

# Good example of moral development research paper

[Technology](#), [Development](#)



## **Introduction**

Raising a morally upright child is the dream of every parent. Parents tend to experience anxiety when their children fail to depict the expected morals. However, it is vital to consider the development state of children before supposing that their immoral behavior is a negative sign of their future. There are various theories of moral development such as Kohlberg and Gilligan theories, which explain the moral development in different stages. They help in understanding the stage in which the child is in and expect parents and other adults will develop reasonable expectations in order to guide the child toward effective moral stage. Therefore, the paper will focus on the progress of moral development from preschool to middle childhood. It will compare and contrast Kohlberg's theory to the Gilligan's theory of moral development. Finally, evaluate how parents should act to promote moral development from the preschool years via middle childhood.

## **The progress of moral development from preschool to middle childhood**

Early childhood is the stage when young children develop various social and emotional competencies such as the capacity to control their emotions, self, confidence, and moral values. These values are vital for successful, judgment and adjustment. Research indicates that lower social competence during the preschool years predicts both internalizing and externalizing problems in early adolescence. Proper instructions and guiding in this moral development stage are required to enable children to manage their feelings and behaviors successfully.

When children move from egocentrism to the higher logical stage of thought, they move via in the development of conscience and moral standards. Young children do not believe that standards of behavior come from within themselves and not from rules established and outlined by parents and others. During the preschool years, children adopt and internalize the moral values of their parents. They learn standards for acceptable behavior, act according to these standards and feel guilty when they violate them. Although the children who age 6 or 7 are aware of the rules and morals expected of them, they do not understand the reasons behind them. Therefore, the parents and other people who interact with these children should use rewards and punishments to guide their judgment. This will help them to understand bad morals are seen in someone who breaks a rule or causes harm. This is so because young children believe in imitating others on what is right and wrong. Therefore, preschool children tend to interpret accidents or misfortunes as punishment of demonstrating immoral behavior. On the other hand, middle school student is capable of judging the behavior by the intentions that provoked it rather than just its consequences. They do not abide by rules and judgments rather they start demanding on the needs and desires of others. For these children, violation of rules is likely to be seen in relation to the entire context in which it appears. The situation and the morality of the rule itself influence reactions. Although younger children judge the behavior based on their conscience, older children take into account different perspective. They are able to understand and accept the moral responsibility of treating other as they opt to be treated (Carr, 2005, PP. 21).

Therefore, the young children who lack proper moral development frequently demonstrate discipline problems in school and at home. For instance, behavior difficulties increase the risk of school dropout, substance abuse, delinquency, and violent behavior. Therefore, fostering moral development is vital for helping child attains positive life outcomes.

## **Compare and contrast Kohlberg's theory to the Gilligan's theory of moral development**

The debate over moral development and the similarities and differences which some claim exists between men and women, has been on a significant to psychologists. Lawrence Kohlberg's of moral stages has been a major factor in the exploration of morality since its early longitudinal studies on boys. On the other hand, Carol Gilligan proposed that women's unique life experiences and its influence on their moral development are not regarded as to what Kohlberg claimed in his universal model of moral development. Therefore, Kohlberg proposed the moral reasoning based on justice while Gilligan based hers on care. However, the two theories of moral development were based on the field of cognitive moral theory. They also attempted to identify the differences of morals on both genders of the human beings. Therefore, Kohlberg evaluated men while Gilligan examined women. Kohlberg's theory developed the Piaget's theory of moral development by asking boys of different ages to resolve a series of moral dilemmas. Kohlberg developed stages of cognitive development that started when a child is born and continued throughout his life. His moral reasoning was the recognition of the value of justice, which governed people's behavior, and a philosophical understanding of justice. For instance, one of the dilemmas is how one can

avoid being punished, which indicate his attribute of justice. He assessed how males interacted with each other during their development stages to build their own decisions.

On the other hand, the Gilligan theory focused on criticizing the sexist bias of Kohlberg theory because he based his theory on interviews with male participants, which indicate it was biased. Likewise, Gilligan theory indicated that Kohlberg's assessment of moral development was gender biased since women were grouped at stage 3 of moral development whereas men were on stage 4. This indicated that men achieve a higher level of moral development compared to women. Gilligan theory argued that boys develop morality of justice in which they focus on the use of laws and moral principles. On the other hand, girls develop the morality of care in which their major focus is on human well-being and on compassion for others (Eysenck, 2000, PP. 65).

The Gilligan's theory demonstrates how Kohlberg theory showed sexist bias by regarding the morality of justice as superior to the morality of care. Gilligan indicated that theories of moral reasoning should accord equal significance to the two types of morality. According Gilligan the gender diversity arises in the early childhood. Women are the major caregivers in most societies, and girls learn the morality of care via their powerful attachment to their mothers. On the other hand, boys are less attached to their mother and tend to identify with their fathers, which make boys develop the morality of justice (Eysenck, 2000, PP. 67).

## **How parents should act to promote moral development**

The moral development from the preschool years through middle childhood can be fostered by parenting styles. The parent can contribute in their children's moral development by assessing what a child recognizes as morality and traits that define a morally good or immoral child. The parents can help the child to develop self-control, social orientation, self-esteem, and compliance. Since moral conduct flows from interest and showing concern for others, parent should develop a good relationship with children, which can promote moral development. This is because it will help younger children to imitate the behavior of their parent, which is initiated by secure attachment. This is vital in the nature of the relation that generate the attachment that promote social and moral in the child.

The parent can help their children to have self-control, which promote the capacity to control their behavior throughout their life. Since the development of self-control is slow and difficulty based on the development stage of a child, the parent influence the development of self-control in their children via a process of scaffolding. The parents can offer their child support in the learning skills through guidance and feedback. Here, the parent can promote self-control development by establishing external controls vital prior self-regulation to offset the nascent self-control strategies seen in children. The parent can promote self-control development by teaching children to copy skills and offering ego-control that is yet to be developed (Damon, 2010, PP. 45).

The person demonstrates moral values when he or she has the capacity to adhere to selected external controls. Therefore, parent behavior is very

influential in the development of compliance in children, which is vital in moral development. Likewise, parents can promote moral development via initiating self-esteem in children. This helps children to accept themselves via setting defined limits of their child's behavior.

## **Conclusion**

In a recap, moral development is very vital in influencing the well-being of individuals. This was demonstrated in the moral development progress in preschool to middle childhood. Likewise, the paper evaluated the differences and similarities between Kohlberg theory and the Gilligan theory of moral development, which demonstrated the gender diversity in their moral reasoning. Finally, the paper analyzed the role that parents play in moral development.

## **Reference List**

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