

# Inclusion as a Moral Challenge: the Potential of the Konstanz Method of Dilemma Discussion® (KMDD®)

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**Abstract:** This article presents the *Konstanz Method of Dilemma Discussion*® (KMDD®) and explains the integration of the KMDD® in ethics lessons. In this paper, some special learning effects of this inclusive teaching and learning method are shown. Furthermore, it investigates the questions of how to achieve more knowledge in ethics lessons by dialogue and how to realize better moral development, particularly by handling of differentiation. Moral education of all participants who are involved in the learning process (learners and teacher alike) is a crucial task of every true inclusion. True inclusion means building optimal learning conditions in keeping with the free will of all participants. Because our society is transforming constantly in both global and demographic aspects, coping with these challenges is mandatory.

**Keywords:** inclusion, integration, diversity, KMDD, moral development

## Current social conditions

Volker Pfeifer writes in his book *Didaktik des Ethikunterrichtes (Didactic of ethics lessons)*<sup>1</sup> that our society is characterized by the following three special features:

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<sup>1</sup> Volker Pfeifer, *Didaktik des Ethikunterrichts: Bausteine einer integrativen Wertevermittlung*. Kohlhammer, Stuttgart 2013.

1. Our society is a pluralistic society that distinguishes itself through an increasing level of individuality.
2. Independent decisions must be made during adolescence. It is unclear if these decisions are good decisions. The assessment is difficult because pluralism also refers to values.
3. There is constant growth in digitization of life.

The digitalization of communication plays an important role for adolescents. According to the BITKOM study,<sup>2</sup> more and more students use social networks like Facebook, WhatsApp, and other online services. Real communication is increasingly repressed with the growth of augmented reality. The network is a very important source of orientation during the adolescence crisis. The most important role of this crisis is to reevaluate personal values. In this context, the seemingly value-free space in social networks contradicts the desire to bind values like tolerance, helpfulness, and togetherness in the real world. Students answer question about values and norms in social media in the following manner: 'There are no values on Facebook and I set my own norms. I am my own boss there.'; 'I do not follow any norms on Facebook. There are no genuine conflicts, because the others cannot defend themselves.'; 'If I post a negative or insulting comment about someone, I am just giving my opinion. That is my freedom of expression.'

One the other hand, this free communication within Internet communities can become common acting if the members have the same values. Hence, cyberspace is not a space without values and norms. The Internet makes social behaviour perceptible and changes it. The older generation has certain opinions on the modified social behaviour of students. The following is an excerpt from a conversation in a staff-room: 'Young people only play around with their cell phone. When we speak to them, they get disturbed. Lovers sit on the bench (as we did in old times) but they are not together. They are busy with their cell phones.' A teacher from Great Britain asked his students this very interesting and

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<sup>1</sup> BITKOM – Bundesverband Informationswirtschaft, Telekommunikation und neue Medien e. V., *Jung und vernetzt Kinder und Jugendliche in der digitalen Gesellschaft*, BITKOM, Berlin 2014.

indicative question: 'What is the difference between love and Facebook?' One student understood that he meant the consequences of decisions taken on the Internet and answered him: 'Facebook is forever!'

### Diversity in everyday school life

On the one hand, young people have to make quicker decisions with long-lasting impact. On the other hand, more and more students are facing social and emotional problems that are often accompanied by learning difficulties. This is the reason every third student in secondary schools in Germany needs support.<sup>3</sup> It is thus obvious that the differentiation in classes is not due to different learning level of students, but because of their special needs. Neglecting this diversity leads to different learning levels and not the other way around. If schools want meet the future requirements of learning locations, they have to face these challenges.

The integration activities at schools show that more and more students have some characteristics and disadvantages that must be balanced (UN disability convention). The right to equal educational opportunities (Universal Declaration of Human Rights Article 26; Basic Law Article 3; state constitutions) means that individual characteristics should be considered and that students with disadvantages should be encouraged. Students create individual support plans and learning aims together with their advisory teachers. The steps for the development of each student are recorded in a development report. The learning process is documented in writing and thus is transparent. Inclusion is the declared aim while integration is a step in this direction. The development starts from separation, goes on to integration, and finally culminates in inclusion.<sup>4</sup>

But in reality, creation of special learning conditions separates the disabled and the non-disabled students. The only

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<sup>3</sup> Klaus Klemm, *Inclusion in Deutschland. Daten und Fakten*, Bertelsman Stiftung, Gütersloh 2015.

<sup>4</sup> Johanna Robeck, *Von der Segregation über Integration zur Inklusion*, Vindobona Verlag, Neckenmarkt 2012.

way out of this ‘inclusion paradox’<sup>5</sup> is to create optimal conditions for all students. This includes providing the best conditions for the most disadvantaged students that will also consider the special needs of not-disadvantaged students. These students also have a right to individuality. Thus, a goal-oriented learning process is made possible for all students and nobody is excluded from inclusive education. Students can develop according to their special needs, strengths, and a ‘special education plan’ (similar to the Canadian model). There remains a long way to go towards inclusion. Instead of taking bureaucratic detours, it is advisable to follow a route with sustainable impact.

### The special role of ethics lessons

Schools, as places of learning, play an important role in this context. The ethics lessons in particular, and also other lessons have a great potential for inclusivity.

Ethics lessons offer possibilities to balance one’s own arguments and the arguments of others freely and comprehensively (i.e. cognitively and emotionally), while enduring dissent and experiencing real tolerance. During ethics lessons, students can practise making commitments and strategies to resolve conflicts or to deal with them better. Existing methods of argumentation and discourse (debate, discussion, World Café, Socratic dialogue, three- or five-step argumentation, dilemma discussion in four steps, ethical argumentation on the basis of case studies, and so on) are very suitable. It is also possible to effectively measure the degree of mastering of these methods.<sup>6</sup> In terms of these methods, the following questions play a secondary role: Have the statements anything to do with the personal opinion

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<sup>5</sup> Georg Lind, *Moral ist lehrbar. Wie man moralisch-demokratische Fähigkeiten fördern und damit Gewalt, Betrug und Macht mindern kann*, 3. erweiterte, überarbeitete Auflage, Logos, Berlin 2015, s.124.

<sup>6</sup> Zob. Anita Rösch, *Kompetenzorientierung im Philosophie- und Ethikunterricht: Entwicklung eines Kompetenzmodells für die Fächergruppe Philosophie, Praktische Philosophie, Ethik, Werte und Normen, Teil 2-Kompetenzmodell*, Lit Verlag, Berlin 2012; Schmidt Donat, von Ruthendorf Peter, *Philosophieren messen: Leistungsbewertung im Philosophie- und Ethikunterricht*, Miltzke Verlag, Leipzig 2013, s. 40ff.

of the students or do they present only the group opinion? Will supported independent thinking and critical questioning be enough? Do students talk about generalizations critically? Often, debates about real and current conflicts are affect-controlled. But this prevents thinking, and as a result, an access to own (especially to moral) emotions is hardly possible. Moral emotions frequently do not play any role or they play a subordinated role. That is why empathizing with others as an intrinsic change of perspective is not possible. Therefore, the ability to empathize is hardly practised.

Current discussions about the 'refugee problem' are often polemical and affectively controlled. Opponents of refugee sheltering talk about this topic consciously or unconsciously with a great degree of social coldness and pluralistic ignorance, i.e. with a lack of confidence in the helpfulness of others.<sup>7</sup> Some students are unable to see the other as even human, let alone empathize with their situation. Proponents of refugee sheltering on the other hand desperately appeal to reason by loudly expressing their horror. The undecided students are silent because they do not know what to say.

The most important source of opinion formation for many students is the media. However, many students use the media incompetently. 'We no longer know what we should believe.' Uncertainty combined with ignorance creates prejudices.

Finally, reflection on discussions, on methods of argumentation and discussion, and on the teaching process is rare. Furthermore, the teacher does not know whether the reviewed and analysed topics will be converted into daily action, or whether the gap between judging and acting will really be closed. Altogether, it is not clear if the expressed opinions influence moral thinking and behaviour. Will promoting the motivation and volition help to integrate the discussed topics in everyday actions?

Although the teachers are even able to measure the degree of mastery of strategies and operations, they often remain uncertain about whether students are developing their morality. It is unclear whether moral education has an effect on the real life of students.

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<sup>1</sup> Georg Lind, *Moral ist lehrbar*, op. cit.

Moral education means to educate moral feelings so that we can rely on it in everyday life, if we have to make moral decisions and to judge the behaviour of others.<sup>8</sup>

Some people are appalled by the pluralistic ignorance on real moral dilemmas in parts of the population. Were not some of them our students? Where are their social skills? How do teachers really think about refugees, Islam, and so on?

[...] how their student [...] some teachers (M.R.) [...] are far from an ideal moral competence.<sup>9</sup>

To summarize, not enough moral education is being provided in the classrooms.

However, moral education is one of the main, perhaps the most important, current and future task of teaching ethics in particular and school in general.<sup>10</sup>

One possible reason for lack of moral education is that very few are trained in moral competence.

Moral competence is the ability to resolve conflicts on the basis of universal moral principles (justice, cooperation, respect [...]) by thought and discussion rather than through force, fraud, and power.<sup>11</sup>

For example, it is not useful to forbid drugs in an authoritarian way. A more effective approach by the teachers and the school is to empower all students to say 'No' when offered drugs. The school, as a learning location, plays an increasingly important role for the development of these and other social competencies.

### Old questions of ethics and the KMDD®

Going back to the aforementioned basic questions of ethics, how are moral decisions made and what decisions are good decisions? The history of *KMDD*® gives an interesting and contemporary answer to these questions.

<sup>8</sup> Ibidem, s. 140.

<sup>9</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>10</sup> Zob. Vereinigung der Bayerischen Wirtschaft e. V. (Hrsg.), *Bildung. Mehr als Fachlichkeit*, Waxmann Verlag GmbH, Münster 2015.

<sup>11</sup> Ibidem, s. 39.

Initially, *KMDD*<sup>®</sup> revives the idea of Socrates to debate in a meaningful way and thereby to reach the knowledge of the good. The *KMDD*<sup>®</sup> has also evolved from the method suggested by Moshe Blatt and Lawrence Kohlberg, from the ideas on communicative ethic given by Habermas, from the discourse method given by Oser, and from the dual-aspect theory given by Lind.<sup>12</sup> Georg Lind, an experimental psychologist and philosopher, is the inventor of *KMDD*<sup>®</sup>.

The *KMDD*<sup>®</sup> assumes the ethical approach, i.e. a good moral decision is a decision based on one's own moral principles. These moral principles become conscious by thinking and by discussion with others. An objective discussion free from major emotions (affects) is necessary. Only under these conditions can decisions be considered carefully and in keeping with personal emotions. Only in such a case can moral principles become sustainable decisions, and in the best case, sustainable actions, if they are checked by conscience and approved by the opinions of the others. In this way, moral principles can be developed continuously. In this case, moral education takes place through developing of moral competencies.

There are strong indications that everyone has these abilities since childhood. In this context, it is relevant to take note of the comprehensive and meaningful research by Gertrud Nunner-Winkler.<sup>13</sup> Moral knowledge and moral motivation evolve differently, but both are eventually lost if they are not practised.

### Training of moral competence in ethics education

From a purely formal perspective, the dilemma discussion by Lind is a discussion in nine steps and takes 90 minutes. But a closer look at this method from the point of view

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<sup>12</sup> Georg Lind, *Moral ist lehrbar. Handbuch zur Theorie und Praxis moralischer und demokratischer Bildung*, 2. Überarbeitete und aktualisierte Auflage, Oldenbourg Verlag, München 2009 oraz nowe wydanie z 2015 roku: G. Lind, *Moral ist lehrbar*, *op. cit.*

<sup>13</sup> Gertrud Nunner-Winkler, *Zum Verständnis von Moral-Entwicklungen in der Kindheit*. In: *Moralentwicklung von Kindern und Jugendlichen*, VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, Wiesbaden 2007, s. 71.

of a teacher shows the real advantages and learning effects of this method.

But initially, the biggest challenge for teachers is redefining their own role. They are required to withdraw from the traditional role of the teacher:

The teacher is initially a kind of leader of the *KMDD*<sup>®</sup> session. He or she opens the session by presenting a story with a dilemma. The story is semi-real and educative, and it includes a moral problem. The protagonist of this story has to select between two actions, both of which violate his moral principles. This triggers inquisitiveness and enthusiasm in the listeners (similar to a real dilemma), but not learning-retardant affects like fear and hate (which happens when we hear a real dilemma). The 'leader' of the session gives the participants access to their moral emotions and the chance to work on these emotions by thinking (by reading this story once again and by understanding the problem and the feelings of the protagonist). The teacher triggers moral emotions repeatedly in a well-measured way during each session. The result is an interest in thinking and discussing the presented dilemma, thus creating a learning environment at an optimal level due to the ideal degree of emotions. This optimal level remains consistent in all learning phases if the teacher is an expert at the *KMDD*<sup>®</sup> and can lead the session without any effort like rebuke or boredom. He or she has two resources—support and challenge—both of them used alternately and in proper doses. The aim is to become aware of and work with their own emotions, and also to understand the emotions of others.

Das moralische Gefühl ist die Fähigkeit, durch ein moralisches Urteil affiziert zu werden. [...] Urteilen kann der Verstand freilich, aber diesem Verstandesurteil eine Kraft zu geben, und dass es eine Triebfeder werde, den Willen zu bewegen, die Handlung auszuüben, das ist der Stein des Weisen.<sup>14</sup>

The moral emotion is the ability to be affected by a moral judgement... the intellect is able to judge, but Philosopher's

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<sup>14</sup> Kant Immanuel, *Eine Vorlesung über Ethik*, Fischer, Frankfurt am Main 1990, s. 54.



stone is to give this intellectual judgement a power and to make that becomes a motivating force which is able to move the will to acting.

(translation: Martina Reinicke)

Our feelings are able to promote our intellect by becoming conscious through thinking and discussion. Our feelings are able to promote our acting when they become our motives.

But back to the role of the teacher during a *KMDD*<sup>®</sup> session, the teacher also acts somewhat like a referee in the session. He or she not only challenges the students to participate in discourse but also supports them. Specifically for this purpose, the teacher introduces two rules:

1. The 'ping-pong rule' (the person who has spoken appoints a respondent from the opposite-team who can respond and so on)
2. 'Respect for other people and their opinions' (anything can be said but no person must be qualified negatively or positively inside or outside the room).

The teacher nonverbally indicates infractions during this 90-minute session. Apart from this, the discussion is self-regulated and self-controlled.

The third role of the teacher is that of a trainer. His or her most important aim is to give the participants freedom to argue. Thus, he or she enables them to develop their own moral competence, i.e. their ability to judge, discuss, and practise, similar to exercising a muscle.<sup>15</sup> This 'training' enables the participants to make decisions with moral competency and includes the following 'training sessions':

1. The participants realize their own moral principles. This is the first prerequisite to be able to assess moral problems. Therefore, an effective *KMDD*<sup>®</sup> session takes place only when the participants are able to find a moral problem or when they are able to feel a problem in the presented dilemma.
2. Each participant finds his or her own standpoint in a stress-free, informal, and respectful atmosphere.
3. Everyone learns to represent his standpoint publicly in a self-regulated debate.

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<sup>15</sup> F. Richter, *Sächsische Zeitung* from 15.08.2014.

4. The participants learn to accept diversity of opinions, good arguments, and criticism of the own opinion, and to evaluate it.
5. The participants learn to reflect on their session and their learning successes.

Therefore, disabilities or disadvantages no longer play a role in a *KMDD*<sup>®</sup> session. In a *KMDD*<sup>®</sup> session, tolerance comes alive—for the first time for some students. There is no penalty for being self-confident and specific, and giving opinion is encouraged. Hence this method opens unforeseen opportunities for participation and education for all participants. A real change of perspective is possible by putting oneself in the other's position. It enables 'the generalization of the self'.<sup>16</sup> The 'opponent' will be regarded as an equal dissident. Controversy will be perceived as fruitful and meaningful. Inclusion takes place and is actually experienced. Integrative ethics education using the *KMDD*<sup>®</sup> finally orients itself with the students and their needs. Integrative education is more than the 'orientation of other subjects with the reference of science and philosophy'.<sup>17</sup> Ethics education integrates the moral development of students and is not aimed only at the contents of curriculum.

The *KMDD*<sup>®</sup> as classroom discussion can be realized in almost all conditions. Even students with problems of language who are not able to speak very well, e.g. foreign students, have the possibility to use other communication channels. They could try to understand their schoolmates in the role of an observer. If the teacher provides the stories in English or Arabic, it opens up even more ways for understanding. Learners who speak English or Arabic can also think about the story and the included moral problem and can position themselves in the room (pro or con side) according to their attitude. The discussions could help to better understand others. It could also give a possibility to learn the language of the others in a better way.

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<sup>16</sup> Seyla Benhabib, *Selbst im Kontext: Kommunikative Ethik im Spannungsfeld von Feminismus, Kommunitarismus und Postmoderne*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main 1995.

<sup>17</sup> Johannes Rohbeck, *Didaktische Konzeptionen*, THELEM, Dresden 2013, s. 51.

Furthermore, the *KMDD*<sup>®</sup> helps to foster and evolve democratic competences by the use of democratic playing rules. It also includes the ability to deal with emotions and social dynamics.<sup>18</sup>

Equal participation during a *KMDD*<sup>®</sup> session fosters an inclusive togetherness and, hence, the learning of inclusion. This method can be used in classes, groups of children and peers, retirement homes, and also the penal system.<sup>19</sup> In future, we will need many more inclusive methods like the *KMDD*<sup>®</sup>.

The most important learning effect is that all participants evolve their moral competences—learners and teachers alike. Furthermore, the effective application of *KMDD*<sup>®</sup> motivates the teachers to evaluate their own lessons and to derive measures for further development.

### Diagnosis of own lessons

The aforementioned observation during a *KMDD*<sup>®</sup> session is only one of four possibilities to reflect upon teaching.

1. Self-observation, as well as observation by others, takes place during the session.
2. After the conclusion of a session, the leader writes a report about it.
3. The participants have a short period of reflection at the end of each *KMDD* session where they talk about their development, the learning process, the learning situation, and their own emotions.
4. A further measure to evaluate learning success is the moral competence test (MCT) by determination of the C score.

<sup>18</sup> Julia Dietrich, „Ethische Kompetenz- Philosophische Kriterien für die Klärung eines Begriffsfeldes“, w: Johannes Rohbeck, Peggy H. Breitenstein, Volker Steenblock, and Joachim Siebert (Hrsg.): *Geschichte- Kultur- Bildung. Philosophische Denkrichtungen*, Siebert Verlag, Hannover 2007, ss. 206-220.

<sup>19</sup> Hemmerling Kay, Scharlipp Mathias and Lind Georg, „Die Konstanzer Methode der Dilemma-Diskussion für die Bildungsarbeit mit Risikogruppen“, w: Klaus Mayer, Huldreich Schildknecht (Hg.), *Handbuch Dissozialität, Delinquenz und Kriminalität – Grundlagen und Methoden der professionellen Arbeit mit Menschen mit abweichendem Verhalten*, Schulthess Juristische Medien, Zürich 2009.

This test determines the moral competence of a group. The C score and the way it changes (e.g. during a school year) makes it possible to determine effectiveness of the endeavours of the teacher to foster moral competence.

Factors that hinder the development of moral competence are counterproductive. This is particularly true for manipulation in the form of subtly authoritarian behaviour, subliminal assessment of opinions and arguments, authoritarian seating plans in classrooms, and so on. Hence, it is mandatory to check lessons with regard to influences that inhibit or destroy moral education. Also, it is necessary to plan *KMDD*<sup>®</sup> sessions, to ensure they are led by certified *KMDD*<sup>®</sup> teachers (two sessions in each school year are sufficient), and to plan an MCT test to measure the C score at the beginning and the end of each school year. The results of this endeavour will be competent students and teachers who can experience inclusion.

### Summary

Currently, our society is in a process of transformation. Digitalization of society is comparable with industrialization. This transformation is characterized by globalization, pluralism, and fast pace. This requires a rethink by all participants in all spheres. Schools too cannot evade this situation. Inclusion, as an answer to social changes, is becoming a necessity. Therefore, it is mandatory to create learning conditions that are also the best for the most disadvantaged students. Through these facilities, all students should have possibilities of development in correspondence to their special needs (personal strengths and weaknesses). We should not create artificial conditions for individual pupils to be adapt them to 'normalcy'; rather we should create optimum conditions so that nobody is at a disadvantage. Diversity should be seen as normal.<sup>20</sup> This requires rethinking and moral competence of all the involved parties. Thus, the importance of moral education increases continuously.

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<sup>20</sup> Zob. Götz Nordbruch, "Diversität als Normalfall. Das Projekt Zwischentöne- Materialien für das Klassenzimmer", Eckert.Beiträge 2014/3 (on-line article), urn:nbn:de:0220-2014-00254v.

Moral education means an education that enables learners as well as teachers to humanely solve new problems constantly. Having expert or theoretical knowledge is not enough anymore in a fast-moving society, because knowledge is also fast-moving and quickly become obsolete. Inclusive teaching methods like the *KMDD*<sup>®</sup> could help in coping with new challenges that are consequences of this constant change. This is why *KMDD*<sup>®</sup> sessions and other inclusive methods should be a normal part of all schools. Therefore, the establishment of a comprehensive *KMDD*<sup>®</sup> training programme for teachers at universities is a potential that should be utilized urgently.

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