

MORAL VALUES AMONG ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN RELATION TO THEIR GENDER AND RESIDENTIAL BACKGROUND

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Abstract

Today, there is a lot of degradation of values. People run after material wealth, and want to make money through immoral means. Moral values give meaning and purpose to our life. They play a supreme role in the making of the individual as well as nation. The present study attempts to analyze the moral values of elementary school students in relation to gender and residential background. The study is quantitative in nature and the sample consists of 200 elementary school students (100 males and 100 females) randomly selected from 5 government and 5 private schools of Jammu. The main objective of the study is to find differences in moral values among elementary school students in relation to their gender and residential background. Also interaction between gender and residential background in elementary school students with moral values as the dependent variable has been analyzed. In this study, a standardized tool namely Moral Values Scales (MVS-GS) developed by Gupta and Singh (1997) has been used. The data has been analysed by employing Two-way ANOVA. Significant gender difference in moral values among elementary school students was observed in favour of female students. However, no significant difference in moral values among elementary school students from rural and urban residential background was found. Also no significant interaction between gender and residential background was found in elementary school students with moral values as dependent variable.

Key words: Moral Values, Gender, Residential Background, Two-way ANOVA

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Introduction

Schools have long been seen preparing children both academically and morally. Moral values are very important in life, if a person has never learned about these values then how can he/she decide between right and wrong. Moral values refer to those principles which guide a person on how to evaluate between good and bad. These are the levels of quality which helps an individual to distinguish between good and evil and also helps to govern a person's behavior and choices. Moral values include good habits such as honesty, truthfulness, integrity, compassion, respectfulness, hard work etc. Morals are expressed through behavior and are a part of inner life of human beings. Morals of a person may be derived from self, community, government, society or religion. These values help to shape the character and personality of an individual and are regarded as desirable, useful, attractive, important and necessary course of action, which are held in a high respect and admiration by the members of the family and the society in which a person lives. Moral values are universal and non-tangible ideas; they are universally accepted ethical principles. Values help us to grow and develop; they inspire our thoughts words or actions. The decisions we make are a reflection of our values and beliefs which directs a person towards a specific goal or purpose. Values such as firmness, truthfulness, determination, uprightness, loyalty, integrity, honesty, and giving respect to each other etc. should be inherited by every individual from his parents and ancestors. Morals of an individual always insists him or her to behave in a good manner to each and every person, respecting each other no matter what age of person is standing in-front. These values help us to gain good relations at every walk of life, be it a family, workplace or society. A person who is determined and has made a firm decision to follow a meaningful life, who patiently follows moral values in his life without the fear of being getting judged stands out in the crowd.

Current researches (Seth, 2001; Malti, 2006; and Kaur, 2016) highlight that gender plays a significant role in demonstrating different patterns of value system. The results of these studies reflect that female students possess higher moral values than male students. In contrast to this, studies by Kumar (2014) and Mittal (2016) reported no significant difference in the moral values among male and female students. Studies by Zameen (2007) and Digumarti (2007) reported that there are no significant differences in the moral values of elementary school students of rural and urban residential background. But study by Suresh (2002) found that the students of the rural areas have higher values than the students of urban areas. Islam & Sirajul (2002) and Kumar (2014) in their studies found no significant difference in the moral values among elementary school students with respect to their gender and residential background. However, study by Suresh (2002) reported that the students from rural areas have higher moral values than the students of urban areas.

Significance of the Study

Elementary stage is the basic stage for weaving and inculcating moral values within the child. At this stage, values are crystallized in the child, so that he/she can become a good human being and a useful member of society. The major purpose of education is to shape the personality of the child in such a way that the individual becomes a better learner, a better person, a better worker not only in terms of knowledge, understanding and skills but also in terms of values and motives which gives meaning and satisfaction. Incorporating the moral values of honesty in life makes the person trustworthy. Today, there is a lot of degradation of values. People run after material wealth, and want to make money through immoral means. The study of moral values is important because morals allow us to have an overall feeling of peace and joy. Moral values give meaning and purpose to our life. They play a supreme role in the making of the individual as well as nation. When one lives his life according to the moral values of honesty, compassion, modesty and forgiveness then only he can form a positive bond with other people. Honesty makes a person respectable and incorporates compassion, compassion allows us to have sympathy and feeling of mercy towards other people, forgiveness makes a person emotionally stable, modesty allows us to realize what our limits are and keeps us focused and humble. So, keeping in view the importance of moral values the present study has been conducted. The present study attempts to examine the moral values of school students in relation to their gender and residential background. The findings of the study would help the teachers, parents, administrators, policy makers and curriculum planners to develop adequate values among students at elementary school level.

Objectives

1. To find significant gender difference in moral values among elementary school students.
2. To find significant difference in moral values among elementary school students from rural and urban areas.
3. To find whether significant interaction exists between gender and residential background in elementary school students with moral values as the dependent variable.

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant gender difference in moral values among elementary school students.
2. There is no significant difference in moral values among elementary school students from rural and urban areas.
3. There is no significant interaction between gender and residential background in elementary school students with moral values as the dependent variable.

Methodology

Descriptive Survey Method has been applied for the present study.

Population

All the students studying in Middle Schools of Jammu City comprised of the population for the present study.

Sample

Stratified Random Sampling Technique has been employed for the selection of sample. Five Government and 5 Private Schools have been selected randomly from Jammu District. However, 10 male and 10 female students have been selected randomly from each school. Thus, the total sample comprised 200 students, out of which 100 were male and 100 were female students. Further, 100 students were from rural residential background and 100 students were from urban residential background.

Tool used

Moral Values Scale (MVS-GS) developed by Sengupta and Singh (1997) has been used. This scale consists of 36 items.

Data Collection Procedure

For data collection procedure, the schools of Jammu District were visited personally. The heads of the institutions were approached and the purpose of the data collection was explained to them. The sample was selected randomly and a cordial atmosphere was developed with them. After providing the necessary instructions to the students, the copies of *Moral Value Scale* were distributed among selected elementary school students. Every attempt was made to remove their doubts and difficulties. The students were directed to read statements one by one and tick mark the suitable response for the respective items in the scale. After filling the responses, answer-sheets were collected back.

Data Analysis

The obtained data has been analyzed by computing Two-way ANOVA.

Results and Findings

The resulting data has been analyzed by applying Two-Way- ANOVA. The results have been given in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of Two-Way ANOVA for Scores on Moral Value Scale with Moral Values as Dependent Variable

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F
Gender	92.14	1	92.14	8.06**
Residential Background	0.64	1	0.64	0.06#
(Interaction) Gender* Residential Background	37.58	1	37.58	3.29#
Error	2239.52	196	11.426	
Total	144628.00	200		
Corrected Total	2370.22	199		

** Significant at 0.01 level, # Not Significant at 0.05 level.

Summary of conclusions: Main effects

1. *Gender.* The computed value of F for the main effect of gender on moral values of students, irrespective of their residential background, has come out to be 8.06, for *df* 1 and 196, which is greater than the Table value of F (6.76) at 0.01 level of significance for *df* 1 and 196. This result indicates that there is a significant gender difference in moral values among elementary school students.

To find which group has scored higher on Moral Value Scale, mean values for sub-groups have been computed which are given in Table 2.

Table 2: Mean Values on Moral Value Scale in Different Cells (N=50 in each cell)

Group	Male	Female	Combined
Rural	25.51	26.98	26.60
Urban	26.49	27.73	26.74
Combined	25.99	27.35	26.67

From the mean values given in Table 2, it is clear that females have got higher mean scores on *Moral Value Scale* in comparison to male elementary school students. Hence, in the light of present finding, Hypothesis No. 1 stating no significant gender difference in moral values among elementary school students stands rejected.

2. *Residential Background.* The obtained value of F for the main effect of residential background on the moral values of students, irrespective of their gender, has come out to be 0.06, for *df* 1 and 196, which is less than the Table value of F (3.89) at 0.05 level of significance. This result shows that there is no significant difference in residential background of elementary school students. Hence, in the light of the present finding, Hypothesis No. 2 stating that there is no significant difference in moral values among elementary school students from rural and urban residential backgrounds, stands accepted.

This result indicates that there is significant difference in the moral values among elementary school students with respect to their gender; however, there is no significant difference in the moral values among elementary school students with respect to their residential background.

3. *Interaction between Gender and Residential Background.* The obtained value of F for the double interaction between variables gender and residential background with moral values as the dependent variable is 3.29 which have failed to reach the Table value of F (3.89 and 6.76) at both 0.05 and 0.01 level of significance for *df* 1 and 196. Hence, no significant interaction exists between gender and residential background in elementary school students with moral values as the dependent variable.

In the light of this finding, Hypothesis No. 3 stating no significant interaction between gender and residential background among elementary school students with moral values as the dependent variable stands accepted.

Conclusion and Discussion

The results of the research can be summarized as under:

1. The present study reports that the female elementary school students possessed higher moral values than the male elementary school students. This difference in moral values may be due to the differences in personality traits of male and female students. Girls are more loyal, truthful and honest than boys. It is necessary on the part of parents, teachers and community members to support the girls and at the same time empower the boys to increase their level of moral values. Studies by Seth (2001), Malti (2006) and Gupta (2012) also reported similar results stating a significant difference between the values patterns of male and female students. Kumar (2014) reported results contrary to the study stating no significant difference in the value preferences among male and female students.
2. The present study indicates that there is no significant difference in moral values among elementary school students from rural and urban areas. The reason may be the better involvement of parents, teachers and the society towards the students of rural and urban areas or due to better verbal and mental abilities of students who are more focused and motivated to achieve better grades and vocational facilities. Zameen (2007) and Murugudu & Digumarti (2007) also reported similar results. Suresh (2002) and Dhinakaran & Sivakumar (2014) has reported results contrary to the above study, stating that the students of the rural areas have higher values than the students of urban areas.
3. The present study reveals that no significant interaction exists between gender and residential background in elementary school students with moral values as the dependent variable. As gender differences in rural and

urban areas are getting diminished in today's context with the availability and advancement of modern facilities. Further the reason may be the better involvement of parents, teachers, society and administrators in inculcating better moral values among them. Studies by Islam & Sirajul (2002), Zameen (2007) and Kumar (2014) also reported similar results indicating that there is no significant difference in the moral values among elementary school students with respect to their gender and residential background. Study by Suresh (2002) reported results contrary to the study.

Educational Implications

Teachers, parents, community members, administrators and policymakers etc. should try to imbibe moral values among elementary school students especially male students. Parents and teachers should demonstrate high moral values in their day-to-day life, and should try to imbibe the same in their child. Also, better involvement of society, administrators, policy makers and community members should be there in inculcating moral values among male and female elementary school students belonging to rural and urban residential background in order to make them better citizens.

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