

Session 8

Learning Theories: Lawrence Kohlberg's Moral Development Theory

A. Introduction

This session presents the theory of Lawrence Kohlberg, which is the Moral Development. His interest and focus of study is about the moral reasoning of an individual where he relate much of his research in Piaget's cognitive development. Coined with this idea of Piaget, Kohlberg uses the cognitive development to link with the ability of an individual to choose from doing what is right or what is wrong. This could also be used to understand the logical reasoning of an individual. He presented six (6) stages of moral development under the three (3) levels of moral reasoning or moral development. Generally, this theory is very useful in analyzing students' responses to varied scenarios in the classroom or in the school.

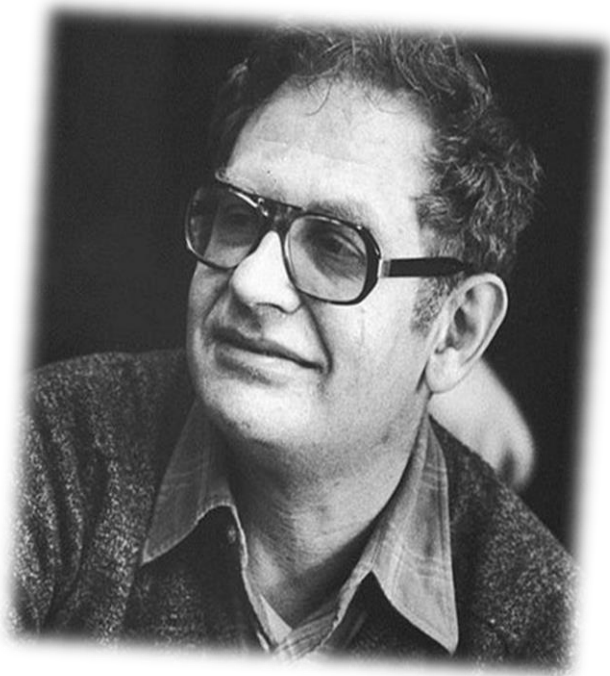


Image 1. Stages of Moral Development – Lawrence Kohlberg
(Source: Kurt, S.,2020 :Online)

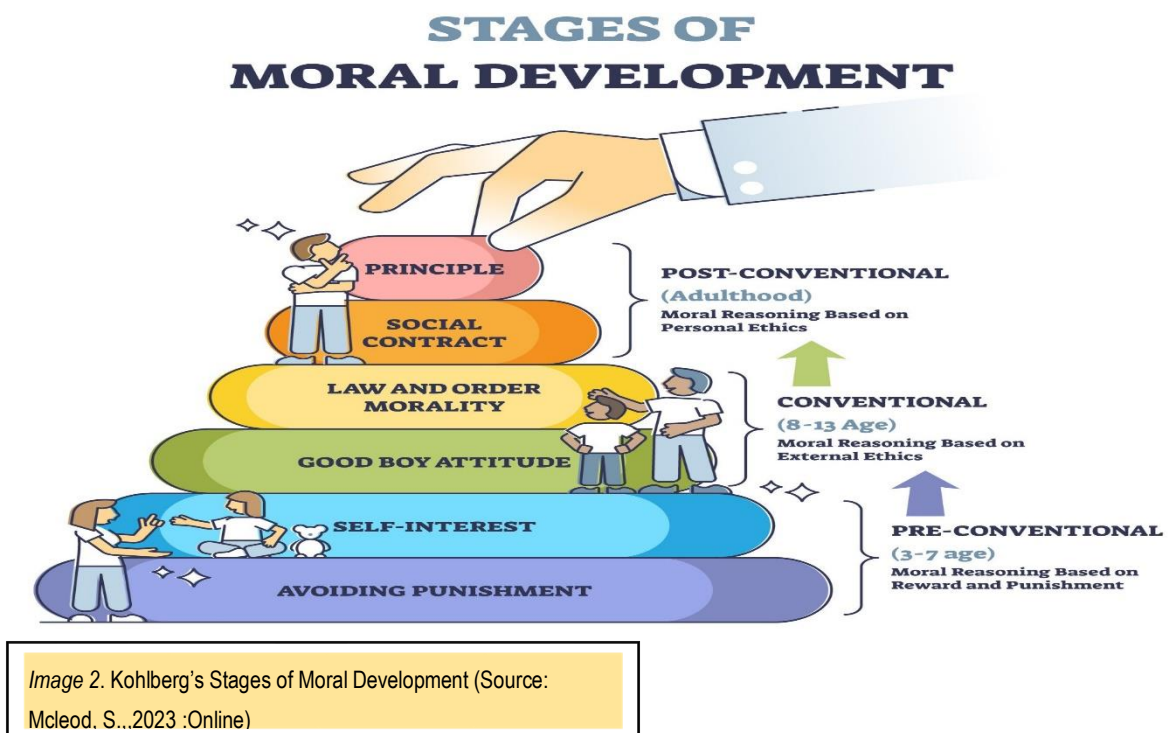
B. Session Objectives

- ✓ Explain the stages of moral development.
- ✓ Analyze the level of moral reasoning of an individual especially in a classroom and community scenarios.

- ✓ Examine one's reasoning based on one's moral dilemmas.
- ✓ Articulate how the theory of moral development or moral reasoning can be applied to teaching.

C. Session Content :

Lawrence Kohlberg identified six (6) stages of Moral Reasoning grouped into three major levels which are the Pre- Conventional, Conventional and Post-conventional orientation. Each level represents a significant change in the moral reasoning or perspective of an individual.



1. Topic 1: *Level One (1) of Moral Development*

Pre-conventional Orientation

Pre-conventional Level of Moral reasoning is based on the consequence or on the result of an action made, not considering the whether or not the action made or to be made is good or bad.

Stage 1: Punishment / Obedience

It is described as a motivation by fear of an individual to act upon an experience or scenario to avoid punishment or being punished by someone who is in authority.

Stage 2: Mutual Benefit

Mutual benefit is another kind of motivation that can yield benefit in the in the future. It is like you are investing something in order to get the same or even more in return. The term '*You scratch m back, I will scratch yours*' is an understanding or an agreement by two parties in which they will do favors to one another and in return will benefit both.

2. Topic 2: *Level Two (2) of Moral Development*

Conventional Orientation

The moral reasoning in this stage is based on the commonly accepted *standards* in the society that includes the affirmation or approval of others and following the law and order.

Stage 3: Social Approval

A person is motivated to what other people is expected of him to maintain a desirable inter-personal relationships with others. A person acts according to

what he or she wanted to be seen by the public because he/she care about what would be the feedback on his or her actions. In this stage people is more concern about the approval of the people or the society.

Stage 4: Law and Order

In this stage, people maintain and uphold the law or policies because they are the governing law or policies that must be followed. People recognize the importance of having law or policies in the society to maintain peace and order.

3. Topic 3: Level Three (3) of Moral Development

Post- Conventional Orientation

The moral reasoning in this stage does not only focus on recognizing the law or the policies but the principles behind it.

Stage 5: Social Contract

In this stage people learn to recognize the value of individual rights. What is common to every society is that there are laws and policies that controls the possible occurrence of conflicts and chaos since every individual have different points of view. A person thinks of flexibility in the implemented rules based on the majority's common good.

Stage 6: Universal Principles

This is the highest level of moral reasoning because it follows the universal moral principles. In this stage, people act based on their belief or maybe even on their culture even if it deviates to the societal standards.

D. Conclusion

People when confronted by a challenging situations, they need to composed themselves in order to allow logical reasoning to take place especially

in decision-making. In school, teachers play a very significant role in guiding the learners to practice or to develop the ability in choosing to do good or to do the right thing other than choosing to do that may harm other people or themselves.

E. References

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