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A New Perspective to Altruism: Moral Disengagement and Moral Metacognition

Özgecilğe Yeni Bir Bakış Açısı: Ahlaki Çözülme ve Ahlaki Üst Biliş

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ABSTRACT

Researchers and practitioners have shown a growing interest in finding the variables related to altruism through many factors. Recent studies have shown that various cognitive concepts as well as moral concepts are related to altruistic behavior. This study aims to investigate the relation of moral metacognitions and moral disengagement and altruistic behavior with a cross-sectional design. For this purpose, a survey study was constructed with a sample of 181 participants, collected from general population in a paper form. T-test, correlation and regression analyzes were used to find answers to the research questions. SPSS v27 was used to test the regression model. Moral meta cognitions, moral disengagement, altruism scales and demographic form were conducted. The results show that moral disengagement is negatively related to altruism, while moral metacognition is positively associated with altruism. Specifically, two of the four sub-dimensions of moral metacognitions as the regulation of cognition and cognition knowledge sub-dimensions are positively related to altruism. The remaining two sub-dimensions of moral metacognitions as declarative and conditional knowledge were not associated with altruism. The current study found that women were more altruistic than men while no difference is found between different socioeconomic groups' altruistic behaviors. Furthermore, having spiritual beliefs are associated positively with altruistic behavior. Finally, the discussions regarding the implications for practice in Turkish culture and theory are provided in the study.

Keywords: Altruism, Moral Disengagement, Moral Metacognitions, Regulation of Cognition, Procedural Knowledge

ÖZET

Araştırmacılar ve uygulayıcılar, özellikle son dönemlerde artan sosyal ihtiyaçlarla özgecilikle ilgili değişkenleri bulmaya ilgi göstermektedirler. Son zamanlarda yapılan araştırmalar, bilişsel değişkenlerin yanı sıra ahlaki kavramların da özgecil davranışla ilişkili olduğunu göstermiştir. Bu çalışma, ahlaki üst biliş ile ahlaki çözülme ve özgecil davranış arasındaki ilişkiyi kesitsel bir desenle incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu amaçla, genel popülasyondan yüz yüze toplanan 181 katılımcıdan oluşan bir örnekleme bir anket çalışması oluşturulmuştur. Çalışmada ahlaki üst biliş ölçeği, ahlaki çözülme ölçeği ve özgecilik ölçeğinin yanı sıra demografik soru formu kullanılmıştır. Araştırmanın sorularına yanıt aramak için t-testi, korelasyon ve regresyon analizleri kullanılmıştır. Regresyon modelini test etmek için SPSS v27 kullanılmıştır. Sonuçlar, ahlaki çözülmenin özgecilik ile negatif yönde ilişkili olduğunu, ahlaki üstbilişin ise özgecilik ile pozitif olarak ilişkili olduğunu göstermektedir. Özellikle, ahlaki üstbilişin dört alt boyutundan ikisi olan bilişin düzenlenmesi ve bildirimsel biliş bilgisi alt boyutları özgecilik ile pozitif yönde ilişkili bulunmuştur. Diğer yandan, ahlaki üst bilişin diğer iki alt boyutu olan yöntemsel ve koşullu biliş ile özgecilik arasında ilişki bulunamamıştır. Mevcut çalışma, farklı sosyoekonomik grupların özgecil davranışları arasında bir fark bulunmazken, kadınların erkeklerden daha özgecil olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Ayrıca, manevi inançlara sahip olmak özgecil davranışlarla olumlu bir şekilde ilişkili olduğu raporlanmıştır. Bu bulgular ışığında, bulgular uygulama ve teoriye ilişkin Türk kültürüne yönelik çıkarımlar temelinde tartışılmıştır.

Ahatar Kelimeler: Özgecilik, Ahlaki Çözülme, Ahlaki Üstbiliş, Bilişsel Regülasyon, Yöntemsel Bilgi

1. INTRODUCTION

Morality has been defined from past to present from many perspectives. According to Kohlberg (1964), morality is similar to conscience in that people internalize cultural norms for social actions. The psychology of morality is addressed by many empirical approaches and themes to understand its implications (Ellemers, Van Der Toorn, Paunov, & Van Leeuwen, 2019). There are four main theories to understand morality, which are biological, psychoanalytic, social learning and cognitive developmental (Cesur, 1997). This study has followed Bandura's social cognitive theory to study morality.

Bandura (1989) proposes that moral principles have been internalized by modeling and pursuing active learning instead of being involved in a passive process. This principle constitutes the social cognitive theory that is set within a social and moral context. Specifically, in the earlier stages of development, the behaviors of the child are subject to social and external effects. The developmental perspective views observational learning from a broader context that requires both the use of cognitive strategies and social development. As the child improves and enriches the experiences, the internal standards progress to regulate one's moral behavior. Thus, this change is not a temporary change but rather needs a longer term of developmental change.

The psychological theories of morality emphasize individuals' moral actions yielding negative results related to their attitudes and behaviors. Bandura (1999) explains moral thoughts and actions with moral disengagement construct that takes place within social cognitive theory. Moral disengagement is one's awareness of the responsibility for their immoral actions (Bandura, 1999). In the meantime, the individual reconstructs are cognitively able to continue this immoral action despite its negative effects. Hence, the individual can decrease the responsibility for her action. There are many strategies to justify the immoral actions such as displacing the responsibility to a higher institute, dehumanizing the victim, or finding support.

Bandura (1999) introduced the concept of self-consciousness that serves individuals to derive their own experiences and thoughts and analyze the results they produce. Accordingly, they can generate new knowledge about the world around them. This new knowledge helps one to criticize his / her own thoughts and alter them. Individuals actualize the behaviors according to the right and wrong standards they have internalized along the development of the moral self. This is a self-regulatory process, which shapes the behavior according to the results, context, and the conditions (Bandura, 2002).

Morality has an inhibitive and a proactive form that reflects duality. The inhibitive form is defined as the ability to restrain one from inhuman actions and the proactive form is reflected in the human actions (Bandura et al. 2002). Thus, aside from social and cognitive areas, morality has been studied within the meta cognitive scope, which deals with the awareness of one's thoughts and patterns. McMahon and Good (2015) merged the morality and meta cognition constructs and introduced the moral metacognition term.

Metacognition is the "thoughts about the thoughts", which comprises besides the cognitive states, the emotional states, motives and intentions of self and others' (Papaleontiou-Louca, 2008). Flavell (1979) examined metacognition in four dimensions as (a) metacognitive knowledge, (b) metacognitive experiences, (c) goals and (d) strategies. Metacognitive knowledge consists of knowledge and beliefs about the variables that impact cognitive processes and outcomes which are respectively person, task and strategy. Person is comprised of the beliefs about yourself, others and the universe. One can learn about self by listening to other people and can realize the interpersonal differences. Goals are the objectives during the cognitive enterprise. Strategy is the effective knowledge of the cognitions that drive one towards the goals. While metacognitive knowledge occurs as an interaction of the person, task and strategies, metacognitive experiences help you analyze the meaning and understand consciously its behavioral consequences.

When one realizes about the metacognitive knowledge consciously, it transforms into metacognitive experiences. For example, when one is aware of the feelings of injustice, metacognitive knowledge guides the process of coping which turns into metacognitive experiences. Thus, moral decision making is related to one's ability to use metacognitions (Hanna, Avolio, & May, 2011). When confronted with a moral dilemma, one's metacognitive ability helps him/her to sense and judge morally since metacognitive ability provides one with the skills to access and select moral knowledge to reason morally. The use of metacognitive ability facilitates the evaluation of the knowledge from all aspects as emotions and values to judge. Therefore, moral metacognition comprises all emotions and values to judge moral dilemmas.

Moral metacognitive knowledge, as the first dimension of moral metacognition, consists of three sub-dimensions as declarative, procedural and conditional knowledge (Shraw, 1998). Declarative knowledge refers to knowing "about" things. Procedural knowledge is the knowledge about how to do things. Conditional knowledge is the knowledge about when and why one needs to perform. Then, a fourth dimension has been added to the metacognitive knowledge as regulation of cognition (Nelson & Narens, 1990). The regulation of cognition consists of monitoring and controlling sub-dimensions. Monitoring is the subjective knowledge about one's internal processes. Controlling comprises starting, continuing and finalizing an action. Altruistic behavior is an example of moral action which requires metacognitive knowledge to engage in.

Altruism is the tendency to help to others only for their benefits without any benefits to one. Altruistic behavior such as heroes saving other people's lives at the expense of their own lives can even be a cost to one (Aronson, Wilson, & Akert, 2011). Altruism is considered to be a moral action which also regulates our interpersonal relationships and brings many moral benefits to society. August Comte expressed that altruism is the responsibility of moral action of one's own to others (Bykov, 2017). Compassion and empathy are the important internal factors that drive one for altruistic behavior. Batson (1991) introduced the empathy-altruism hypothesis to explain altruistic behavior. An individual only helps the other person for altruistic reasons if she feels empathy. Another hypothesis about altruism is about the altruistic personality proneness to make moral decisions and prioritizing to help others.

Adults with high levels of moral character tend to have high levels of honesty, conscientiousness and more empathic concern for others. These individuals are more involved in other people's needs and problems and tend to care about the consequences of their actions that result in other people's lives. Therefore, they tend to organize their behavior to be more efficient and right. Thus, it would be expected that moral metacognitions lead to altruistic behaviors. Besides, the socio-demographic correlations of altruistic behavior in either university students (Ümmet, Ekşi & Otrar, 2013) or specific groups (Arpacı & Özmen, 2014) in Turkey are frequently investigated. However, we are interested in comparing the demographic variables as gender, education, socio-economic status, engagement in social responsibility projects and spiritual faith of the participants from general population to consider the current situation in a Turkish sample.

Moral disengagement and altruism relationship has been investigated only with handful of studies (Paciello, et al., 2013; Yang, Yong & Shi, 2020). The results indicated the diffusion or avoidance of moral responsibility to engage in altruistic behaviors. On the other hand, to the best of our knowledge, moral metacognition has not been studied through altruistic behavior perspective. Consequently, this study aims to examine the relationships between moral disengagement, moral metacognition, and altruism, aiming at approaching the relationships between these concepts in a comprehensive manner, allowing for a multifaceted as well as a refined understanding of them. In this context, the question that this study investigates is how the moral disengagement, moral metacognition can predict altruism. Thus, the research hypotheses are as follows:

H1: Moral disengagement is negatively, and moral metacognition is positively related to altruistic behavior.

H2: Altruistic behavior differs in terms of demographic variables as gender, education, socio-economic, engagement in social responsibility projects, spiritual faith.

2. METHOD

2.1. Participants

The sample consists of 181 participants; 108 (% 59.7) were women and 73 (% 40.3) were men. The age range of the participants varies between 18 and 60 ($\bar{X}=27.77$, $s = 9.43$). See Table 1 for the demographics.

The education levels of the participants were distributed as follows: 6 (3.3%) of the participants are primary and secondary school graduate, 22 (12.2%) of the participants are high school graduate, 153 (84.5%) of the participants are university and above university graduate. 22 (12.2%) of the participants have low, 107 (59.1%) of the participants have medium, 52 (28.7%) of the participants have middle-high and high socio-economic status. 44 (24.3%) of the participants are married, 18 (9.9%) of the participants are single, 55 (30.4%) of the participants have a romantic relationship, 63 (34.8%) of the participants have no romantic relationship. Lastly, 61 (33.7%) participants stated they took part in a social responsibility project, 115 (63.5%) of the participants did not take part in a social responsibility project.

Table 1. Demographic Variables

	N	%
Gender		
Women	108	59.7
Men	73	40.3
Education Level		
Primary and secondary	6	3.3
High school	22	12.2
University and above university	153	84.5
Social Economic Status		
Low	22	12.2
Medium	107	59.1
Middle high and high	52	28.7
Romantic Relationship Status		
Married	44	24.3
Single	18	9.9
Have romantic relationship	55	30.4
Have no romantic relationship	63	34.8
Social Responsibility Project		
Have worked	61	33.7
Never worked	115	63.5

2.2. Procedure

The data were collected in person. The participants were presented with fundamental information regarding the purpose and privacy of the research. All the participants volunteered to conduct the survey and signed informed consent. The completion of the study took approximately 10-15 minutes. 203 participants conducted the study. As a

result of the normality analysis, 8 outliers ($-3.49 \leq x \leq +3.49$) were removed from the data set. 14 individuals were also removed since they had inconsistencies in the data because they had major missing data. The university ethics committee consented the ethical approval of the study.

2.3. Measures

2.3.1. Demographic Information Form

This demographic form includes participants' gender, age, education, socio-economic status, romantic relationship status, if they have ever been involved in a social responsibility project, and their status on spiritualism faith.

2.3.2. Moral Disengagement Scale (MDS)

This scale was developed by Moore et al. (2011) to measure individual's moral disengagement tendencies for the explanation of unethical behaviors. The Turkish version of the scale was validated by Erbaş and Perçin (2015). The scale was rated on 7-point-Likert scale (1= strongly disagree, 7= strongly agree). Turkish validation of the scale confirmed its original single-factor structure. The Cronbach alpha value of the scale was found .73.

2.3.3. Moral Metacognition Scale (MMS)

Moral metacognition scale was developed by McMahan and Good (2016). The scale's Turkish reliability and validity study was conducted by Çelik and Sarıçam (2018). The scale aims to measure individuals' level of moral metacognition abilities. The scale was rated on 6-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree, 6= strongly agree). The Cronbach alpha coefficient is .90 for the scale.

2.3.4. Altruism Scale (AS)

The scale was developed by Ümmet, Ekşi and Otrar (2013) and it aims to measure the altruism behavior of individuals in accordance with cultural structure. The scale consists of 38 items and 7 sub-dimensions as participating volunteering activities, financial aid, aid under traumatic situations, aid to older people/ patients, aid based on physical strength, aid in educational process, aid based on intimate feeling. The scale was rated on 5-point Likert scale (1= never agree, 5= strongly agree). The Cronbach alpha value was found to be .94.

3. RESULTS

3.1. Correlation Analysis

Pearson Correlation Analysis was applied to examine the relationship of the participants' age, spiritual belief, moral disengagement, moral metacognition and altruism scores. Accordingly, no relation was found between the participants' age and altruism scores ($p > .05$). A negative significant correlation was found between moral disengagement and altruism total scores of the participants ($r = -.224, p < .01$). The findings obtained from moral metacognition and altruism total scores are as follows: Regulation of the cognition of the participants with altruism is significant and positive ($r = .37, p < .01$), as cognition knowledge (declarative) and altruism ($r = .29, p < .01$). Besides cognition knowledge (procedural) and altruism ($r = .40, p < .01$), cognition knowledge (conditional) and altruism are also significant and positively associated ($r = .31, p < .01$). At the same time, a positive correlation was found between the participants' level of strength from their spiritual beliefs and their altruism total scores ($r = .32, p < .01$). Findings related to the correlation analysis are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Findings of Pearson Correlation Analysis for Variables

	Altruism	Ave.	Ss
Age	-		
Spiritual Beliefs Status	.32**	3.86	1.11
Moral Disengagement	-.22**	17.36	7.13
Moral Metacognition			
Regulation of cognition	.37**	26.27	4.33
Declarative	.29**	28.93	4.48
Procedural	.40**	17.78	3.44
Conditional	.31**	17.91	3.30

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

3.2. Regression Analysis Results

Regression analysis was applied to predict the relationship between moral disengagement and moral metacognition with altruism. The model explains 19% of the variance. Accordingly, there was a statistically significant negative linear relationship between altruism and moral disengagement ($\beta = -.15, t = -2.08, p < .05$). There is also a statistically significant positive linearity between altruism and regulation of cognition ($\beta = .20, t = 2.10, p < .05$) and

cognition knowledge (procedural) ($\beta = .24$, $t = 2.15$, $p < .05$), ($R^2 = 0.19$, $F(5,175) = 8.62$, $p < .01$). Findings related to regression analysis are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Regression Analysis Findings for Variables

Altruism	R	R ²	F (5,175)	β	t
	.44	.19	8.62*		
Moral disengagement				-.15	-2.08*
RoC				.20	2.10*
PK				.24	2.15**

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

RoC: Regulation of Cognition, PK: Procedural Knowledge

3.3. Results Related To Demographic Variables

Independent groups t-test analysis was conducted to determine whether altruism scores differ in terms of gender. Accordingly, women's altruism total score averages (M_{Female} = 153.36, $s = 21.77$) are significantly higher than men's (M_{Male} = 145.08, $s = 21.30$) ($t(179) = 2.53$, $p < .05$). The result of the analysis is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Independent Groups T Test Findings Regarding the Altruism Scores of Women and Men

Groups	N	Ave.	S	df	t	p
Women	108	153.36	21.77	179	2.53	.01*
Men	73	144.08	21.30			

$p < .05$

One-Way Variance Analysis (ANOVA) was applied to determine the extent to which the levels of altruism of the participants differed in terms of their educational level, socio-economic level and romantic relationship level. According to the results, the levels of altruism of the participants did not differ significantly according to their education levels, socio-economic level and romantic relationship level ($p > .05$).

4. DISCUSSION

The aim of this study is to examine altruism behavior in terms of moral disengagement and moral metacognition. In line with the main purpose of the research, it was seen that moral disengagement is negatively related to altruism, while moral metacognition cognition is positively associated with altruism. Specifically, the regulation of cognition and cognition knowledge sub-dimensions of moral metacognition were positively related to altruism, declarative and conditional knowledge were not associated with altruism. Previous research indicated that decision-making about a moral issue and moral action are linked to metacognition (Swanson and Hill, 1983). In order to exhibit altruistic behavior, individuals need to have knowledge of how events and situations occur and of how to control events. Thus, we can suggest that these are areas related to the regulation of cognition and procedural knowledge. Accordingly, people may tend to engage in altruistic behavior in a more spontaneous way than they tend to behave altruistically depending on a condition. Since declarative knowledge is more about defining and explaining things, people may not need to define what their altruistic behavior is. Therefore, this might explain the finding that the declarative and conditional knowledge were not associated with altruism.

When the literature is examined, there are many studies related to altruism and morality (Bloom, 2012; Bykov, 2017; Krebs, 1982; Phelps, 1975; Post, 2007). However, since moral metacognition is relatively a new concept, there are only a handful studies related to altruism and moral metacognition. In addition, Hannah, Avolio & May (2011) suggested that those people who have high moral metacognition skills, their moral sensitivity and moral judgment is also high. Solving complex moral dilemmas requires access to moral knowledge and using reasoning skills on moral dilemmas. Thus, moral meta cognition has an important role to play in slowing down the process of automatic, intuitive, and schematic moral decision-making. They also argue that using moral metacognition effectively will help one to have conscious awareness of ethical and moral issues and to make more appropriate ethical decisions. Furthermore, Moran (2009) found that the metacognition raises awareness of individuals to exhibit more prosocial behavior. At the same time, Fisher and his colleagues (2020) found that although a study on metacognition and intrasubject relationship assessment found no correlation between weak metacognition and prosocial behavior, weak metacognition was associated with poor social relationships. Based on the current study and these findings, we may state that the effective use of moral metacognition can have a positive effect on altruistic behavior.

Another finding of the current study is the negative significant relationship between moral disengagement and altruism. Social cognitive theory (Bandura, 2002) explains moral actions as the result of personal and social interactions with each other. Yang and his colleagues (2020) have demonstrated that moral disengagement has a negative relationship with moral identity and altruistic attitude. They found that moral identity has a partial

mediation role between moral disengagement and altruistic behavior, but not between altruistic behavior and altruistic attitude. In addition, participants with low moral identity were found to have less altruistic attitudes and higher moral disengagement scores. As a result, the individual who does not experience moral disengagement may tend to be more sensitive to behave altruistically.

In addition to the relationship of moral disengagement and moral metacognition with altruism, this study also investigated the differences in altruism behavior depending on various psycho-demographic variables. The current study found that women were more altruistic than men. Similarly, female college students were more altruists than male students (Carreon et al., 2011). Relatedly, a previous study reported that boys exhibited more antisocial behaviors during adolescence than girls (Moffitt, Caspi, Rutter, & Silva, 2001), while girls exhibited more prosocial behavior than boys (Eisenberg & Fabes, 1998). Specifically, young males who experienced more moral disengagement than young females, exhibited less prosocial behavior than females (De Caroli & Sagone, 2014). Additionally, adolescents who think they live in a fair world, exhibit more prosocial behavior, and they experience fewer moral disengagements. In the current study, women's altruism scores differ significantly from the altruism scores of men. These findings can be explained by the fact that women become more altruistic through gender roles. Social role theory involves the male gender role in more heroic and bold subjects, while female gender roles involve care, compassion and assisting behavior (Eagly & Crowley, 1968). Blackstone (2003) states that appropriate gender roles are defined in a society based on their beliefs. Relatedly, women are expected to be altruistic and are punished much more than men for not being altruistic (Rand et al., 2016). For this reason, they have suggested that women can intuitively internalize altruism. At the same time, biological theories can explain the fact that women are more altruistic due to the influence of gender roles. Altruistic behaviors change with the activation of the oxytocin system, and that oxytocin hormone promotes pro-environmental attitudes and behaviors (Marsh et al., 2015).

The current study did not find a difference between different socioeconomic groups' altruistic behaviors. The different socio-economic groups with an unequal size might be the reason why this result did not differ in the current study. However, an earlier study found that that students with low socioeconomic levels were more altruistic (Carreon et al., 2011).

This research was conducted in Istanbul, Turkey, which is classified as a collectivist and feminine (Sunar, 2020) country in Hofstede's cultural dimensions (2011). The power range is again indicated to be high, and the long-term orientation is lower (Pellegrini & Scandura, 2006). Long term orientation (LTO) was negatively associated with donating money and helping a stranger. They argue that in LTO-owned communities, individuals tend to engage in future-oriented behaviors, such as planning and investing for the future, and are more likely to act within the plan. Donating money accidentally or helping a stranger is not expected from long term-oriented cultures. Hence, the idea of getting the best outcome in a short time may have made the behavior of helping important because of the inability to plan in the long term. (Luria et al., 2015). In a study of national culture and prosocial behavior among 66 countries, Luria and her colleagues (2015) found that individualism is positively related while altruism and power distance are negatively correlated with altruism. Based on the current study, we can also bring up the existence of altruistic behavior in cultures where collective and power distance are high.

Participants who worked in a social responsibility project were more altruistic than those who were not involved in a social responsibility project. According to Haski-Leventhal (2009), individuals with prosocial personality tend to exhibit spontaneous altruistic behavior or planned voluntary action. Similarly, Yöntem and İlhan (2013) conducted a study with the employees of nonprofit associations. They found that those who are engaged in voluntary activities act more altruistically than those who did not engage in voluntary activities. Accordingly, people who are involved in social responsibility projects or voluntary activities may tend to engage in more altruistic behavior.

This study found a positive relationship between spiritual beliefs and altruism. A study of the relationships between sacrifice, empathy and spirituality found that altruism is most associated with spiritual experiences and high levels of spiritual cognition (Huber & MacDonald, 2011). They stated that spiritual cognition and spiritual experiences are the most important predictors of empathy and altruism. Thus, they found that spiritual experiences had a direct effect on altruistic behavior and spiritual cognition had an indirect effect on altruism through empathy. Accordingly, another study on moral metacognition, showed a negative relationship between Machiavellian personality and a positive one with spirituality (Sönmez et al., 2018). In parallel with the finding from the current study, having spiritual beliefs are associated positively with altruistic behavior.

4.1. Limitations

It can be difficult to conduct moral studies in terms of the social desirability effect since participants may abstain from fully disclosing themselves. Participants' ability to fully reflect themselves can become a bias in terms of the

findings (Grimm, 2010). Thus, it should be taken into account that participants may have a desire to reflect themselves in a more moral way than they are.

4.2. Conclusion And Implications

It is expected that the examination of altruism in terms of moral metacognition and moral disengagement will help to explain the current and future events and phenomenon that exist in social life. The interventions to increase altruism in society, reduce moral disengagement and promote the use of moral metacognitions needs to be integrated within the education system early on. Hand's (2014) theory of moral education, it is not enough for children to learn moral principles and to learn that others should follow moral principles. They need to internalize that they have good reason to apply moral principles. Moral analysis studies with educators should include which moral principles are right and valid. Thus, moral education will be more rational and indoctrinated when educators explain that moral principles should be adopted in order to produce good results. Doctrine, often seen as a negative situation, prevents people from thinking individually and therefore hinders their intellectual development. At the same time, moral education and altruism complement each other (White, 2016). Another effective intervention has been reported through care and compassion to increase that (Böckler et al., 2018).

Kohlberg (1968) describes morality as a cognitive ability, while the individual can act in accordance with the common judgments and the principles of universal morality. Moral awareness can be cultivated and enhanced, especially with a focus on acceptance and adoption of moral self, moral identity, moral courage, and moral efficacy. All these constructs build on the starting point of self-awareness and meta-cognition. Consequently, one's self-consciousness serves to be aware of moral self (Doty, 2011).

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