How do education processes and religiosity interact in the development of moral judgment competence?

Iuliana Lupu (iuliana.lupu@uni-konstanz.de) and
Georg Lind (Georg.lind@uni-konstanz.de) (University of Konstanz, Germany)

Theoretical Concepts

The Dual-Aspect Theory of Moral Behavior: Moral behavior exhibits certain moral orientations (the affective aspect) and a certain moral judgment competence (the cognitive aspect) (cf. Lind, 2008).

Education Theory of Moral Development: Education is the most important factor of the development of moral competence (cf. Lind, 2002).

Favorable learning environment: Opportunities for role taking and guided reflection contribute substantially to the moral development of students (cf. Sprinthall et al., 1993).

Religiosity: Students from countries, in which the religious institutions are very influential, have a lower level of moral competence than students from secular, west European countries (Lind, 2003). Certain forms of religiosity are related to prejudice and lower level of moral competence (Allport, 1967).

Research Questions

- Does the learning environment in Romania contribute to the moral development of students?
- Which form of religiosity has a negative impact on the development of moral competence?
- How interact education processes and religiosity on the development of moral judgment competence?

Research Design

- Procedure: Questionnaires filled out in the classrooms
- Participants: N = 477 Students from Universities in Romania
  - Age: 21.80 (SD = 3.1)
  - N = 384 women and 93 men

Results

Findings

- Years of study had no effect on moral judgment competence. F(3, 453) = 0.16, p > 0.05
- Role-taking and guided reflection opportunities lead to a moderate increase in moral judgment competence during study. F(6,444)=1.46; p>0.05
- Personal religiosity had a positive, moderate effect on moral judgment competence. F(1,454)=2.67; p>0.05
- In the group of non-dogmatic religious students, study length had a moderate positive effect on moral development. F(3, 152) = 1.2, p > 0.05
- In non-dogmatic religious students, role taking and guided reflection opportunities had a strong, positive effect on development of moral judgment competence. F(3, 54) = 1; p > 0.05

Discussion

Education has a fostering effect on moral judgment competence only if it provides opportunities for role-taking and guided reflection. This positive effect of education on moral development is hampered by dogmatic religiosity.

As our analyses also revealed, highly dogmatic religious students can grow some moral judgment competence if they are offered opportunities of guided reflection and discussion). Further research is needed to find out whether their moral judgment competence can be stimulated even more by special teaching methods like the Konstanz Method of Dilemma Discussion (KMDD) (see http://www.uni-konstanz.de/ag-moral/; Lind, 2009).

References


