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ETHNIC VARIATION AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF MORAL JUDGMENT OF YOUTH IN DUTCH SOCIETY

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Students, aged 14 to 19 years, from different types of schools participated in this study: Dutch, Surinamese, Moroccan, Turkish, and a remaining mixed group. They rated moral problems of two of Kohlberg's dilemmas. An analysis of variance with the factors ethnicity, sex, and type of school and multiple range tests were used to detect differences between the groups. Moroccan and Turkish pupils show a lag in their moral development, perhaps due to their parents' societal background.

This article reports on an empirical study of the development of moral judgment in groups of students with different ethnic backgrounds. The object was to examine Kohlberg's complexity thesis. This thesis is directly related to Kohlberg's claims of the universal validity of his theory of moral development. Without going into detail right now, we can say that our research does not support the complexity thesis as we have interpreted it.

MORAL DEVELOPMENT ACCORDING TO KOHLBERG

The theory (Kohlberg, 1971) differentiates six stages of moral development that are distributed over three different levels: the pre-conventional level (stage 1, punishment and obedience orientation, and stage 2, instrumental orientation); the conventional level (stage 3, ori-

entation of the group, and stage 4, loyalty to the law); and the postconventional level (stage 5, orientation to social contract, utility, and individual rights, and stage 6, orientation to universal principles). With regard to these stages, Kohlberg claims that "all individuals in all cultures go through the same order or sequence of gross stages of development, though varying in rate and terminal point of development" (p. 126) (see also Kohlberg, 1986). This latter, the varying terminal point in the moral development of individuals from various cultures, is remarkable, but according to Kohlberg, it is not in conflict with the universality claim. Many researchers have studied this claim by Kohlberg in a cross-cultural and cross-sectional context. The majority have concluded that, irrespective of the cultural setting, individuals go through the first three or four moral judgment stages (Dien, 1982; Edwards, 1975; Snarey, 1985). These results yield two more findings: (a) in non-Western countries, postconventional judgments (stages 5 and 6) hardly occur and (b) (particularly significant for the current study) in non-Western countries, individuals on the average attain lower average stages than do individuals in Western countries.

MORAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE COMPLEXITY OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Such a difference is explained by Kohlberg (1971) by hypothesizing a relationship between the development of moral judgment and the "cognitive and social complexity of the group" (p. 129).¹ He thus says that the moral development of the individual is a function of the cognitive and social structure of the environment in which he or she participates. The complexity of an environment can vary in terms of the stimulation of the individual to more or less complex forms of thought (here Kohlberg refers to the cognitive stages of Piaget) and of role taking. Kohlberg now suggests that complex social settings stimulate individuals to reason according to higher moral judgment stages than is the case in less complex environments. This thesis, to be referred to hereafter as the *complexity thesis*, would prove its strength if it were possible to demonstrate that individuals originating from less complex environments demonstrate higher moral judgment levels in more

complex environments. But these types of data are most difficult to generate. Large-scale experiments in countries that are considered to be less complex do not exist. Nonetheless, various researchers have attempted to underpin the difference in moral development of individuals from more and less complex environments. From their research (Edwards, 1975, 1982; Nissan & Kohlberg, 1982; Tietjen & Walker, 1985), education and urbanization emerge as two critical factors.² These factors are said to stimulate individuals to develop social perspectives that enable them to make moral judgments at a higher level. In one of her Kenyan studies, Edwards (1975, 1982) compares respondents pursuing university studies in Nairobi with the much older leaders of small village communities. She notes that stage 4 occurs particularly among the students, whereas the village leaders on the average score lower, leading her to conclude that, with regard to the development of moral judgment, education is a relevant factor. But her research design yields no reply to the question of which factors (education, the village-city differentiation, leadership, or interactions between these) explain the variance in the development of moral judgment. Nissan and Kohlberg (1982) compare villagers and city dwellers in Turkey, noting that villagers score lower. A problem in their design is that the city dwellers have enjoyed a higher level of education than the villagers. Here, again, the question arises of which factor(s) (education, urbanization, or both) explain(s) the variance in the development in moral judgment. It can be stated categorically that statements concerning the relationship between environmental complexity and the development of moral judgment are speculative and that it is not yet clear what are the determinants of moral development.

Remarkable in the studies of Kohlberg's complexity thesis is that research in Western European countries into the moral development of immigrant children is virtually nonexistent. Many of the immigrants living in the Netherlands originate from non-Western, traditional settings. A study of the moral development of individuals from this group of immigrants, who now comprise a part of a more complex cognitive and social environment, could represent a valuable perspective of studying Kohlberg's complexity thesis from an approach other than a cross-cultural (internationally comparative) one.

FORMULATION OF THE PROBLEM AND EXPECTATIONS

In this study, which is exploratory in nature, the main question is, To what extent do ethnically differentiated groups of students differ in their development of moral judgment? If differences indeed exist, then the next question is whether sex and type of education are relevant factors here. These questions are commented on and examined below in a number of expectations.

1. In the non-Western, often traditional areas from where the immigrants (such as Moroccans and Turks) living in the Netherlands originate, the individual's moral cognition is based on collectivist values, such as honor, respect, obedience, and often religious values as well.³ Moral reasoning, which, according to a measurement with a Kohlberg scale, should lie at a stage higher than the third, is not functional (Edwards, 1975, 1982; Nissan & Kohlberg, 1982). In the Western European countries,⁴ moral thinking⁵ is based on individualistic values (Reid, 1990), such as personal development, independence, success, honesty, and happiness. The chance that in Western civilizations stages higher than 3 might be identified is, therefore, greater than in non-Western, traditional societies. The ethnic groups of students studied here (Dutch, Surinamers, Moroccans, Turks, and a group composed of others than the nationalities just mentioned, hereafter referred to as the "remainder group") live in Amsterdam and attend the same types of schools. On the basis of the complexity thesis, insofar as this was examined in the studies mentioned above by the factors of education and urbanization, it can be expected that there are no differences in the development of moral judgment between the specified ethnic groups if the factors of urbanization and education are kept constant. If differences do indeed exist, then these may be related to other (complexity) factors that must be sought in family development, in combination with the minority cultural background (Schulze, 1996) and/or type of formal education. Expectations concerning these relationships are formulated below.

2. It is expected that possible differences between ethnic groups in the lower types of schools will continue to exist, but in the higher types of schools, they will have been erased (in terms of Kohlberg, higher types of school form more complex cognitive environments than do

lower types of schools). The reason for this assumption is based on the research of Edwards (1982). Students in the higher types of schools are stimulated to think at higher abstract levels than students in the lower types of schools. This creates possibilities for thinking about moral problems at a more abstract level and, thus, to reason according to higher moral stages. As a result of this, it is also expected that, in general, the moral judgments of students in different types of schools will be different.

3. In some studies (Gilligan, 1982; Parikh, 1980; Snarey, 1985), the two sexes score differently.⁶ Kohlberg and Kramer (1969) also explain these types of differences with the complexity thesis. That women in the relevant studies score at lower moral stages than men can be attributed to their social status. Women generally orient themselves more in terms of the family, whereas through their professions, men also function in more complex environments. Taking into consideration the fact that the overall position of women in the West has improved considerably, it is not surprising that in most studies, no sex differences with respect to moral reasoning were noted among indigenous groups (Mey, Van der Draai, & Spiecker, 1989; Van IJzendoorn, 1986). But, might these differences be expressed in some ethnic groups in which women do not have the same status as men, such as, for example, in the Moroccan and Turkish communities? The research of Pels (1990) and Van der Leij, Rögels, Koomen, & Bekkers (1991) has demonstrated that Moroccan and Turkish girls have different social roles than their male counterparts. Boys are prepared to represent the family in the outside world, whereas it is assumed that girls will become mothers and housewives. It is, therefore, expected that in some ethnic groups, particularly in the Moroccan and Turkish segments, the girls will score lower than the boys on the field of cognitive moral reasoning.

In summary, the following hypotheses can be formulated:

Hypothesis 1: In relation to the development of moral judgment, in general no ethnic differences will occur.

Hypothesis 2: If ethnic differences in the development of moral judgment do in fact occur, then these will be expressed in relation to type of school.

Hypothesis 3: In "higher" types of school, higher judgment stages will be scored than in "lower" types of schools.

Hypothesis 4: Sex differences in the development of moral judgment will occur in relation to ethnicity.

METHOD

GROUPS STUDIED

The study involved students attending MAVO (lower general secondary, 35%), HAVO (higher general secondary, 44%), and VWO (preuniversity education, 22%) institutions in Amsterdam ($N = 208$). Their ages ranged from 14 to 19 years, the average age being 15.67 years. The percentage of males was 47%, and 53% were females. The data were collected among Dutch citizens ($n = 45$, average age = 15.63, 40% men, 60% women; 31% MAVO, 49% HAVO, 20% VWO); Surinamers ($n = 46$, average age = 15.80, 44% men, 56% women; 24% MAVO, 50% HAVO, 26% VWO); Moroccans ($n = 45$, average age = 15.55 years, 45% men, 55% women; 42% "mavo," 42% HAVO, 16% VWO); Turks ($n = 36$, average age = 15.67, 50% men, 50% women; 47% MAVO, 25% HAVO, 28% VWO); and a remainder group ($n = 36$, average age = 15.78, 47% men, 52% women 52%; 31% "mavo," 50% HAVO, 19% VWO). The remainder group consists of respondents originating from such countries as Portugal, Indonesia, China, (former) Yugoslavia, India, Pakistan, and Chile. The classification of the group is derived from the fact that in each case the parents came from the country in question.

INSTRUMENT

The instrument used is a questionnaire consisting of two sections. The first section concerns background variables, such as age, sex, country of origin of the target person and her or his parents, language, religious affiliation, and so forth. The second section concerns the Kohlberg dilemmas: the Heinz-dilemma and the Joe- or promise-dilemma. Both dilemmas and their associated questions form the Sociomoral Reflection Objective Measure (SROM). The SROM was developed from Kohlberg's Moral Judgment Interview (MJI) and the Sociomoral Reflection Measure (SRM) by Gibbs et al. (1984). Van IJzendoorn (1986) adapted the SROM for the Dutch situation. The results of this adaptation were applied by Van IJzendoorn (1986, 1988), de Mey (1991, 1992), and de Mey et al. (1989).

In the Heinz-dilemma, Heinz finds himself in the situation in which his wife will die unless she is treated with a newly developed medicine. Heinz does not have enough money and the pharmacist who invented the medicine refuses to sell Heinz the medicine at a lower price. What should Heinz do? Break the law by stealing the medicine and save his wife's life or watch his wife die and thereby respect the law?

The promise-dilemma describes a situation in which a father promises his son that he will be allowed to go to camp. The condition is that 14-year-old Joe must earn the money to pay for it himself. The son gets a job and saves the \$100 he needs. But his father changes his mind. His father wants to go on a fishing trip, but he does not have enough money. So, he demands that Joe give him the \$100. What should Joe do? Not listen to his father and go to camp or help his father and give up going to camp as he had been promised?

Description of the Answer Possibilities

There are a number of different questions concerning the Heinz- and the promise-dilemma. Each question has six answer possibilities. Five of these represent stages of moral judgment. A sixth answer possibility is a so-called pseudo, a "nonsense" alternative that controls for response set on the part of the respondents (see also the Procedure section). First, the respondent must specify which of the six stated reasons he finds "in the neighborhood" of his own point of view and then he must state which reason he finds to be "most in the neighborhood" of his own opinion. To clarify, an example from the Heinz-dilemma is given. The respondent is confronted with a modified situation in which the dying person is not Heinz's wife but a friend. Should he steal the medicine to save the friend, or should he not steal it? The respondent must specify from a number of suggested reasons whether these are in the neighborhood of the reasons that he or she would give himself or herself: (a) because your friend may have done something for you, and now you have to do something for him, certainly if you want your friend to continue to help you in the future; (b) because a friendship must be based on mutual respect and cooperation; (c) because your friend might be a famous person; (d) because you care about your friend and expect that your friend would help you too, (e)

because you and your friend might have become completely dedicated to each other; (f) (pseudo) because the first requirement for caring about someone is to have a relationship.

PROCEDURE

The data are collected with the help of classically administered questionnaires. The procedure takes approximately 50 minutes. Protocols with seven or more pseudos (control for tendency to give socially desirable answers) are not included in the analysis (Gibbs et al., 1984).

SCORING AND ANALYSIS

According to a procedure by Gibbs et al. (1984), the scores on the items are processed to item indexes and a general moral level index.⁷ On the basis of these indexes, the moral judgment level for each participant and the moral judgment level, in general, can be established. Here, a higher score means a higher moral development. The scores are analyzed by means of multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVA, SPSS/PC) and then the means are compared with post hoc tests (Duncan's "multiple range" test, SPSS/PC). Two-tailed tests are conducted with a significance level of $p = .05$.

METRIC CHARACTERISTICS

With regard to the reliability and validity of the SROM, Gibbs and his colleagues (1984) wrote favorable reports. The research results, too, of Van IJzendoorn (1986, 1988) can be viewed as favorable in this respect. Gibbs et al. (1984) reported for their samples, which were heterogeneous in terms of age, a Cronbach's alpha of .82. Van IJzendoorn reports alphas of .76 for a group of VWO students (1986)—.71 (1988) for a group of first-year educators, and .73 (1988) for a group of students pursuing advanced studies. The reliability of the SROM, measured over 32 items, in the relevant study, resulted in a Cronbach alpha coefficient of .71 for the entire group. The alpha coefficients per subgroups are the following: Dutch, .71; Surinamers, .70; Moroccans, .71; Turks, .73; and remainder group, .69.

TABLE 1
F Values From 5 × 2 × 3 Multivariate Covariance Analysis
of the General Moral Level Index (SRMTOT) (covariate = age)

<i>Variance Source</i>	df	<i>F Value</i>
School type (A)	2	8.36**
Sex (B)	1	1.29
Ethnicity (C)	4	3.73*
A × B	2	2.92
A × C	8	8.85
B × C	4	4.95
A × B × C	8	1.44

p* .01. *p* .001.

RESULTS

The formulated hypotheses pertain to relationships between ethnicity, sex, school type, and development of moral judgment. To determine which factors produce main effects and between which factors interactions occur, a three-way MANOVA was carried out of the overall moral level index, with age as the covariate. First, a test of homogeneity of regression was performed. The aim was to determine whether the conditions for the MANOVA were met, that is, whether the regression of the criterium variable (general moral level index) was homogeneous for the covariate in all observation cells. This was confirmed ($F(28, 129) = 1.06, p = .394$). Then the analysis was carried out using a general nonorthogonal model⁸ (Finn, 1974; Finn & Mattsson, 1974; Milliken & Johnson, 1984; Searle, 1971).⁹ The results are presented in Table 1.¹⁰

To prevent misunderstandings with regard to possible sequential effects (Finn, 1974) of the factors School Type and Ethnicity, the effects of these factors were once more estimated, now in both sequences.¹¹ The factor of Sex was not dealt with here, because in the former analysis this factor had no effect. The results showed that there were no sequence effects to be observed.

ETHNICITY

In view of the significant *F* values resulting from the various analyses, the first hypothesis, proposing that in relation to the development

TABLE 2
The Results of Analysis of Variance and
Duncan's Multiple Range Test of Mean General
Moral Level Index (SRMOTOT) With the Factor Ethnicity

	n	M	SD
Dutch	45	294	40
Surinamers	46	292	39
Moroccans	45	268	43
Turks	36	274	42
Remainder group	36	294	38
<i>F</i> (4, 203) = 4.06 <i>p</i> = .0035			

NOTE: Dutch = Surinamers = Remainder group > Moroccans = Turks.

of moral judgment no differences exist between ethnic groups, finds no support. Ethnicity proves to have a main effect on the general moral level index. A more detailed study of the main effect with Duncan's multiple range test¹² is found in Table 2.

The results of the post hoc tests in Table 2 show that the general moral level index differentiates between two subsets of groups. The Dutch, Surinamers, and the remainder group form one subset, and the Moroccans and Turks together form the other group. The comparison shows us that the Moroccans and the Turks score significantly lower than the other three groups. No significant differences were observed between the other groups. The general moral level index, which is measured here in the various groups, perhaps presents us with too general a picture. A more specific picture emerges by checking in which item indexes the effects occur and whether the contrasts at the general moral level index are consistent. Research (de Mey, 1991; Nissan & Kohlberg, 1982) showed that the moral dilemma is a possible source of variance, because here the experience and involvement of the individual plays a role. A MANOVA of the dependent-item indexes shows a general significant group effect (Hotelling's $T^2 = .54$; $F(64, 746) = 1.56$, $p = .005$), something that justifies an inspection of the univariate test results. The results are in Table 3.

Table 3 shows that the effects are spread over the Heinz and Joe items. On the basis of this observation, one cannot say that the effects occur exclusively with one dilemma. It is obvious, however, that between-groups differences in involvement with issues included in

TABLE 3
Means (*M*) and Standard Deviations (*SD*) in the Dutch,
Surinamers, Moroccans, Turks, and Remainder Group on Item Indexes

Index	Dutch		Surinam		Moroccan		Turk		Remainder		F Value
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	
Heinz1	369	127	388	87	340	132	334	121	343	113	1.63
Heinz2	335	92	309	86	284	70	284	126	315	64	2.47*
Heinz3	285	122	283	109	236	86	258	93	234	101	2.35
Heinz4	315	89	316	77	320	79	317	87	317	78	.03
Heinz5	299	99	233	99	238	82	238	97	257	90	3.47**
Heinz6	252	116	291	105	249	101	294	126	281	142	1.46
Heinz7	299	75	299	95	299	77	301	93	325	75	.77
Heinz8	300	73	279	77	258	103	285	99	297	70	1.69
Heinz9	263	118	281	135	269	121	251	122	263	97	.34
Heinz10	308	106	307	133	275	145	233	116	338	98	4.01**
Joe11	223	94	249	127	190	88	219	83	265	112	3.27*
Joe12	286	95	252	130	256	120	274	94	303	89	1.61
Joe13	326	124	323	120	343	108	336	111	328	104	.22
Joe14	295	86	296	103	282	100	267	101	305	81	.93
Joe15	267	146	309	117	218	163	239	149	272	123	2.70*
Joe16	282	121	256	107	231	99	243	93	263	104	1.48
Hotelling's $T^2 = .54$											

NOTE: Univariate F values ($df = 4, 203$), with ethnicity as a factor and the separate items as dependent variables
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

TABLE 4
Contrasts From Duncan Multiple Range Tests on
the Mean Scores of Dutch (N), Surinamers (S), Moroccans (M),
Turks (T), and the Remainder Group (R), and F Values (*df* = 4, 203)

<i>Item Indexes</i>	<i>Duncan Comparison</i>	<i>F Value</i>
Heinz2	N > M = T	2.47
Heinz5	N > S = M = T	3.47
Heinz10	N = S > T; R > M = T	4.01
Joe11	S = R > M	3.27
Joe15	S > M = T	2.70

the Heinz-dilemma, such as law, punishment, and judicial power, are greater than with those that refer to the issues that are central in the Joe-dilemma. An examination of Table 3 also shows us that the differences between the groups cannot be attributed to aspects of the dilemmas to an equal degree; nor is the degree of differences between the ethnic groups the same. To determine for which groups the effects apply, post hoc tests were carried out on the five discriminating aspects of the dilemma. The results are in Table 4.

Table 4 can be read as follows. *Heinz2*: Here the respondents give reasons why they would break the law to save a friend's life. The comparison shows that only between the indigenous Dutch on one hand and the Moroccans and Turks on the other, do significant differences exist. The indigenous Dutch score higher on this item. *Heinz5*: The respondents give reasons why one should not steal. Only between the indigenous Dutch on one hand and Surinamers, Moroccans, and Turks on the other, are there significant differences. Here the indigenous Dutch score higher. *Heinz10*: The respondents state why it is important that courts send people who break the law to jail. On this item, the remainder group scores significantly higher than the Moroccans and Turks. The indigenous Dutch and the Surinamers score higher than the Turks. Other comparisons on this item yielded no demonstrable differences. *Joe11*: The respondents give reasons why it is important for parents to keep their promises. Surinamers and the remainder group score significantly higher on this item than the Moroccans. Other comparisons show no significant differences. *Joe15*: The question is why it is important for parents to allow children to keep the money the

TABLE 5
The Results of Variance Analysis With the Factor School Type and
Duncan Multiple Comparison Tests of Mean

	n	M	SD
VWO	45	302.99	36.16
HAVO	91	289.94	37.90
MAVO	72	265.47	42.74
HAVO = VWO > MAVO			
$F(2, 205) = 14.30$			

NOTE: HAVO = higher-general secondary school; MAVO = lower general secondary school; VWO = preuniversity education.

$p = .000$

children themselves have earned, even if this had not been promised to them. Here there are significant differences between the higher-scoring Surinamers on one hand and the lower-scoring Moroccans and Turks on the other. Summarizing the results with regard to ethnicity, one can conclude that Moroccans and Turks in general turn out to be the lower-scoring group. Inspection of the scores shows that the moral judgment of these groups more often demonstrates a combination of the pre-conventional and conventional level than does the judgment of the other groups, which are more at the conventional level.

SCHOOL TYPE

Research into the second hypothesis, that differences in the development of moral judgment between ethnic groups occur only in the lower school types, cannot be affirmed. In Table 1, one can see that Ethnicity and School Type are factors in which only main effects are found and no interactions. Research into the third hypothesis, that respondents from the higher school types score higher than respondents from the lower school types, reveals that this hypothesis, in view of the main effect reported in Table 1, can be retained. The main effect shows that the moral judgment level varies according to school type. Studying the factor with the aid of post hoc tests is a logical next step; Table 5 shows the results.

Table 5 shows that VWO and HAVO form a single subset and MAVO the other subset, whereby MAVO scores significantly lower

TABLE 6
Means and Standard Deviations
in VWO, HAVO and MAVO of Item Indexes

<i>Index</i>	<i>VWO</i>		<i>HAVO</i>		<i>MAVO</i>		<i>F Value</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Heinz1	356	129	364	112	346	119	.42
Heinz2	327	76	306	95	292	92	2.01
Heinz3	305	103	260	106	234	96	6.78**
Heinz4	318	72	315	80	318	89	.04
Heinz5	270	92	252	95	242	99	1.13
Heinz6	262	118	267	117	284	120	.65
Heinz7	314	79	315	85	284	81	3.24*
Heinz8	292	87	281	84	280	89	.32
Heinz9	281	101	269	123	254	125	.75
Heinz10	315	126	311	124	257	121	4.77**
Joe11	249	102	239	108	201	98	3.86*
Joe12	297	95	265	120	269	102	1.39
Joe13	347	90	347	113	302	122	3.90*
Joe14	339	82	288	91	260	95	10.55***
Joe15	305	133	300	124	186	144	17.56***
Joe16	272	100	261	112	237	101	1.80

NOTE: Univariate *F* values ($df = 2, 205$) for factor school type and dependent variable item indexes. HAVO = higher general secondary school; MAVO = lower general secondary school; VWO = preuniversity education.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .005$.

than the other two school types. Just as this occurred with ethnicity, here, too, it is interesting to determine in which item indexes the effects occur. A multivariate analysis with School Type as a factor yielded a significant evaluation result (Hotelling's $T^2 = .48$; $F(32, 378) = 2.84$, $p < .000$) for the dependent-item indexes. The univariate test results can be seen in Table 6.

Table 6 demonstrates seven significant effects. In contrast to the division for ethnicity, here one can see that the strongest and the majority of effects were measured on the Joe items. On Joe15, an entire level difference can be seen even in stage terms. The Joe items reflect the problems of the child-parent relationship. Apparently the differences between the groups, in terms of involvement and experience with this theme, are of greater significance than is the case with the topics of the Heinz items. The post hoc tests (the comparisons of which are not included here) that were carried out on the item indexes show that, in

general, the difference is noted between VWO and HAVO on one hand and MAVO on the other. At the general moral level index and on seven item indexes, the MAVO proves to be the lower-scoring group. This means that respondents from the MAVO, in comparison with the other two groups, judge more in the changeover area of stages 2 and 3 and apply pre-conventional and conventional principles, respectively. In the other two, particularly in the VWO, stages 3 and 4 judgments were made at the conventional level. Nonetheless, these joint results are only partly consistent with expectations, because between VWO and HAVO respondents, in general, no difference is to be seen in the development of moral judgment.

SEX

In Hypothesis 4, it is suggested that an interaction would occur between the effects of ethnicity and sex. In certain groups, the girls were expected to score lower than the boys. The results in Table 1, however, do not support this assumption. There is no main effect; neither is there an interaction effect between sex and ethnicity nor any interaction between the effects of sex, ethnicity, and school type.

DISCUSSION

GROUPS AND SCORES

In this study concerned with Kohlberg's complexity thesis, the ethnicity factor is the central point. The expectation was not confirmed that inasmuch as ethnically differentiated groups of students comprise a part of the same complex environment, there would be no differences between them in the development of moral judgment. Ethnicity proves to have a main effect on the groups studied here, irrespective of their sex and school type. The higher scoring groups are sometimes indigenous Dutch, at other times Surinamers, or else respondents from the remainder group. The lower scoring groups are the Moroccans and Turks. Strong differences between these and the other groups are noted chiefly for the Heinz items. It must be stated that on the basis of these data, no relationship whatsoever can be established with moral

behavior. In contrast to the suspicion voiced earlier, the changeover to a more complex social structure, despite the type of education, does not result in every group catching up, in terms of moral development.

MIGRATION AND AGE

It may be that the differences observed here have something to do with the immigration age of the respondents. One may state that the groups in question have been in the Netherlands for too short a time to accumulate the experience needed for a moral development at the same pace and at the same level as that of other groups. But this can be countered by saying that all the Moroccans (96%) and Turks (97%) studied here, except for perhaps the occasional exception, have been attending school in the Netherlands from elementary school onward. Yet, one can maintain that the children were too old to assimilate into the new culture. The last aspect is based on a hypothesis of Schrader, Nikles, and Griese (1979), which suggests that children who emigrate between birth and 2 years of age have a reasonable chance of being completely assimilated into the new culture. But, this new hypothesis is not supported here. The finding is that there are no differences, $t(77) = .68, p = .49$, in the development of moral judgment between the Moroccans and Turks who were born in the Netherlands ($n = 47$) and those who came here at a later age ($n = 32$). Another possibility can be raised. It is possible that the given minority and majority cultures do not interact in such a way that we can talk about an emergent new culture built up on the elements of both parties.

EXTRAFAMILIAL ENVIRONMENT AND FAMILY

Finally, what can be concluded in terms of the complexity thesis? In any case, the ethnicity effect that has been found, with no interaction between Sex and Type of Schooling, fails to support Kohlberg's thesis. On the other hand, it would be premature to overturn the assumption. What is indeed clear is that the factors of Education and Urbanization, which came to the fore as differentiating points in the consulted cross-cultural study, may be necessary in this study but certainly are not sufficient conditions for moral development. It seems reasonable to expand the complexity thesis by adding the factors of the system of

upbringing. After all, an explanation for the lower scores of the groups in question may lie in the fact that in the upbringing of respondents in these groups, Islamic guidelines are followed.¹³ Within the respective guidelines, one is responsible mainly to God; also, obedience and respect for the parents are very significant virtues. Individualism and independence are virtues that are stressed much less, and these are specifically virtues that can encourage a moral development to higher levels.¹⁴ Let us explain this a bit more in detail. The two values, individuality and independence, which can be seen as attributes of indigenous Dutch family life, rest on democratic procedures and bargaining processes. In other words, children participate in everyday life decisions within their families comparable to adults who participate in public and political decisions. In terms of complexity, such kinds of family structures are more complex than those child-rearing environments based on order. On the micro level, we may thus assume with Bronfenbrenner and Ceci (1994) that the degree of complexity of the proximal processes in the family may be of relevance for subgroups in society and the consequences of child rearing. We may not forget, of course, that empirical research must decide on the value of our assumption.

Coming back to our research, the question still remains that if a family's style of bringing up children matters, why are there no sex differences in the Moroccan and Turkish groups of students? The answer may be that the groups that were studied are too young and that sex differences in moral development only appear at a later age. After school, the girls return to the family and the boys go to work. But it is also possible that sex differences simply cannot be measured with the instrument used here. The proposal to not yet discard the complexity thesis is a good one for yet another reason: The expectation that respondents from lower school types would score lower moral judgments than respondents from higher school types has been partially confirmed. Moral judgment differences are expressed, in particular, between the VWO and HAVO, on one hand and the MAVO, on the other. But, the interpretation of these results calls for some caution, because analyses made here say nothing about the causality of this connection.

In closing these remarks, one might temper the results somewhat by bringing Kohlberg's theory and the instruments based on it up for discussion.

**KOHLBERG'S THEORY:
CHUCK OR CHANGE?**

From the very beginning, the criticism of Kohlberg has been considerable. A very abridged summary is as follows. In addition to the criticism of a number of moral development claims (de Mey, 1991), Kohlberg's descriptions of moral judgment stages in terms of justice have been viewed as being one-sided (Locke, 1986). This criticism also has led to the development of alternatives for the adaptations of the instruments used by Kohlberg. The moral dilemmas, which represent conflicts between rights, are, according to some people (Gilligan, 1977), on the basis of their hypothetical nature, artificial and according to some others (Cortese, 1990), give a distorted picture of non-Western cultures. Gilligan calls for real-life dilemmas as an alternative for the hypothetical dilemmas of Kohlberg. Rest (1986) also says that a choice between the hypothetical and real-life dilemmas still would be a problem.¹⁵ The cultural distortion that results from the Kohlberg instrument is said to apply particularly to the postconventional stages. These are said to be based on typical European American principles.¹⁶ The first through the fourth stages, one notes in a survey by Snarey (1985) of 41 cross-cultural studies, are no longer up for discussion.

Despite the fact that in Kohlberg's theory of moral development a number of points are still controversial, on the basis of scientific evaluations (Enright, Lapsley, & Olson, 1986; Lapsley & Serlin, 1984; Siegal, 1980), one can deduce from Kohlberg's concept that it can be developed progressively.

NOTES

1. Here Kohlberg (1971) feels that a "mild doctrine of social evolution" applies.

2. Education furthers perspectives in a cognitive and social context that lies at the basis of higher moral judgment stages. In urbanized areas, a richer assortment of role assumption possibilities is available and, thus, a broader social context in which individuals are socialized than in

nonurbanized areas. Both factors yield a positive share in the moral development of the child, according to the visions of the researchers.

3. This goes together with the small-scale status, the absence of professional differentiation, and a low level of education of the population. In the socialization of individuals, the stress is on functioning in groups.

4. In general, these are urbanized, have a quite advanced division of labor, and the level of instruction of the professional population has constantly risen since the Second World War. In socialization processes, parents stimulate their offspring to think and act independently.

5. Reid (1990) states, for example, "European culture is simply more individualistic in its approach to moral decision making. By contrast the Samoan system views the individual as inherently connected through a set of intertwined relationships with others" (p. 63).

6. An outstanding analysis of the Gilligan-Kohlberg debate that developed on the basis of these differences can be found in the thesis by Vreeke (1992).

7. The item indexes are constructed with the aid of the manual by Gibbs et al. (1984). Here, the following steps were followed: (a) per item section, an average stage score was calculated over answers that are chosen as being "in the neighborhood"; (b) each item section is assigned a stage score, this time noting which reply is chosen as "most in the neighborhood"; (c) on a and b, a total average is calculated with which the "most in the neighborhood" scores count twice as much as the "in the neighborhood" scores. The general moral level index is an average of the "in the neighborhood" and the "most in the neighborhood" scores.

8. Here, use is made of the option *unique* (default). With this option, each effect is checked for all other effects.

9. According to Finn (1974, p. 298) the advantage of a nonorthogonal model in comparison with an orthogonal solution (similar cell frequencies) is that it is not artificial and, thus, fits better with the design used for the study.

10. The homogeneity of the cell variances, tested as per Bartlett-Box, came out favorably with respect to the intended analysis.

11. The option used is *sequential*.

12. With this test, multiple comparisons are made between averages of the groups.

13. An assessment of the relationship between other religions (none, RK, Jehova, Islam, Hindu, and other) and the development of moral judgment yielded no significant effect.

14. Another explanation is also possible. A hypothesis derived from information theory (Bakker, 1985) suggests that lower-educated persons possess less of the skills needed to process complex forms of information than do persons with a higher education. Particularly Moroccans, and to a lesser extent Turks, have the most unfavorable social position of all the ethnic groups, in terms of having no education or, at the most, primary school level and, moreover, the worst housing situation (Roelandt, Martens, & Veenman, 1990). This would mean that, for Moroccan and Turkish families, it is difficult to put across the values and standards of the new culture.

15. He shows that some people do observe differences in scores between the two types of dilemmas, whereas others do not. He argues that the Kohlberg dilemmas have the advantage of presenting a clearer overall line of moral argumentation than is possible with situation-related moral problems. Moreover, he demonstrates that Kohlberg's instruments are the best developed instruments in the realm of cognitive moral development so far.

16. Although some people (Cortese, 1990; Dien, 1982) see this as a reason to reject the theory, others (Iwasa, 1992; Reid, 1990; Vasudev & Hummel, 1987) tend to protect and refine the theory. This latter group of researchers proposes expanding the postconventional level with principles other than those of justice, such as, for example, care, responsibility, human dignity, and nonviolence. In the past, incidentally, Kohlberg has voiced his approval of this type of proposal.

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