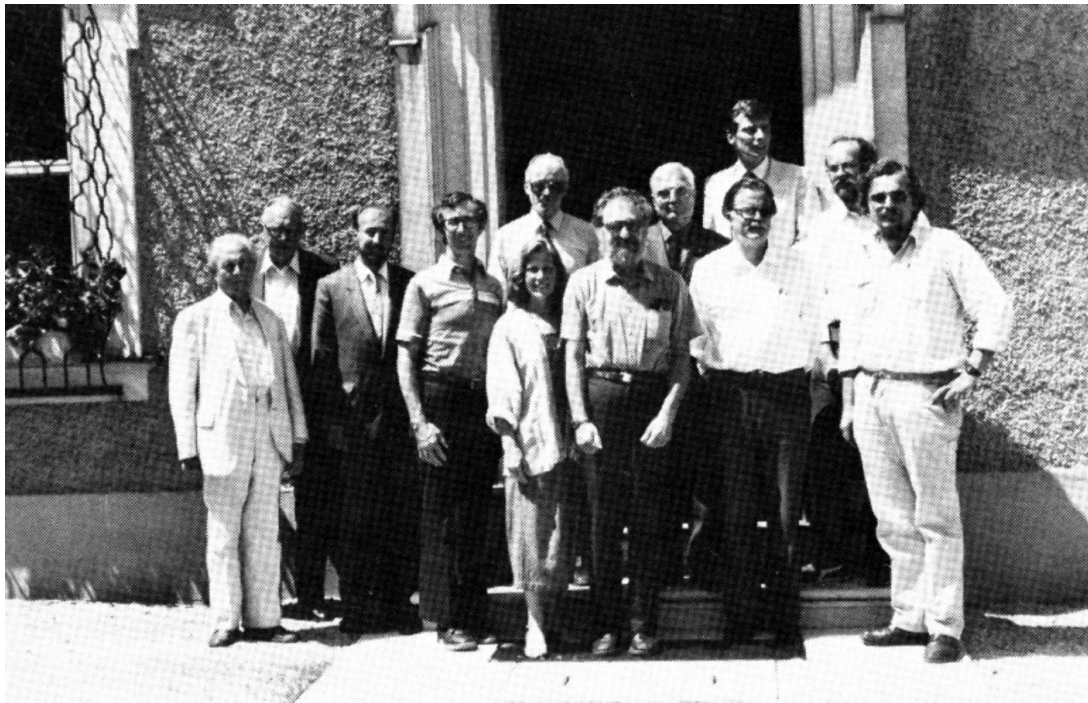


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# MORAL COMPETENCE AND EDUCATION IN DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY

Georg Lind

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This paper views ‘conscience’ in the context of society and education. Modern states, in particular democratic ones which rely on the rule of law and popular voting, require an adequate stage of moral-cognitive development in their citizens. Schooling is widely thought to be a necessary and indispensable means for achieving this, although it may not be a sufficient one and other social institutions may be equally necessary. Our main question is: Do institutions of education in our societies foster moral judgment competence? After reviewing a large body of research findings related to this questions, the answer is that yes, by and large education does facilitate cognitive-moral development. This seems to hold true at least for secondary and university education. Before beginning this review, I would like to comment briefly on the salience of moral-cognitive development for the survival and development of a democratic society, and on problems of definition and measurement.

## 2. EDUCATION AND MORAL COMPETENCE IN DEMOCRACY

In his recent essay on the cognitive prerequisites of “Political Observers and Market Participants”, the political scientist Robert Lane (1983) observes a most interesting difference in learning mechanisms. According to Lane, the abilities needed in economic market interaction are developed by participation in the market itself, that is, through “punishments and rewards.” The competence for coping with the tasks facing a democratic society does not have a comparably powerful reinforcement.

One might object and point out the catastrophic punishments that “low political performance” has inflicted upon societies throughout the course of history. However, as Lane rightly asserts, politics is less concrete, personal, and quantifiable than are economic markets, and involves abstract and remote ideas about justice and human needs and rights which might be difficult to promote through rewards and punishments. Hence other means of teaching, even if less effective than the immediate rewards and punishments of the market, must be considered when attempts are made to promulgate democratic culture.

More than 150 years ago, Alexis de Tocqueville, one of the first commentators of politics in a democratic society, asserted that general education in schools and universities is among the most important prerequisites for the political behavior of the citizen. He believed that only education can make the individual discover the advantages of political competence. Tocqueville foretold “a time when freedom, public peace, and even the social order will not be able to endure without education.”

For this reason he emphatically demanded: “People should be educated whatever the cost” (Tocqueville, 1976, p. 613, my transl.).

Both times after the catastrophes of World War I and II, this advice seems to have been recalled. Politicians endeavored to reconstruct the educational system in such a way as to provide a better education for a broader class of people. This was not only to make up for the high unemployment rates among young veterans or to provide a good starting base for individual professional careers, but above all to instill a higher moral and democratic competence in the citizenry as a whole. After the Second World War, the importance of democratic education and the development of democratic personality was recognized once again. As Ralph Barton Perry wrote, “Education is not only a boon conferred to democracy, but a condition of its survival and of its becoming that which it undertakes to be. Democracy is that form of social organization which mostly depends on the personal character and moral autonomy. [. . .] Democratic education is therefore a peculiarly ambitious education.” (1954, p. 425). In Germany, after the terror of the Nazi-regime, which today is perceived less as the deed of a single man than as the failure of society as a whole, the reconstruction of schools and universities was guided by similar beliefs. In 1947 the “Committee on the Reform of West German Higher Education” began to turn out a series of influential papers (the *Blaue Gutachten*). The committee states, “The conviction that each citizen should have a full share in the political responsibility must never again be lost. The practical realization of this insight in Germany is particularly important, though also particularly difficult” (cited in Neuhaus, 1961, p. 293, my transl.).

Unfortunately, the lessons taught by the man-made catastrophes of the two wars were in both cases soon in danger of fading away. In the first time, in the Weimar Republic, the striving for better and broader education could not endure long enough to produce democratic and moral competence in a sufficient number of people. The problems involved in the reorganization of postwar Germany and resulting from worldwide economic turmoil at the time were beyond the coping capabilities of society, and produced anti-democratic and anti-intellectual sentiments. The second time, after World War II, a similar development appeared to take place. Postwar difficulties as well as fear of communism and the cold war fostered the enlargement of the educational system. However, there was soon a shift from democratic and moral aims to economic and military emphasis. As Hersh and his colleagues wrote, “The 1950's were an inhospitable time for moral education, or for any form of study that smacked of ‘progressivism’ [. . .] Moral education took a back seat to technical and academic training [. . .] Democracy seemed to hinge less on the moral autonomy of the individual than on the size of the gross national product and the quantity of nuclear warheads.” (Hersh, Miller and Fielding, 1980, p. 23).

In any event education was for many individuals considerably increased. Within eighty years, in (West) Germany university attendance rose from less than one to more than twenty percent. There was a temporary decrease during the Third Reich when

university education faced suspicion. But after the Second War, many new universities have been built and the attendance rose strongly (cf. Peisert and Framhein, 1980). And in the sixties it was the university students who revived such ideas as morality, democracy and education, amongst others in the United States (Haan et al., 1968; Yankelovich, 1974) and in West Germany Nitsch et A, 1965). While one cannot overlook the negative role that the “new mandarins” or the “back door boys”, as Chomsky has called the intellectuals, can play in modern society, one may speculate that without the moral and critical competence of the highly educated, complex societies like ours would uphold freedom and justice to an even lesser degree than they do now. With the new movements, politics and morality are seen to be closely related again. As early as the 1920's, it had been suggested that moral and democratic competence be viewed not as separate, but as overlapping domains of personality (cf. Piaget, 1932; Allport, 1929). Recently, Christian Bay restated this by saying that “political activity is almost synonymous with moral activity and each citizen [. . .] is a political and moral being” (1971, p. 168). Empirical research has supported this view by showing that the correlations between moral judgment competence and various aspects of political attitude and action are substantial and largely consistent with each other (cf. Haan et al., 1968; Alker and Poppen, 1973; Rest, 1979; Lind, Sandberger, and Bargel, 1981-82; Schenk and Bohn 1983; Heidbrink, 1983; Weinreich-Haste). In his research, Kohlberg has found “that reasoning and decision making about political decisions are directly derivative of broader patterns of moral reasoning and decision making. We have interviewed high school and college students about concrete political situations involving laws to govern open housing, civil disobedience for peace in Vietnam, free press rights to publish what might disturb national order, and distribution of income through taxation. We find that reasoning on these political decisions can be classified according to moral stages and the individual's stage on political dilemmas is the same level as on nonpolitical dilemmas (euthanasia, violating authority to maintain trust in a family, stealing a drug to save one's dying wife)” (Kohlberg, 1978, p. 43-44).

Consequently, there has been a return to the idea of ‘moral education’. However, this type of ‘moral education’ is not to be understood as the teaching of conformist behavior or the indoctrination of values, but as “education for the analytic understanding, value principles, and motivation necessary for a citizen in a democracy if democracy is to be an effective process” (Kohlberg, 1978, p. 43). It is notable that in discussing new educational policies, the notion of general education has been partly de-emphasized in favor of specialized programs in civic and moral education (cf. the papers in Purpel and Ryan, 1976; Scharf, 1978; Mosher, 1980). This may have been because there was little trust in the overall democratizing effect of school education. Individual impressions nourished the suspicion that the organization and “hidden curriculum” of our schools may be inadequate for, or even adverse to, fostering democratic competence and behavior. However, with regard to moral and democratic

competence, there had been little or insufficient empirical data to evaluate such an educational aim. Only now, with the new concepts and methods that cognitive--developmental theory has provided, the evaluation of the democratizing effects of schooling can be based on a broader and more adequate set of empirical data.

### 3. ISSUES OF DEFINITION AND OPERATIONALIZATION

According to Kant, human behavior is to be called “moral behavior” only if it is motivated by moral concerns or principles. Hence, labeling a behavior as “moral” always requires psychological properties, motives and judgments to be taken into account when assessing it. A person’s behavior or judgment that is not related to his or her own moral motive cannot be rightly called a moral behavior, even if it were objectively in accordance with external, that is, socially defined norms. Roughly speaking, only those rules can be called “moral” which are universally valid. Hence “moral behavior” is defined as behavior that obeys internalized and universally valid moral maxims. Therefore, we may distinguish three forms or meanings of moral behavior:

1. Behavior which is merely objectively in accordance with social norms, enforced by the “law of effect”, that is, by punishments and rewards. The question of moral goodness does not arise because the behavior is pre-moral.
2. Behavior which subjectively (through internalization) complies with conventions and laws. This type of behavior is enforced by feelings of shame and social insulation.
3. Behavior which does not obey social norms blindly, but on the basis of a critical evaluation regarding their consistency and universality. Only in this case can conscience be said to have developed into moral autonomy or autonomous moral judgment competence.

“Moral competence” means both the willingness to base one’s behavior on universalizable moral maxims (= the affective aspect), and the ability to apply these principles in one’s behavior consistently, i.e., for example to evaluate an action consistently with regard to moral principles even if this is contrary to one’s prior habits and opinions (= the cognitive aspect). We may call this the ability to decenter (Piaget) or to take the perspective of the generalized other (G.H. Mead, Kohlberg). Cognitive-developmental theory is to be credited with drawing our attention to this cognitive or structural aspect of Moral conscience and behavior. Nevertheless, we must be aware of the fact that the affective aspect, i.e., the affective binding of behavior to social norms and moral principles is not secondary or less important. There is no cognition without affect.

This conceptual differentiation between the affective and the cognitive aspect of moral judgment behavior, as obvious as it may seem, was not easily translated into the

language of research. Early assessments of moral attitudes and moral behavior have mostly been confined to the individual's affective tendency toward social or moral norms, but have seldom addressed the structural properties of moral judgment, i.e., the question of logical consistency and universal validity. How and how well is a person's moral conscience organized? How well is his or her moral judgment competence developed?

The strength and weakness of a purely affective approach are best exemplified in the much quoted "Studies in Deceit" by Hartshorne and May (1928). The goal of this study was to determine whether children's behavior was objectively in accordance with socially defined norms. The authors failed to assess the degree of subjective internalization of those norms, and completely left out the issue of reflective and critical judgment. Although these and other researchers were aware of the cognitive aspect of moral behavior, they nevertheless employed measurement instruments that were not able to assess this aspect (for an excellent review, see Pittel and Mendelsohn, 1966). Among the first authors who attempted to overcome this gap between theory and research were Levy-Stuhl, Moers, Hetzer, and Piaget who did most interesting research on moral behavior in the nineteen-twenties. However, manageable research instruments for assessing the effects of education or of an educational system as a whole were only developed later, foremost by Kohlberg. He created a standardized, yet very flexible interviewing and coding system which allowed him to assess both the affective and cognitive aspects of moral judgment (cf. Kohlberg, 1958; Colby and Kohlberg, 1984). On the basis of Kohlberg's method, James Rest (1979a; 1979b) and others have developed questionnaires similar to classical attitude tests or based on a mixture of interview and test (cf. Kuhmaker et al. 180). Building more on Kohlberg's theory than on his method, we have created the "Moralisches-Urteil-Test"<sup>+</sup> which is based on the new methodology of "Experimental Questionnaire" (Lind, 1982). The major aim of the MUT, in addition to assessing the affective aspect, is to measure the cognitive aspect of an individual's moral judgment behavior (i.e., its universality) in an analytically differentiated way without disintegrating it from the affective aspect. We assume that both aspects can be distinguished from one another but cannot be ontologically devided and, therefore, cannot be assessed through sampling different sets of behavior (cf. Lind and Wakenhut, 1983; Lind 2016<sup>+</sup>).

#### 4. HYPOTHESES ABOUT THE IMPACT OF EDUCATION ON MORAL DEVELOPMENT

Although many of us would regard it as highly desirable that schools foster moral and democratic competencies, there is great scepticism whether our school system is actually able to do this. Modgil and Modgil (1976) quote research which found that "educational attainment does not appear to be an effective factor in moral judgments

in adults and the elderly” ( p. 98). Some see the aims and the structure of formal education as being directly opposed to such a development. Education for citizenship and moral development implies goals which are at least in part ”incompatible” with one another within the school framework (cf. Nelson, 1980, p. 257). Other institutions of education indeed seem to add little to the progress of moral-cognitive development. A study of apprentices showed that vocational training without general education has a significant effect on the moral development of apprentices, however, this effect is still small when compared to the differential impact of the level of previous schooling (Lind, 1983b; Oser and Schläfli). Socialization in the military seems to have no or even a slightly negative effect on the development of moral judgment competence (Wakenhut, 1984; Räder and Wakenhut, 1984). Surprisingly, even higher education is said to have no (enduring) effect on the acquisition of democratic attitudes (Newcomb, 1974; Cloetta, 1975).

From cognitive-developmental theory, on the other hand, one can derive an opposing hypothesis, namely that the multiple opportunities of participation and interaction which institutions of education provide, together with the moral ideas on which they are based, will eventually foster moral growth (cf. Kohlberg, 1969; Lind, 1983a). In particular, the experiences of responsibility and freedom provided by higher education are considered by Kohlberg as both necessary and sufficient for promoting democratic competence beyond the level of conventional, obeisant morality (Kohlberg, 1973, p. 196). Although the rates and absolute degrees of development may vary considerably, in most cases this development should be empirically evident, invariant, and enduring.

## 5. REVIEW OF EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

A number of research projects have in the meantime tried to validate the cognitive-developmental hypothesis. The hypothesis that education affects moral development has been examined in three ways, (a) through analyses of the correlation between the level of moral development and the level of education, (b) through longitudinal studies of effects of socialization and selection produced by institutions of education, and finally (c) through educational experiments in which special pedagogical programs in schools, like the Just Community approach, were introduced to foster cognitive-moral development of students. To provide a common basis of comparison, I have throughout transformed the figures reported into the Pearson coefficient of correlation  $r$  between two variables.<sup>2</sup>

### 5.1 Correlational Studies

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<sup>2</sup> The correlation coefficient  $r$  ranges from +1, indicating a perfect linear relationship between moral development and level of education, over 0, no relation, and to -1, a perfect negative relation. The formula for computing  $r$  from the F- statistic is:(cf. Bredenkamp, 1970)

$$r = \left( \frac{F}{F+N-2} \right)^{1/2}$$



A corroboration of the positive role of schooling in moral-cognitive development can already be found in correlational studies. Although a high correlation does not positively prove the alleged relationship, it can, if calculated from findings of thoughtfully designed studies, rule out a number of objections. A negative or consistently low correlation would of course call into question the notion of a cognitive-developmental basis of moral judgment.

As a matter of fact, all studies reviewed showed very high correlations between the level of education and moral judgment competence.<sup>3</sup> Kohlberg's (1958) original cross-sectional study of modes of moral thinking in adolescence showed an educational effect between the ages of 10 and 16 of more than one stage of reasoning (from Stage 1.3 to 2.6). The correlation between both variables accounts for about 44% of the total variance in judgment (which is equivalent to a  $r$  of +0.66).<sup>4</sup> However, because of the design of the study the effects of education cannot be distinguished from effects of other age-related variables. Candee, Graham and Kohlberg (1978) provided correlational evidence from subjects of their longitudinal study which indicated that the level of education attainment was very closely associated with adult moral reasoning ( $r = 0.71$ ). This association was higher than any of the correlations with job status, IQ, father's job, and even with the level of moral reasoning in the subject's adolescence. Rest (1979a), using the Defining-Issues-Test, has produced findings very similar to these. In his first study on students from high school, college, and Ph. D. courses in philosophy and political science, Rest found a correlation as high as  $r = +0.69$ ; in a second sample as  $r = +0.67$ ; in a combined analysis of data from 136 different studies on 5,714 subjects, the correlation was  $r = +0.62$  (computed from the omega-square statistic reported by Rest, 1979a, p. 110). There were moral score differences (P-score) due to education of more than 35 percentage points of a total of hundred points (pp. 108-111). In this study, education and age could also not be differentiated, but studies with adults indicate that, after the completion of education, judgment competence decreases rather than increases with age (pp. 111- 112).

Kitchener and King (1981, p. 107), drawing upon the similar concept of reflective judgment found that from high school to graduate students there was an increase of more than three stages (on their 7-stage development scale). The correlation between educational level and development, as computed from the F-statistic, was  $r = +0.77$ . This correlation "could not be statistically accounted for by other theoretically or potentially confounding factors related to intellectual development: verbal ability, formal operations, socio-economic status, and verbal fluency" (p. 112).

In a study on Swiss vocational school (Berufsschule) students, there was a small but noticeable effect of three years of education  $r = +0.09$ ,  $p .05$ ). The effect may be so

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<sup>3</sup>A linear correlation of  $r$  greater than +0.60 (not corrected for attenuation) can be called "very high". It is rare when two psychologically distinct variables are involved.

<sup>4</sup>The formula for computing  $r$  from percentage of variance (PV) is simply  $r = (PV : 100)^{.5}$ , with  $PV = 100 * r^2$

small because this education provides only one-day-a-week general education at school while the other days are devoted to on-the-job training. The quality of previous general education (as based on the tripartite system of secondary education in Switzerland) is more strongly correlated to moral-cognitive development  $r = +0.29$ ) than is vocational training. In this study, the “Moralisches-Urteil-Test” was used (cf Lind and Wakenhut, 1983). A cross-sectional comparison of high school graduates, university graduates, and scientists in the Federal Republic of Germany which used the same instrument showed that there are considerable differences in moral judgment competence and that they are attributable to different degrees of general education (Lind, 1983a).

## *5.2 Longitudinal Studies*

‘The evidence for a decisive impact of formal education on moral and democratic development is of course more convincing when obtained from longitudinal studies. With their 20-year longitudinal study, Kohlberg and his colleagues could show that the correlation of education and moral development is indeed independent of age, as it remains high within all age periods’ studied (Colby et al., 1983, pp. 50-51). They were also able to once more demonstrate that the correlations between moral judgment competence and level of education are higher than the correlations between moral judgment and either social class or IQ, and that these correlations remained substantial even after socio-economic status and IQ were taken into consideration (pp. 55-56). The most important finding was that the attainment of “consolidated stage 4” of “moral judgment (which was formerly partly scored as stage 5) was closely correlated to college attendance (p. 56). This finding conforms well with the theoretical expectation, stated by Kohlberg in 1973, that college experience is very important for the development of a principled moral reasoning.

In a very thorough and encompassing comparison of longitudinal development of students with college education and without, Jim Rest (1979b) also found strong support for the hypothesis that higher education fosters development in moral judgment: “While both college and non-college groups show increases immediately after leaving high school, by the time that four years have passed, the college students are still showing gains while the non-college subjects are not.” (p. 33). These gains could not be attributed to other variables studied. In our own, still ongoing, longitudinal study on university socialization in five European countries, we have some preliminary findings that are consistent with the findings of Kohlberg, Rest and others. In the interval between high school graduation and entrance of university, and in the time between the first and fifth semester of study, we found consistent progress in the cognitive-moral development of German students (Lind, 1983c). Regressions, which Kohlberg and Kramer (1969) have discussed, occurred only superficially. There

are good reasons to believe that the regression phenomenon is mainly caused by inadequacies of the assessment method used (Colby et al., 1983; Lind, 1983c).

This latter study also gives some insight into the interrelation of the development of the affective and cognitive aspect of moral judgment competence, which may be of importance for educational practice. Both aspects seem to develop in parallel fashion, as Kohlberg has suggested, but also in a predictable time order. It is astonishing how systematically the direction and strength of students' attitudes toward the different stages of moral justification (= affective aspect) correlated with the degree of moral judgment consistency (= cognitive aspect). This finding has been replicated without exception in several studies on university students and other subject groups. However, in developmental terms the high esteem for high stage moral reasoning (and the rejection of low-stage reasoning) seems to take place prior to the development of the competence of integrated and differentiated judgment in concrete situations of moral conflict. Even in their first semester of study, almost all students prefer stages of moral reasoning which have been ascribed a higher ethical value, and hardly change this preference order during study, whereas the competence aspect, i.e., the consistency of students' moral preference judgments, seems to be not fully developed yet and still increases while attending university (Lind, 1983c).

One educational implication of this finding seems especially worthy to mention. We have seen that many young students are morally very sensible even though they still lack all capability to apply their moral principles consistently. This sensibility seems to be extremely important for the growth of students' personality, though it may also be a major source of an individual's frustration and discontent. Obviously, in most instances the environment is supportive and understanding, and discontent ultimately leads to the enhancement of moral judgment competence. But moral development may take another path when there are no opportunities for discussion, participation and role-taking. Then moral sensibility may turn into either moral rigorism or moral cynism and resignation.

### *5.3 Experimental Studies: Educational Intervention*

A number of studies provide us with information on the effectiveness of educational interventions on the level of individual school classes and schools. While in the beginning these interventions were designed as a specialized curriculum in a classroom, there are now also interventions which comprise a whole educational institution, like a school. Their aim is not only to stimulate moral development but also related psychological processes, and to enhance the moral atmosphere of the supportive social environment (Kohlberg, Lempert, Oser and Schläfli).

In sum, these studies show that special moral curricula can succeed % fostering cognitive-moral development. There have been promising theoretical and practical

attempts in this regard (for reviews see Althof, 1984; Mosher, 1980; Oser, 1981; Rest, 1979a). Preliminary but most impressive effects have been reported from experiments involving a whole educational institution and which succeeded in changing its moral climate (Higgins, 1980; Kohlberg).

- (a) Some limitations of these pedagogical experiments should also be mentioned: Rarely could any of the educational interventions proceed like an experiment in physics in which all relevant variables are held constant; therefore, we cannot be sure whether the effects are really attributable to these interventions.
- (b) Typically, these interventions are rather complex. Most researchers have designed their own specific configuration of educational treatments for achieving a measurable growth in moral maturity. Therefore, it is difficult to say which single treatment or which constellation of treatments is the most effective.
- Finally, (c) the range of educational means that could be used was more or less constrained by the institution in which the experiment took place (Oser and Schläfli).

These objections apply to almost any educational intervention and certainly do not invalidate moral education. The process of identifying effective educational means for moral-democratic development is a very arduous one, and new insights will have to be gained by evaluating both present and planned educational programs in this field. Neither in physics nor in education are isolated experiments sufficient to validate a theory. We will achieve a better understanding only through a process of simultaneous improvement of the theory of moral development and of educational practice (Kohlberg called this process “bootstrapping”). As the basis of our experiences widens we will be more able to determine which educational means must be held constant and which variable in order to adjust moral education to the particular circumstance. This will be especially true when moral-cognitive interventions are adapted to other institutions of socialization and other countries. New programs and studies will have to be designed which attend to the special needs of students, parents, teachers, the school system and the political environments of these countries. Moreover, most of the moral education programs<sup>5</sup> which we have been studied so far were new and exceptional. Their effects can be for the better or for the worse, considerably different when moral education becomes a common curriculum in a state’s educational system.

## 6. CONCLUSION

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<sup>5</sup>The countries participating in this international panel study into the conditions and effects of higher education (MM) are Austria, Federal Rep. of Germany, the Netherlands, Poland and Yugoslavia. The study is coordinated by the Vienna Center for Social Sciences, Grünangergasse 2, P. O. Box 974, A-1011 Vienna, Austria. In charge of the German part is the project group Hochschulsozialisation at the University of Konstanz: Tino Bargel, Barbara Dippelhofer-Stiem, Gerhild Framhein, Georg Lind, Hansgert Peisert (director), Johann-Ulrich Sandberger and Hans Gerhard Walter.

Most of us would probably agree with Tocqueville that democracy should be interested in the formation of the individual personality not only for the sake of the individuals' vocational career, but also for the sake of democracy itself as the cognitive-moral research of two decades shows, our educational systems seem to have by and large fulfilled this objective. All findings have shown with surprising consistency that general education actually does foster cognitive-moral development and hence democratic competence. For example, the impact of education cannot be reduced to effects of socio-economic status, IQ, verbal abilities, or age. The effects remain substantial even after competing variables have been considered. This fostering effect of the educational system has been shown in the United States through a series of well-designed cross-sectional, longitudinal, and experimental studies. For the Federal Republic of Germany and other European countries only scarce evidence is available yet.

This achievement of general education applies in particular to the cognitive aspect of moral judgment, i.e., a person's ability to deal with moral dilemmas and to make consistent and differentiated moral judgments in the face of conflicting needs and principles. Whereas the affective binding to moral principles seems to have been largely established before schooling, i.e., in childhood or even in infancy, schooling apparently helps the individual to develop competencies in organizing and applying these moral principles to concrete action in complex social situations. We have noted that moral competence is not equivalent with rigid adherence to general principles but with the ability to eliminate inconsistencies in one's judgments and to regard differentially the situation to which they apply (cf. Döbert and Nunner-Winkler). Feelings of guilt and shame are certainly an important prerequisite that the child becomes conscious of moral issues. They make one also aware of conflicting values and principles. But feelings and emotions do not suffice to solve those conflicts. The individual must in addition develop moral-cognitive capacities. For this, education is without doubt of great importance. However, though schools and universities foster cognitive-moral development, the degree to which they do so may not suffice in view of the number and difficulties of the problems before us. Extraordinary problems call for the development of extraordinary moral competency. For this, it may be necessary to provide not only parts of society but all its members with a higher level of education. Apart from this, education on all levels may need improvement with regard to its capability to foster moral-cognitive development. This may be achieved by implementing special moral education curricula and perhaps better yet by improving the moral atmosphere of schools, colleges, universities. Moreover, moral education must be brought into balance with general education, that is, with the teaching of such other subjects as physics, history, chemistry, languages, mathematics, economics and so on, because the individual also needs those subjects to develop comprehensive judgment competency in a complex environment.

+ The MJT / MUT has been renamed Moral Competence Test (MCT) in order to align its name with its measurement object (GL 2016). More recent description of the MCT: Lind, G. (2016). How to teach morality. Berlin: Logos.

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