



Six Stages Kohlberg

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CNL-518 Lifespan and Development

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July 31, 2024



Kohlberg's six stages of moral development

Lawrence Kohlberg created the six stages of moral development by analyzing children, adolescents, and adults' responses to dilemmas (Kail & Cavanaugh, 2022).

This presentation will describe the six stages of moral development, showcase the moral thought process through a case study, and correlate the stages to Erikson's and Piaget's cognitive stages of development.

Scenario

A young adolescent woman is caught between doing what her family wants and following her own dreams. She believes in the power of learning, but her parents would rather have her stay at home to help rather than go to school.

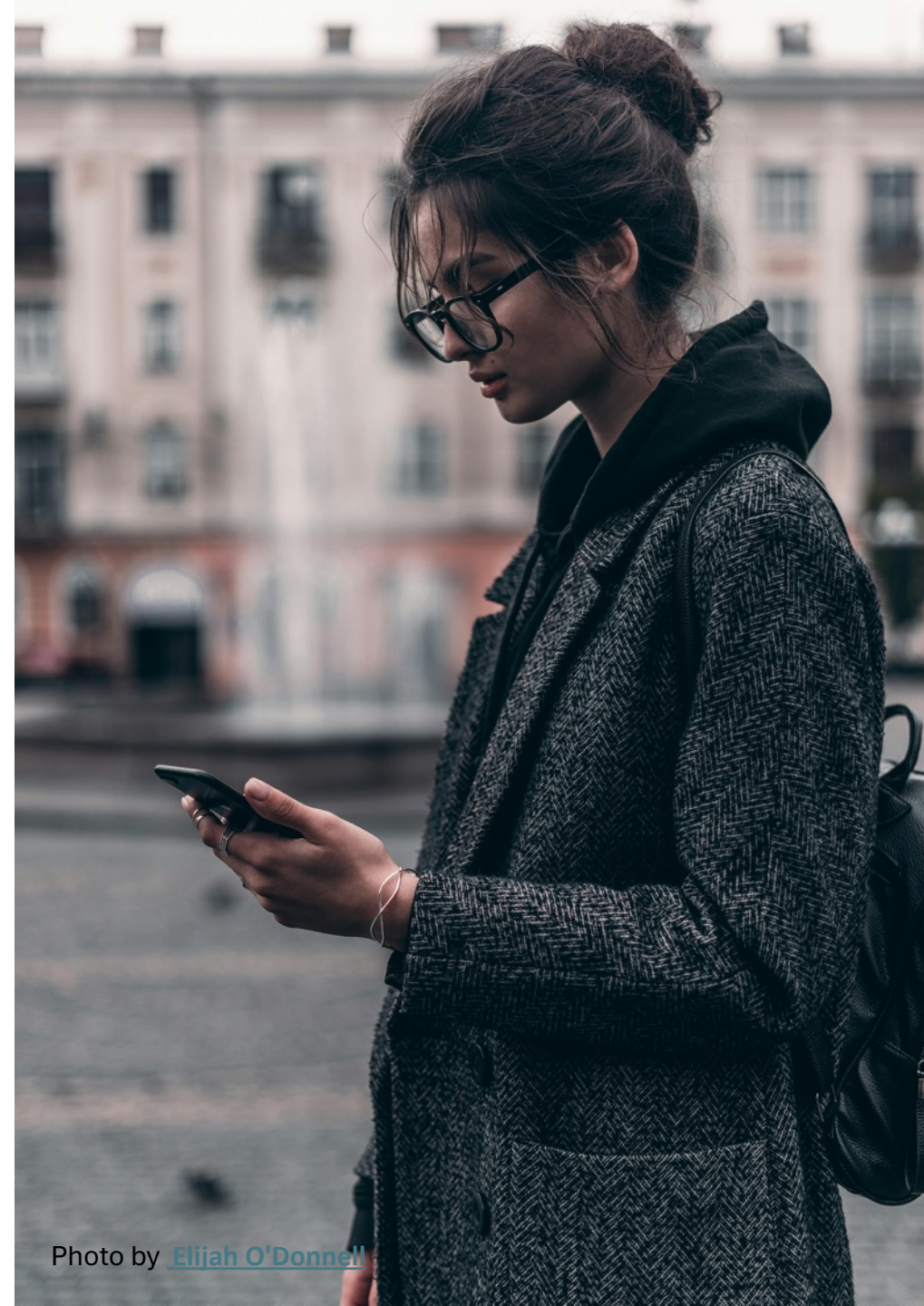


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Stage 1: Obedience orientation

- Preconventional stage
- Moral reasoning is based on rewards and punishments
- Avoid punishment to obtain pleasure

Rationale

- She wants to do right by her parents, and that would be staying home to help

Stage 2: Instrumental orientation

- Preconventional stage
- Looking out for their own needs
- Being nice to others so in return they're nice to you

Rationale

- At this stage, the young lady understands that her parents are not the only authority on right and wrong
- She understands that she can look out for her own needs





Stage 3: Interpersonal norms

- Conventional stage
- Based on society norm
- Win approval of others

Rationale

- The young girl understands that she needs to be a good person so that others in society, such as her peers, will accept her. If her dream is to go to school to learn then she's doing her best to be good to everyone so she is liked and accepted.

Stage 4: Social system mortality

- Conventional stage
- Social roles, expectations, and laws
- Promote good of all people

Rationale

- The young girl understands that her family needs help but also understands that kids should be in school by law. She understands that at an older age, she is not breaking the law by not attending college but knows that to live out her dreams, she may need a college education, and within that education, there are rules that must be followed to graduate.



Stage 5: Social contract

- Postconventional stage
- Moral reasoning based on personal code of ethics
- Expectations and laws benefit all groups

Rationale

- The young girl understands and looks for laws and rules that benefit her situation. In this scenario, she may discuss the benefits of a college degree and how that can help her family more than staying home to help and not following her dreams of learning more.



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Stage 6: **Universal ethical principles**

- Postconventional stage
- Moral reasoning based on abstract principles
- Justice, compassion, equality

Rationale

- The young girl is looking within herself and her own moral codes to make the best decision for herself and her family.



Piaget & Erikson's developmental stages

- Moral development progresses with age
- Moral reasoning is related to cognitive reasoning
- The progression of stages preceded from one to the next



Conclusion

Lawrence Kohlberg's six stages of moral development tie into Piaget's and Erikson's cognitive development theory. As children age through adolescence and adulthood, they learn cognitive and moral reasoning skills in stages (Kail & Cavanaugh, 2022). Each stage builds on the preceding stage, allowing cognitive and moral reasoning to grow.

As an adult, such as the young woman in the scenario, one can think through more complex issues and add an ethical and moral element to make the best decisions as she ages. Through the growth of these stages, the young woman will be able to make a decision that benefits both her and her family.



References

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