

# Moral development and the gender bias

Sociology



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Interspersed throughout these critical learning levels are seven different stages of understanding in which the child slowly progresses from one level to the next. Kohlberg defines the first level of moral development as that time when a child is very impressionable to rules and standards of behavior, but only to the extent that he or she will act a certain way to avoid physical punishment or gain physical rewards (treats, etc.).

Level Two moral development involves both conformity and loyalty to social norms, according to Kohlberg, and this is the level that parents and educators strive to instill in their children. In this stage, laws and societal rules are accepted and understood as being put in place for the good of the nation or group. In contrast, Level Three, also called the Autonomous Level, sees an individual making judgment choices based not only on societal expectations and laws but on his or her own personal ethical code, which has developed throughout the years (Kohlberg 1971).

According to Miller, Van Esterik and Van Esterik, the concept of childhood itself has only been in use for a few hundred years (2001); this relative newness gives researchers few concrete ideologies when it comes to understanding the moral development of a young person in school. Kottak agrees that the role of the classroom and the effects of a changing world are constantly creating new issues with students; he feels that in particular, television has a great role to play in the gender development of students everywhere. Kottak notes that in a few short decades as television became omnipresent, students began treating their teachers and their peers with what he regards as less respect and simply less attention. Instead of learning their place in society from their teachers and their parents, they are also learning it from movies and TV programs; in fact, these very programs have <https://assignbuster.com/moral-development-and-the-gender-bias/>

a direct effect on the gender bias in classrooms (Kottak 2000). Where parents and even teachers might tend to avoid actually discussing the issue of gender bias in the classroom and the wider world, television opens up the topic for discussion and children are learning early on about their history as sex and making decisions about their future in this respect.

### Conclusion

Kohlberg's levels of moral development can be directly implemented by teachers in early learning situations most effectively; the more time left before instilling basic social expectations, the more difficult it is to instill them at all. As children in level one are the most susceptible to learning fresh concepts, it is best that teachers of younger children do their best to address issues of gender bias in such a way as to bring the children forward into a new reality, instead of merely teaching them about what already exists. Perhaps this is the most crucial aspect of level one learning: instead of showing children the things that need changing and hoping they will decide to take a stand in the future, teach them about their role in a more perfected society.