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Moral Conscience in Children: An Innate Construct or an Acquired Phenomenon

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Abstracts

Abstract

Moral conscience is an objective reality within humans, comprising cognitive and emotional capacities. These capacities drive adherence to moral norms and behavior in accordance with them. Such a system—with the mentioned capabilities—is not only supported by internal intuitions and external observations but is also corroborated by revelatory propositions. The cognitive dimensions of moral conscience include the awareness of, and commitment to, the goodness or badness of specific virtues and the avoidance of vices in human traits and behaviors. Emotionally and affectively, it encourages adherence to these virtues and, when mistakes occur, evokes feelings of remorse, paving the way for rectification and prevention of recurrence. The question of whether such a phenomenon is innate to humans or acquired through experience significantly impacts the understanding of human moral dimensions. By examining childhood—a stage where environmental factors have yet to exert significant influence—it becomes evident that this phenomenon is innate. Through a library-based and analytical study of religious texts and experimental findings in the field of moral psychology, it can be demonstrated that significant aspects of "moral conscience" are indeed innate.

Keywords

Ethics, Moral Conscience, Child, Innate Construct, Moral Psychology.

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