

2 Moral Competence and Democratic Personality [55]

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Three Theoretical Approaches

Cognitive-developmental theory has been credited with a notable contribution to the study of the development of the democratic personality. In a review of “political socialization and models of moral development,” Friedman (1977, p. 361) asserts that “the Kohlberg model of man, i.e. the last stages toward which his system is directed, is a model which is democratic in process and goal.” In this article we shall outline this conception together with two other “models of man” to demonstrate that, in spite of its great utility, the cognitive-developmental theory and methodology may be improved upon by taking into account aspects found in other approaches to political psychology, especially the neo-Freudian (psychodynamic) and the attitude-structural approaches. All three approaches have been utilized to describe and explain the nature and development of the political competencies, and, as we argue below, their contributions to the theory of democratic personality may be integrated into a unifying model. Whether this is a fruitful endeavor should become clear when the empirical hypotheses derived from it are tested.

Psychoanalytic Approach

In the 1930s and 1940s, political psychologists were concerned mainly about the rise of fascism and other totalitarian ideologies. Explanations were given in terms of psychoanalytic theory. The psychoanalytic approach was prominently adhered to by the Berkeley Group (Adorno et al., 1969) which in its study of the authoritarian personality assumed a high degree of coherence between personality and political orientation. For instance, Adorno and his colleagues believed that, if the personality structure lacked “the integration between the moral agencies by which the subject lives,” authoritarian submission, conventionalism, and authoritarian aggression would result and would clear a path for the spread of Fascism (p. 234). Such a “weakness in the ego is expressed in the inability to build up a consistent and enduring set of moral values within the personality, and it is this state of affairs, apparently, that makes it necessary for the individual to seek some organizing agency outside himself” (p. 234). Moreover, there seemed to be a close relationship between authoritarian “adherence to substitutes and crutches of this kind” and immature cognitive organization. The results of their empirical investigations showed that reliance on an “agency outside” relates to “a simple, firm, often [55]

stereotypical structure. There is no place for ambivalence and ambiguities” (1969, p. 480). Though the significance of these findings has been widely acknowledged, the research of the Berkeley Group provoked criticism because of its methodological and theoretical shortcomings. Thus Selznick and Steinberg (1969) argued that a false conception of the role of cognitive factors in political socialization had led Adorno and his associates to an erroneous assumption about the direction of causality in the functioning of personality. Selznick and Steinberg pointed out that fascist attitudes are a result, not a cause, of cognitive structure. Sanford (1973, p. 167), reviewing the critique of research on the authoritarian personality, conceded that the “personality syndromes most useful in understanding political behavior will surely embrace both cognitive and psychodynamic factors.” Such an understanding does indeed seem necessary. More recent psychoanalytic research suggests that neurotic symptoms, which may in part be responsible for the democratically immature personality, are due to a lack of coping ability in the ego rather than, as Freud believed, to an overdeveloped superego (Mowrer, 1972, p. 350). Intolerance of ambiguity, fear of failure, and the feeling of being controlled by external forces may be “type-2-symptoms” (Mowrer), i.e., defensive reactions to an overwhelmingly difficult life situation when the individual lacks the competence to integrate different demands. One might hypothesize that the development of an authoritarian character can be meaningfully described in terms of cognitive-moral development. Kohlberg (1964, p. 422) reported that authoritarianism, as measured by the F-scale of Adorno and his colleagues, correlated negatively ($r = -.52$) with cognitive-moral development. Whereas Kohlberg (1964, p. 422) is reluctant “to offer a view of moral ideology which combines personality type and developmental considerations within a single framework,” other researchers have attempted to do just this (Habermas, 1976; Loevinger, 1976; Döbert [57] and Nunner-Winkler, 1975). For Habermas (1976), Kohlberg’s and Loevinger’s theories have provided a basis for positive definition of the properties of a democratic personality, an endeavor that Adorno had deliberately eschewed for fear of “false positivism.” One might conclude that, in order to become a democratic personality, one must have a strong ego involving among other things tolerance of ambiguity, hope for success, and an internal control cognition (Lane, 1962, pp. 400-412). Yet this description remains incomplete, if for no other reason than that it could also fit the outline of a narcissistic personality who plays “hardball politics” (Etheredge, 1979). To define democratic personality, we need to take into account both political and moral orientations.

Attitude Structure Theory

Within the last decade a second major stream of theorizing has merged with the cognitive-developmental approach, resulting in a more unified paradigm of research into political socialization. The object of this research could be labeled “attitude structure” although several other, apparently interchangeable, labels are also in use, e.g., “focus of concern” (Campbell et al., 1960, p. 188), “ideology” (McClosky, 1964, p. 362), “belief system constraints” (Converse, 1964, p. 207), and “levels of conceptualization” (Converse, 1964, p. 215).

The application of the concept of attitude structure to socialization research has corroborated some straightforward hypotheses. As a major result of their study of pupils from grades 2 to 8, Hess and Torney (1967) found that at an early age children acquire some vague “ideal standards” with which they, like adults, evaluate political objects. However, children lack many of the logical, conceptual, and sensory links that make up an integrated self – be they links between these ideal standards and other standards, or between ideal standards and specific beliefs (“issue beliefs”). Many empirical findings show that the process of attitude formation continues beyond childhood and that many adults may never reach the most sophisticated levels of conceptualization, ideology, attitude structure, or belief system constraint (Campbell et al., 1960; Converse, 1964, 1970; McClosky, 1964). Only a small proportion of the population has organized the world of political problems into systems of values and attitudes.

These findings have not been uncriticized. In some studies, belief system constraint is operationalized as “level of verbal conceptualization” (Campbell et al., 1960; Converse, 1964), measuring to a large extent the level of verbal articulateness. This approach may largely underestimate the basic citizen’s political competence (Brown, 1970). On methodological grounds, furthermore, there has been objection to the use of (synchronous or diachronous) interindividual correlations as indicators of the degree of individual attitude structure. [58]

On theoretical grounds it has been argued that mainstream attitude structure research has been biased toward the specific “political logic” of political elites, who are found to be more consistent in applying general principles to specific issues (McClosky, 1964, p. 366). This argument neglects the possibility that the man in the street may use different dimensions and ways of organizing attitudes and beliefs. Indeed, Lane (1962) found that the ordinary man also links events and beliefs to form an ideological system, even though this system may be different from the ideology of those who are politically active.

The implicit assumption that the organization of attitudes along a single universal dimension can be regarded as superior to other types of political consciousness now seems doubtful on normative grounds (Lane, 1973; Bennett, 1975). The public may have stable opinions on various matters without

holding to an encompassing ideology. It appears problematic to infer an ill-structured consciousness from a lack of constraint in political attitudes, since a low degree of constraint may indicate a highly structured, highly differentiated consciousness. Even among the political elite, the priority and sufficiency of the liberal-conservative dimension is contested. Furthermore, it is also questionable whether a variety of socio-political value systems can be condensed into a single dimension (Rokeach, 1973; Sandberger, 1979).

To understand political consciousness, one must survey the structure of at least three fundamental value orientations. Ever since the French revolution, liberty, equality, and brotherhood or solidarity have been regarded as core democratic values. Tomkins (1965) asserts that a general humanistic orientation in particular provides the resonance basis for democratic personality structures. He sees the humanistic posture centering on the belief in human goodness, whereas distrust, or sociophobia, constitutes an ideo-affective posture to which anti-egalitarian and authoritarian ideologies tend to resonate. For a heterogeneous sample of respondents, Tomkins (1965) was able to demonstrate a consistent pattern of correlations between expressed empathetic affects and ideological beliefs with regard to a wide range of topics. Furthermore, it seems that a democratically mature value system cannot coexist with political apathy. As Durio (1976) has put it, “democratic behavior is a conscious commitment to a value structure requiring individual action” (p. 212). The “New-Left Ideology” strongly emphasized a more direct and more encompassing participation by ordinary people in political decision making. Thus, a democratic personality is not completely described by value concepts (see Döbert & Nunner-Winkler, in this volume). We have not yet touched upon the more specific behavioral implications of such ideals. Do values exert any influence on specific action decisions? The problem of relating abstract moral and political ideals to specific judgments has been most thoroughly studied by cognitive-developmentalists. [59]

Cognitive-Moral Approach

Cognitive theory of moral development is concerned with ego development, a topic which has long been neglected by psychoanalytic theory and research. According to Kohlberg (1964) one has to interpret “moral character as ego rather than superego strength [. . .] This interpretation implies that the major consistency in moral conduct represents decision making capacities rather than fixed behavior traits” (p. 391). We have seen that this view extends psychodynamic theory. Moreover, the cognitive-developmental approach is concerned with the structural organization of affects which attitude research has usually bypassed for lack of appropriate models and methodological tools.

Kohlberg has described six types of moral judgment which are combined into three levels: preconventional, conventional, and postconventional. On the grounds of moral-philosophical considerations and empirical findings, Kohlberg asserts that these types form an invariant sequence of stages of individual development. He conceives of them as stages of justice and social perspective taking. Moral reasoning is conceived of as hierarchically organized into structural wholes. Invariant sequential order and structural wholeness are important assumptions of the cognitive-developmental approach (Colby et al., 1983; Kohlberg et al., 1983; for a discussion of Kohlberg's theory, see Lind, Chapter 2 in this volume). Theoretically, the degree and kind of structural integration of behavior are the core features of personality development (cf. Loevinger, 1976, pp. 54-67). Hence, we would not expect consistency of judgment to be invariant across situations and throughout individual development. Methodologically, the assumption of structural wholes implies that we may not infer the level of an individual's cognitive-moral development from a single behavioral event, such as a single answer to a questionnaire item. Multiple assessment of behavior is necessary, not to estimate a "true" attitude score, but to provide information about the structural properties of an individual's behavior. To assess unequivocally the meaning of behavior, we must examine a configuration of responses to a carefully selected pattern of stimuli (cf. Lind 1982b; 1984). [60]

Moreover, the concept of consistency itself carries an ambiguous meaning which must be explicated in every instance. *Behavior is not consistent per se, but always with regard to some value criterion.* Regarding judgment behavior in moral situations, such criteria may be acquiescence (agreement with any argument to avoid debating), opinion agreement (supporting arguments that are in line with a person's issue beliefs), or orientation toward the moral quality of the arguments. Empirical investigations have demonstrated that the degree to which moral principles are consistently applied to judgments and behavior decisions follows some developmental trends, and that this degree also relates to different degrees of political articulation. Conversely, research has indicated that acquiescence and opinion agreement are negatively related to moral development (cf. Fiskin et al., 1973; Keasey, 1974; Lind, 1978a). Only when the subjective validity of moral values becomes independent of egocentric motives, i.e., when the individual is able to *decenter* (Piaget), is the individual's moral competence transformed into what Habermas (1973) calls communicative competence. Only then can individual actions be rationally justified and criticized in terms of principles. The subjective reasoning becomes objective and open to argument from others.

Toward an Integration of Models of Democratic Personality

We have seen that all three of the above-mentioned approaches are structuralist, psychodynamic theory being the least explicit, and cognitive-developmental theory the most explicit in this regard. All three approaches assert that individual behavior and thought are organized into structural wholes, which does not imply that people necessarily behave uniformly across situations. The decisive criterion of belonging to a structural unit is not phenomenal similarity but *functional correspondence*: Any behavior that serves the same goal can be regarded as an element of the same structure.

Structural wholeness is no metapsychological dogma. It is not a question of "being there or of not being there." Not every belief or action of an individual is integrated under a single system of orientations, since several reference systems can coexist within the same person without being interrelated. As Adelson and O'Neill (1966) have found, domains of structurally organized behavior in young children may be scattered like islands in the stream of action. Only to the extent that a person has developed consistent relations between various orientations, values, and goals, can he or she be considered to have an integrated personality. [61]

In the process of development, people experience phases of crisis and phases of accelerated change of thought and behavior. From the structural point of view, one is led to believe that this phenomenon is caused by the integration of previously unrelated substructures of personality. In phases of crisis, especially when an individual's ecological context changes or enlarges, the individual becomes aware of conflicting values and intentions. New criteria have to be found for deciding value priorities, and new modes of behavior have to be acquired to cope with situations of conflict. Contrary to associationist positions,¹ all three approaches take into account both motivational and cognitive components of behavior, although it is not always obvious how these components relate to each other and to behavior. In the face of the widespread practice of treating motivational and intellectual functions separately, one might well ask, "One psychology or two?" (Kuhn, 1978). Though the necessity of combining "a developmental approach with simultaneous interest in motivational and cognitive aspects of personality" (Loevinger, 1976, p. 101) has long been felt, a truly integrated model is still absent (see Kuhn, 1978, p. 116).

In all three approaches, motivational and cognitive components may be conceived of as entities of the same type. Psychodynamic approaches tend to assume that id, ego, and superego are different faculties of the mind which contended with each other for power over behavior. In attitude theory, even approaches that consider the existence of more than one affective dimension conceive of these dimensions merely as juxtaposed to one another. In Lasswell's (1951) or Greenstein's (1968) conceptions of the democratic personality,

the cognitive component is essentially restricted to a belief in the basic goodness of man, and hence lacks the structural feature under discussion here.

Even in cognitive-developmental theory, the genuine structural character of moral consciousness is missed when one assumes that the cognitive component can be validly measured solely through logical tasks, or that this component precedes moral reasoning (Kohlberg, 1976; Kuhn et al., 1977; Ijzendoorn, 1979). This conception is questioned by Kaern (1978, p. 98), who points out that “stages of logical thought and stages of moral thought may be models of the same theory,” i.e., that the two content areas may have common structural properties.² Such a conception was also proposed by Lee (1971, p. 101), in whose view the ability to see the weight of a body unchanged by the alteration of its shape seems structurally equivalent to the ability to abstract the validity of a democratic value from specific applications. Both abilities are said to be based on the common structural property of what Piaget has called “conservation.” [62]

Moral behavior always contains aspects of content *and* of structure which reflect the distinction between elements and their interrelations. In organismic structures (see Werner, 1957), elements must be further differentiated into means and ends, that is, into concrete moral judgment behavior and abstract value orientations (content). The structure is then characterized by its content, i.e., the purpose it serves, and by the development of its system of “logical relations.”³ As a preliminary operational definition, any value is said to be cognitively organized if it exerts noticeable influence on the pattern of judgment behavior, i.e., if the value orientation is conserved across a class of judgment situations. Above all, moral values should be generalized across the particular population of persons that support them. Each person should be able to take the value perspective of any other person, which means that the conservation of values is the core of role-taking ability.

The consistency or “conservation” of moral judgment is a prerequisite for democratic discourse. An autocratic social system is characterized by the limits it puts on the universal application of values through social power differences. In autocratic societies, members of a particular social class are allowed and even encouraged to prevent the universal application of certain moral values in order to defend their particularized positions. In such societies, morality is segmented (for the concept of segmentation, see Senger, in this volume, and Döbert & Nunner-Winkler, 1975). Conversely, democratic society rests on the unconditional application of certain basic values. Only if conflicts do not involve disagreement with regard to basic values can they be solved by means of rational discourse. Democracy is achieved insofar as individual judgment behavior is moralized, i.e., insofar as it reflects “all values involved” (Mead, 1967).

Certain forms of segmentation are, however, legitimate. Considering the availability of means and mitigating circumstances or weighing the values against one another may lead to differentiations in judgment which are compatible with a democratic personality. The opposite monomaniacal adherence to abstract values may lead to Jacobinism. A “temporary Jacobinism” is part of most individuals' adolescence (Lipset, 1965). Perry (1970) conceives of this phase as one of “basic duality,” in which the world is seen in dualistic terms, right versus wrong. But this phase is eventually challenged by relativistic thinking, and finally subdued by the achievement of “contextual relativism,” on which adult “commitment” is based. This commitment brings back the capability of firm judgment, tempered now by full awareness of uncertainty and relativism, “it is an act in an examined, not in an unexamined, life” (Perry, 1970, p. 136). In short, abstract value orientations, like id-impulses and superego-controls, or like general affect-loaded attitudes and goals, are the leading elements of the complex cognitive structure that organizes concrete judgment behavior and issue beliefs. Besides the many things that distinguish the three theoretical “dioceses” discussed above, these contiguities constitute the identification of three defining aspects of personality structure: abstract (motivational) content, concrete (behavioral) elements, and relational (cognitive) structure. [63]

Table 1**Structural Concepts in the Study of Personality Structure**

Theoretical Domain	Abstract Content	Concrete Elements	Relational Structure
Psychoanalytic Theory	Id, Superego	Thoughts, Dreams	Ego
Attitude Structure Theory	Affective Component, Orientations	Behavioral Component, Issue Beliefs	Cognitive Component, Constraints
Cognitive-Developmental Theory	Moral Concern, Socio-moral Perspective	Moral Judgment, Evaluative Behavior	Justification, Consistency of Evaluation

Research Questions and Hypotheses

This attempt to provide an integrated structural approach to the study of democratic personality and the outline of a model of democratic personality [64]

raises several questions, some of which can be investigated empirically. For reasons of time and space, we shall concentrate here on those aspects that seem most fundamental in the sense that they prepare the ground for further research into the nature and development of the democratic personality. *Hypothesis 1.* Prevailing methods of personality and attitude assessment presuppose that people vary only by the amount or degree, not by the structure, of a trait. Inconsistencies in judgment behavior are attributed solely to measurement error. This position of classical test theory (Spearman, Gulliksen) is incompatible with structural theories, which assume that judgment consistency regarding some organizing perspective depends on a person's cognitive development. We expect, therefore, that even within a developmentally homogeneous group individuals will vary markedly in judgment consistency with regard to particular moral orientations.

Hypothesis 2. Judgmental consistency (as defined above), seems to signify moral competence; i.e., we believe that it reflects a particular organization of moral values. This particular organization is primarily defined by the developmental order of moral orientations, as has been suggested by Kohlberg (1971) and Loevinger (1976, pp. 27-28). In operational terms, we expect that the more a person judges concrete statements by the value orientation the statements represent, the more he or she will evaluate them in accordance with a hierarchy of moral orientations as described by Kohlberg's (1969) stage model.

Hypothesis 3. Though the mechanisms are not yet known in detail, we deduce from psychodynamic theory and from cognitive-developmental theory that ego strength and moral competence are correlated. A mature hierarchy of goals and values and their efficient organization, which is reflected in high judgment consistency, should be negatively related to intolerance of ambiguity, fear of failure, and perception of one's fate as controlled by external forces. Since moral competence means the ability to cope with moral conflicts, it renders superfluous the defense mechanisms of a weak ego, of which those three reactions may be symptomatic.

Hypothesis 4. Finally, it is hypothesized that adherence to abstract democratic orientations relates both to the structure and to the content of concrete judgments. Since, as many writers contend, democratic values are among, or even identical with, the highest stages of moral orientation, we expect that explicit commitment to democracy is positively related to moral-cognitive development.

For the present study, we expect that these hypotheses will be empirically valid even when important variables like level of formal education and cohort membership are controlled, i.e., when relationships are tested in a developmentally and socially homogeneous sample. Studies which use more heterogeneous samples will presumably produce even clearer confirmations of these hypotheses.

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Methods

Sample

The 708 subjects of this study are a sample token from a cohort of graduates of German upper secondary schools in Baden-Württemberg. Their median age was 18.5.⁴ Standardized questionnaires were administered during classroom hours in 48 classes shortly after the students had taken their final (written) examinations in the spring of 1976. This survey is part of a more comprehensive research project on university socialization.

Moral Judgment Competence

For measuring motivational (or evaluative) and cognitive components of moral judgment, a new instrument was developed which utilizes questionnaire techniques and an experimental, multifactorial design. It is called the “Moralisches Urteil Test” (MUT; moral judgment test; Lind, 1978a, 1984, and Lind & Wakenhut in this volume). Its purpose is to infer behavior-guiding orientations and thought organization from an individual's pattern of judgments on the acceptability of certain arguments which are presented in connection with a moral dilemma. The test consists of two subtests, each containing a story which presents a behavioral dilemma, followed by a set of questions pertaining to agreement/disagreement with a suggested solution to the dilemma and to the acceptability of arguments speaking for and against this solution. The arguments were constructed to represent moral reasoning at each of the six stages described by Kohlberg (1969, p. 376). The respondent is asked to evaluate twelve reasons for each story – twenty-four altogether. Hence, by virtue of test construction, the MUT items constitute an [66] “experimental questionnaire,” a tool which has been discussed at length elsewhere (Lind, 1982; see Lind and Wakenhut, this volume).⁵ The independent variables form a 2 x 2 x 6 factorial design. The three factors included are: Dilemma, Pro-Con, and Stage. Each item belongs to a particular story, represents a pro or a con position, and refers to one of the six Kohlbergian stages of moral reasoning. The dependent variable is represented by the respondents' judgment of the acceptability of the given reasons on a scale ranging from -4 to +4. Since neither self-description nor introspection is recorded, only individual patterns of *judgment behavior*; this questionnaire can be viewed as a behavioral test. The dilemma of the subtest entitled “Mercy Killing” is adapted from Kohlberg's Situation IV (Kohlberg, 1958, p. 366). It is assumed that the life-death issue requires the most unambiguously moral reasoning. On contrast, we used a second dilemma labeled “Theft,” a story

about two workers who break into the main office of their factory in search of evidence to support the allegation that the management has bugged their work area (for more details on the MUT, see Lind & Wakenhut, in this volume).

In this paper the inter-stage structure is elicited by calculating the average acceptability of every four statements for each of the six stages, and by combining them into individual profiles of stage-ratings. This method is a convenient device for depicting simultaneously the motivational (content) and the cognitive (structural) components of moral reasoning (cf. Lind, 1985a). The content of the judgment is indicated by the acceptance or rejection of the stage of orientation which the argument represents. The degree of structural or cognitive organization of judgment behavior is indicated by two measures: the distance of the average acceptability of a stage from the theoretical scale mean (± 0) and the steepness of the profile of stage-ratings. The less consistently a respondent evaluates statements with regard to their stage-appropriateness, the more the profile flattens and approaches the zero-line. In addition to these profiles, a direct measure of intra-individual response consistency is used, although this measure by itself does not allow us to infer content from structure.

Ego Strength

Three scales for measuring ego strength were included in our study. *Intolerance of ambiguity* was measured through the scale developed by Budner (1962), which seemed appropriate since it is explicitly related to psychoanalytic concepts. The scale contains 16 items which are to be rated from -3 (“I reject completely”) to +3 (“I accept completely”). After a linear transformation, the total scale ranges from 0 to 96 with 96 signifying extreme intolerance of ambiguity. *Fear of failure*, which is considered either to result from ego-weakness or to contribute to it, was assessed using seven items adapted from a larger Fear of Failure scale developed by Fend et al. (1974). The respondent was to decide between pairs of statements, e.g., “When I am confronted with a new task ... (A:) I am rather sure that I shall succeed. (B:) I am often afraid that I shall not succeed.” The scale ranges from 1 to 7, with 7 indicating extreme fear of failure. *Locus of Control* was measured by a shortened version of Rotter's (1966) scale. Our selection of items represents the personal control factor (cf., Gurin et al., 1969; Lefcourt, 1976).

Democratic Orientation

For this study we selected four indicators of democratic orientation. The questions we chose for the present analysis pertain to the following issues. Respondents were asked to take a stand on two questions involving *egalitarian values*. First, “Would you be for or against a reduction of social inequalities?” and second, “Would you support an increase of social equality even at the cost of material wealth?” These items are part of a comprehensive instrument for the study of orientations toward social inequality (Sandberger, 1983). For assessing *Humanism* a somewhat shortened version of Tomkins' (1965) scale was used. The respondent was to choose between polar statements, e.g., “Human beings are basically good” versus “Human beings are basically bad,” with the option to indicate neutrality or indifference. *Democratization*, taken as an abstract ideal of political action, is described by an item of the “New Left-Scale” developed by Christie et al.: “The democratization of all areas of life should be the basis of a new society” (cf. Gold, et al., 1976; Robinson & Shaver, 1973, p. 470). The respondent was to indicate his degree of agreement or disagreement on a scale ranging from -3 to +3. A *readiness to participate* in political affairs was seen as a prerequisite for democratic orientation. We took as an indicator of this orientation the respondents' reaction to the statement, “I will not engage in political activity under any circumstances.”

Evaluation of Data

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To gauge the degree to which the data support our hypothesis, we have used two complementary approaches. In the first approach, information content and conformity with theoretical prediction are tested, and in the second statistical significance is checked. Our hypothesis is that students high in ego strength and democratic orientation will discriminate more between stages of moral reasoning, rejecting lower-stage arguments and accepting higher stage arguments more markedly than do their counterparts who are not so high in those orientations. In technical terms this means that the former group should exhibit a steeper profile of median scores for the stages. A thought experiment reveals that, for this hypothesis, the a priori chance of confirmation is rather low. When the median scores of two groups – to be denoted here as *A* and *B* – are compared for each stage, and a dichotomous distinction is made between “*A* smaller than or equal to *B*” and “*A* greater than *B*,” there are $2^6 = 64$ possible sequences or configurations across the six stages. Among these, six configurations are in line with the hypothesis; their graphic form corresponds to that of an *X*.⁶ Hence, under the assumption of randomness and independence of trials (stages), the probability of obtaining a configuration that conforms to

the hypothesis is no larger than 6/64 or about 9 percent. The reciprocal value of this number constitutes a measure of the information contained in the data (see Lind, 1984a).

For computing *statistical significance*, two-way analyses of variance were run, using ego strength and democratic orientation – taken one at a time – as independent variables, and using stage as a repeated measurement variable. To analyze the effects of each of these variables, orthogonal polynomials as proposed by Bock (1975, pp. 447-488) were used.⁷ Our hypotheses focus interest on the interactions between the variables of ego strength and democratic orientation with stage, with special emphasis on the linear component of this interaction. To support the hypothesis of a differential steepness of stage-score profiles, the linear component should be significant and should account for a sizeable proportion of the variance.

Empirical Findings

Hypothesis 1: Variation in the Cognitive Aspect of Moral Judgment

Intra-individual analysis of components of variance calculated from the MUT reveals that individuals do indeed differ greatly with regard to response consistency or, more precisely, consistency with respect to moral criteria. When confronted with a behavioral dilemma, some persons employ moral reasoning to a high degree while others consider nonmoral criteria of judgment, e.g., whether the reasons advocated support, or oppose, the opinion to which the person is committed. The degree to which respondents use moral categories in their judgments is depicted in Figure 1. The abscissa represents the proportion of individual judgment variance accounted for by the Stage factor. This measure is simply the ratio of the sum of squares due to this factor to the total sum of squares. In Figure 1, the degree to which individual judgment behavior is determined by the opinion-agreement variable (Pro-Con) is also depicted as well. As compared to younger subjects (cf. Keasey, 1974), the upper secondary school graduates in our sample are obviously less oriented toward the agreement/disagreement aspect of the arguments. [69]

Hypothesis 2: Cognitive and Affective Aspects of Moral Judgment

If the preference for “high” levels of moral orientation is a pacer for a later form of cognitive organization, we are led to assume that the recognition of the moral priority of higher stage reasoning should go together with a more highly organized thought structure, i.e., that motivational content and cognitive structure of moral judgment behavior should empirically correlate in a predictable way. The findings depicted in Figure 2 clearly corroborate this hypothesis. The more the “higher” moral orientations are accepted, and the more the “lower” stage reasons are rejected, the more the respondents evaluate the arguments morally, i.e., with regard to the stages they represent. Configurations of intergroup median differences are all perfectly in line with the prediction.⁸ Thus this finding supports the claim that even Stages 5 and 6 have a cognitive basis, a claim which has sometimes been questioned (cf. Gibbs, 1977, among others).

Hypothesis 3: Moral Competence and Ego Strength

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A marked and well-structured value hierarchy coincides with high ego strength. Though the sample as a whole can be regarded as comparatively mature and as fairly homogeneous in its level of moral development, differences

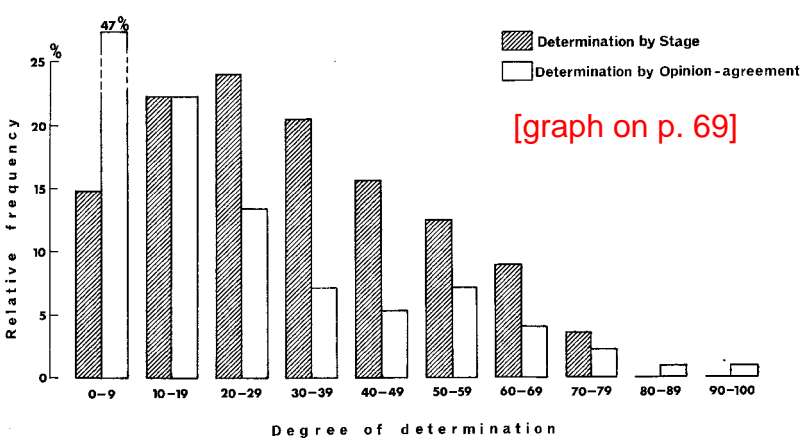


Figure 1 Distribution of the Degree of Judgment Consistency with Regard to Stage of Reasoning and Opinion-Agreement.

in ego strength correlate with differences in moral judgment structure. Although the orderings of moral orientations (stages) are similar, students of lo-

wer ego strength are obviously less consistent in the application of abstract orientations to concrete judgments. This is indicated by a less marked rejection of lower stage arguments. The pertinent data are presented in Table 2. High scores on intolerance of ambiguity turn out to be associated with relatively high endorsement of Stage 1 through Stage 3 reasoning. With regard to fear of failure and external control cognition, the findings are somewhat less articulate, yet they follow the same pattern. Those who fear failure, like those who feel they are externally controlled, exhibit a less consistent rejection of morally inferior orientations in their judgments. Except for the comparison of students who are medium and low in intolerance of ambiguity, all configurations of median differences between groups are fully congruent with the hypothesis. In each case the dependent analysis of variance yields a significant linear component of the Groups x Stages interaction; although, for intolerance of ambiguity, some higher order components also turn out to be significant, the bulk of the interaction variance is accounted for by the linear component, as shown in the last column of Table 2. This confirms the hypothesized differences in steepness of stage rating profiles.

These findings corroborate those of other studies. Sullivan and Quarter (1972, p. 156) report that Conventionals reveal a lower, "morally hybrid" and "pure" Postconventionals a higher, tolerance of ambiguity as measured by the Omnibus Personality Inventory. Haan et al. (1973) found a low but consistent correlation between tolerance of ambiguity and Kohlberg's moral maturity measure. Alker and Poppen's (1973) study showed that moral development was negatively related to dogmatism. Correlations of moral development with the locus of control variable are only partially comparable, since in most cases the complete Rotter scale was used, which confounds several dimensions (Mirels, 1970, Gootnik, 1974). Nevertheless, (low) negative correlations between moral development and external control cognition have consistently been found (Alker and Poppen, 1973; Bloomberg, 1974).

Hypothesis 4: Moral Judgment and Democratic Orientation

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Finally, we hypothesized that conscious adherence to democratic values would correlate with moral-cognitive structure. The results shown in Table 3 are in line with this hypothesis. Though egalitarianism is only a prerequisite concept and not necessarily indicative of a fully developed democratic consciousness

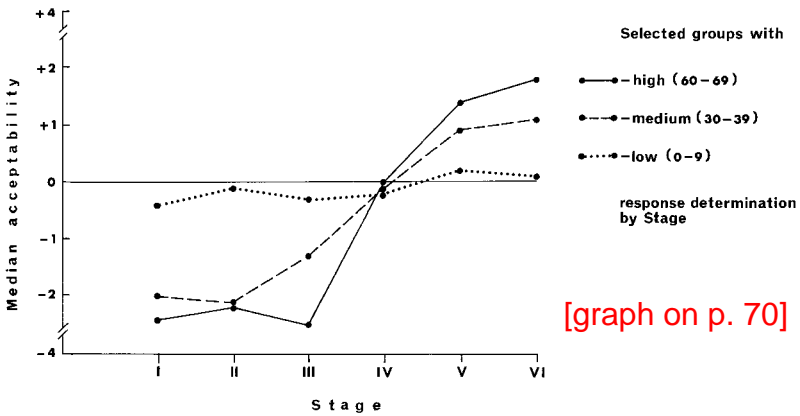


Figure 2 Correlation between the Affective and Cognitive Aspects: Acceptability of Stages by different Degrees of Judgment Consistency.

(Piaget, 1973; Rawls, 1971), students who support a reduction of social inequality – even at the cost of material wealth – show less preference for lower stage reasoning. This can be taken as an indicator of higher moral development. Humanistic values and the request for “democratization of all areas of life” seem to be at the heart of advanced moral development. This is indicated by the preference profiles of the “high” and “low” groups as presented in Table 3, and by their differences with respect to cognitive-moral consistency. In our sample, students with humanistic and democratic orientations show the clearest preference order of the six stages of moral orientation. The group of students disagreeing with democratization shows less discrimination between the stages of morality in evaluating arguments. In other words, this latter group possesses less decisional competence for making morally substantiated judgments. However, this is a small group. Except for egalitarian attitudes, the configurations of median differences conform perfectly to the hypotheses. Analyses of variance yield significant linear components for the Groups x Stages interactions for all the aspects of democratic orientation examined here. With respect to some of these variables, higher order components of the interaction also turn out to be significant, yet in all cases but one the linear component accounts for the greater part of the interaction variance.

Conclusion

A central prerequisite for a democratic society is the moral autonomy of its citizens. A person may be regarded as morally autonomous to the extent that he or she exhibits “general consistency of approach on principle to all situations” (Kohlberg, 1958, p. 131). This does not mean, of course, cross-situational rigidity. It means a greater awareness of the multiplicity of aspects of a situation, and a more general and more encompassing perspective on moral values. All three structural approaches discussed in this paper agree that a complex cognitive structure is needed to organize behavior in accord with such abstract ideals. As Nunner-Winkler (1980) has asserted, the stability and maintenance of democracy is intimately linked to the degree to which moral values are structurally anchored in the individual mind. It obviously does not suffice to reach consensus on the basic democratic values (Dahl, 1961, p. 325). Inability, or unwillingness, to apply these values in concrete situations renders the individual prey to autocratic submission. [75]

Our integrated study of styles of reasoning, ego functioning, and values suggests that ego strength (tolerance of ambiguity, hope for success, internal control cognition), content and structure of moral judgment behavior, and positive valuing of democratic ideals are all interrelated. These findings, as well as those from other studies, provide insight into the importance of the cognitive component in democratic behavior. Hence, they clearly demonstrate that, as Binford (1983) has stated, “the tolerance of opposing viewpoints and the appreciation of the utility of such views for social change is an important organizing principle for the character-rooted democratic personality” (p. 678). Moreover, they suggest that the acquisition of abstract values may be considered a necessary, though not sufficient, condition for the development of democratic personality. Further studies are needed to clarify how value ideals function as pacers for cognitive development.

Table 2

Moral Judgment and Ego Strength: Median Stage Acceptability by Students with Different Scores on Ego Strength Scales

Group	n ^b	Acceptability ^a of Stage						Testing of Hypotheses		
		1	2	3	4	5	6	(c)	(d)	(e)
Intolerance of Ambiguity:										
low	272	-2.1	-1.8	-1.7	-0.4	0.9	0.8]]	1%	75%
medium	411	-1.4	-1.4	-0.9	-0.1	0.7	0.8			
high	25	-1.1	-1.4	-0.3	0.3	0.6	0.6			
External Locus of Control:										
internal	200	-1.9	-1.8	-1.4	-0.3	0.8	0.9]]	1%	94%
external	431	-1.6	-1.4	-1.1	-0.2	0.8	0.8			
Fear of Failure:										
low	230	-1.9	-1.8	-1.4	-0.2	0.8	0.9]]	1%	79%
high	324	-1.5	-1.4	-1.2	0.2	0.8	0.8			

^a From -4 (completely unacceptable) to +4 (completely acceptable).

^b The n's usually do not add up to the sample size of 708 because of "don't know" answers.

^c Configurations of median differences that are completely in line with the hypothesis are denoted by brackets.

^d Statistical significance of the linear component of the Group x Stage interaction. Two-way analysis of variance with Stage as a repeated measurement variable, applying orthogonal polynomials according to Bock (1975, pp. 447-488).

^e Proportion of the total interaction variance accounted for by the linear component.

Table 3

Moral Judgment and Democratic Orientations: Median Stage Acceptability by Students with Different Scores on Dimensions of Political Attitude

Group	n	Acceptability of Stage						Testing of Hypotheses		
		1	2	3	4	5	6	(c)	(d)	(e)
Reduction of Social Inequality:										
For	563	-1.8	-1.6	-1.3	-0.3	0.8	0.8			
Against	92	-1.4	-1.3	-0.6	+0.2	-0.8	0.9		5%	50%
Increase of Equality:										
Support	391	-2.0	-1.6	-1.4	-0.3	0.8	0.8			
Reject	126	-1.4	-1.3	-0.7	-0.0	0.9	1.0		5%	76%
Humanism:										
High	620	-1.7	-1.5	-1.2	-0.2	0.8	0.9			
Low	51	-1.1	-1.2	-0.5	-0.3	0.5	0.4		1%	74%
Democratization:										
Agree	437	-1.9	-1.6	-1.3	-0.2	0.9	0.9			
Disagree	46	-1.4	-1.1	-0.9	-0.2	0.4	0.6		1%	78%
Participation in Politics:										
Yes	409	-1.9	-1.7	-1.4	-0.3	0.8	0.9			
Not as all	72	-1.2	-1.1	-0.6	-0.1	0.8	0.9		1%	71%

Note: For explanation see the notes of Table 2.

With the combination of survey research methods and sophisticated assessment techniques, we hope that new perspectives will open up for the study of processes of socialization and personality development. The new techniques for assessing moral judgment structure render cognitive-developmental theory, as well as other structural theories, testable through empirical research geared to using multiple measures with large samples of individuals. Moreover, it will be possible to systematically investigate processes of moral *décalage*, value conservation, cognitive anchoring, or conversely, processes of moral segmentation, particularization, and isolation. This research will ultimately have to be directed at answering Allport's (1929) fundamental query of whether a fully developed democratic personality is merely a particular configuration of unrelated drives, attitudes, or traits, which are accidentally juxtaposed by an individual's history of conditioning and shaping, or whether such a personality represents a more or less organized whole of thought and behavior, which is continually striving for integrated ego identity.

[75
cont'd]

Notes

[76]

1. These are not identical with “behaviorist” psychology. Our cognitive, developmental approach is behavioristic in so far as it claims to be empirical. In contrast to the concepts of “latent traits” and “hypothetical constructs,” the organization of cognitive structure requires that it be empirically verified by the structural assessment of patterns of judgment behavior. But cognitive-developmental theorizing is to be distinguished from atomistic behaviorism, which rules out a priori the possibility of measuring complex constructs by means of behavioral assessment. The position here may best be designated by Miller, Galanter, and Pribram’s (1960) term “subjective behaviorism.”
2. See Edelstein et al. (1980), who found that, contrary to Kohlberg’s (1976) assertion, the hypothesis of a “general genetic primacy of logical, before social-cognitive, operations is not tenable” (p. 12).
3. By referring to “logical relations,” we allude not only to propositional logic, on which Piaget has concentrated in his work, but also to the broad, yet not fully recognized, fields of modal and deontic logic. The insufficiency of Piaget’s approach hal in the light of Hegel’s dialectical logic, been thoroughly discussed by Broughton (1981).
4. This study was carried out by the Forschungsgruppe Hochschulsozialisation at the University of Konstanz, as part of an ongoing international longitudinal study. Besides the authors, Barbara Dippelhofer-Stiem, Gerhild Framhein, Hansgert Peisert (director), and Hans-Gerhard Walter have collaborated on the research. The cross-national FORM project is coordinated by the European Coordination Centre, Vienna, and comprises parallel research projects in Austria, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Netherlands, Poland, and Yugoslavia. The research design and questionnaire used with the graduates of West German upper secondary schools (Abiturienten) are fully described in two working documents, prepared by the Forschungsgruppe Hochschulsozialisation: *Wissenschaftlicher Bericht, 1976-1978* (Zentrum I Bildungsforschung, University of Konstanz, 1979); and *Anlage und Instrumente des Abiturienten-Follow-up, 1976/177* (Arbeitsunterlage 37, Zentrum I Bildungsforschung, University of Konstanz, 1981).
5. Note that these experiments are located on the level of the individual (idiographic experiment), and not on the level of an aggregate of individuals, as is the case in the correlational analysis below. Nor are these experiments conducted to assess the effect of an “independent” variable, but to measure individual structural dispositions (Lind, 1985d).
6. In formal terms, these configurations consisted of i times A smaller than or equal to B, followed by $(6 - i)$ times A greater than B, where A denotes the median scores of the group higher in ego strength or democratic orientation, and the range of the index i is between 1 and 6. In these configurations, scores A are at most equal to scores B for lower stages, and are larger than B for higher stages. By way of limiting cases, configurations with lower A scores for lower stages and equality of scores for higher stages are included in the conform subset, whereas, of course, the case in which $A = B$ for all stages is excluded.
7. The Box-Bartlett Test (Morrison, 1976, pp. 252-253) serves to check

[77]

whether the assumption of homoscedasticity (equality of variance-covariance matrices for independent groups) is tenable. As revealed by the Huynh-Feldt pattern test (Morrison, 1976, pp. 214-215), the model that Bock (1975, pp. 459-460) presents as Assumption I proved too restrictive. The tests we applied (using term-by-term F statistics) are valid under Bock's most general Assumption III, which allows for heteroscedasticity as well as correlated polynomial error components.

8. Analysis of variance procedures cannot be meaningfully applied to these data, because the way the consistency measure was constructed implies that the homoscedasticity assumption is violated, that is, that the groups have different interstage covariance matrices. These are not identical with "behaviorist" psychology. Our cognitive, developmental approach is behavioristic in so far as it claims to be empirical. In contrast to the concepts of "latent traits" and "hypothetical constructs," the organization of cognitive structure requires that it be empirically verified by the structural assessment of patterns of judgment behavior. But cognitive-developmental theorizing is to be distinguished from atomistic behaviorism, which rules out a priori the possibility of measuring complex constructs by means of behavioral assessment. The position here may best be designated by Miller, Galanter, and Pribram's (1960) term "subjective behaviorism."

A preliminary version of this chapter appeared in *Political Psychology* (Lind, Sandberger & Bargel, 1981-82). We wish to thank the publisher of the journal for her kind permission to revise that article for the present volume.

New book:

Lind, G. (2016). *How to teach morality. Promoting deliberation and discussion, Reducing violence and deceit.* Berlin: Logos.