Psychological Root of Morality: A Proposal According to Nine Types Temperament Model

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Abstract

Researchers acknowledge individual differences about morality through concepts of temperament, character, personality, or values. The Nine Types of Temperament Model (NTTM), which explores human behaviors through individual differences, claims to explain the psychological organization of individuals through temperament, character, and personality concepts. This study investigates the relationship between morality, values, vices and individual differences in the context of temperament and proposes a method that discusses whether a temperament-based approach offers a new conceptualization, perspective, and approach to morality, as presented by NTTM. Firstly, this study examines the relationship between concepts of temperament, character, personality, values and morality. Subsequently, it suggests that temperament constitutes the primary root of virtues and vices and that temperament types offer society bipolar morality traits (positive and negative). Moreover, it suggests that traits that are accepted as virtues or vices could be embraced at two levels, a conceptual and individual one. The conceptual approach that this study proposes can be the main useful resource that explains the conditions of the approach, development, and methodology for being a moral person at an individual level.

Keywords: Morality; Temperament; Character; Values; Nine Types of Temperament Model

Introduction

Moral concept, which has an important function in both individual and social life, is the object of attention and discussion of philosophers, psychologists, educators, and theologians, who frequently ask questions regarding what morality is, how morality develops, and how morality is shaped. The studies that developmental and functional features focused (exp. individual moral development, moral cognition and moral conduct prossess) and conceptional features focused (exp. what is the conceptional root of morality, what is the meaning of morality concept in individual or social life) investigates the morality in the literature. In this study, we will focus the conceptional features and will suggest a new conceptional approach by looking at individual perspective.

In a social context, morality is a system that is developed by human beings in order to work and live together and that includes norms and reasons [1]. According to Filip et al. [2] morality is a popular consensus and societal balance gained about how individuals should behave. In a more general context, morality is described as set of rules and principles that should be followed [3,4] says morality have represented gene-culture coevolution for evolutionary history. In the individual context morality is described as a certain understanding of self-respect values which are related to how an individual lives and acts [5].

Also there are some studies that investigating the morality from the point of individual differences (in the context of personality, character, values or vices) besides the studies that the morality's individual or social side emphasized in the literature. For example Lifton [6] indicates that individual differences in morality development are parallel to individual differences in personality development. According to Meindl et al. [7] if the morality investigates from the personological based approach, the individual differences in moral cognition and behaviors will be clarify consistently. Fleeson, et al. [8] emphasizes the importance of the individual differences in moral development should be researched from the personality

and character based approach. Jonason et al. [9], personality traits which provides individual differences in morality, operate in the social world. Cohen and Morse [10] consider the morality focus through the moral character concept and conceptualized the moral character as an individual's disposition to think, feel, and behave in an ethical versus unethical manner, or as the subset of individual differences relevant to morality. For example fairness, helpfulness, reliability, solidarity and hospitality. In addition, values, which constitute an important concept in experiencing morality, should be considered through individual differences. For example, Bilsky and Schwartz [11] suggest that values are individual preferences that can be observed in socializing and are relatively stable. According to Timmons [12], virtues should be described as traits that are brought to the forefront of the moral evaluation of individuals in a positive way, and as traits that determine the richness of typical behaviors, emotions, and thoughts. Vices are traits that play a role in the negative evaluation of individuals and they are relatively stable traits of character or mind [12]. For example jealousy, arrogance, manipulation, hypocrisy, gossiping, and vengefulness.

Besides the researchers who study on the relation between morality and individual differences, many researchers study on the roots of human morality by asking whether human morality has innate roots or not. According to Haidt's claim while nativists believe morality is purely innate, empiricists believe that humans are blank slates at birth; morality emerges from parental or societal instruction [13]. Haidt (the social intuitionist model's proposer) says morality is take shape with enculturated social experience and it has an innate root [14,15]. Some researchers suggest that moral traits, which individuals carry as potentially innate structure, are shaped by temperament [16]. In addition to this, Kagan associates moral behavior patterns with activity patterns in the amygdala and suggests that the differences in moral behavior patterns of individuals are shaped according to temperament, which is innate [17].

The Nine Types of Temperament Model (NTTM), which explores human behaviors through innate individual differences, embraces the psychological organization of individuals through temperament, character, and personality concepts [18,19]. According to The Nine Types of Temperament Model (NTTM), temperament is a psychological building block that is innate, does not change during the lifetime, determines a person's basic seeking, perception, motivation, and tendencies, and forms the roots of individual differences [20,21]. At the same time, temperament includes both potential and risky traits according to seeking, perception, motivation, and tendencies of individuals (Table 1) [20,22].

Table 1 Traits of nine types of temperament model types.

Temperament Types	Positive Potentials	Risky Features
Ntt1-Perfection Seeking	Being fair (being careful of not doing injustice or not being exposed to injustice too much), being hardworking, being clear and organized, following rules, planning, being patient	Becoming easily stressed/angry, interfering in mistakes and deficits of people quickly/too much, not being able to relax (being too serious), being excessively hypercritical and strict
Ntt2-Seeking to Feel Emotions	Caring about relationships/attachment, sincerity/warmth, compassion, helpfulness and sacrifice, communication skills, being strong, being friendly, being forgiving	Being affected easily (being sad, crying), being touchy and reproachful, being insistent and cohesive, being jealous
Ntt3-Admirable Self Image Seeking	Motivation for success/reaching targets, resolution of work, not caring about negative feeling, being practical, being a champion in competition, motivating people	Being excessively ambitious, despising others, being insulting, ignoring emotions, being cunning
Ntt4-Seeking Meaning of Emotions	Individualism, having an original identity, original creativity, empathy and sensitivity, sincerity and neutrality, compassion, a tiny artistic/aesthetic perspective	Being vulnerable, being jealous/envious ("I Want This Too"), being rebellious and contradictious, being melancholic
Ntt5-Seeking the Meaning of Knowledge	Being introvert, being a quiet observer, curious about knowing and learning, being a researcher, being an expert on an interesting topic (knowing everything about a topic), poor sense of humor, analytical thinking/abstraction/conceptualization	Being too cold and distant, being distant from emotions, being stingy, being skeptical
Ntt6-Intellectual Serenity Seeking	Caring about trust and loyalty, being a team player, (being adaptable in a group), being deliberate, being rigorous and organized, being responsible, recognizing ambivalences, being canny	Being indecisive, being anxious/worried, inefficacy/insecurity, being dependent
Ntt7-Seeking Joy of Discovery	Being curious about discovery, being extrovert and sociable, being physically active and energetic, being cheerful/witty, being optimistic, being practical	Get bored easily/not being able to tolerate anxiety, having attention deficit, being too active, being disorganized, being fickle
Ntt8-Absolute Power Seeking	Being a leader, acting quickly, making strong decisions (deciding easily and confidently), being brave, being protective (prohibitive, protecting weak and needy people)	Being enduring/steady, being generous, being direct/outspoken
Ntt9-Sensory Motor Comfort Seeking	Being calm and adaptive, avoiding conflicts, being peaceful, being a mediator, being patient, being flexible/acquiescent	Being lazy, being unable to say no, stubborn, being shy

The Nine Types of Temperament Model (NTTM) suggests that temperament constitutes the root of personality, shapes behavioral, emotional, and cognitive traits of individuals for life, and determines a person's tendencies of perception regarding

individual and social events or situations and regarding their response to situations [23,24]. According to NTTM, character develops as long as temperament traits present clarity and continuity [19]. Because of that, personality causes temperament to interact with internal (gender, intelligence, age, biological traits) and external factors (family, education, culture) [18,21]. Moreover, when individuals have traits that are part of their temperament types, as a result of this interaction, they can be described as the natural side of personality (i.e., natural personality) [21,25]. In addition, when individuals learn traits that are not their own temperament types, in terms of family, education, culture, and belief, these can be explained as the synthetic side of personality (i.e., synthetic personality) [21,26].

By embracing human nature and psychology in an integrative way, it may be possible to understand the conceptual and behavioral roots of morality and values and to evaluate them in a comprehensive way. It has been accepted that morality is closely related to human nature and individual differences [27]. Also some concepts like character, personality, virtues and vices are appertaining to moral, related with individual differences too. Individual differences are directly related to temperament [28]. In this way, it is possible that morality correlates with temperament. However, a contemporary theory that explains moral concept based on a temperament approach could not be found among the literature. The purpose of this study is investigate the relationship between morality, values, vices and individual differences in the context of temperament and proposes a method that discusses whether a temperament-based approach offers a new conceptualization, perspective, and approach to morality, as presented by NTTM.

Method

Data collection and procedure

This study includes articles published between 1970 and 2017 and e-books about morality without date limit. Articles were scanned in PsycINFO, ebscohost/academic, eric, the social science research network (SSRN), journal storage (JSTOR), Google Scholar and PubMed database, whereas e-books were scanned in PsycINFO, ebscohost/academic, eric, the social science research network (SSRN), journal storage (JSTOR), Google Scholar and PubMed database through search engines using the word 'morality'. These investigations were evaluated as abstracts, including temperament, character, personality, and NTTM words (3 in PsycINFO, 53 in eric, 122 in SSRN, 9.722 in JSTOR, 19.800 in Google Scholar, 12 in PubMed). Between these, 189 articles and 46 books that embrace morality conceptually were investigated. Sources that are not related to the main propositions of this study were eliminated. In total, 31 articles and 18 books were added to the study.

Results

The results show that moral concept, which has various responses in social and individual contexts, is embraced by many researchers in relation to individual differences. These researchers regard moral and individual differences as two different concepts that are parallel to each other. Some of them point out that individual differences are rooted in moral concept. Moreover, character, personality and values, which are other concepts related to morality, are described as concepts that determine individual differences and that are influenced by individual differences.

However, even when researchers associate morality with many parameters, they arrive at the conclusion that morality has an innate root and that the concept that constitutes this root may be temperament. In addition to this, no approach is observed that associates the root of moral concept with morality and embraces the relationship between temperament, character, personality and value concepts in an explicit integrative organization.

NTTM, which is the focus of this study, embraces the concept of temperament, which consists of individual differences, and explains the relationship between temperament, character, and personality concepts consistently. From this perspective, the root of morality, which is a product of human nature, is based on the concept of temperament that underlies human nature and individual differences. Moreover, values, which constitute morality, originate from temperament traits, which, in turn, shape behavioral, emotional, and cognitive patterns. Traits belonging to temperament types that are described in NTTM contribute bipolar values (virtues and vices) conceptually. In that way, moral traits receive responses in both individual contexts and society, which consists of individuals in the context of temperament traits. It can be concluded that virtues and vices can be embraced in two dimensions: a conceptual and individual level.

Discussion

The relationship between morality and some basic concepts, such as character, personality and values, and individual differences, will be explored in the context of temperament and the outcome will be predicted in this section. Subsequently, the perspective of NTTM will be used to explain the similarities and differences in a comparative and comprehensive way. Finally, a general proposal regarding the NTTM's approach to temperament and moral values will be presented.

Relationship between Character and Personality in the Context of Individual Differences

Roback [29] proposes that character and morality, which are very important concepts of human nature, should be embraced in the context of temperament, which is a very important concept for exploring human nature; he argues that psychologists generally ignore this point. However there are some studies that investigate the relation with morality and temperament in the contemporary literature. For example, Kochanska and Aksan [30] embrace morality in the context of temperament and argue that temperament traits and socialization in the family context underlie the roots of individual differences in moral development. We also argue that temperament traits constitute the roots of individual differences in moral development. But if moral development of family

members in socialization in the family context is considered to be rooted in temperament types, it ignores the fact that temperament is a primary effective factor.

McKinnon [31] suggests that character can be examined in three groups: naturalist, ethical, and metaphysical. From the naturalist perspective, character formation is a part of human nature and based on biological tendencies. From the ethical perspective, character presents the virtues and vices of a person, but is not personally identifiable. For example, being helpful is not a personally identifiable trait; however, it could be a character trait. From the metaphysical perspective, character is related to personally identifiable traits and also related to an individual's temperament [31]. Cloninger embraces character as a component of personality [32,33]. At the same time, he contends that character has conscious effects on the maturity of personality [34]. According to Cloninger [35,36], character is defined by individual differences that develop gradually as long as it becomes more mature through life experience and insight in the way of an individual's targets and values. According to NTTM, character is a behavioral, emotional, and cognitive pattern that derives from temperament, constitutes the most remarkable stable traits of personality, and is very resistant to change [19]. In another words, character clearly shows itself in personality and is related to personality in the context of expressing oneself, instead of being an additional component of personality [19]. In this context, it can be suggested that character is determinant of individual differences and derives from temperament, parallel to both the metaphysical and naturalist perspective, and that it can also be a natural part of psychological development.

On the other hand, according to Cloninger [37] character matures in a stepwise manner in increments from infancy through late adulthood with temperament configuration and social education be interaction. In contrast, Cloninger suggests that the character dimension of self-transcendence shows the moral and spiritual maturity of an individual [38]. When as Josefsson et al. [39] argue that even though maturity increases with age, the scores of character dimension, when challenging oneself, decrease in a group. Moreover, individuals who challenge themselves are defined as individuals with a self-forgetful (intuitive and light), transpersonal (holistic and joyful), and spiritual perspective [36]. However, when we consider NTTM's perspective, traits such as being intuitive (NTT6, NTT4), light, holistic (integrative) (NTT9), and joyful (NTT7) are innate temperament traits, which indicate individual differences rather than character traits, which, in turn, show moral maturity [20,40,41]. At the same time, these traits can be considered as an indicator of moral maturity and can also be presented automatically by their own self [19,23]. It can be suggested that having a spiritual perspective without these traits is related to the perception, realization, and awareness levels of the psyche instead of a character trait that is part of natural psychological development.

Another important concept for understanding morality is personality. Fleeson et al. [8] defend that it is necessary to explore morality from a personality perspective in order to explain individual differences in the presentation of morality

traits and in the manifestation and function of morality traits in an individual's life. In addition to this view, we believe that a perspective that explains morality through individual differences should contain both personality and temperament concepts, which explain the structural root of individual differences. While the manifestation of traits that constitute morality in an individual's life is related to personality, the innate root of mechanisms that constitute morality is related to temperament.

Relationship between Temperament and Value Concept

Values are another important concept for understanding morality, and are described as desirable principles, criteria, and qualities [42]. Chen [43] pays attention to the individual differences in embracing morality and virtues, and argues that virtuous individuals have different values because of temperamental differences. We believe that temperamental differences underlie virtues as well as vices.

Vauclair, Wilson, and Fischer [44] propose that moral values should be explored in two categories: international and culture-specific. Schwartz [45] approaches morality values in two dimensions: a cultural and individual level.

We propose that virtues and vices should be discussed at two levels: a) at a conceptual level corresponding with social meaning, and b) at an individual level corresponding with the experience of the individual. We argue that the conceptual meaning of a virtue or a trait is different from how it corresponds with an individual's life (i.e., in two ways, as overdoing-undoing and as situational suitability). A virtue can be described as an ideal trait, which can be accepted as absolutely positive at a social level. However, this virtue cannot always be experienced positively during an individual's life. For example, being determined is a positive trait in a conceptual way [46]. However, this trait cannot always be presented positively at an individual level; it can even be seen as a sign of overdoing, such as being too ambitious or having intolerance to failure, in terms of overdoing-undoing [48]. Moreover, it can come across as a person working determinedly at tasks that are not suitable to his or her capacity/at which he or she cannot be successful. In contrast, a trait that is accepted as negative/bad is bad overall at a conceptual level. For example, the trait of being suspicious is accepted as bad overall [24,46]. However, when this trait is considered at an individual level/in accordance with individual experience, it cannot be experienced as completely negative. For example, in terms of overdoing-undoing, being generally suspicious or presenting suspiciousness in uncertain and risky situations can be seen as necessary and positive for considering dangers and taking measures, instead of being seen as negative [47,48].

Peterson and Seligman [49] suggest that there are six core virtues and that there are twenty-four virtues, in summary, which they call character power in their study, in which they investigate main virtues and character traits. We argue that nine temperament types, each with their potential and risky traits, present bipolar moral values (virtues and vices) primarily to the social pool (**Table 2**). Traits that belong to all temperament types

and are accepted as positive generally consist of a majority from the social pool of moral virtues. Potentially risky traits of individuals, in terms of their temperament type, are related to their individual morality. Moreover, when an individual presents potential traits in terms of his or her temperament type belonging to his or her natural personality as well as virtues, which he or she gains through family, education, and social environment related to his or her synthetic personality [24,26], it shows his or her virtues in terms of his or her individual limits. At the same time, the capacity to present virtuous traits belonging to other temperament types means that the existential moral level of an individual reaches a moral maturity level that is except and over limits of individual's existence.

Table 2 Primary values which temperament types present to social pool according to NTTM.

Temperament Types	Virtues	Vices
Ntt1-Perfection Seeking	Being fair, being responsible, considering ceremony and propriety, being diligent, being planned, clean, and organized, being tenacious and stable	Being heartless (not showing/ flexibility), offending and judgmental
Ntt2-Seeking to Feel Emotions	Being loving, caring about, relationships, being intimate, being helpful and self-sacrificing, forgiving, devoting oneself, sharing	Being jealous and manipulative, being over-proud
Ntt3-Admirable Self Image Seeking	Being hardworking, ignoring negative feelings, motivating for success/targets	Being narcissistic and self-seeking, being unfeeling, being cunning, doing something behind people's back
Ntt4-Seeking Meaning of Emotions	Having empathy, being sincere, merciful, original, being acquiescent, intimate and humanist	Being rebellious, and unbalanced in an emotional way, being envious, being jealous
Ntt5-Seeking The Meaning of Knowledge	Being objective, reasonable, productive, giving value to information, being wise	Being arrogant (cold, mordacious, taking oneself to an ivory tower) being ungenerous emotionally isolated
Ntt6-Intellectual Serenity Seeking	Being reliable, loyal, cautious, being thrifty, devoting oneself, being economical	Cheeseparing, questioning a lot, being factious, suspicious, insecure
Ntt7-Seeking Joy of Discovery	Being a visionary, being open to innovation, being innovatively creative, cheerful and positive	Being a hedonist, a liar, unstable, desultory, reckless, slapdash, extravagant
Ntt8-Absolute Power Seeking	Being a leader, being brave, generous, protecting weak and powerless people, being steady, being decisive, straightforward, manly	Being despotic and prone to violence, being grandiose, dominating, being cruel
Ntt9-Sensory Motor Comfort Seeking	Being peaceful, patient, being acquiescent, perceiving without judging, being flexible, being tolerant, being soft and adaptable	Being lazy and stubborn, being deprived of initiative

However, it can be suggested that risky traits belonging to all temperament types constitute the majority of vices in the social pool. Individual bad (negative) morality can be described as an individual presenting risky traits that are part of his or her natural personality in an excessive way, as well as presenting risky traits that he or she learns later in life as part of his or her synthetic personality, which is affected by family, school, or social environment. The table below shows the bipolar (positive and negative) moral values that we propose (**Table 2**).

Rokeach [50] divides values into two groups: terminal values and instrumental values. According to this classification, when terminal values contain main factors of safety, happiness, and equality, instrumental values contain values that are used for reaching these main factors. We argue that the roots of values are based on primary positive values, except for those mentioned in **Table 2**, such as respect for others, modesty, hospitality, solidarity, saving animals and the environment, and opposing all uncivilized things in the world. Therefore, values that emerge from main temperament types can be considered as primary values. Values that originate and take their root and motivation from primary values can be described as secondary values. Moreover, it can be suggested that the way in which an individual perceives and experiences secondary values may be associated with that individual's temperament type. In this context, while we embrace solidarity values that can be accepted as secondary values, when for an individual with NTT1 solidarity means that people uniting for the same ideal support each other [46], for an individual with NTT6, solidarity can mean that individuals come together, unite their powers, and constitute a more reliable and powerful group/team [47]. Alternatively, for an individual with NTT2, hospitality value can be described as a relationship tool to make people happy, to exhibit their love, and to endear themselves to people [25]. Meeting other people's needs, providing the best offers, and making people comfortable can be tools to show existence and power for an individual with NTT8 [47].

In contrast, there are also vices, such as jugglery, hypocrisy, gossiping, and vengefulness, as well as vices that belong to all temperament types. However, we argue that these values can be divided into primary (originated from temperament types) and secondary (taking roots and motivation from primary traits), similar to virtues. For example, when jugglery is a way for an individual with NTT3 to make their own profit and reach their target [25], it can be the shortest and most practical way to gain pleasure for an individual with NTT7 [46].

Conclusion

In conclusion, we suggest that temperamental differences underlie the psychological root of morality, based on individual differences. Generally, when seen from the perspective of NTTM, character can be explained as part of natural psychological development related to temperament and individual differences, rather than as a moral concept. Moreover, we propose that the side of morality based on innate temperament types expresses itself through natural personality, and that the side that is learned later in life/from the environment expresses itself through synthetic personality. In this context, NTTM, which embraces the relationship between temperament, character, and personality, should be considered to constitute a new conceptualization of morality.

We argue that every temperament type presents bipolar (positive and negative) moral traits to society conceptually, each with their potential and risky traits. These concepts, which originate from temperament types and are characterized by different temperament types, constitute the primary basis of bad moral traits. However, the traits of virtues and vices can be considered at two levels: a conceptual and individual level.

This study focuses mostly on the conceptual dimension, which introduces a new moral conceptualization and suggested approach. However, the fact that the relationship between morality and temperament types is not tested by clinical and experimental studies can be considered as a limitation of this study. Investigating the relationships between moral perception, behavior, and temperament types through studies that use statistical methods can provide important contributions to literature.

Another limitation of this study is the fact that it stays outside the scope of exploring the topic of our suggested approach; hence, the developmental and methodological conditions of being a moral person at the individual level are left for future studies. Moreover, the conceptual approach that this study proposes can be the main useful resource that explains the conditions of the approach, development, and methodology for being a moral person at an individual level.

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