

العلاقة بين التفكير الأخلاقي والسلوك الأخلاقي
في نظرية كولبرج وتداخلها مع قضيتي الصدق والعالمية

دكتور نديم الشرعي

أستاذ مشارك

جامعة تعز وشبكة جامعة عجمان

للعلوم والتكنولوجيا

ملخص :

تتناول هذه الدراسة قضية محورية في النمو الأخلاقي وهي العلاقة بين النظرية والتطبيق، وتحديد العلاقة بين مستوى النمو الأخلاقي في نظرية كولبرج وبين السلوك الفعلي. وتتبع أهمية هذه القضية من كونها تتصل بالاهتمام الأول لعلماء النفس وهو محددات السلوك.

يبدأ التقرير بتقديم الخلفية النظرية التي اعتمد عليها كولبرج وهي نظرية بياجيه في النمو الأخلاقي والمراحل التي توصل إليها. يلي ذلك مراجعة مختصرة لنظرية كولبرج في النمو الأخلاقي والدراسات التي أجراها لاكتشاف مراحل النمو الأخلاقي.

يتبين من الدراسات التي تمت مراجعتها أن هناك فجوة بين الجانب العقلي في الأخلاق والجانب السلوكي. تزعم هذه الدراسة أن صعوبة استخدام مستوى النمو الأخلاقي للتنبؤ بمسار السلوك ليست مشكلة منعزلة ولكنها ترتبط بجوانب قصور تتصل بصدق المراحل وبالميتها. إذ أنه ليس هناك ما يشجع على توقع علاقة قوية بين النظرية والتطبيق في الوقت الذي تكون فيه النظرية ذاتها بعيدة عن الواقع كما تشير إلى ذلك الدراسات المتصلة بصدق مراحل كولبرج ودراسات النمو الأخلاقي التي تقارن الثقافات وتقارن بين الجنسين.

تلقت هذه الدراسة الانتباه أيضا إلى قضية أخرى هامة لها دور في وجود الفجوة بين التفكير الأخلاقي والسلوك الأخلاقي. تلكم هي تركيز نظرية النمو الأخلاقي على الجانب العقلي وإهمال متغيرات هامة تحدد سلوكنا مثل الجانب الوجداني والدافعية والمعتقدات.

- 34- Shaffer, D. R. (2000). *Social and Personality Development*. (4th ed). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- 35- Simpson, E.L. (1974). Moral development research: A case study of scientific cultural bias. *Human development*, 17, 81-106.
- 36- Stiller, N.J. and Forrest, L. (1990). An Extension of Gilligan and Lyons's Investigation of Morality: Gender Differences in College Students. *Journal of College Student Development*. 31: 54-63.
- 37- Turiel, E., and Wainryb, C. (2000). Social life in culture: Judgments, Conflict, and Subversion. *Child Development*, 71: 250-256.
- 38- Walker, L.J. & Pitts, R.C. (1998). Naturalistic Conception of Moral Maturity. *Developmental Psychology*, 34: 403-419.
- 39- Ward, L. and Wilson, J.P. (1980). Motivation and moral development as determinants of behavioral acquiescence and moral action. *Journal of Social Psychology*, 112, 271-286.
- 40- Westen, Drew (2003) *Psychology*. New York, N.Y: John Wiley and Sons.

- 25- Locke, D. (1983). Doing what comes morally: The relation between behavior and stages of moral reasoning. *Human Development*, 26, 11-25.
- 26- McNamee, S. (1977). Moral behavior, moral development, and motivation. *Journal of Moral Education*, 7, 27-31.
- 27- Michael, C. Boyes, Lawrence J. Walker (1988). Implications of cultural diversity for the universality claims of Kohlberg's theory of moral reasoning. *Human Development* 31: 44-59.
- 28- Nuci, L., Cmino, C., and Sapiro, C. M. (1996). Social class effect on northeastern Brazilian children's conception of areas of personal choice and social regulation. *Child Development*, 67: 1223-1242.
- 29- Messer, D. & Miller, M. (Eds.) (1999) *Exploring Developmental Psychology*. Arnold: London, U.K.
- 30- Percival, T.Q. (1979). Cognitive implications of motivational parallel in moral development. *Canadian Journal of Behavioral Science*, 11, 214-224.
- 31- Piaget, J. (1965). *The Moral Judgment of the child*. Free Press: New Your
- 32- Power, C. and Reimer, J. (1978). Moral atmosphere: An educational bridge between moral Judgment and action. In Damon, W. (Ed.), *Moral development. New Directions for Child Development. No. 2*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass (PP. 105-116).
- 33- Sanders, C.E. (1990). Moral Reasoning of Male Freshmen. *Journal of College Student Development*. 31: 5-8

- 17- _____ (1971). From is to ought: How to commit the naturalistic fallacy and get away with it. In Mischel, t. (Ed.), *Cognitive Development and Epistemology*. New York: Academic Press.
- 18- _____ (1973). The claim to moral adequacy of a highest stage of moral Judgment. *Journal of Philosophy*, 70, 630-646.
- 19- _____ (1976). Moral stages and moralization. In Lickona, T. (Ed.), *Moral development and Behavior*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- 20- _____ (1978). Revisions in the theory and Practice of Moral development. In Damon, w. (Ed.), *New directions for Child Development. No. 1. Moral development*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- 21- Kohlberg, L., Levine, Charles and Hewer, A. (1983). Moral stages: A current formulation and a response to critics. In Meacham, J.A. (Ed.), *Contributions to Human Development, (vol. 10)*. New York: Karger.
- 22- Krebs, d. and Rosenwald, M. (1977). Moral maturity and behavior: Failure to find a link. *Journal of Youth and adolescence*, 9, 249-261.
- 23- Kupfersimd, J.H. and Wonderly, D.M. (1980). Moral maturity of moral thought: Review and evaluation of Kohlberg's approach. *Psychological Bulletin*, 81, 453-470.
- 24- Lind, G. (1989). Measuring Moral Judgment: A Review of 'The Measurement' by Anne Colby and Lawrence Kohlberg. *Human Development*. 32: 388-397

- 9- _____ (1993). Adolescent Development Reconsidered. In A Garrod (Ed.) Approaches to Moral Development : New research and Emerging Themes. New York: Teachers College Press.
- 10- Haan, N. (1975). Hypothetical and actual moral reasoning in a situation of civil disobedience. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 32, 255-269.
- 11- _____ (1978). Two moralities in action contexts: relationships to thought, ego regulation and development. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 36, 286-305.
- 12- Haan, N., Black, and Smith M.B. (1968). Moral reasoning of young adults: Political-social behavior, family background and personality correlates. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 10, 183-201.
- 13- Hoffman, M. (1977). Personality and social development. *Annual review of Psychology*, 28, 293-321.
- 14- _____ (1979). Development of moral thought, family and behavior. *American psychologist*, 34, 958-966.
- 15- Jaffee, S., and Hyde, J.S. (2000). Gender differences in moral orientation: A meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin*, 126: 703-726.
- 16- Kohlberg, L. (1969). Stage and sequence: the cognitive developmental approach to socialization. In Goslin (ed.), *Handbook of socialization theory and research*. (PP. 347-480). Chicago: Rand McNally.

References

- 1- Blasi, A. (1980). Bridging moral cognition and moral action: A critical review of the literature. *Psychological Bulletin*, 88, 1-45.
- 2- Candee, D. (1976). Structure and choice in moral reasoning. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 34, 1293-1301.
- 3- Colby, A. (1978). Evolution of a moral developmental theory. In Damon, W. (Ed.). *New directions for child development. No. 1. Moral development.* (Pp. 89-104). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- 4- Conn, W.E. (1982). Moral reasoning and moral action: A critical analysis of Kohlberg's theory of moral development. In Meachem, J.A. (Ed.), *Social Development in Youth: Structure and Content.* Basel: Korger.
- 5- Gerson, R.P. and Damon, W. (1978). Moral understanding and children's' conduct. In Damon, W. (Ed.), *New directions for child development. No. 1. Moral development.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- 6- Gibbs, J.C. (1977). Kohlberg's stages of moral Judgment: A constructive critique. *Harvard Educational Review*, 47, 32-61.
- 7- _____ (1979). Kohlberg's moral stage theory: A Piagetian revision. *Human Development*, 22, 89-112.
- 8- Gilligan, C. (1982). *In a different Voice: Psychological theory and Women Development.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

==Dr./ Nadeem Ashuraey==

“moral atmosphere” which influences social conduct. Oftentimes the social group’s values themselves influence both the individual’s conduct and his moral development (Power and Reimer, 1978).

==The Relationship between Moral Thought and Moral Action in Kohlberg's==
Moral content subsumes other variables that have been studied by Ward & Wilson, (1980) and Percival, (1979) in their relation to moral action.

The first study found that action is determined more by the interaction of social pressure on the one hand and self-orientation (safety vs. esteem orientation) on the other, than by the level of moral reasoning. Although in the second study Percival concludes that it is necessary to give "greater Weight" to motivational factors it is difficult to understand "greater Weight" in relation to what, because what the author did was to discover whether the subjects at each stage would be motivated by the "incentives" suggested for that stage by Kohlberg. For instance, stage 3 , "good boy, nice girl" would be motivated by interpersonal approval.

The second Variable, following motivation, is the context or the situation in which people find themselves. This has been found to have a strong influence on moral choice and action (Gerson and Damon, 1978; Gilligan, 1982; Power and Reimer, 1978). Whether we are speaking of one action or of long-term development any situation is always more than a moral stage and an action. The individual in his own way will interpret events and contexts. This will lead to specific moral judgment which does not necessarily correspond to one's level of moral reasoning as assessed by hypothetical dilemma. Additionally, contexts create a

claim on the judgment-action relationship (Messer & Miller 1999) or invalidate Kohlberg's theory (Hoffman, 1977; 1979; Simpson, 1974).

The general designs of the studies and measurement procedures are criticized and it is maintained that the cross-cultural, the statistical, the experimental and the longitudinal evidence is too weak to validate Kohlberg's theory in general not only with regard to the relationship between judgment and actions.

This means that the relationship between the level of moral reasoning and moral action, particularly the failure of the former to predict the latter, may not be an isolated shortcoming. It is a logical consequence of other fundamental problems especially the validity of the stages and the universality.

Moral action is not determined by cognition only. One of the variables to which Kohlberg theory did not pay enough attention is emotions. The cognitive school in general had had little to say about this important human phenomenon. The last section of the paper is dedicated to that issue.

Other Variables Influencing Moral Action

Moral behavior is not determined by cognition only. It is influenced by other variables. The most important of which are affective variables such as guilt and Empathy (Westen, 2003).

==The Relationship between Moral Thought and Moral Action in Kohlberg's==
between moral judgment level and moral action, they add little to our understanding of the nature of that relationship. Furthermore, they do not provide a clear rationale for choosing specific moral actions and not others. The generalization of the findings to other situations and populations is also limited because of their "experimental" nature and because their samples are limited to school pupils and college students who often have not confronted life in all its concrete dimensions

In a review of the moral cognition-action studies, Blasi (1980) states that the findings support the hypothesis that moral cognition is related to moral action. However, when it comes to specific empirical findings, he found that the strength of the judgment action relation is different from one area to the other. First, it is strongest for the hypothesis that moral reasoning differs between delinquents and non-delinquents. But it is important to note that this is not a clear case of judgment-action relation, and that delinquent, "immoral" behavior is defined differently by different studies, as Blasi has shown.

Second, there is less support for the hypothesis of judgment-action relation in the area of honesty. Finally, the weakest support is for the hypothesis that post-conventional reasoners resist, more than others, the social pressure to conform in their moral action.

In sum, except for the studies done by Kohlberg and his collaborators, empirical findings either do not support Kohlberg

many pre-conventional reasoners (stage 2) sat in as post-conventional reasoners. That means stages of moral reasoning cannot, on the whole, predict action, since reasoners at different stages may act in the same way for different reasons.

Another study (Krebs and Rosenwald 1977) assessed its subjects' levels of moral reasoning and then were given the rest of the tests in self-addressed envelopes to complete at home in one week. The subjects were paid fees for their participation. The moral action in the study was returning the materials on time. The results of the study indicate that the scale of moral development did not predict an everyday "moral" behavior.

First, there were no subjects in stages six and one. Second returning the materials on time was observed only among some subjects the in remaining stages (2-5). The correlation between the level of moral judgment and "honoring the contract" was weak.

Another study found stronger support for the relationship between the stages and behavior (Candee 1976). The moral action that was correlated with moral judgment level, however, was the subjects' responses to a questionnaire on Watergate and Lt. Calley. The author's conclusion was that there is a linear relationship between moral stages and moral choice.

Some researchers (Kupfersmid and Wonderly, 1980) noted that regardless of the results of studies on the relationship

==The Relationship between Moral Thought and Moral Action in Kohlberg's==
moral development debates. Some authors maintain that what is needed in order for the cognitive developmental theory to have a more adequate conceptualization of the relationship between reasoning and action is a more serious consideration of "substantive moral judgments" i.e. e., values (Conn, 1982).

A distinction is needed between moral reasoning (structures) and moral judgment in the most concrete sense of the word (Locke, 1982). In other words, for these authors as well as for a score of others, moral content, values, norms, etc., is as important as is moral form. But to incorporate moral content into the cognitive developmental theory particularly in the area of moral action prediction is yet to be achieved (Colby, 1978; Kohlberg, 1978; Kohlberg et al 1983)

One of the earliest of cited study is that of the free speech Movement (Haan, Block and Smith, 1968). These authors investigated the relationship between participation in the student's protest against some new regulations by the university administration against particular political activities on the one hand, and personality and social characteristics of the participating students including the moral judgment level a la Kohlberg on the other.

The study found that more post-conventional reasoners, defended free speech by sitting in than did conventional reasoners (stages 3-4). However, it was found that almost as

Movement, Haan (1975) found that 66 percent of the students used different stages in the actual situation protest than in a hypothetical dilemma.

In another study (McNamee, 1977) the reasoning was found to be often more moral than the action. Except for stage 6 many subjects thought they should help someone in need of help but did not do so in action. In stage 2, 36 percent thought they should help but only 11 percent did in fact help. At stage 3 the percentages were 77 and 36, respectively; at stage 4 the corresponding percentages were 69 and 38 percent and at stage 5 the percentages were 80 and 68 percent. All subjects at stage 6 acted in accordance with their moral thinking.

The fact that the relationship between thought and action is not linear and that only stage 6 subjects are consistent, has been found by Kohlberg himself (quoted by Haan, Black and Smith, 1968). In one of the Milligrams classical experiments, it was found that only at stage 6 a significant number of subjects (75 percent) defied authorities by refusing to inflict a higher voltage electric shock to their victims.

Similar findings on the inconsistency between moral reasoning and moral action were reported by a number of other studies (Kupfersmid and Wonderley, 1980; Ward and Wilson, 1980; Gerson and Damon, 1978).

Inconsistency is probably the most attended to problem in

==The Relationship between Moral Thought and Moral Action in Kohlberg's==
the work is underway to "enlarge" the theory in order to account more effectively for moral actions, among other objectives.

Other studies found little support to the claim that moral judgment inevitably leads to moral action. In his review of the literature, Shaffer (2000) found that most researchers have found that moral judgment level do not predict children's behavior in matters such as cheating and other 'immoral' behavior.

The relationship between moral judgment and moral action involves also the issues of: 1) whether the moral judgment level determines the moral action; (2) whether one needs the Kohlbergian moral structures in order to act morally, and (3) whether high stage moral reasoners consistently act more morally than low stage moral reasoners. Kohlberg and his supporters seem to take these issues for granted. "To act in a morally high way," writes Kohlberg (1976, p. 32), "requires a high stage of moral reasoning. One cannot follow moral principles if one does not understand or believe in them."

Considering the scarcity of studies that investigate action in real life it is difficult to determine once and for all the level of validity of the above assumptions. Moreover, the few studies that have attempted to investigate such assumptions seem to have failed to confirm them. For instance, it has been found that subjects do not necessarily act in accordance with their assessed moral reasoning stage. In another study of the free speech

effectively nor situationally determined since the “moral force” within each individual is cognitive which not only determines actions but also “defines” the many noncognitive predictors of action (see Kohlberg, 1969, p. 394; 1971, p 230; 1976, p. 32;; Kohlberg, Levine and Hewer, 1983).

“Just as there is a vertical sequence of steps” in moral development,” writes Kohlberg (1976, p. 32), “there is a horizontal sequence from logic to social perception to moral judgment... the final step in this horizontal sequence is moral behavior.” This sequence, the horizontal, was not referred to in Kohlberg’s earlier writings.

In fact he preferred to leave the sequence of the last two steps (i.e. e., moral judgment and behavior) an open empirical question (Kohlberg, 1969, p. 397). In a recent interpretive statement on Gilligan’s and Blenkey’s abortion study Kohlberg suggested that the sequence could be either way or simply that there is no sequence. It is rather a matter of coordination.

The coordination of structures of moral reasoning with structures of practical moral decision-making seems to be a process of coordination between action and reflection rather than a one-way determination of action by reflection or vice-versa. (Kohlberg 1983, p. 52)

No further elaboration is made concerning this coordination. Neither was the coordinator specified. But Kohlberg stated that

==The Relationship between Moral Thought and Moral Action in Kohlberg's==
interpersonal moral reasoning was used more than the cognitive developmental moral reasoning. The former is distinguished from the latter in two ways:

- 1- The source of interpersonal moral reasoning is "moral" dialogue the results of which are "balanced" agreements that are likely to be translated in action. In contrast, cognitive developmental moral reasoning is a matter of inner construction that could stay that way: they need not be externally validated by social behavior.
- 2- Interpersonal moral reasoning is contextual rather than abstract and inductive rather than deductive. For these reasons, in addition to the fact that its source is interpersonal moral reasoning is "more closely related to ego processing than is the cognitive developmental reasoning" and particularly the ego processes that pertain to coping, empathy and interpersonal logic.

Moral Thought and Moral Action

What has been discussed so far is only one component of morality which is moral cognition (judgment or reasoning). There are still two more components. These are emotion and action.. Kohlberg (1969, p. 374) maintains that once the first component is understood, we will have no difficulty understanding and predicting the last two. Moreover, moral action is neither

and more adequate approach to the conflict between selfishness and responsibility. The sequence proceeds "from an initial concern with survival to a focus on goodness and finally to a reflective understanding of care as the most adequate guide to the resolution of conflicts in human relationships" (Gilligan, 1982, p. 105).

It is not that women can not reach higher stages of moral reasoning a la Kohlberg (although current investigations find fewer women than men at high stages) but that their moral judgments is "oriented towards issues of responsibility and care rather than principles and justice" (p. 99). Stillar and Forrest (1990) studied male and female moral reasoning and found "significant differences". The researchers concluded that Kohlberg's stages hold only for men.

Interestingly enough, it has been found the 'care' is not necessarily a monopoly of women. Both men and women think that both 'care' and 'justice' are central to moral development (Walker & Pitts, 1998). In their meta-analysis, Jaffee and Hyde (2000) found that although women are more 'care' oriented and men are more 'justice' oriented, the differences between men and women are relatively small.

Another variation of the above moral orientation is the interpersonal morality of Norma Haan (1978). Again, this author's findings indicate that in an action context the

==The Relationship between Moral Thought and Moral Action in Kohlberg's==

Like each of us, Kohlberg himself, his interest in cognitive developmental and moral reasoning, his choice of a Kantian or Deweyan infrastructure for of such principles as justice, equality and reciprocity are all accidents of time and place and the interaction of his personality with a specifiable social environment and the norms of the subgroup within that environment. His rebuttal with... (Others) who emphasize cultural differences along with their superordinate more abstract commonalties is more a statement of faith than an evidence-based conclusion.

The universality of Kohlberg Stages appears to be absent also with regards to men and women. In investigating women's morality, Gilligan (1982, 1993) found that Kohlberg's type of moral reasoning is more salient with men than with women in the context of real life decisions. (note that Kohlberg's original sample contained no female subjects and neither did his oft-cited longitudinal study) Women are apt to value relationships, responsibility and care rather than abstract moral principles. Kohlberg stages claim a monopoly on human morality despite the fact that social conduct is determined by other systems of morality with orientations such as responsibility and care. (Gilligan, 1982)

Women go through a developmental sequence of three perspectives of responsibility and care. Each step marks a new

Dr./ Nadeem Ashuraey

ideology following its defeat in World War I, can hardly be considered non-western. With regard to Taiwan, we do not know how much of the culture its society is still non-western given the heavy western penetration since the foundation of the mainland Communist republic. The same thing could be said about India, the ex-gem of the British empire, or at least, the educated segment of India.

It stands to reason, and the literature of orientalism has shown that it is legitimate to ask to what extent the educated segments of the non-western societies are different from their western counterparts in matters of values and beliefs, or cognitive structures, given the fact that the world's information and communication systems are controlled by the West. In fact, the literature indicates that education in these non-western societies is itself westernization. No wonder then, that there are stage 5 reasoners in such societies. In General cultures, as empirical findings suggest, seem to exert their own moral reasoning (Nucci, Capino, & Sapiro 1996; Turiel and Wainryb, 2000; Walker & Pitts, 1998).

One is inclined to consider Kohlberg's claim (1971, p. 155) that morality "as has been conceived by western moral philosophers," is both is and ought "for all humanity a mere speculation. Furthermore, it is reasonable to take a cultural relativist stance such that of Simpson who wrote: (1974, p. 85)

==The Relationship between Moral Thought and Moral Action in Kohlberg's==
of this stage is not "a particularistic, existential moral theorizing rooted in culturally-specific metaethical thinking ... (this is) indicated by the fact that stage 5 appears to be used by educated persons in eastern countries as well as in the West" (Kohlberg, Levine and Hower, 1983, p. 154). The "non-western educated" stage 5 reasoners referred to in this statement are from Israel, Turkey, Taiwan and India. These are hardly "non-western."

Finally, the changing of Kohlberg's scoring system created a discrepancy among the studies in defining the stages (Colby, 1978, Lind, 1989). What is stage 2 in one study might be stage 1 in another and so forth.

The Universality of the Stages

As some researchers noted, Kohlberg put forth an unsubstantiated claim of universality (Simpson, 1974). There is a strong case for this critique. If we only turn our attention to the societies upon which the claim of universality rested. These are Israel, Turkey, Taiwan and India. Such societies, but especially the segments from which the samples were drawn are hardly far from Western thought.

As for Israel, in addition to the fact that the Israelis are a mixture of both Western and nonwestern people, the society is dominated both culturally and politically by western values.

Turkey, a country which has made "Westernization" its

Studies of college students (e.g. Sanders, C.E. 1990) did not find the higher stages. From a Piagetian cognitive developmental stance Gibbs (1977, 1979) has proposed a modification of Kohlberg's theory in which stages 5 and 6 are to be dropped. According to Gibbs, only the first four stages of Kohlberg's theory meet the criteria of a stage. They cover childhood and adolescence and they constitute the "standard phase" of moral development.

Adulthood is different. It involves metaethical reflections — not the spontaneous uncovering of structures by the mind, a characteristic of earlier ages. In fact Michael, Boyes, and Walker (1988) showed that the higher stages are in fact more metaethical reflections than natural development. Gibbs called development during adulthood the existential phase. Kohlberg himself, although still thinks that stage 6 is necessary, "has backed away from his initial characterization of stage 6 as a legitimate, achievable stage" (Kohlberg et al 1983).

While in agreement with more fundamental critiques of the theory as being "ethnocentric," "ideological," "elitist," "restrictively abstract" and "perniciously individualistic", Gibbs (1979, p. 90) expected that the theory "will be fine once its proportion returns to its proper constitutional frame." Stage 6 has been dropped from the new scoring system.

With regard to stage 5, it was retained because the reasoning

==The Relationship between Moral Thought and Moral Action in Kohlberg's==
adequate type of morality is stage 6 to which all people
ought to be prepared (Kohlberg, 1973).

Theoretical and Empirical Challenges to Kohlberg's Stages

In his original study, Kohlberg used a population of 72 middle and lower-class boys in Illinois and reported that he "isolated" six developmental types of value orientations. Those types provided the basis for the six stages of moral development (see appendix for Kohlberg's stages). "The number of types we came out with," writes Kohlberg (1969 p. 21) "was eventually rather arbitrary and undoubtedly determined by the limits of variation of our particular population." Such value orientations, however, had subsequently, become in Kohlberg's view the "natural" course of moral development of all humanity.

Such assertion has not been verified. On the contrary the theory proposes too many "natural" stages of moral development (Gibbs, 1977; 1979); Moreover the upper two stages have been found far from natural and universal. Simpson asked (1974) what is so "natural" about stage 5 which can "develop" only among those members of western societies who have access to power. The same question can be made with regard to "stage" 6 reasoning whose "structure's" source are the writings of such western philosophers as Kant and Descartes.

human rights, and of respect for the dignity of human beings as individual persons.

Kohlberg's review of Piaget's works and his own research led him to the following conclusions:

- 1- Moral Judgment (or reasoning) is developmentally linked to "physical" cognition development, specifically that a new cognitive stage is necessary for a new moral stage (Kohlberg, 1973, p. 632).
- 2- Each stage of moral development represents a type of thought that reflects structures emerging from the child's interaction with the social world, not from learned or socialized values or norms. Thus, social participation is the key element in moral development (Kohlberg, 1969).
- 3- The sequence of moral judgment stages is universal and should be found in all cultures (Kohlberg, 1969; 1971; 1973; Kohlberg, L., et al 1983),
- 4- The Universal developmental trends in moral judgment have a formal cognitive base. This is another way of saying that the cognitive universality and the moral universality go hand in hand (Kohlberg, 1969).
- 5- Moral judgments of the higher stages are necessarily more than those of the lower stages (Kohlberg, 1971, p. 176);
- 6- The endpoint of moral development, which is also the most

terms of general individual rights, and standards which have been critically examined and agreed upon by the whole society. There is a clear awareness of the relativism of personal values and opinions and a corresponding emphasis upon procedural rules for reaching consensus. Aside from what is constitutionally and democratically agreed upon, the right is a matter of personal "values" and "opinion." The result is an emphasis upon the "legal point of view," but with an emphasis upon the possibility of changing law in terms of rational considerations of social utility (rather than freezing it in terms of stage 4 "law and order"). Outside the legal realm, free agreement and contract is the binding element of obligation. This is the "official" morality of the American government and constitution.

Stage 6: The universal ethical principle orientation. Right is defined by the decision of conscience in accord with self-chosen ethical principles appealing to logical comprehensiveness, universality, and consistency. These principles are abstract and ethical (the golden Rule, the categorical imperative): they are not concrete moral rules like the ten Commandments. At heart, these are universal principles of justice, of the reciprocity and equality of

identifying with the persons or group involved in it. At this level, there are the following two stages:

Stage 3: The interpersonal concordance or “good bounce girl” orientation. Good behavior is that which pleases or helps others and is approved by them. There is much conformity to stereotypical images of what is majority of “natural” behavior. Behavior is frequently judged by intention – “he means well” becomes important for the first time. One earns approval by being “nice.”

Stage 4: The “law and order” orientation. There is orientation toward authority, fixed rules, and the maintenance of the social order. Right behavior consists of doing one’s duty, showing respect for authority, and maintaining the given social order for its’ own sake.

III. The Postconventional level

At the postconventional, autonomous, or principled level there is a clear effort to define moral values and principles which have validity and application apart from the authority of the groups or persons holding these principles, and apart from the individual’s own identification with these groups. This level again has two stages.

Stage 5: The social-contract legalistic orientation, generally with utilitarian overtones. Right action tends to be defined in

Stage 1: The punishment and obedience orientations. The

physical consequences of action determine its goodness or badness regardless of the human meaning or value of these consequences. Avoidance of punishment and unquestioning deference to power are valued in their own right, not in terms of respect for an underlying moral order supported by punishment and authority (the latter being stage 4).

Stage 2: The instrumental relativist orientation. Right action

consists of that which instrumentally satisfies one's own needs and occasionally the needs of others. Human relations are viewed in terms like those of the marketplace. Elements of fairness, of reciprocity, and of equal sharing are present, but they are always interpreted in a physical pragmatic way. Reciprocity is a matter of "you scratch my back and I'll scratch yours, "not of loyalty, gratitude, or justice.

II. The Conventional Level

At this level, maintaining the expectations of the individual's family, group, or nation is perceived as valuable in its own right, regardless of immediate and obvious consequences. The attitude is not only one of conformity to personal expectations and social order, but of loyalty to it, of actively maintaining, supporting, and justifying the order, and of

In Europe, a woman was near death from a very bad disease, a special kind of cancer. There was one drug that the doctors thought might save her. It was a form of radium for which a druggist was charging 10 times what the drug cost him to make. The sick woman's husband, Heinz, went to everyone he knew to borrow the money, but he could only get together about half of what it cost. He told the druggist that his wife was dying, and asked him to sell it cheaper or let him pay later, but the druggist said, no, I discovered the drug and I am going to make money from it. So, Heinz got desperate and broke into the man's store to steal the drug for his wife.

The subjects were asked for solutions to the dilemma and for the reasons for the solutions. The six stages and their characteristics are presented in the appendix. The stages are grouped into three levels each of which has its own basis for moral judgment.

I. Preconventional Level

At this level the child is responsive to cultural rules and labels of good and bad, right or wrong, but interprets these labels in terms of either the physical or the hedonistic consequences of action (punishment, reward, exchange of favors,) or in terms of the physical power of those who enunciate the rules and labels. The level is divided into the following two stages:

==The Relationship between Moral Thought and Moral Action in Kohlberg's==
thought, which refers to the structures or modes of thought and
specific problems, respectively. The cognitive developmental
theory, being a structural theory, is by definition, concerned with
form.

Cognitive development theory assumes that cognitive
development and social development is a single process so that
what stimulates developmental changes in cognition stimulates
social development, including moral development. Moral
development, however, involves also role-taking by which one
sees things from others point of view and expects others to see
things from one's own point of view.

By elaborating on, modifying and adding to Piaget's and
other's theoretical propositions, Kohlberg (1969) formulated a
theory which, according to him, provides a more adequate
explanation, and that other approaches to the study of morality
such as those derived from social learning and psychoanalytic
theories have failed to understand both the true nature of morality
and the process by which people become moral.

Kohlberg's Stages of Moral Development

Kohlberg defined six stages of moral judgment.: stages
which, according to Kohlberg (1969) were derived from
responses to hypothetical dilemmas presented to subjects such as
the following dilemma (Kohlberg, 1973, p. 638):

either copying other's behavior, incorporating, imitating or identifying.

Development in this theory involves interaction between the individual and the environment through which greater equilibrium is achieved. A socio-moral equilibrium between the individual's rights and others' rights is achieved through reciprocity. In the context of cognitive development this is corresponding to equilibrium in physical cognition which is achieved between the cognitive structures and the environment or between assimilation and accommodation is.

Finally, development occurs through stages. Each stage is qualitatively different from other stages; the solutions employed for the same problem are different from one stage to the other. The mode of thought for each stage forms "a structured whole" which entails the existence of logical relations among the child's solutions to different problems.

Another characteristic of the stages is that they occur in one sequence, with no variation, and it is the same in every society and every culture. The order of the stages forms a hierarchy of "increasingly differentiated and integrated structures" in the sense that new structures "reintegrate" old structures. As a result, old structures are consolidated and retained for problems that require them. Finally, implicit in the above structural perspective of development is the distinction between form and content of

==The Relationship between Moral Thought and Moral Action in Kohlberg's==
in social settings, whether at home or school or with peers, was not the purpose of Piaget's investigation.

Piaget maintains that: (1) the development of moral judgment is one aspect of cognitive development: (2) that just as cognitive development originates in action (or interaction) on the physical world, moral judgment originates in the child's action on the social world; and (3) that the stages can be identified in the development of moral reasoning during childhood. The first is called the heteronomous stage which is characterized by the child's belief that the "moral" and the "good" is what is judged to be so by those in authority positions. Similarly, the "immoral" or the "bad" is what is forbidden by those authorities.

In the second stage or the autonomous stage, the child heeds less external prescriptions and more his own judgment, guided by general principles such as cooperation, reciprocity and justice. Although according to Piaget, the two types of morality overlap, once cognitive immaturity and social constraints are overcome the autonomous morality gains dominance.

According to Piaget, moral development is governed by the same principles that govern cognitive development. Development in this sense involves, first, internal structural transformation as well as structural expansions. This is different from moral development in other theories for which moral development is

The paper begins by reviewing the theoretical background of Kohlberg's stages particularly Piaget's theory and his stages. This is followed by presenting a summary of Kohlberg's levels and stages of moral reasoning. Following such background the paper turns to the main issue. It presents and discusses the problems facing Kohlberg's stages particularly with regard to the validity of the stages, the claim of universality and the relationship between moral thought and moral action.

The literature makes it clear that the failure to find strong evidence that moral reasoning is a predictor of moral behavior is strongly related to problems in the stages themselves, the assumption of the universality. In other words it is hypothesized that it would be difficult to find a strong relationship between moral development level and moral action when the moral development level is based on incoherent theory and inconclusive empirical findings.

The Theoretical Background of Kohlberg's Stages

Kohlberg's studies of moral development are a continuation of Piaget's. As part of the latter's investigation of cognitive development, his earliest investigation of moral development was carried out in the early 30's (Piaget, 1965). He was interested in the development of morality in childhood, particularly the moral reasoning children employ at different ages. Children's behavior

The Relationship between Moral Thought and Moral Action in Kohlberg's Theory

Nadeem Ashuraey

Associate Professor

Taiz University and Ajman

University of Science and

Technology Network

Introduction :

One of the most important concerns of students of morality is moral conduct in everyday life. However, little analysis and research had been done on that. What has been the subject of analysis and research is rather people's knowledge of virtues or their intellectual construction of morality. It has often been assumed that moral thoughts lead to moral action. That assumption is increasingly challenged by empirical research.

Extensive work on the cognitive morality had been done by cognitive-developmental school of moral development. This school was founded by the Swiss genetic epistemologist Jean Piaget and articulated further and modified by Lawrence Kohlberg.

This paper reviews the fundamental claims of the cognitive school and the major critiques of such claims and attempts to evaluate the empirical findings and the nature of the relationship between moral thought and moral action.

The Relationship between Moral Thought and Moral Action in Kohlberg's Theory

Nadeem Ashuraey

Associate Professor

Taiz University and Ajman

University of Science and

Technology Network

Abstract :

This paper reviews the theoretical and empirical works on Kohlberg's moral reasoning stages. It focuses on the question of the relationship between moral reasoning and moral action. The theoretical bases and empirical findings reviewed point to a clear gap between thought and action.

It is argued that the failure of moral reasoning level to predict moral behavior is related to problems in the stages themselves and the assumption of the universality. In other words it is hypothesized that it is unreasonable to expect a strong relationship between moral development level and moral action when the moral development level is based on questionable theory and empirical findings. Another reason for the reasoning – action gap put forth in this paper is the influence of non-cognitive factors on human action, namely emotion. Kohlberg theory, like other cognitive theories have had no place for emotions in their systems.

The paper reviews the theoretical background of Kohlberg's stages particularly Piaget's theory and his stages of moral development. This is followed by a review of Kohlberg's levels and stages of moral reasoning. The core part of the paper deals with the problems facing Kohlberg's stages particularly with regard to the validity of the stages, the claim of universality (cultural wise and gender wise) and the relationship between moral thought and moral action.