose, lacks emotional truth and inner harmony for her. Blasi's Moral Identity Theory (1984) will be instrumental in understanding how Jane's core values become central to her self-concept, leading to consistent moral behavior even in

challenging situations. This will be evident in her refusal of Mr. Rochester's proposal after discovering his hidden marriage, where she prioritizes her principles over emotional attachment.

The linguistic aspect of the analysis will draw heavily from Speech Act Theory (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1979), which will be used to deconstruct Jane's dialogue and narrative monologues. This will allow for an examination of how her utterances function as performative acts that assert her identity and moral stance, as seen in her refusal of Rochester or her declarations of spiritual equality. Furthermore, the concept of emotional honesty, supported by research from Arvanitis and Kalliris (2020), will be explored by analyzing how Jane's emotional expressions align with her moral cognition and intentions, contributing to her overall integrity. Her open expression of love, grief, and fear, without societal pretense, will be key to this analysis.

Finally, the study will incorporate insights from feminist scholarship (Gilbert & Gubar, 1979) to contextualize Jane's moral autonomy as a form of resistance against gendered expectations and patriarchal authority. Her journey, marked by refusal to depend on male validation and her eventual reunion with Rochester on terms of equality, will be examined through this lens. The literature on cognitive dissonance will also provide a framework for understanding how Jane resolves internal conflicts between passion and principle by reaffirming her core values, as exemplified by her departure from Thornfield. By systematically integrating these diverse theoretical perspectives and focusing on the identified research variables, this study aims to provide a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of Jane Eyre's moral integrity, contributing significantly to both literary and interdisciplinary character analysis. This approach ensures that the research is not only grounded in established scholarship but also pushes the boundaries of current understanding, offering fresh insights into a timeless literary masterpiece.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative descriptive research design, specifically focusing on textual analysis to explore the multifaceted moral integrity of Jane Eyre, the central character in Charlotte Brontë's seminal novel 'Jane Eyre'.

A qualitative approach is deemed most appropriate for this inquiry, as it prioritizes the deep understanding of meaning, context, and interpretation over the quantification of data or statistical analysis. This design enables a rich, detailed, and nuanced portrayal of Jane's moral development throughout the narrative, shedding light on the intricate interplay between her internal motivations, emotions, beliefs, goals, and actions, and how these elements consistently form a principled moral identity. The descriptive nature of this study ensures that the findings provide comprehensive insights into Jane's character, which would be challenging to capture effectively through purely quantitative methods.

Data Collection Procedures

The primary data for this research consists exclusively of selected scenes and dialogues from Charlotte Brontë's 'Jane Eyre'. The data collection process was meticulously structured to ensure both relevance and depth of analysis, allowing for potential replication by other researchers. It commenced with a thorough and careful reading of the entire novel to establish a comprehensive understanding of its narrative arc, thematic concerns, and character developments. Following this initial immersion, specific scenes and conversations were systematically identified and selected. The criteria for selection were their demonstrable significance in revealing Jane's core values, authentic emotional expressions, personal goals, and critical moral decisions.

Data extraction involved the verbatim transcription of all relevant dialogues and narrative passages that explicitly articulate Jane's internal reflections, expressed sentiments, and descriptions of her actions. Each extracted text block was carefully

annotated with its corresponding chapter and page number from the Oxford University Press edition of 'Jane Eyre' to ensure traceability and facilitate future reference.

Data Analysis and Instrumentation

The collected textual data underwent a rigorous and systematic textual analysis, guided by an interpretive framework that seamlessly integrates concepts from psychology, linguistics, and literary studies. The analytical process involved a detailed coding of instances where Jane's behavior, thoughts, and speech aligned with the five predefined dimensions of moral integrity: adherence to personal principles, emotional honesty, resistance to external pressures, moral courage, and consistency between belief and behavior. This coding process served as the primary instrument for identifying and categorizing textual evidence relevant to each dimension. To ensure a robust, theoretically grounded, and replicable analysis, three main theories served as the foundational conceptual instruments for interpreting Jane's actions and words: Self-Determination Theory (SDT) by Deci and Ryan: This theory was instrumental in analyzing the motivational underpinnings of Jane's choices. It allowed for the differentiation between actions driven by her deeply held personal values (intrinsic motivation) and those influenced by external pressures or rewards (extrinsic motivation).

Furthermore, to enrich the analysis and provide broader context, relevant information from scholarly books, theses, and journal articles on 'Jane Eyre' and related theoretical concepts was integrated. This interdisciplinary methodology ensures a rigorous and comprehensive examination of Jane Eyre's moral integrity, offering a clear pathway for other researchers to follow and build upon.

Ethical Considerations

Given that this study primarily involves the textual analysis of a published literary work, the ethical considerations typically associated with research involving human subjects (e.g., informed consent, participant privacy, confidentiality) are not directly applicable.

However, the highest standards of academic integrity were rigorously maintained throughout the entire research process. This included ensuring accurate representation of the source material, meticulous adherence to proper citation practices, and transparent acknowledgment of all theoretical frameworks and external sources utilized. All interpretations and conclusions drawn from the

This analysis delves into the profound moral integrity of Jane Eyre, the central character in Charlotte Brontë's seminal novel. Jane's unwavering commitment to her ethical convictions is explored through five interconnected dimensions: Adherence to Personal Principles, Emotional Honesty, Resistance to External Pressures, Moral Courage, and Consistency Between Beliefs and Actions. By examining key scenes and dialogues, and interpreting them through psychological theories such as Blasi's Moral Identity Theory and Self-Determination Theory, as well as linguistic theories like Speech Act Theory, we gain a deeper understanding of how Jane's moral compass guides her through life's challenges.

Adherence to Personal Principles

text are explicitly supported by direct textual evidence, and any external knowledge or theoretical constructs are clearly attributed. The overarching aim is to contribute to the academic discourse in a responsible, transparent, and ethically sound manner.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Jane Eyre consistently demonstrates a steadfast commitment to her personal principles, even when confronted with significant personal cost or emotional hardship. This dimension is identified by analyzing instances where Jane's actions and decisions align with her deeply held ethical convictions, irrespective of external pressures or desires. The theoretical foundation for interpreting this adherence comes primarily from Blasi's Moral Identity Theory, which posits that moral integrity arises when an individual's core values become central to their self-concept and consistently guide their behavior. This theoretical lens reveals how Jane's self-concept is intrinsically linked to her moral values, making deviations from them intolerable.

Table 1: Adherence to Personal Principles – Key Manifestations

Scene/Event	Chapter	Jane's Action/Statement	Underlying Principle	Theoretical Insight
Refusal of Mr. Rochester's Proposal	23	'I will keep the law given by God; sanctioned by man.'	Upholding moral and legal boundaries, self-respect over emotional comfort.	Blasi's Moral Identity Theory: Moral values are central to self-concept; Self-Determination Theory: Decision driven by intrinsic motivation.
Departure from Thornfield	27	'I care for myself. The more solitary ... the more I will respect myself.'	Prioritizing self-respect and integrity over comfort and companionship.	Blasi's Moral Identity Theory: Staying would violate self-concept; Self-Determination Theory: Autonomous decision rooted in core self.

Jane's refusal of Mr. Rochester's proposal in Chapter 23 is a pivotal moment illustrating her adherence to personal principles. Despite her profound love for him, she firmly refuses to marry him upon discovering his existing

marriage to Bertha Mason. Her internal monologue, 'I will keep the law given by God; sanctioned by man,' directly reflects her unwavering commitment to moral and legal boundaries.. This decision is driven by intrinsic

motivation and her internal values, rather than external desires for comfort or social acceptance, aligning with the Self-Determination Theory (SDT). She chooses moral clarity over emotional compromise, demonstrating an autonomous decision rooted in her core self.

Similarly, her decision to leave Thornfield in Chapter 27, the man she loves, and the only home she has known, further exemplifies her adherence to principles. Her statement, 'I care for myself. The more solitary ... the more I will respect myself,' underscores her commitment to self-respect and integrity above emotional comfort or companionship. This action clearly indicates her willingness to endure hardship to uphold her ethical standards, and Blasi's theory helps explain that her moral identity is so

integrated that staying would violate her self-concept.

Emotional Honesty

Emotional honesty in Jane Eyre is characterized by her authentic expression of feelings without self-deception, allowing her decisions to be both heartfelt and reflective. This dimension is identified through close examination of Jane's dialogues and internal monologues where her true emotions are revealed, even when they are complex or painful. Speech Act Theory is particularly instrumental here, as it allows for an analysis of how Jane's speech acts (e.g., confessions, declarations) perform her identity and moral stance. Her emotional clarity, observed through her linguistic expressions, helps convey her moral integrity.

Table 2: Emotional Honesty – Key Manifestations

Scene/Event	Chapter	Jane's Action/Statement	Significance	Theoretical Insight
'Spirit' Confession to Rochester	23	'It is my spirit that addresses your spirit.'	Articulates deepest feelings and spiritual connection with sincerity.	Speech Act Theory: Speech acts perform identity and moral stance; Arvanitis and Kalliris: Integrity arises when emotional experience aligns with moral cognition.
Reflection After Departure from Thornfield	27	'I love Thornfield—I love Jane Eyre more.'	Honest self-assessment, acknowledging both love and commitment to identity despite profound grief.	Textual analysis: Shows transparency and capacity for honest self-assessment.

In Chapter 23, during a passionate exchange with Rochester, Jane declares, 'It is my spirit that addresses your spirit'. This statement showcases her ability to articulate her deepest feelings and spiritual connection with sincerity, aligning with the idea that emotional expression aligned with personal values supports authenticity. This finding supports the argument by Arvanitis and Kalliris that integrity arises when emotional experience aligns with moral cognition and intention. Following her departure from Thornfield in Chapter 27, Jane's internal reflections reveal her profound grief while simultaneously acknowledging her autonomy: 'I love

Thornfield—I love Jane Eyre more'. This narrative excerpt demonstrates her capacity for honest self-assessment, acknowledging both her love and her commitment to her own identity. This candid reflection, identified through careful textual analysis, shows her transparency.

Resistance to External Pressures

Jane's moral integrity is strongly evidenced by her unwavering resistance to external pressures, including authority figures, societal norms, and romantic appeals, when these conflict with her inner values. This dimension is identified by examining scenes where Jane actively rejects coercion or manipulation. The

Self-Determination Theory is crucial for understanding this aspect, as it highlights Jane's intrinsic motivation to act according to her

values rather than succumbing to extrinsic forces. Her resistance demonstrates her moral autonomy, a key concept in SDT.

Table 3: Resistance to External Pressures – Key Manifestations

Scene/Event	Chapter	Jane's Action/Statement	Nature of Pressure	Significance	Theoretical Insight
Confrontation with Mrs. Reed	4	'I will never call you aunt again as long as I live.'	Imposed family hierarchy, emotional abuse.	Early assertion of self, rejection of unjust authority, nascent moral agency.	Self-Determination Theory: Intrinsic motivation over extrinsic forces; Linguistic analysis: Early act of defiance.
Critique of Brocklehurst at Lowood	N/A (Lowood period)	Continues 'calm study despite disproportionate punishment'.	Hypocritical authority, harsh discipline, external judgment.	Internal resilience against oppressive forces, refusal to let external judgment compromise moral identity.	Blasi's Theory: Moral identity not compromised by external judgment; Narrative analysis: Resistance through internal state.
Rejection of St. John Rivers' Proposal	36	'I do not love you—I don't want to be a missionary's wife.'	Socially commendable path, duty, romantic appeal.	Refusal to compromise emotional truth and inner harmony for external expectations.	Speech Act Theory: Performative act of refusal; Self-Determination Theory: Commitment to authentic self.

In Chapter 4, Jane, as a child, confronts her aunt, Mrs. Reed, stating, 'I will never call you aunt again as long as I live'. This direct refusal demonstrates her early assertion of self and rejection of an imposed family hierarchy, showing her nascent moral agency. During her time at Lowood, despite Mr. Brocklehurst's harsh punishment and hypocritical authority, Jane maintains her sense of justice and continues her intellectual growth. The narrative describes Jane continuing 'calm study despite disproportionate punishment,' illustrating her internal resilience against oppressive forces and her refusal to let external judgment compromise her moral identity, aligning with Blasi's theory. A major example of her resistance is in Chapter

36, when Jane declines St. John Rivers' missionary proposal, stating, 'I do not love you—I don't want to be a missionary's wife'. This explicit rejection, identified through Speech Act Theory as a performative act of refusal, demonstrates her refusal to compromise her emotional truth and inner harmony for a socially commendable path or duty. This decision highlights her commitment to her authentic self, even when it means rejecting a seemingly noble purpose.

Moral Courage

Jane Eyre consistently exhibits moral courage, defined as the willingness to act under adversity to preserve moral agency and make difficult choices under emotional strain. This

dimension is identified by analyzing scenes where Jane takes decisive action despite fear, uncertainty, or significant personal risk. The Self-Determination Theory helps explain that

her courageous decisions are often driven by intrinsic values, even when they lead to difficult outcomes.

Table 4: Moral Courage – Key Manifestation

Scene/Event	Chapter	Jane's Action/Statement	Adversity/Risk	Significance	Theoretical Insight
Leaving Thornfield Alone	27	I arose and went down stairs... I left Thornfield alone.'	Physical danger, uncertainty, destitution.	Willingness to face hardship for moral conviction, prioritizing principles over safety.	Self-Determination Theory: Decisions driven by intrinsic values; Narrative analysis: Bravery in prioritizing principles.
Return to Rochester	37	Walks to his home 'alone, unsure of welcome'.	Ruined home, Rochester's disability, uncertain reception.	Willingness to accept risk to follow conscience, demonstrating strong ethical bravery for an equal relationship.	Narrative analysis: Not driven by weakness, but renewed sense of identity and possibility of equality.

In Chapter 27, Jane makes the courageous decision to leave Thornfield alone, stating, 'I arose and went down stairs... I left Thornfield alone'. This action signifies her willingness to face physical danger and uncertainty for her moral conviction, demonstrating her bravery in prioritizing her principles over safety. Her return to Rochester in Chapter 37, despite his ruined home and disability, further showcases her moral courage. The narrative describes her walking to his home 'alone, unsure of welcome'. This act is not driven by weakness but by a renewed sense of identity and the possibility of an equal relationship. This decision reflects her willingness to accept risk to follow her

conscience, demonstrating strong ethical bravery.

Consistency Between Beliefs and Actions

Jane's moral integrity is profoundly reflected in the consistent alignment between her stated values and her lived behavior across different life stages. This dimension is identified by tracing patterns of behavior and decision-making from childhood to adulthood, confirming that her actions consistently match her professed beliefs. Blasi's Moral Identity Theory is central to understanding this consistency, as it emphasizes the integration of values into one's self-concept, leading to consistent moral behavior.

Table 5: Consistency Between Beliefs and Actions – Key Manifestations

Scene/Event	Chapter	Jane's Action/Statement	Principle Demonstrated	Significance	Theoretical Insight
Childhood at Gateshead	N/A (Childhood)	Asserts she will tell the truth and not seek approval from Mrs. Reed.	Truthfulness, self-respect, integrity.	Sets the stage for lifelong commitment to truthfulness and self-respect; integrity is deeply embedded.	Blasi's Moral Identity Theory: Values integrated into self-concept; Textual analysis: Not episodic, but deeply embedded.
Lowood and Thornfield Tenure	N/A (Throughout)	Maintains humility and self-respect under criticism.	Principled behavior, self-respect, humility.	Values consistently carry through changing conditions; principled behavior is not situational.	Narrative analysis: Continuous alignment of values and actions.
Exile and Self-Support	N/A (Exile period)	Survives alone, teaching, and working by her own labor rather than compromising herself.	Self-reliance, honesty, integrity.	Self-reliance and honesty; integrity maintained even in isolation, highlighting depth of moral character.	Narrative analysis: Reinforces alignment of behavior with values.
Reunion with Rochester	N/A (Final reunion)	Returns when moral and personal equality are possible.	Moral clarity, equality, core values over mere sentiment.	Ultimate coherence of belief and action, solidifying moral integrity.	Narrative analysis: Actions consistently guided by core values.

Even in childhood at Gateshead, Jane asserts her moral self by stating she will tell the truth and not seek approval from Mrs. Reed. This early declaration sets the stage for her lifelong commitment to truthfulness and self-respect. This initial assertion demonstrates that her integrity is not episodic but deeply embedded from a young age. Throughout her time at Lowood and Thornfield, Jane maintains humility and self-respect under criticism. Her values consistently carry through changing conditions, demonstrating that her principled

behavior is not situational but deeply ingrained. This continuous alignment of values and actions underscores her unwavering moral compass.

During her period of exile and self-support, Jane survives alone, teaching, and working by her own labor rather than compromising herself. This period shows her self-reliance and honesty, further reinforcing the alignment of her behavior with her values. This demonstrates that her integrity is maintained even in isolation, highlighting the depth of her moral

character.

Jane's final reunion with Rochester occurs only when love aligns with equality and moral clarity. She returns when moral and personal equality are possible, demonstrating that her actions are consistently guided by her core values, not mere sentiment. This final act represents the ultimate coherence of her belief and action, solidifying her moral integrity.

In summary, Jane Eyre's moral character is a rich blend of strong principles, honest emotions, firm resistance to pressure, true courage, and consistent actions. By looking at her through these different lenses, we not only understand her better but also gain insights into how moral character develops. Jane's story continues to inspire, teaching us the importance of living with integrity, being true to ourselves, and facing life's challenges with unwavering moral strength. Her journey exemplifies a profound commitment to an inner moral compass that remains steadfast regardless of external circumstances or personal hardship. This detailed analysis, supported by psychological and linguistic theories, illuminates the enduring power of Jane Eyre's moral integrity as a timeless literary and ethical model.

Discussion

The findings of this study provide a comprehensive understanding of Jane Eyre's moral integrity, demonstrating it as a multi-faceted and deeply embedded aspect of her character. The systematic application of Blasi's Moral Identity Theory, Self-Determination Theory, and Speech Act Theory proved instrumental in dissecting the complex interplay of Jane's internal motivations, emotional expressions, and behavioral choices across her life stages. This interdisciplinary approach allowed for a nuanced interpretation of textual evidence, moving beyond mere plot summary to reveal the profound psychological and linguistic underpinnings of her moral development.

Jane's consistent adherence to personal principles, as evidenced by her refusal of Mr. Rochester's proposal and her departure from

Thornfield, strongly aligns with Blasi's theory of moral identity. Her decisions, though emotionally taxing, were not arbitrary but deeply rooted in her self-concept, where moral values were central and non-negotiable. This highlights that her integrity is not a series of isolated moral acts but a continuous expression of a deeply integrated moral self. This finding reinforces the idea that true moral integrity is characterized by an unwavering commitment to one's core values, even when faced with significant personal sacrifice. The analysis of Jane's emotional honesty, particularly her 'spirit' confession and candid reflections, underscores the importance of authentic emotional expression in moral integrity. Speech Act Theory illuminated how Jane's words were not merely descriptive but performative, actively shaping and asserting her moral identity.

Her ability to express her feelings transparently, without self-deception, allowed for a coherence between her emotional experience and her moral cognition, a key aspect highlighted by Arvanitis and Kalliris. This suggests that genuine moral behavior is often accompanied by emotional clarity, where feelings are acknowledged and integrated into ethical decision-making. Jane's remarkable resistance to external pressures, from Mrs. Reed's tyranny to St. John Rivers' persuasive proposals, exemplifies her strong moral autonomy. Self-Determination Theory provided the framework to understand that these acts of resistance were intrinsically motivated, driven by her internal values rather than external coercion or social expectations. Her ability to reject societal norms and authoritative demands when they conflicted with her inner truth showcases a high level of moral reasoning, akin to Kohlberg's post-conventional stage, where universal ethical principles guide decisions.

This finding is particularly significant in the context of Victorian society, where women were often expected to conform, making Jane's defiance a powerful statement of individual agency. Her moral courage, demonstrated

through her solitary departure from Thornfield and her eventual return to Rochester, illustrates her willingness to act decisively in the face of adversity. These actions, while fraught with uncertainty and risk, were driven by her commitment to her principles. The application of Self-Determination Theory here reveals that these courageous acts were not impulsive but were deliberate choices stemming from her intrinsic desire to maintain her moral integrity. This suggests that moral courage is not the absence of fear, but the ability to act in alignment with one's values despite it, a crucial component of a robust moral character.

Finally, the consistent alignment between Jane's beliefs and actions across her entire life journey—from her childhood assertions at Gateshead to her mature decisions regarding Rochester—is a testament to her profound moral integrity. Blasi's Moral Identity Theory provides a compelling explanation for this consistency, as Jane's values were so deeply integrated into her self-concept that they consistently guided her behavior, regardless of changing circumstances.

This long-term consistency distinguishes Jane's integrity as a fundamental aspect of her being, rather than a situational response. It reinforces the idea that a truly moral character is one whose values remain steadfast and whose actions consistently reflect those values throughout life.

In conclusion, Jane Eyre's journey serves as a compelling case study for exploring moral integrity through a multi-disciplinary lens. Her character embodies a powerful synthesis of principled adherence, emotional authenticity, resilient autonomy, courageous action, and unwavering consistency. The findings of this study not only deepen our understanding of Jane Eyre as a literary figure but also offer valuable insights into the nature of moral development itself, providing a robust framework for future research in character analysis across various literary and cultural contexts.

This study looked closely at Jane Eyre, the main character in Charlotte Brontë's novel, to

understand her strong moral character. We examined her thoughts, feelings, beliefs, goals, and actions to see how she consistently lived by her principles. To do this, we focused on five key aspects of her moral integrity: sticking to her personal values, being emotionally honest, resisting outside pressure, showing moral courage, and ensuring her actions matched her beliefs. We used ideas from psychology (like Self-Determination Theory and Blasi's Theory of Moral Identity) and linguistics (Speech Act Theory) to help us understand her character deeply.

Jane's Unwavering Principles

Jane consistently stuck to her personal values, even when it was very difficult. This was a core part of her character. For example, when Mr. Rochester proposed to her, she loved him deeply, but she refused to marry him because he was already married. She felt it was her duty to 'keep the law given by God; sanctioned by man'. This shows that her moral values were so central to who she was that she couldn't betray them without losing herself. Later, she left Thornfield, the only home she knew, stating, 'I care for myself. The more solitary ... the more I will respect myself.'

This highlights that her self-respect and integrity were more important than comfort or love. Her decisions were driven by her inner beliefs, not by what others wanted or what was easy, which is a key idea in Self-Determination Theory.

Her Honest Emotions

Jane was always truthful about her feelings, even complex or painful ones. This honesty made her decisions genuine and thoughtful. When she told Rochester, 'It is my spirit that addresses your spirit,'

she was expressing a deep, authentic connection. This shows that her feelings and her moral choices were in sync, which is important for true integrity.

Even after leaving Thornfield, she honestly acknowledged her pain but also her commitment to herself, saying, 'I love Thornfield—I love Jane Eyre more'.

We used Speech Act Theory to see how her

words didn't just describe her feelings but actively shaped her moral identity.

Resisting Outside Pressure

Jane consistently resisted pressure from others, whether it was from authority figures, societal expectations, or even romantic advances, if they went against her inner values. From a young age, she stood up to her cruel aunt, Mrs. Reed, telling her, 'I will never call you aunt again as long as I live'. She also bravely resisted the hypocritical Mr. Brocklehurst at Lowood.

A major example of her resistance was when she turned down St. John Rivers' proposal to marry him and join his missionary work. Despite the seemingly good purpose, she refused, saying, 'I do not love you—I don't want to be a missionary's wife'. This highlights that her choices were based on her own deep convictions, not on what society or others expected, showing her strong independence and moral autonomy.

Her Moral Courage

Jane showed great courage by acting on her beliefs even when it was scary or uncertain. Leaving Thornfield with no money or plan was an incredibly brave act. Her simple statement, 'I arose and went down stairs... I left Thornfield alone,' hides the immense courage it took to choose her principles over comfort and safety. Her later return to Mr. Rochester, despite his injuries and the challenges, was also an act of courage. She didn't return out of desperation but only when the situation allowed for an equal and morally sound relationship. This shows that Jane's courage wasn't about being fearless, but about acting according to her values despite her fears.

Actions Matching Beliefs

Perhaps one of Jane's most defining traits is how consistently her actions matched her beliefs throughout her life. From her childhood promise to tell the truth to Mrs. Reed, to her self-reliant life in exile, and finally to her reunion with Rochester on her own terms. Jane's behavior always reflected her core values. This consistent alignment, explained by Blasi's Theory of Moral Identity, means her

integrity was deeply ingrained and didn't change with circumstances. She maintained her self-respect and humility even when criticized at Lowood and Thornfield.

This constant harmony between her inner moral compass and her outward actions is what makes Jane Eyre such a powerful and lasting example of moral integrity. In summary, Jane Eyre's moral character is a rich blend of strong principles, honest emotions, firm resistance to pressure, true courage, and consistent actions. By looking at her through these different lenses, we not only understand her better but also gain insights into how moral character develops. Jane's story continues to inspire, teaching us the importance of living with integrity, being true to ourselves, and facing life's challenges with unwavering moral strength.

CONCLUSION

This study has demonstrated that Jane Eyre's moral integrity represents a deeply ingrained and consistently expressed dimension of her character, shaped by the interplay of principles, emotions, autonomy, courage, and consistent action. By applying Blasi's Moral Identity Theory, Self-Determination Theory, and Speech Act Theory, the analysis revealed that Jane's choices were not merely situational responses but the product of a coherent and enduring moral self. Her refusal of Mr. Rochester's proposal, her resistance to St. John Rivers' persuasion, and her departure from Thornfield highlight her unwavering adherence to values that transcended external pressures and personal desires.

Jane's emotional honesty further underscores the role of authenticity in moral identity, showing how her words and confessions functioned performatively in affirming her integrity. Likewise, her moral courage—acting decisively despite fear and uncertainty—reflects the profound connection between intrinsic motivation and principled action. Most significantly, the consistency between Jane's beliefs and actions across her life stages illustrates that moral integrity is not episodic but a continuous expression of an integrated self-concept.

Overall, *Jane Eyre* emerges not only as a literary figure of remarkable depth but also as a case study in moral development with interdisciplinary relevance. Her story affirms that genuine integrity rests upon the synthesis of principled adherence, emotional clarity, resilient autonomy, and moral courage. Beyond enriching literary analysis, these findings contribute to broader discussions in psychology, philosophy, and ethics, offering a framework for future research on character formation and moral identity across literary and cultural contexts.

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