

Research Article

Influence of Family Backgrounds on Moral Values in Higher Secondary Students

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Article History

Received: 14.01.2021

Accepted: 25.01.2021

Published: 05.02.2021

Journal homepage:

<https://www.easpublisher.com>

Quick Response Code



Abstract: Reported is a survey conducted to study the influence of family backgrounds related factors like types of family, caste, guardians' occupation, familial monthly income and educational qualification of the guardian on the moral values among higher secondary level students. For this purpose data was collected from a sample of 444 higher secondary level students in Paschim Medinipur district of West Bengal in India randomly. Moral values of the students were measured with the help of "Test for Moral Values among School Students" developed by B.M. Benjamin and translated in the Bengali language by L.L. Mohakud and N.D. Ghorai. Collected data were analysed through descriptive statistics like-Mean, SD etc. and inferential statistics like- t-test, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) in the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21. The result revealed that moral values in higher secondary students were significantly influenced by their family backgrounds related factors like family types, familial monthly income and educational qualification of the guardian but caste and guardians' occupation did not appear significant in this regard.

Keywords: Moral Values, Family Backgrounds, Higher Secondary Students.

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INTRODUCTION

A famous quote says that "if wealth is lost nothing is lost if health is lost something is lost; when the character is lost all is lost [1]. So, which character of human is right and wrong in standards considered valuable in life [2]? A set of guiding principles that leads an individual on how to judge right versus wrong are referred to as moral values (www.reference.com/world-view/moral-values-357e4ae84df08fa3). Moral values are the tools for deciding which is good or bad things throughout our lives. It refers to an individual's personality and spirituality. Morality is viewed as the "system of rules that regulate the social interactions and social relationships of individuals within the societies and is based on concepts of welfare, trust, justice, and rights" [3, 4]. In the context of the deep human crisis at the end of the twentieth century, the education of future citizens needs to be redressed so that a better balance is achieved between academic excellence and human values and moral perceptions [5, 6]. Moral values such as integrity, determination, loyalty, truthfulness, honesty, giving respect to each other etc. should be inherited by every individual [7]. Moral behaviour focuses on the child's ability to differentiate between

good and bad as they grow in their different cultural settings [8, 9]. Value is transferred to the younger generation by the older generation. Values involve both the cognitive and affective domains and provide an important basis for individual choices based on connecting thoughts and feelings and emotions leading to positive action [10]. Moral education makes one perfect. Education is not aimed at achieving only a degree; it includes significant value-based teachings which result in character building and social development too. It is important in our everyday life because, if we have never learned about moral values then how can we judge between good and bad. Moral education must be given to all the school going children to improve their ethical practices. It helps to eliminate problems like- violence, cheating, jealousy from our everyday life and improves our decision-making and rapport establishing, be it family, school-college or society [7].

Trommsdorff, (2018) noted that moral values are the result of the interaction of heredity and environment. After birth, its development in children is fuelled by responding to their social environment influenced by genetic (Fortuna and Knafo, 2014 cited in Trommsdorff, 2018), ecological (Whiting and Whiting,

1975), and cultural factors (De Guzman, Do and Kok, 2014; Fasoli, 2018; Miller and Kallberg-Shroff, 2018 cited in Trommsdorff, 2018), including parental and social agents` contributions (Bornstein, 2002; Padilla-Walker, 2014; Padilla-Walker and Memmott-Elison, 2018 cited in Trommsdorff, 2018) [11-15]. Researchers have suggested that cultural values influence moral judgment and moral principles are culturally specific [16]. Kohlberg's theory of moral cognitive development and Gilligan's moral dualism proposes that the principle of moral orientation is applicable in various social cultures [17-20]. Miller and Bersoff [21] found that Americans indicated a typical moral justice orientation, whereas Indians indicated a typical care orientation for an identical moral dilemma. Yang [22] noted that Chinese and Western culture have different origins in terms of moral principles. Studies also revealed that moral values were influenced by gender [23, 24], teachers' effectiveness [25], environmental factors [9] etc.

Home, school and culture are some of the environmental factors that strongly influence the moral behaviour of secondary school students [9]. However, among various factors family is considered to be one of the prime factors affecting the moral development of children. Scholars noted that moral value is influenced by family [36] and family backgrounds related factors. It is the place, where children take birth and spent most of their time with close and intimate association with their parents and family members. Parents are their immediate caretakers who provide them necessities of life and fulfil their basic needs [27] and make aware of the importance of leading life ethically [28]. Children continuously try to imitate and follow the gesture, postures, values and behaviours of their family members. Usually, the first impression of society and social life developed from the family in the life of children. Thus factors associated with family backgrounds play a significant role in the moral development of the children and students. These include inheritance, experiences at early stages of lives, modelling by important adults and older youth, (Campbell and Bond cited in Khanam [29]), family type (joint and nuclear) [27]. Walker and Hennig [30] while analysing results of two studies, reported that parents' interaction styles, ego functioning and level of moral reasoning are predictive of children's subsequent moral reasoning development and highlighted the implications

of these findings for the understanding of the role of parenting style in children's moral development. The study of Saritha [31] revealed that the moral development of children significantly influenced by the education of mothers, not of fathers. The other factors which affect their ethical grooming include socio-economic condition, family issues, cognitive factors [32, 33, 10]. However, the study of Dhull and Kumar [34] revealed that socio-economic status has no significant effect on the moral development of children. But, another study [35] claimed that there is a lack of moral grooming among children these days due to family issues and moral degradation. We see mass degeneration in every society and in every religion [36]. The nature and structure of the family are constantly changing and its impact can be seen from the behaviour and attitude of children. Repeated incidence of crime, corruption, kidnapping, rape, violence and killing of innocent people are found. Added to these, the problems of communal intolerance, regionalism, terrorism, separatism and political fundamentalism have crippled the very base of democracy. The cause can squarely attribute to large scale erosion of human values upon which humanities rest and survive [37]. In this circumstance, it will be very significant to understand the nature and development of moral values among the higher secondary students who are in the stage of adolescence, the most crucial and sensitive stage of life, and the impact of family on it.

Based on the aforementioned rationale, we sought to measure the influence of family backgrounds related factors on moral values among higher secondary students of West Bengal in India by testing the hypothesis: family backgrounds related factors (types of family, caste, guardians' occupation, familial monthly income and educational qualification of guardian) have no significant influence on moral values.

METHOD

Participants

The sample consisted of 444 higher secondary level students selected randomly from fifteen schools of Paschim Medinipur district of West Bengal in India. Higher secondary level students of Paschim Medinipur district of West Bengal in India were considered as the target population of the study.

Table-1: Demographic Characteristics of the Sample (N= 444)

Demographic Variables		Frequency	Percentage
Types of Family	Joint Family	101	22.7
	Nuclear Family	343	77.3
Caste	General	258	58.1
	Other Backward Caste	77	17.3
	Schedule Caste	72	16.2
	Schedule Tribe	37	8.3
Guardians' Occupation	Govt. Employee	16	3.6
	Business and Others	62	14.0
	Cultivation	366	82.4
Familial Monthly Income	Up to 15,000/-	262	59.0
	15,001/- to 30,000/-	124	27.9
	Above 30,000/-	58	13.1
Educational Qualification of Guardian	Illiterate	6	1.4
	Madhyamik (MP)	350	78.8
	Higher Secondary (HS)	68	15.3
	Undergraduate (UG)	20	4.5

Measures

For data collection, one self-made information sheet and one standardized test were used, namely- "Test for Moral Values among School Students" developed by B.M. Benjamin [38] and translated in Bengali by L.L. Mohakud and N.D. Ghorai [39]. It was a four-choice scale consisting of one appropriate answer. The whole test consists of 50 items, with 12 different dimensions. Appropriate answer for each item assigned 1 score. Responses of representatives were scored following the same rule.

Procedure

In this survey, the questionnaire was distributed among 484 higher secondary level students of fifteen schools in Paschim Medinipur district of West Bengal. The researchers went to these schools and taking prior permission from HM collected the data. Out of 484 questionnaires handed out, 462 questionnaires were fully completed and used in this study. Therefore, the analysis was done on 444 participants.

Techniques Used for Data Analysis

Statistical analyses were conducted using SPSS-21. Descriptive statistics like the Shapiro-Wilk test was calculated to test the normality of distribution and the results revealed that the data were normal (p -value > 0.05 level of significance) in overall moral values based on demographic variables. Based on this result, parametric statistics like t-test, a series of one-way ANOVA and multiple comparisons in LSD test were used for the analysis of the collected data to assess the influence of family backgrounds related factors like types of family, caste, guardians' occupation, familial monthly income and educational qualification of the guardian on moral values of students.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The SPSS-21 was used to analyse data. To examine the influence of family backgrounds related variables like type of family, caste, guardians' occupation, familial monthly income and educational qualification of the guardian on moral values among students a t-test and a series of one-way ANOVA were performed.

Table-2: Influence of Family Type on Moral Values

Types of Family	N	Mean	SD	MD	df	t	SED	Sig. (p)
Joint	101	38.20	4.626					
Nuclear	343	36.95	5.631	1.245	442	2.028	.614	.043

It was hypothesized that the type of family has no significant influence on moral values among students. Results (in the Table- 2) showed that students from joint family backgrounds scored higher moral values ($M= 38.20$, $SD= 4.626$) than students from the nuclear family backgrounds ($M= 36.95$, $SD= 5.631$). Further, the t-test result also revealed that the difference

between these two means was significant as the $p=.043<.05$ level of significance. Students from joint family showed significantly higher moral values compared to students from the nuclear family. Consistent with this finding, Yadav and Shukla [26] showed that type of family has a significant impact on moral value.

Table-3: Influence of Caste on Moral Values

Categories	N	Mean	SD	Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig. (p)
General	258	37.75	4.848	Between Groups	214.765	3	71.588	2.443	.064
SC	72	35.93	7.060						
ST	37	37.32	4.069	Within Groups	12891.404	440	29.299		
OBC	77	36.69	5.979	Total	13106.169	443			
Total	444	37.24	5.439						

It was hypothesized that caste has no significant influence on moral values among students. Results demonstrated (Table- 3) that general caste students scored higher moral values (M= 37.75, SD= 4.848) than ST (M= 37.32, SD= 4.069), OBC (M= 36.69, SD= 5.979) and SC (M= 35.93, SD= 7.060)

students. But the one-way ANOVA result revealed that the difference was not significant as the $p=.064 > .05$ level of significance. Consistent with this finding, Sankaran *et al.*, [40] reported that high caste norms are associated with moral values while the lower caste norms are associated with immorality.

Table-4: Influence of Guardians' Occupation on Moral Values

Categories	N	Mean	SD	Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig. (p)
Government Employee	16	37.88	7.365	Between Groups	48.109	2	24.055	.812	.444
Business and Others	62	37.97	6.930						
Cultivation	366	37.08	5.052	Within Groups	13058.060	441	29.610		
Total	444	37.24	5.439	Total	13106.169	443			

It was hypothesized that the guardians' occupations have no significant influence on moral values among students. Results demonstrated that (Table-4) students, whose guardians' occupation were business and others scored higher moral values (M= 37.97, SD= 6.930) than students whose guardians'

occupation were government employee (M= 37.88, SD= 7.365) and cultivation (M= 37.08, SD= 5.052). But the one-way ANOVA result also revealed that the difference was not significant as the $p=.444 > .05$ level of significance.

Table-5A: Influence of Familial Monthly Income on Moral Values

Categories	N	Mean	SD	Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig. (p)
Up to 15,000/-	262	36.67	5.445	Between Groups	292.327	2	146.164	5.030	.007
15,001/- to 30,000/-	124	37.57	5.633						
Above 30,000/-	58	39.07	4.538	Within Groups	12813.842	441	29.056		
Total	444	37.24	5.439	Total	13106.169	443			

Table-5B: Familial Monthly Income-wise Multiple Comparisons in LSD Test

(I) Familial Monthly Income	(J) Familial Monthly Income	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig. (p)
Up to 15,000/-	15,001/- to 30,000/-	-.901	.588	.126
	Above 30,000/-	-2.397*	.782	.002
15,001/- to 30,000/-	Above 30,000/-	-1.496	.857	.082

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

It was hypothesized that familial monthly income has no significant influence on moral values among students. Results demonstrated that (Table- 5A) students, whose familial monthly income were "above 30,000/-", scored higher moral values (M= 39.07, SD= 4.538) than students from income group of "15,001/- to 30,000/-" (M= 37.57, SD= 5.633) and income group of "up to 15,000/-" (M= 36.67, SD= 5.445). And the one-way ANOVA result also revealed that the mean

difference was significant as the $p=.007 < .05$ level of significance.

Further, the multiple comparisons (Table- 5B) shows that the students whose familial monthly income was "up to 15,000/-" and "above 30,000/-", they differ significantly as the $p= .002 < .05$ level of significance. Consistent with this finding, Parveen *et al.*, [41] found that positive, strong, linear correlation between poverty and moral development.

Table-6A: Influence of Educational Qualifications of Guardians on Moral Values

Categories	N	Mean	SD	Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig. (p)
Illiterate	6	34.67	11.501	Between Groups	320.282	3	106.761	3.674	.012
MP	350	37.09	5.148						
HS	68	38.85	5.578	Within Groups	12785.887	440	29.059		
UG	20	35.05	6.452	Total	13106.169	443			
Total	444	37.24	5.439						

Table-6B: The LSD Test for Multiple Comparisons of Moral Values among Students concerning Guardians' Educational Qualification

(I) Educational Qualification of Guardian	(J) Educational Qualification of Guardian	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig. (p)
MP	HS	-1.762*	.714	.014
HS	UG	3.803*	1.371	.006

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

It was hypothesized that the guardians' education has no significant influence on moral values among students. Results demonstrated (Table- 6A) that students whose guardians' educational qualifications were HS, they scored higher moral values (M= 38.85, SD= 5.578) than the students whose guardians' educational qualification were Madhyamik (M= 37.09, SD= 5.148); UG (M= 35.05, SD= 6.452) and Illiterate (M= 34.67, SD= 11.501). And the one-way ANOVA result also revealed that the difference was significant as the $p=.012<.05$ level of significance.

Further, the multiple comparisons (Table- 6B) shows that the students whose guardians' educational qualification were Madhyamik and HS, they differ significantly as the $p= .014<.05$ level of significance and it was also found that the students whose guardians' educational qualification were HS and UG, they differ significantly as the $p= .006<.05$ level of significance. Consistent with our findings, Saritha [31] revealed that there exists a significant difference in moral judgment of students concerning their mothers' education and Kaur [28] said not only teachers in schools but the parents at home also play a great role in making the children aware of the importance of leading life ethically.

CONCLUSION

Although the moral development of children is affected by numerous factors, the family is considered to be one of the most important factors in this connection. The results of our study also revealed the same trend. From our study, it is evidenced that family type plays a vital role in the development of moral values among students where the joint family environment plays a positive role in this regard. Joint family helps the young generation of the family to imbibe human values and eradicate their negative mental tendencies when they are among the elders (<https://www.gktoday.in/gk/ethics-role-of-family-in- inculcating-values/>). Familial monthly income and

guardians' educational qualifications have a significant influence on moral values among students. Guardian's education is very important for developing morality among their children and society also. Good guidance and counselling are good strategies for developing morality among youths within families [42]. Based on the results of the study it can be suggested that initiatives should be taken both at personal and government level to make provision of proper education and value-based education to children for the human wellbeing. It should be started from the family of the children as family and education is the two sides of a single coin [43]. Parents should be oriented about the essence of education and value education for the family and the ways and strategies for developing values among their children. Educational institutions should take the mediating role in this respect and highlight the necessity of the provision of basic facilities required for the development and inculcation of moral values among children. Initiatives should be taken to conduct more comprehensive and intensive studies for exploring various other factors along with family related factors affecting moral values and its different dimensions with larger sample for better generalisation of the result.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We convey our heartfelt thanks to all the higher secondary students who participated in this research and to the headmasters of these concerns fifteen schools for permitting us to collect data. We also extend sincere gratitude to the editor and anonymous reviewers for their constructive comments and valuable suggestion.

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Cite This Article: Ghorai, N.D. et al., (2021). Influence of Family Backgrounds on Moral Values in Higher Secondary Students. *East African Scholars J Edu Humanit Lit*, 4(2), 41-47.

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