

Moral development persuasive essay

[Technology](#), [Development](#)



Our moral thought is not an innate and fixed property, but is a learnt attribute that changes in our lifetime with personal development. Personal development in turn, is dominated by cognitive development. And there are two main theories relating moral development with cognition: the first one is Piaget's theory, and the second one is Kohlberg's theory. The basic idea behind both theories is that our moral thought changes with cognitive development. What we are going to show next, is the relation between moral development and Complexity. Moral development depends on cognitive development.

Cognitive development is the result of an increase in cognitive complexity. And Complexity is a universal natural phenomena (see Complexity). So we are going to show how moral development is a particular case of the universal phenomena of Complexity. Piaget's theory can be summarized in the following table. Piaget's table In Piaget's theory, moral thought has two stages: heteronomous morality, associated with moral realism ('being subject to another's laws or rules'), and autonomous morality, associated with moral relativism (being subject to one's own laws or rules').

The stages are not mutually exclusive (e. g. Most adults show a combination to both). The transition from one stage to the other is related with a transition from egocentric thought to a thought that contemplates others point of view. And it is also related with a change in social relationships, from unilateral respect (i. e. Unconditional, absolute and one-way respect to authority) to mutual respect where compromises are reached. Kohlberg's theory can be summarized in the following table. Kohlberg's table Kohlberg's theory is a more sophisticated theory based on six stages of moral

velveteen, which in turn can be more generally grouped on three levels: pre-conventional, conventional and post-conventional. Both Goldberg and Piggel agree that cognitive development is a necessary but not sufficient condition for moral development, i. e. Cognitive development sets a limit on maturity of moral reasoning, with moral development usually lagging behind cognitive development. What is interesting to see is the relation between moral development and complexity. Complexity, in general, is the integration of differentiated parts.

Complexity is characterized for being relative, where complex systems can increase their complexity becoming more integrated and differentiated. In moral development we find the same changes. Moral development is the transition from one stage to another. Transitions are not arbitrary, but they follow a hierarchy from the simple to the complex. Although complexity is continuous, the concept of stages helps to moderate this continuity. So moral development is a transition from one stage to another, where each stage provides a new, more comprehensive and more differentiated perspective, integrated in turn with the preceding ones.

Like all complex systems, moral development is also related with an increase in differentiation and integration. When systems change in complexity, they also change on their properties. And we can also follow this change in moral development too. There are five variables that change with complexity: rigidity/flexibility, dependency/autonomy, similarity/ uniqueness, commonality/rareness and instability/stability. These are universal variables that can also be traced in moral development. Rigidity/flexibility - early

stages of moral development are related with moral realism and absolutism, which are rigid forms of moral thought.

In contrast, later stages are related with moral relativism, where there is more tolerance and acceptance of different points of view.

Dependency/autonomy - early stages are based on externally given moral standards. In later stages of moral development there is an internationalist of moral thought. Similarity/uniqueness - In nature simple systems are more similar to one another, while complex systems are more unique. In moral development we find the same. On its early stages, moral thought is more similar and less differentiated. It is characterized by the simplification and generalization of cases.

On later stages, moral thought is based on a more personal evaluation of individual cases. Commonality/rareness - In nature complexity is more rare and less numerous than simplicity. In moral development we find the same. Everybody in childhood passes through the first stages of moral development (Kohlberg's pre-conventional stages and Piaget's heteronomous morality). Many adults do not attain formal operations (about 50 percent in fact) (Gross), which is a necessary condition for reaching Kohlberg's stages 5 and 6. And only 10 to 15 percent of adults (Goldberg, 1975) attain the highest level of moral reasoning (and not before their mid-30s).

So higher levels of moral development are more rare than lower levels.

Instability/stability - moral behavior on the early stages of moral development is based on simplified views which lack universality and are more inconsistent with and harder to adjust to the complexities of reality.

This results in a behavior that is more conflictive and unpredictable. On the other hand, at the higher stages of moral development, moral behavior is more consistent, predictable and responsible, because the stages themselves employ more stable and general standards.