



A STUDY OF THE MORAL VALUES AMONG CHILDREN, AGED 10-12YEARS

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Abstract

This study will help the parents and teachers in understanding children's inclination towards the moral values that they believe in and strive towards inculcating moral values in children. Through studies it is noted that reciprocity in the parent child relationship is a favourable condition for the development of moral judgment in children. It is a known fact that moral values are inculcated in the child primarily at home through imitation of parental behaviour as they are first role for children. Moral values directly affect the way the child will behave in a given situation.

Keywords: Children, Moral Values, Parents, Income Group, Boys, Girls.

Introduction

Nurturing children to grow up into individuals who honour the good in people and condemn the wrong can be just what the world needs. In order to help your children, discern between what's right and wrong, you will need to begin to lay a strong foundation of morality in their early years. Promoting childhood moral development is the key to bringing up compassionate and emotionally sound human beings.

What is Morality?

Morality is the ability to draw a line between right and wrong. A person's morality is what guides their actions, thoughts, attitude, and behaviour towards others. It can be based on the environment that the person has grown up in, along with the emotional intelligence and cognitive skills of the person.

What is Moral Development?

Moral development is the comprehension and the evolution of morality in an individual right from infancy to adulthood, and beyond. Many psychologists have tried to analyse the idea of moral development in children by observing changes in their approach and understanding of morality.

Freud's Concept of Moral Development

Freud's concept of moral development is based on his theory of id, ego and the superego. Through these theories, he proposed that there is a tension between the needs of the individual and the needs of the society at large.

The id is associated with the part of the mind that is self-preserving and is only interested in self-gain. However, the superego stems from the moral centre and is more concerned with what's right for the society.

Freud believed that a child would have achieved moral development if the child is able to make the transition from the id to the superego keeping in mind societal interests.

Skinner's Concept of Moral Development

Skinner laid emphasis on the idea that the environment that the child grows up in or is primarily subjected to lays a foundation of the child's morality. This translates to how the behaviour and the attitude of the parents and caretakers is, and how it shapes the child's moral standing.

Piaget's View on Moral Development

Piaget drew parallels between the intellectual development of a child and his moral development. He also said that a child's morality is best developed through interactions with groups and exposure to decision making. At a very young age, the child's behaviour is guided by how he will be affected by an action. At this age, rules are very important and are deemed as something that cannot be altered and children are only concerned with the outcome of an action. As the child matures intellectually, he begins to realize the need to examine the motive behind an action and not just the consequences. At this age, the child also begins to analyze the fairness of the rules and will allow negotiation to ensure fairness to all parties involved.



Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Development

Kohlberg was in congruence with Piaget in the belief that cognitive and intellectual development was necessary to progress through the stages of moral development. His six stages (grouped under three levels) of moral development were based on the response of a group of children to a story posing questions and moral dilemmas.

Level 1: Preconvention morality

This applies to children under the age of ten. Here, the children are concerned with avoiding punishment and ensuring that their needs are met. It has two stages.

Stage 1: Obedience and Punishment orientation

Children obey parents or adults in authority for the sole reason of avoiding punishment.

Stage 2: Exchange, Individualism, and Instrumentation

Children, at this stage, begin to believe that the concept of rightness can be subjective and viewed from an individual's viewpoint. They also base their actions on moral reciprocity and may tend to internalize an eye for an eye judgment method. They also learn to make deals and except payoffs for positive behaviour.

Level 2: Conventional morality

This stage begins at the age of ten and can stretch well into adulthood, with certain adults. It may remain the same throughout their lives. Children gravitate towards acceptable behaviour and the actions of adult role models.

Stage 3: Interpersonal conformity

Children engage in good deeds in order to be viewed as good people within a set social group.

Stage 4: Social System and Law and Order

Rules are followed out of respect for authority and to maintain general order in the society.

Level 3: Post Conventional morality

Only about 10 to 15 percent of the adults achieve this stage where their morality is based on reasoning and principles that they have chosen for themselves. Most people don't achieve this stage as they take moral values from people around them.

Stage 5: Social contract and individual rights

Although rules are made for the benefit of the majority, there can be individual exceptions.

Stage 6: Universal principles and ethics

People in this stage are guided by their individual principles that are applicable universally, like equality and human rights. They conform to rules that abide by these principles and shun the others.

Parents' Role in Moral Development of Kids

You have an active role in shaping the foundation of morality in your child and can utilize it to help your child grow up to become a considerate human being. Here are a few guidelines on how to promote moral development in children.

1. Set Rules and Utilize Teaching Opportunities

It is essential that your child has a clear demarcation between what can be done and what needs to be avoided. Take time to explain to your child why certain behaviours like lying or hurting someone is wrong. Use this as an opportunity to teach a moral lesson to your child.

2. Be A Good Role Model

Children are very impressionable and mimic adults to the T sometimes. This is why it is important to exercise kindness and compassion in the way you deal with others and your children.

3. Positive Reinforcement

Reward a morally right behaviour with positive reinforcement so that your child knows that he is being appreciated for doing the right thing.



4. Community Participation

Tasks like volunteering can instill a strong sense of community and the idea of giving back in your child. Working side by side with your children as you clean up parks or help out at senior homes can help your child grow into socially and emotionally skilled individual.

Moral development in children is a necessary part of their growth process and can help steer them in the right direction. It is important that you take the opportunity to help your child understand and internalise positive and good values right from the childhood.

The 20th century brought enormous changes in the family system. Today, due to industrialization, most of the families are nuclear in nature. Nowadays, families are smaller, ties with relatives are weaker and there are fewer contacts with them, children spend more time outside the home than in the home and recreation has shifted outside the home. The major family recreation is interaction with outsiders than with family members. Many mothers work outside the home. Divorce, separation and remarriages are increasing; child training methods are more democratic than in the past. Homes are shifting from rural areas to sub urban; parents are more ambitious for their children and are willing to make personal sacrifices for them, their education, to prepare them for their futures. The pattern of family life today is radically different from the pattern that existed before. So, the changes in all areas of family life have also affected parent-child relationship and so have the behavioural patterns moral values. Some of the family patterns today and their effects on children that is nuclear families, families with working mothers, single parents' family, reconstituted families, adoptive families. Inter religious families, single child families, etc.

Aim of the study

The main aim of the study was "To study moral values among children aged 10-12 years.

Objectives of the study

1. To study the moral value of children with reference to their sex.
2. To study the comparison between moral values of children coming from high- and middle-income group.

At all ages appropriate moral values are very important for development and better adjustment in life. As childhood is the most important period in the life span for learning appropriate moral values, it is necessary to study these factors among children.

This study will help the parents and teachers in understanding children's inclination towards the moral value that they believe in and strive towards inculcating moral values in children. Through studies it is noted that reciprocity in the parent-child relationship is favourable condition for the development of moral judgment in children. It is a known fact that moral values are inculcated in the child primarily at home through imitation of parental behaviour as they are the first role model for children.

Hypothesis

1. There is a significant difference in moral values of boys and girls.
2. There is a significant difference in moral values of children belonging to high income group and middle-income group.

Tools of Data Collection

This study deals with the moral values of children aged 10-12 years from different Economic group. Detailed interview schedule was prepared and information was gathered from selected children and their parents. Standardized psychological test was used for data collection. Moral value for children by Dr. Mrs. A. Sengupta and Dr. A. K. Singh. Scale for assessing moral values has been specially developed for the school children in the group of 6-12 years. The test has been dividing into four dimensions like – Lying, Dishonesty, stealing, cheating. Thus, high score on this indicates high moral values and low score indicates low moral values. Since the present study is based on moral value of children, aged 10-12 years from different economic background. The sample of 100 children was further divided as 50 girls and 50 boys.

Results

- 1) There is a significant difference in moral values of boys and girls. **Hypothesis Accepted.**
- 2) There is a significant difference in moral values of children belonging to high income group and middle-income group. **Hypothesis Accepted.**

Discussion

Hy. 1. There is a significant difference in moral values of boys and girls. **Hypothesis Accepted.**



Today most of the children are more influenced by television, internet etc. Studies conducted by national television violence study shows that when children see televised violence, they may absorb the values depicted and view as they are acceptable values. In a number of homes, many both the parents are working outside at home. Families are nuclear; children are taking care by caretakers. Obviously, their moral values also get affected by all these factors.

Girls from their childhood are expected to behave according to the norms of the society. Girls generally follow discipline very sincerely at school as it is a source of approval by the teachers. At home also girls with good moral values get accepted by the parents, siblings, relatives etc. and other elders in the family accept, appreciate good moral values in children. There are many other factors that negatively affect moral values in girls such as television, for advertisements internet etc. The moral values exhibited on the television and internet project the pleasures derived by wrong doing. Since, moral judgement is not very well developed at this stage, the tendency to imbibe values that gives pleasure in greater. In this age group which is popularly known as 'gang age' generally boys are more influenced by of their peers than the family members. It is observed that in Indian family that the boys do not need to be taught moral values and they will eventually teach themselves. Thus, the boys generally tend to learn moral values that may be different from the values taught to girls.

Hy. 2) There is a significant difference in moral values of children belonging to high income group and middle-income group.

Hypothesis Accepted.

A child belonging to high income group is compared with children from middle income group. It is found that children from middle income group rank higher in moral value than high income group. Those parents who are belong to middle income group they considered to be the best transmitters to culture and moral value. They are quite aware of their role and they feel that they have to carry out role sincerely. In the case of high-income group parents, it is noticed that they have the confidence that whatever they may do sets the trend and they are not so worried about what people say. Easy availability of whatever is demanded by the children sometimes, makes the children less cooperative more demanding, lack sharing and may become self-centered.

Conclusion

Today's children are going to be responsible citizens of tomorrow. It is very essential for parents to teach their child to inculcate good moral values. Inappropriate moral values can make a child irresponsible individual in future. It is observed that there is significant difference in moral values of boys and girls. It is seen that children coming from middle income group have higher moral values than the children coming from high income group.

Today's children are fundamental to the society as they are the nation's future. They hold the key to change and hence it is the duty of parents, school and society to provide them with an environment that is complete and conducive for their growth and development. The initial environment will impact the rest of their lives and ultimately the society's future.

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