



Classical and Contemporary Approaches for Moral Development*

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Abstract

Most of the information in the moral development literature depends on Theories of Piaget and Kohlberg. The theoretical contribution by Gilligan and Turiel are not widely known and not much resource is available in Turkish. For this reason introducing and discussing the theories of Gilligan and Turiel and more comprehensive perspective for moral development were attempted. The purpose of this paper is to presenting and discussing comparatively the psychological theories of moral development. Piaget had proposed two stage theory in children's development as called "moral heteronomy stage" and "autonomous stage". Kohlberg, on the other hand, had established his comprehensive theory of moral development based on Piaget's cognitive developmental stages in which he suggested 3 levels and 6 stages. Although Kohlberg's theory had been very influential, it has limitations with ignoring local, cultural, moral ideas and being disconnected between moral behavior and moral judgment. Gilligan particularly as a reaction of focus on male development rather than females contributed to the literature of moral development. For her, women tend to consider other's care and protection and she emphasized this difference of ethic of care and ethic of justice. However only few studies in the literature have pointed out differences between women and men in terms of moral judgment. Besides Gilligan's ideas are also been criticized for lack of different contextual and cultural support. Turiel, has quite a different perspective for moral development and he specifically focused on connections between social life and morality. As the pioneer of Social Domain Theory he mentioned the difference between "social convention" and "morality". In this paper, theories are presented with their major concepts.

Key Words

Moral Development, Theories of Moral Development, Gilligan's Moral Development Approach, Social Domain Theory, Elliott Turiel.

Most of the knowledge in moral development literature depend largely on theories developed by Piaget, Kohlberg and later theories. Contributions from Gilligan and Turiel are represented relatively limited. However, only few Turkish resources mention Gil-

ligan and Turiel's theories. In this review, contributions from Freud, Piaget and Kohlberg have been touched, criticisms are mentioned. Gilligan's and Turiel's theories comparatively introduced.

In moral development, Freud considered conscience a key for moral development which develops in the superego (Turiel, 2002). In addition personality development is completed largely in the first 5 years of life (Kağıtçıbaşı, 1999). In the psychoanalytic theory, especially development of rules and effect of physical punishment are crucial.

Piaget's and Kohlberg's Moral Development Theories

Piaget and Kohlberg approach moral development from cognitive perspective. Piaget used various sto-

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ries in order to investigate moral development and observed the children during in the play settings (Wright & Croxen, 1989). Piaget emphasized the importance of mutuality autonomy in moral development (Onur, 1979).

Piaget proposed two stages in the moral development as “heteronomous stage” and “autonomous stage” (Fleming, 2006; Gander & Gardiner, 2010; Kağıtçıbaşı, 1999). Although Piaget’s comments were very crucial in moral development, his method had been methodologically criticized (Schaffer, 1997). The Piagetian views led Kohlberg to develop a new theory based on three levels and six stages (Çileli, 1987). The levels in the theory are “preconventional”, “conventional” and “post conventional” (Gander & Gardiner; Kohlberg, 2008). Kohlberg’s contributions to moral development have been very influential (Stroud, 2001). Kohlberg and Piaget theories have common qualities (Çileli; Mercin, 2005). Kohlberg’s theory had reported western cultures reached higher stages. However this finding had not been supported by certain studies and criticized by some other researchers (Kuyel & Glover, 2010; Miller, 2006; Schaffer, 1997). Rest developed Defining Issues Test (DIT) which is used widely (Thoma, 2006) and most of findings support the validity Kohlberg’s theory (Ekşi, 2006).

Carol Gilligan and Moral Development

Carol Gilligan stated already existing theories were developed mainly for man which was a problem (Austrian, 2008). Gilligan pointed out the quality differences women and men moral judgment (Talbot, 2002). Gilligan proposed two models in her theory which are “ethic of care” and “ethic of justice” (Gilligan, 2003; Jaffe & Hyde, 2000; Kyte, 1996; Rhodes, 1985). Gilligan stated that both women and men use two judgements from time to time. But “ethic of care” is mostly seen for women and “ethic of justice” is mostly viewed for men (Friedman, Robinson, & Friedman, 1987; Gilligan, 1982 cited in Jaffee & Hyde; Hotelling & Forrest, 1985). Gilligan criticized Kohlberg methodologically (Friedman et al.; Jaffe & Hyde; Lasch, 1992; Woods, 1996). Instead of hypothetical stories, she preferred real life events (Gilligan, 2003). Gilligan conducted interviews with 29 women from different socioeconomic backgrounds and suggested ethic of care had 3 levels (Austrian; Jaffe & Hyde).

Gilligan criticized Kohlberg as he obtained all the findings from men and generalized the findings to all genders and stated experiences of girls and boys

in various societies differ. In addition, Gilligan stated Kohlberg’s ideas are not universal (Austrian, 2008; Gander & Gardiner, 2010; Gilligan, 2003; Gilligan & Attanucci, 1988; Gilligan & Wiggins, 1987). Although Gilligan criticized Kohlberg’s theory, she herself received series of criticisms in the literature. Not many researches was done based on Gilligan’s ideas and existing research only partially supported her ideas. Gilligan’s overemphasis on gender differences and her ignorance of sociocultural context are major criticisms (Jaffe & Hyde, 2000; Lins-Dyer & Nucci, 2007; Puka, 1991; Skoe & Marcia, 1991; Steinberg, 2007; Thomas, 1997; Turiel, 2002; Walker, 1989).

Social Domain Theory (Elliott Turiel)

Turiel himself is a child in the year 1944 had been saved by a Turkish consolate from being sent on Auschwitz concentration camp and this experience contributed him to study moral development (Rossett, 2003). Social Domain Theory was developed by Turiel (1978; 1979; 1983). Smetana (1983; 2011) as one of the Social Domain Theorists stated through social interactions, individual obtain a lot of information and moral thinking were also based on social interactions. Especially thinking for moral issues develop this way. Turiel (1983; 2002; 2006) similarly stated that children’s daily social experiences contributed the development of moral judgments. In this theory, “social convention” domain represent the rules that children think they are mandatory and these rules provide order for various social settings and they consist of series rules as a form of guide which are responsible for social interactions (Smetana, 1993, 2011; Vasta, Miller, & Ellis, 2004). Turiel (1979; 1983) thought children moved from accepting rules in the social convention domain towards rejecting these rules.

The last sources of social knowledge are mentioned “personal or psychological domain”. This domain includes processes such as understanding and discovering the self (Smetana, 2011). In addition, personal domain includes individuals’ private life but also covers prudential conditions (Nucci, 1981; 1996; 2001; 2008). Prudential conditions in the social domain theory were mentioned by empirical studies in the literature (Smetana & Asquith, 1994; Tisak, 1986) and were supported (Nucci & Nucci, 1982; Tisak, 1993; Tisak & Turiel, 1988).

From developmental perspective ages of sources of information in the social domain theory had been also mentioned (Smetana & Brages, 1990). However differences between cultural contexts and the

separation age and quality in these cultural contexts have been discussed (Turiel, 2002; Turiel & Wainryb, 1994; Wainryb, 1993). Social Domain Theorists provided criticisms for Kohlberg's theory and the differences between religious and non-religious societies (Kuyel, 2007; Vainiu, 2011). So these are various form of Social Domain Theory adapted the different cultural contexts (Vasta et al., 2004). These are criticisms for social domain theory in the literature (Swaner, 2004). However focuses on adolescent parent relationship are considered strong aspects of the theory (Nucci, Camino, & Sapiro, 1996; Smetana & Asquith, 1994). In the literature, those are research in the context of adolescent parent relationships conducted in various cultures (Nucci, 2001; Smetana, 2011).

Conclusion

Although Piaget and Kohlberg provided valuable contribution to the literature, they were also exposed to criticisms (Wright & Croxen, 1989). Gilligan contributed the literature women's moral judgment. Jorgensen (2006) mentioned that Gilligan and Kohlberg criticized each other for their differing views. However they agree on the contributions of cultures on adolescents' principles of justice (Austrian, 2008). Both Kohlberg and Gilligan had been criticized by social domain theorists (Smetana & Turiel, 2003). Social Domain Theorists and Kohlberg differ largely on awareness of sources of social knowledge and moral principles (Kohlberg, 1984; Smetana, 1999; Turiel, 1983). As contrary to other theories, Social Domain Theory is considered more social-cognitive. Turiel and Killen (1998) considered Social Domain Theory's limitation with social dilemmas and adolescent parent relationships a positive asset of the theory.

In Turkey, there are limited studies on the moral development (Çelen, 2000; Ekşi, 2006). As these studies are first studies in moral development, they are valuable. However these researches are very limited in number. This paper does not include replications for practice which is considered as a limitation. Later studies may focus cross-cultural comparisons and theoretically and practically more functional.

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