



## The Development of Moral and Social Judgments: Social Contexts and Processes of Coordination

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### ABSTRACT

The research presented in this essay is grounded in Social Domain Theory. Research provides substantial evidence that children's social development is characterized by the formation of distinctly different systems of thought, including those in the moral, social-conventional, and personal domains. A main focus here is on morality, defined as involving understandings of welfare, justice, and rights, which are applied across societal contexts.

Social conventions are uniformities within social systems, serving to provide uniform expectations. The domains constitute different configurations of thinking and developmental changes occur within each domain. However, decisions in social situational contexts often involve coordination, which is a process of weighing and balancing different and sometimes conflicting considerations. Such social contexts can include conflicts between different moral goals or between moral and societal goals. Processes of coordination are examined in social psychological experiments, as well as developmental studies of topics like honesty, rights, and social inclusion. Coordination is also considered in people's perspectives on cultural practices of unfairness and inequality. Psychological research in patriarchal societies shows that females, who are subjected to inequalities evaluate those cultural practices as unfair. Anthropological research documents that females engage in acts of opposition and moral resistance regarding perceived unfair cultural practices.

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## Introduction

In this paper, we focus on what we refer to as processes of coordination in moral and social decisions. Briefly put, coordination involves the weighing and balancing of different considerations and goals in coming to decisions in social situational contexts. Social situations can be multifaceted and thereby call for processes of coordination in at least two respects. One is that social situations can include conflicts between more than one moral goal or between moral and non-moral goals. A second is that different socially defined contexts can require that the perspective on a moral goal is partially defined by the commitments of those participating in the activity. An example of the latter type – which we discuss below – would be game or sport contexts. Our analyses are grounded in a theoretical framework and associated research labeled social domain theory (Turiel, 1983a, 1983b, 2002). Researchers in this tradition have focused on the development of moral and social reasoning. First, we contrast the domain approach with other approaches to moral development. Then we review some of the parameters of domain theory, along with supporting research evidence, before considering processes of coordination in social contexts.

### *Theoretical Approaches to Moral and Social Development*

The research based on social domain theory has examined the development of moral and social thinking from early childhood to adulthood. The emphasis on thought and reasoning in the moral and social realms is associated with explanations of development as entailing constructions through individuals' interactions with the social world. The moral understandings constructed by individuals involve concerns with people's welfare, justice or fairness, and rights – concerns found across cultural settings. Such a way of defining morality and its development contrasts with other psychological approaches, originated in behaviorist (Skinner, 1971) and psychoanalytic (Freud, 1930) theories that emphasized the learning of societal or cultural values, as well as those that emphasized biological sources (Greene, Sommerville, Nystrom, Darley, & Cohen, 2001).

*Environmental approaches.* Behaviorists of the early and middle parts of the twentieth century proposed that morality is the acquisition of environmentally determined valued behaviors through mechanisms of positive and negative reinforcement. Early in the twentieth century, psychoanalytic theorists proposed that societal moral values are learned by children through the acquisition of a mental faculty – the superego – that included adherence to societal values through mechanisms such as feelings of guilt. In contrast to the behaviorist explanations, psychoanalytic ones included the idea that the process of acquiring moral values involves a great deal of conflict for children. The conflict was seen to stem from the societal requirement that children suppress strong needs and instincts.

In contemporary times, these views of the development of morality as the incorporation of values or standards defined by the environment have been extended in social learning or socialization perspectives and in what is referred to as cultural

psychology. Social learning theorists propose that in addition to the effects of rewards and punishments children learn by imitating others (Bandura, 1991). It has also been proposed that the effectiveness of the transmittal of moral values is influenced by the types of child-rearing practices used by parents (Baumrind, 1989).

In contrast, cultural psychologists propose that individuals come to adopt and identify with general socio-moral orientations of their culture, on the assumption that most cultures can be characterized as individualistic or collectivistic (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Shweder & Bourne, 1982; Shweder, Mahapatra, & Miller, 1987; Shweder, Much, Mahapatra, & Park, 1997; Triandis, 1996). Cultural psychologists propose that cultures have cohesive and integrated moral and social orientations. Those with an individualistic orientation, usually found in Western societies, give most importance to personal choices and decisions. In those cultures, emphasis is placed on freedom of choice and independence, and morality is primarily based on the notion of rights. In cultures with a collectivistic orientation, usually found in non-Western societies, most importance is given to the group and to interdependence among people. Within this orientation, social hierarchies are central, and people readily accept their roles as stipulated by societal systems. Morality is primarily based on adhering to duties and rules.

*Biological approaches.* As noted, there are psychological approaches that emphasize the role of biology or genetics in morality. In recent times, researchers taking a biological perspective have conducted studies associated with neuroscience using neuroimaging methods (e.g., Cushman, Young, & Hauser, 2006; Greene, Sommerville, et al., 2001; Koenigs, Young, et al., 2007). Typically, participants placed in an fMRI machine are presented with situations depicting a runaway trolley that is going to strike and kill five workmen on the track. In one version, a bystander can throw a switch that would divert the trolley and kill one person but save the lives of five. In another version, a bystander can push a man in front of the trolley, killing that person but saving the lives of five. The usual findings are that most participants judge it acceptable to throw the switch and unacceptable to push the man. The usual interpretations of these findings are that pushing a person to his death evokes much stronger biologically based emotions than throwing a switch, and that, more generally, emotions are primary in such decisions.

There are reasons to question the interpretation of the findings from the trolley car research that decisions are mainly emotionally driven (Dahl, Gino, Utlich, & Turiel, 2018; Killen & Smetana, 2007; Turiel, 2010). First, both types of situations should be seen as involving strong conflicts for participants, since they are posed with the problem of choosing whose lives to save and whose to sacrifice (see Dahl et al., 2018 and Turiel, 2010 for extensive discussions). Embedded in the trolley car situations are emotionally laden problems with multiple considerations that are difficult to reconcile without violating serious moral precepts in order to achieve serious moral goals: the strongly held value of life must be violated in order to preserve that very value.

The trolley car situations present a compounded problem involving the saving of lives, taking a life, the natural course of events, the responsibility of individuals

altering natural courses, and causing someone's death in a direct way. As shown in research by Dahl et al. (2018), these situations require a coordination of judgments, with those involving the pushing of a man requiring more complex coordination than those involving the throwing of a switch. The research on judgments about the trolley car situations can be informative for the study of decisions in complex moral situations, but such research needs to be grounded on research that examines judgments about situations that are not so complex. An example of such work is the research done on social domains, which includes assessments of judgments about straightforward moral situations.

#### *Development within Social Domains*

Many studies have been conducted with children, adolescents, and adults using situations better representative than trolley car situations of the ones people face in their lives. A fundamental premise of the domain research is consistent with prominent philosophical analyses of morality – namely, that it involves reasoning and choice (Dworkin, 1977; Frankena, 1963; Gewirth, 1982; Habermas, 1993; Nussbaum, 1999, 2000; Rawls, 1971, 1993; Sen 1999, 2006, 2009). As put by Nussbaum (1999, p. 71), “human beings are above all reasoning beings, and ... the dignity of reason is the primary source of human equality.” In turn, Sen (2006, p. xiii) linked reasoning to choice: “Central to leading a human life ... are the responsibilities of choice and reasoning.” On the psychological side, the domain research has been influenced by the structural-developmental theories of Piaget (1932, 1947, 1970). In Piaget's perspective, children think about their experiences, including social experiences, and construct ways of thinking about the world around them. In this perspective, therefore, development is not environmentally or biologically determined.

Our research has shown that by an early age (4 or 5 years of age and perhaps earlier, see Smetana, 2018) children form moral judgments about right and wrong, which include understandings of the need to avoid harm and to benefit people. At somewhat later ages children develop increased understandings of justice and rights (Helwig, 1995, 1997; Helwig & Turiel, 2017; Turiel, 1983a, 2002; Turiel & Wainryb, 1998). The types of actions studied that demonstrated children's moral judgments include hitting, stealing, unequal treatment, helping, and sharing.

Stated generally, morality involves understandings of welfare, justice, and rights. Those understandings are associated with positive emotions like sympathy, empathy, and affection (Turiel, in press; Turiel & Killen, 2010). Moral judgments are not contingent on rules or authority, and morality is judged to apply across groups and cultures. As an example, children have been posed with questions like “suppose an authority (e.g., a principal or teacher) in a school stated that it is alright to hit people, would that be alright? Consistently, children responded that it would not be alright – as illustrated in the following response by a five-year-old boy (Turiel, 1983a, p. 62): “No it is not okay...because that is like making other people unhappy. You can hurt them that way. It hurts other people, hurting is not good.”

As indicated by the statement of the 5-year-old, children's experiences with these types of events, such as hitting and being hit, are sources of moral development (Turiel & Gingo, 2017). Children's moral judgments are formed through their everyday experiences having to do with harm, benefits to people, fair and unfair treatment, equal and unequal treatment. These types of experiences occur with adults and other children and occur the world over (Piaget, 1932; Turiel & Gingo, 2017). Moreover, children reflect upon their social experiences, as shown by research in which they reported on times they had felt hurt by someone and times they had hurt someone (Wainryb, Brehl, & Matwin, 2005; Wainryb & Recchia, 2005). The following responses illustrate the ways they reflect upon social experiences. First is a response by a 4-year-old boy (Wainryb et al., 2005, p. 55):

I was playing with my friend Adam and I said something that really hurt him and he said, "I don't like that." And I stopped. I also pushed him. And I said, "I'm sorry." Because he told me he didn't like it.

The 4-year-old is aware of his role in causing harm, and of the need to repair it. With age, reflections upon the feelings of others and regrets become more complex as illustrated by the responses of an adolescent female with regard to a time she had made fun of an old friend (Wainryb & Recchia, 2005, p. 18):

I was like thinking about it and I was like, "How could I do that to my former best friend," you know? Cause she was a person too and just cause I wanted to fit in with other people, I shouldn't have done that. So, I like, this went on for a while. And after that I apologized to her and she accepted my apology although, I don't think I would have if someone would have done that to me. I would have been really hurt. And I found out she cried all the time. And that just made me feel really bad that I did that. So ever since then, I don't make fun of people anymore.

In reaction to a perceived moral transgression on her part, this adolescent reflected on the relationship, the reactions of those involved, on how she should have acted, and on how she should act in the future. The responses of the 5-year-old also illustrate how there is a focus on the harm caused and not on rules (or what is dictated by authorities or by common practices). As shown by a good deal of research (see Smetana, 2006 and Turiel, 2015 for summaries), in another domain of social reasoning - the conventional domain - there is a focus on rules, authority, and common practices. The social-conventional domain pertains to those norms or customs that can be particular to social systems, serving to maintain smooth social functioning (Turiel, 1983a). Research has assessed judgments about conventional issues like forms of address, types of dress, table manners, and forms of greeting. It has been found that children do judge conventions to be contingent on rules and authority, and that they can legitimately differ from one setting to another - such as the home, school, or in different cultures. Table 1 provides a summary of the ways the configuration of thinking about moral issues differs from thinking about conventional issues.

**Table 1***Features of Thinking in the Moral and Conventional Domains*

<b>Morality</b>	<b>Social Conventions</b>
Concepts of welfare, justice, and rights	Concepts of uniformities in social systems
Not contingent on rules, authority, or existing practices	Contingent on rules, authority, existing practices, and agreements
Universally applicable.	Relative to social systems

We should also note that children develop judgments about the domain of personal jurisdiction (Nucci, 1981, 2001). They form judgments about autonomy, independence, and personal choices. These are judgments about aspects of life that are seen as up to individual decision as long as they do not harm others. We should also note that the types of judgments distinguishing the domains cut across ages. Developmental changes occur within each of the domains (Nucci, 2001; Nucci, Turiel, & Roded, 2017; Turiel, 1983a).

The domain distinctions have been found in research conducted in several cultures (Turiel, 2002). Research examining related aspects of domain distinctions has also been conducted with members of different religious groups. The first studies of this type were with children affiliated with the following religions: Amish-Mennonites, Dutch Reform Calvinist Christians, and Conservative Orthodox Jewish (Nucci, 1982; Nucci & Turiel, 1993). In that research, participants made judgments about issues classified in the moral domain (e.g., stealing, hitting, damaging another's property) and issues classified as non-moral practices pertaining to the religions (e.g., day of worship, work on the Sabbath, head coverings, women preaching, women reading from the Torah, interfaith marriage). Participants were posed with questions regarding the alterability of the rule pertaining to each type of act (i.e., can the rule be changed by all the members of the congregation and the Minister/Rabbi), the generalizability of the act (i.e., another religion that does not have a rule about the act), and whether or not the rule was contingent on God's command (i.e., suppose there was nothing in the Bible or God's word about the act). It was found that most participants judged that the moral violations were wrong because of harm, that the rules should not be changed by congregations or authorities, that it would be wrong for other religions not to have the rules, and that the wrongness of the acts was not contingent on the Bible or God's word. For the most part, the conventional religious practices were judged differently from the moral acts. Most judged that other religions could legitimately have different rules about the religious practices. Some did judge that the religious authorities could change the rules. Others judged that authorities could not change those rules but that they could be changed by God (which contrasts with the finding that the moral rules were not contingent on God's word).

Corresponding findings have been obtained in studies with other religious groups. Srinivasan, Kaplan and Dahl (in press) studied judgments about moral and religious practices among Hindu and Muslim children in India. Robinson and Smetana (2019) studied judgments about moral rules and gender-based rules and practices among Mormon adults in the United States. In each case, distinctions were made in thinking about moral and conventional religious norms.

### *Judgments Regarding Circumscribed Social Contexts*

In the studies that included assessments of judgments about religious practices, it was found that children and adolescents understand the role of authorities and rules within the constituted social systems. It also was found that while religious rules, authorities, and cultural practices were important to the religious social context, they were not accepted as legitimate bases for allowing acts that caused harm to others or were unfair. However, there may be some circumscribed social contexts in which the moral status of acts of physical force or emotional harm can be transformed in people's decisions. Two such contexts are the games and sport activities that people engage in voluntarily and with general agreement.

In one study, assessments were made of children's (6 to 11 years of age) judgments about hypothetical situations depicting a game in which an act could be construed as entailing psychological or emotional harm (Helwig, Hildebrandt, & Turiel, 1995). As presented to the children, the rules of the game included that one child would call another "stupid," who would then be in the role of chasing the first child. Thus, the game was described in ways that the intentions of the players were not to emotionally harm another but to engage in the game in the specified ways accepted by all. It was found that the large majority of the children judged the act of calling someone stupid in that context to be acceptable. Part of the design of the study was to present situations in which the intentions of a player and the reactions of another were varied. For example, in one situation a child intended to inflict emotional harm to another who was unaware of the game rules and who experienced emotional hurt. Large majorities of the participants judged that it was wrong to engage in the act under those circumstances, because not everyone was aware of and accepted the rules and because of the intention to harm. It was also found that large majorities judged it wrong to engage in the act of calling someone stupid outside of the game context.

The Helwig et al. (1995) study included assessments of children's judgments about a game in which the rules permitted a physical act of force with potential harm – pushing others down but without the intention to cause physical harm. None of the children in the study thought it was alright to play such a game because of the risk for harm. However, there are ways some organized sport activities do allow for physical contact of one type or another (American football is an example). There is a body of research on the moral development of individuals who engage in organized team sports (such as members of university teams). In that research it has been proposed that student-athletes, by being closely tied to the social system of sport, tend to accept

physical aggression because they disengage from their moral responsibilities in favor of more ego-centric goals (Bandura, 2016; Boardley & Kavussanu, 2010) or because their moral development is inadequate, lagging behind that of non-athletes (Bredemeier & Shields, 1984, 1986; Shields & Bredemeier, 2001; Stoll & Beller, 1994). The problems with those approaches are that they have relied on assessments of general stages of moral judgment proposed by Kohlberg (1963) and others that fail to account for domain distinctions. The research on domains has shown that children do not progress through such general stages (Turiel, 1983a).

Recent research was designed to consider these features (Banas, 2019). In that study, groups of young adults (undergraduate students from 18 to 25 years of age) with more and less experience in organized sport activities were presented with general questions about inflicting physical harm in and out of sport activities. The participants were also presented with hypothetical situations describing a player in a game who intentionally inflicts physical harm on another player without provocation and with provocation. Similarly, participants were presented with comparable situations outside of sport activities in which a person intentionally inflicts harm to another person without and with provocation. Additional situations depicted the use of physical force as a means of helping to shape another for the rigors of athletic events and in order to make a young person more resilient.

The preliminary findings reveal little in the way of differences in judgments between those who participate in sports and those who do not do so. Intentionally inflicting physical harm not sanctioned by the rules of the sport was judged wrong whether it be provoked or unprovoked. Similar judgments were made of harm outside of sport contexts. This was the case in responses to the general questions and to the hypothetical situations. Some of the findings, therefore, demonstrate that those engaging in athletic activities make moral judgments about acts intended to inflict physical harm in both sport and non-sport contexts that are similar to the moral judgments made by non-athletes. However, other findings show that individuals do take into account social contextual features of sports that involve voluntary participation and general agreement about the function of acts of force. Participants were more likely to accept acts of force in sport contexts (e.g., in a basketball game) than in non-sport contexts when they are part of the rules and generally accepted.

Other preliminary findings from the study bear on another important contribution, the role of understandings of reality or informational assumptions to the process of making moral and social decisions (Asch, 1952; Hatch, 1983; Turiel, Hildebrandt, & Wainryb, 1991; Turiel, Killen, & Helwig, 1987; Turiel & Wainryb, 1994). It appears that a greater number of participants judged that it is alright to use force in order to help train or shape a young person for the rigors of sporting events they intend to pursue. Such decisions take into account understandings of reality that can be factual and that involve beliefs about psychological functioning (informational assumptions can also involve beliefs about biology and the natural world). Beliefs about reality are different from moral concepts but can affect the moral decisions people make. Consider as an example, decisions about parental spanking of a child, which does involve inflicting physical pain (for other examples, see Hatch, 1983, Turiel et al., 1987; Turiel et al., 1991).



It has been found that some adults who generally judge inflicting pain as wrong judge spanking a child for wrongdoing as acceptable on the grounds that it is effective in helping them to learn necessary moral behaviors (Wainryb, 1991). In turn, those who make the psychological assumption that spanking is not effective for moral learning judge it unacceptable. The research also shows that people's evaluations of spanking are correlated with hypothetically presented evidence proving that spanking is either effective or ineffective (e.g. individuals more often say they would judge spanking as wrong if it were proven that spanking is ineffective for learning and development). The judgment that physical force is alright when used with the aim of training for sport activities rests on the psychological-informational assumption that it is effective and necessary in the learning process of becoming a better athlete and does not cause harm that would outweigh the benefits of the training.

#### *Social Situational Contexts and Processes of Coordination*

The examples of judgments about non-sport activities show that an act like purposely pushing someone down to the ground can be seen as a straightforward situation, invoking only moral concerns (e.g. pushing is not alright because it is harmful). However, when the act is placed into the context of a game in which the rules allow for pushing and everyone playing the game agrees to it, the situation takes on additional features that are perceived and taken into account. In doing so, individuals weigh and balance – or coordinate – these components and draw priorities in coming to a decision. Many social situations are complex in these ways and include multiple components with competing goals, requiring coordination. Indeed, some situations may involve conflicts between different moral goals. There is a fair amount of research from the domain perspective evidencing that these processes of coordination are involved in social decision-making.

However, before discussing that research we consider a set of classic social psychological experiments on so-called "obedience to authority" (Milgram, 1963, 1974) as a means of illustrating the ways social situations can present people with conflicting considerations and goals. In the experiments, participants were recruited through public postings and advertisements to participate in "scientific study of memory and learning" conducted by Professor Stanley Milgram of Yale University. Those who volunteered to participate were taken to a "laboratory" setting, introduced to the experimenters who wore official looking white coats, and told they would be participating in a study on the effects of punishment in the form of electric shocks on memory and learning. The experimenters made a pretense of choosing between two supposed participants to be the teacher and learner, but the one chosen as the learner was actually a confederate of the experimenters. The "learner" was strapped into a machine that supposedly delivered increasing levels of shock. Then the participant as teacher was instructed to administer the increasing levels of shock (though the learner did not actually get shocked) every time the learner made a mistake in the task.

We have provided all these details in order to convey that the social context of the experiment went beyond the directives of persons in authority and also conveyed that it was a scientific enterprise. In addition, the details reveal the good deal of dishonesty or deception engaged in by the experimenters (more about this below). The oft presented notion that Milgram's research demonstrates that people will obey an authority when commanded to inflict pain and harm to another is inaccurate for two reasons. One is that it does not account for most of the findings in the different experimental conditions in the research (Milgram, 1974). The research actually included a number of different conditions in which there were variations in the closeness of the person being shocked (e.g., the person is in a different room or in the same room) and/or of the roles of the experimenters (e.g., gives instructions from another room or two experimenters give conflicting instructions). In most of those experimental conditions the majority of participants at some point actually refused to do what the experimenters instructed.

In the most publicized condition, the learner was in a separate room, but the participants could hear him yell that the shocks were very painful and that he wanted to stop the experiment. It is only in that condition that the majority (about 65%) of participants did continue giving the shocks to the end of the scale. However, even in that condition participants reactions did not simply reflect obedience to authority. In most cases, there was a great deal of conflict experienced by the participants and they usually expressed concern for the other person and repeatedly asked the experimenter to stop (Turiel, 2015). Their reactions reflected concern with the pain and harm experienced by the other person. At the same time, participants were concerned with the goals of the scientific enterprise conveyed (falsely) to them by the researchers – for which they had agreed to participate. As opposed to the process of obeying an authority, we propose that participants who continued or refused to continue administering the electric shocks were involved in a process of coordination, weighing and balancing concerns with the pain inflicted and achieving the scientific goals of the experiment.

As already stated, decisions in many social situations involve processes of coordination because they include more than one consideration or goal. Indeed, we can see that the researchers in the so-called obedience to authority studies, including Milgram, made decisions involving coordination between their scientific goals and the value of honesty. They made dishonest statements by, in essence, lying to participants in the recruitment announcements and in the experimental settings in order to further their scientific goals. Milgram essentially justified the use of deception on the grounds that it served to further scientific goals. He has stated, "Misinformation is employed in the experiment; illusion is used when necessary in order to set the stage for the revelation of certain difficult to get truths" (Milgram, 1974, p. 198). More generally, the topics of honesty and deception provide interesting instances of processes of coordination in decision-making. In the philosophical, social scientific, and values education literatures honesty often is cited as a seemingly binding moral good. Whereas honesty and trust often are moral goods, there are situations in which they may have lower priority than other moral goods. An illustrative example provided by

philosophers is a hypothetical situation in which an individual has to decide whether or not to tell the truth to a murderer who asks where his intended victim has gone (Bok, 1978). This hypothetical situation poses a conflict between being honest and saving a life. It has been argued that the morally correct response is to lie to the murderer. Often-cited real life examples of such decisions are those who lied to German authorities during World War II regarding the location of Jewish people.

Using situations other than ones involving lives, we have conducted a series of studies on judgments about honesty and deception with adolescents and adults (Gingo, Roded, & Turiel, 2017; Perkins & Turiel, 2007; Turiel & Perkins, 2004). In one study, we examined judgments about deception that took place between an adolescent and a parent or an adolescent and a peer in response to conflicting positions on moral, personal, or prudential (i.e., bearing on one's safety or well-being) actions in which the adolescent was involved. First, we should emphasize that adolescents and adults judge dishonesty to be wrong in the abstract and when it is done for self-serving purposes (Turiel & Gingo, 2017). The procedure in the studies with adolescents was that they were presented with hypothetical situations in which parents or peers direct an adolescent to engage in: acts they consider morally wrong (e.g., engage in racial discrimination, in a fight); acts involving personal choices (e.g., who to date, clubs to join); and prudential acts (e.g., riding a motorcycle, doing homework). In the stories, the adolescent does not do what is directed but lies about it to the parent or peer. The results showed that the adolescent participants varied in their judgments about the acceptability of deception on the basis of the type of act and the type of relationship. The majority of participants judged that deception of parents was acceptable when it came to the moral and personal acts, but not regarding the prudential acts. These findings show that the adolescents were considering two sides of the situation involving moral considerations (in the cases of racial discrimination and fighting) and the value of honesty and ended up judging that honesty should have lower priority than unfairness or harm. Similarly, they judged that perceived legitimate areas of personal choices should have priority over honesty. By contrast, the majority of adolescents judged it wrong to engage in deception of parents regarding the prudential acts. They thought it was legitimate for parents to have jurisdiction over activities that affected the safety and well-being of their children or adolescents. Interestingly, a greater number of participants judged it unacceptable to lie to peers than to parents regarding the acts in the moral and personal domains because peer relationships were seen to be based on equality and mutuality (as opposed to relationships of power and status differences with parents).

The acceptance of deception in processes of coordination does not only occur in adolescence. Other research shows that adults too judge that deception might sometimes be necessary to promote emotional welfare and personal choices in the context of marital relationships involving inequality of power (Turiel & Perkins, 2004). In addition, studies with physicians have ascertained that they judge deception of insurance companies to be acceptable when it is the only way to prevent serious physical harm to patients (Freeman, Rathore, Weinfurt, Schulman, & Sulmasy, 1999; Wynia, Cummins, Van Geest, & Wilson, 2000).

Coordination in decisions has also been found in research on judgments about rights and about fairness in social inclusion and exclusion. As is often discussed by moral philosophers, the idea of rights and associated freedoms are important to moral judgments (Dworkin, 1977; Gewirth, 1982; Mill, 1859). A good deal of research on judgments about rights shows that at least starting in late childhood in several cultures there is endorsement of rights to, as examples, freedom of speech, religion, and privacy. Research on rights conducted in the United States and Canada has shown that young children (Helwig, 1997), adolescents, and adults (Helwig, 1995) endorse rights and judge that they are independent of rules and authority dictates. Rights are also upheld in straightforward situations, such as giving a public speech critical of the government. Moreover, it was found in several non-Western cultures that individuals endorse rights. Studies were conducted in China (Helwig, Arnold, Tan, & Boyd, 2003; Lahat, Helwig, Yang, Tan, & Liu, 2009), Africa (Day, 2014; Ruck, Tenenbaum, & Willenberg, 2011), and in the Middle East (Turiel & Wainryb, 1998). However, it is also the case that in some situations involving conflicts between rights and other moral or social considerations, such as speech advocating violence, the civil rights are not supported in order to promote welfare.

Therefore, it is often found that individuals support rights in some social situational contexts but give priority to other moral or social considerations over those same rights. Again, we see coordination between different considerations in coming to decisions in different contexts. Similar results were obtained in a set of studies in children's judgments about fairness in social inclusion and social exclusion. Whereas social exclusion is judged to be wrong and unfair in some situations, it is judged to be acceptable in other situations – such as when an individual's lack of ability would hamper a group's goals (Killen, Lee-Kim, McGlothlin, & Stagnor, 2002; Killen, Piscane, Lee-Kim, & Ardila-Rey, 2001).

#### *The Development of Moral Judgments and Cultural Practices of Inequality*

The research on honesty, rights and social inclusion supports the propositions that moral development does not occur through a process of incorporating transmitted standards or values. The research reveals that individuals actively consider different features of social situations and do not simply apply one set of standards in coming to decisions. This is to say that there is heterogeneity in thinking in ways that cannot be captured by the proposed general cultural orientations of individualism and collectivism. In addition, the research on judgments about honesty and deception with adolescents shows that they would resist directives they consider morally wrong from persons in authority and thereby accept acts of "subversion."

Since that research was conducted in the United States, it leaves open whether people in so-called collectivistic societies accept acts of social opposition and moral resistance. One of the characterizations of non-Western cultures is that their orientation to the group and interdependence entails an acceptance of their designated roles in the social system, which includes an acceptance of cultural practices that restrict freedoms and rights. Our alternative hypothesis in studies conducted in non-

Western patriarchal societies was that individuals would apply moral judgments of welfare, justice, and rights to existing cultural practices. In patriarchal cultures males hold higher status and power than females in the social hierarchy and many practices promote inequalities between them (Turiel & Wainryb, 1994, 2000; Wikan, 1982). As characterized by Wikan (1982, pp. 55-56), "The male is considered superior physically, morally, and intellectually, and women must be constrained and protected by men." We expected that females, who are subject to male dominance, would critically reflect on such cultural practices.

Research was conducted in several settings, including the Middle East, India, Colombia, and Benin (Conry-Murray, 2009; Guvenc, 2014; Mensing, 2002; Neff, 2001; Wainryb & Turiel, 1994). A typical example is the research conducted in a Druze Arab community in Northern Israel (Wainryb & Turiel, 1994). In that research, assessments were made of the judgments of adolescents and adults regarding cultural practices of inequalities between males and females, such as in educational and work opportunities, leisure activities, and decision-making within the family. In contradiction with the idea that people accept their prescribed roles and the inequalities that entails, we expected both conflicts around the practices and desires for changes on the part of females.

In the research with the Druze, as well as in other studies, we found that concerns with individual freedoms and autonomy were expressed by males and females. In particular, it is recognized that within their culture males assert the right to pursue personal choices over those of females. Females are aware of the prerogatives accorded to males and often accept their roles in these regards because of a fear of consequences. Nevertheless, females also asserted a desire for greater equality, as reflected in the comments of an 18-year-old female from the Druze community (Turiel, 2002, p. 249): "We live in a conservative culture. Maybe in the future I might want to treat my daughter in the same way I would treat my son, but the culture wouldn't let me do it. I believe in equality, but the culture would grant more to a male."

It was also found that over 80% of Druze adolescent and adult females evaluated the practices of male dominance and associated inequalities to be unfair and as requiring changes. An interesting perspective on the unfairness was provided by an adult Druze female, who stated with some irony (Turiel, 2002, p. 249):

A man's life is simple. He works, he comes back home; he has no other responsibilities. I work too and I have kids and a home. He knows that when he comes back, everything will be ready for him. That's such a pleasure. When I come home I have more work to do at home. So, who do you think deserves to get out a little and enjoy life?

Whereas the studies thus far mentioned mainly assessed people's judgments, there are ethnographic studies that also examined the actions of females in patriarchal societies. One study was conducted among people living in conditions of poverty in Cairo (Wikan, 1996), and another was with a Bedouin community in rural areas of Egypt (Abu-Lughod, 1991, 1993). In both research programs it was found that in their daily lives women often sought ways to avoid control by men and resisted unfair

practices. Such resistance resulted in good deal of conflict in social relationships. Comments from a woman from Cairo, with similarities to those of the Druze woman, illustrate the sense of conflict and resistance (Wikan, 1996, p. 31):

I tried to make Mustafa understand that we must be open with each other and mutually adjust - that we must tell each other what each of us liked and wanted from life, so we could make each other happy. But he just scowled and said, "I do as I please!" and "I am free." ...Of course, the man should have his freedom, but not at the woman's expense!

From her research with the Bedouin community, Abu-Lughod described how in their daily lives women often sought to avoid control by men. They would use a number of strategies to avoid restrictions imposed by men, as well as practices like arranged marriages and polygamy. They judged those practices as unfair, as illustrated by the following response from a Bedouin woman (Abu-Lughod, 1993, p. 238):

And this business of marrying more than one wife - I wish they'd change their views on this. It is the biggest sin. The Prophet -- it is not forbidden but the Prophet said only if you treat them fairly. But a man can't, it can't be done. Even if he has money, he can't. As a person in his thoughts and his actions, he can't be fair. He'll like one more than another.

It is important to emphasize that such findings of social opposition and moral resistance are contrary to the characterizations of such non-Western cultures as collectivistic.

### Conclusion

In patriarchal cultures, as in most other cultures, there are conflicts and disagreements among different individuals and different groups. In particular, there are disagreements between people in different positions in social hierarchies. As a consequence, it is difficult to draw comparisons between cultures. Along with differences within and between cultures, there can be commonalities between those in similar positions on the hierarchy in different cultures - such as similarities between those in lower positions in different cultures. The reasons there are these complex similarities and differences is that individuals, starting in childhood, construct thinking in the different social domains.

A large body of research has documented that individuals do reason about social relationships in different ways, accounting for societal customs and conventions as well as arenas of personal jurisdiction and choice. A significant aspect of orientations to social relationships is reasoning about the welfare and rights of people, as well as concerns with justice. However, understanding how people make social decisions does not end there. In addition to the analyses of the development of moral judgments, it is necessary to analyze how moral concepts are applied, and how moral considerations are weighed and balanced against other moral or non-moral

considerations. Processes of coordination are significant since many social situations include multiple considerations. Therefore, it is important to understand how individuals weigh and balance different considerations in coming to decisions in social contexts. Relatedly, moral judgments and process of coordination relate to the scrutiny that people give to cultural practices, often leading to social opposition and moral resistance.

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