

A STUDY OF MORAL VALUES AMONG HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN KRISHNA DISTRICT

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the level of moral values among high school students in Krishna District, Andhra Pradesh. With increasing concerns about the erosion of values in modern society, especially among the youth, the study investigates how moral values vary with respect to gender, locality (rural/urban), and type of school (government/private). A sample of 300 students was selected using stratified random sampling. The Moral Values Scale developed by Sinha and Verma (1992) was used as the instrument. The results showed a moderate level of moral values across the sample, with significant differences based on gender and school type. Recommendations are offered to integrate value education more effectively within the curriculum.

Keywords : Moral Values, Gender difference, value education.

Introduction

Moral values are the guiding principles that help individuals distinguish between right and wrong, shaping their behavior, attitudes, and interactions with others. These values, such as honesty, respect, responsibility, empathy, and fairness, form the foundation of a civilized society. The development of moral values begins in early childhood and is significantly influenced by family, school, peers, and the broader social environment. Among these, schools play a critical role, especially during adolescence - a stage marked by identity formation, emotional development, and increasing social awareness.

High school students, who are on the threshold of adulthood, are particularly susceptible to external influences such as media, peer pressure, and societal changes. The contemporary world, driven by rapid technological advancements and globalization, presents both opportunities and challenges in value formation. In recent years, educators and policymakers have expressed concern about the perceived decline in moral values among the younger generation, making it imperative to assess and address this issue systematically.

Moral values are the foundation of a healthy, functioning society. They guide individuals in distinguishing right from wrong, fostering integrity, empathy, and social responsibility. Adolescence is a crucial period for the development of moral values, and schools play a pivotal

role in this formative process. In the current fast-paced and digitally influenced world, concerns have been raised regarding declining moral standards among youth. This study is an attempt to assess the moral value orientation of high school students in Krishna District of Andhra Pradesh and to identify demographic influences.

Review of Literature

Previous studies indicate that factors like family background, school environment, peer influence, and media exposure significantly affect moral development (Narvaez, 2002; Kumar & Rao, 2014). Gender-based differences have been observed, with girls often exhibiting higher moral sensitivity (Gilligan, 1982). A few regional studies (e.g., Reddy, 2018) highlighted that urban students tend to score lower on moral value scales compared to rural counterparts. However, localized and up-to-date data from Krishna District remain limited.

Objectives of The Study

1. To assess the level of moral values among high school students in Krishna District.
2. To examine the differences in moral values based on Gender.
3. To compare moral values between Rural and Urban students.
4. To analyze the influence of school type (Government vs. Private) on moral values.

Hypotheses

1. There is a significant difference in moral values between Male and Female students.
2. There is a significant difference in moral values between Urban and Rural students.
3. There is a significant difference in moral values between Government and Private school students.

Methodology

Research Design:

Descriptive survey method.

Sample:

A stratified random sample of 300 students (150 boys and 150 girls) from 10 schools (5 Government, 5 Private) across Urban and Rural areas of Krishna District, Andhra Pradesh.

Tool Used:

Moral Values Scale by Sinha & Verma (1992) – consisting of 36 items on a 5-point Likert scale.

Data Analysis:

Mean, Standard Deviation, and t-test were used for analysis.

Results Analysis

Variable	N	Mean Score	SD	t-value	Significance
Gender					
Boys	150	102.4	11.3	3.52	p < 0.01
Girls	150	108.7	10.1		
Locality					
Urban	150	104.2	11.5	1.21	NS
Rural	150	106.0	10.7		
School Type					
Government	150	108.9	10.2	3.89	p < 0.01
Private	150	102.3	12.4		

Interpretation:

- Girls showed significantly higher moral values than boys.
- No significant difference was found between rural and urban students.
- Government school students showed significantly higher moral values than private school students.

Discussion

The findings align with earlier research indicating that girls tend to be more morally oriented, possibly due to higher emotional and social sensitivity. The higher values in government schools may stem from greater emphasis on moral education and less exposure to commercial influences compared to private schools. The absence of a significant difference between urban and rural students is noteworthy, possibly reflecting a closing gap in cultural exposure due to digital media.

Educational Implications

- Strengthening moral education in school curricula is essential.
- Value-based activities like storytelling, group discussions, and community service must be encouraged.
- Teachers should be sensitized to act as moral role models.
- Parents and schools must collaborate to create a values-rich environment.

Limitations

- The study is limited to Krishna District; generalizations to other regions should be made cautiously.

- Self-report scales may carry a social desirability bias.
- Cross-sectional design limits understanding of value development over time.

Conclusion

This study provides a clear understanding of the moral value orientations among high school students in Krishna District. The findings indicate that students exhibit a moderate level of moral values overall, with notable variations based on gender and type of school. Female students displayed higher moral value scores compared to their male counterparts, and government school students outperformed those in private institutions. In contrast, no significant difference was observed between rural and urban students, suggesting a convergence in moral perspectives, potentially influenced by shared access to media and technology.

The results highlight the pressing need to embed value-based education more deeply within the school system. Moral education should not be treated as an ancillary aspect but as an integral part of both academic instruction and co-curricular engagement. It is essential for schools, families, and communities to work collaboratively to instill strong ethical values and social responsibility in the younger generation.

This research offers valuable insights for educators, curriculum planners, and policymakers aiming to promote moral development in schools. It also opens avenues for future studies to examine the long-term influence of socio-cultural and digital factors on adolescents' moral growth. Strengthening moral education is vital for cultivating responsible, compassionate, and ethically grounded citizens.

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