1 March 10th, 2021

1.1 Moral Development

Definition 1.1 (**Moral Development**)**.** The changes in people's sense of justice. The process of learning to distinguish between right and wrong in accordance with cultural values.

> **Remark 1.2 —** A person's moral development is closely tied to their cultural background and values.

There are three dimensions of moral development:

- Moral Behavior - behavioral perspective

- Moral Emotions - psychodynamic perspective

- Moral Reasoning - cognitive perspective

Moral development does not exist at birth, but as babies are exposed to socialization, they begin to learn what is write and wrong.

1.2 Moral Behavior

- Focuses on how the environment in which the individual operates produces moral behavior.

- According to the operant conditioning theory, it is the **consequences** of behaviors that teach children to obey moral rules.

- Moral behaviors (e.g. prosocial behaviors) are reinforced, while morally unacceptable behaviors are punished.

Definition 1.3. Prosocial behaviors are any behaviors that can help or benefit another person.

> **Example 1.4**
> Mia helping / hitting her brother will be reinforced or punished by the parent.

Although punishment is effective, it shouldn't be overdone. For effective parenting, we should always follow the punishment with an explanation, or tell them about alternate behaviors.

- Apart from operant conditioning theory, there is the observational learning theory to learn what's right and wrong.

- Children learn more from role models, and rewarded behaviors will be imitated while punished behaviors will be avoided.

- Research supports this theory, as children learn moral behavior from a model's behaviors.

- We don't require direct punishment to learn morally acceptable behavior.

> **Example 1.5**
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> Children were told a story about a person who was misbehaving and got punished. Children in the experimental condition were more behaved.