

A STUDY ON MORAL VALUES OF B.Ed. STUDENTS BASED ON GENDER AND AGE

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Abstract

Moral values constitute an essential component of teacher professionalism as they influence ethical decision-making, classroom practices, and character formation among students. Teacher education institutions are expected to nurture prospective teachers who possess strong moral principles and professional integrity. The present study examined the moral values of B.Ed. students with reference to two presage variables, namely gender and age. A descriptive survey method was employed. The sample consisted of 250 B.Ed. students selected through simple random sampling from colleges of education affiliated with Tamil Nadu Teachers Education University in Chennai. Moral Values were assessed using the standardized Moral Values Scale developed by Anne A. Epsibai (2010), comprising four dimensions: Personal Values, Family Values, Social Values, and Spiritual Values. Independent sample t-test, and one-way ANOVA were proposed for data analysis. The study seeks to determine whether significant differences exist in moral values across gender and age groups. The findings are expected to provide insights for curriculum planners and teacher educators in strengthening value education programmes within teacher education institutions.

Keywords: *Moral Values, Teacher Education, Personal Values, Family Values, Social Values, Spiritual Values*

Introduction

Education is not merely the transmission of knowledge but also the cultivation of ethical behaviour and responsible citizenship. Teachers occupy a unique position in society because they influence students' intellectual, emotional, and moral development. Consequently, teacher education programmes should focus on strengthening moral values among prospective teachers.

Moral values are enduring beliefs and ethical principles that guide behaviour, decision-making, honesty, fairness, responsibility, and compassion. In the teaching profession, these values determine professional integrity, classroom management, interpersonal relationships, and educational leadership. The present thesis identifies four dimensions of moral values: Personal Values, Family Values, Social Values, and Spiritual Values.

Previous studies indicate that demographic characteristics influence moral development. Gender differences have frequently been reported in educational research, while age reflects

maturity and life experience that may contribute to stronger ethical reasoning. Therefore, investigating moral values based on age and gender among B.Ed. students is educationally significant.

Need for the Study

In the present era, education is undergoing rapid transformation due to changing societal values and evolving professional expectations. Teachers are expected not only to possess subject knowledge but also to demonstrate moral competence in diverse classroom situations. In this context, Moral Values have become an essential quality for effective teaching, as they enable teachers to act with integrity, model ethical behaviour and foster character development in students. Lickona T (1991) emphasized that the moral character of teachers plays a crucial role in shaping the ethical development of students.

For future teachers, it is essential to develop strong moral values required to build meaningful relationships with students, colleagues and parents. Moral Values help them uphold ethical standards and serve as responsible role models. Despite the importance of these variables, there is a need to study the Moral Values among B.Ed. students. Understanding this relationship can provide valuable insights into teacher education and help in developing strategies to enhance moral competence among prospective teachers. Therefore, the present study is undertaken to examine Moral Values among B.Ed. students.

Literature Review

Few studies related to Moral Values were reviewed for the present study. These studies provided valuable insights into the causes, patterns, and impact of Moral Values on students' gender and age.

Sharma R.K (2006) conducted a study to investigate the moral values of adolescent students in relation to their sex, socio-economic status, school environment, and parental education in Rajasthan. Using a standardized Moral Values Scale on a sample of 600 secondary school students, the study found that girls scored significantly higher on moral values than boys across all socio-economic groups. Students from higher socio economic backgrounds demonstrated stronger moral values, and students studying in private schools exhibited better moral development than those in government schools.

Althof W and Berkowitz M.W (2016) examined the relationship between moral education and character development in schools across different cultural contexts in North America and Europe. Using survey and observation methods across 500 school settings, the study found that schools which embedded character education into their daily practices produced students with significantly higher moral values, greater prosocial behaviour, and stronger civic engagement. The study also found that teachers who received training in values education were more effective in creating morally supportive classroom climates.

Patel S and Joshi M (2021) conducted a comparative study to examine the moral values of B.Ed. students from urban and rural backgrounds in Gujarat. Using the Moral Values Scale by Hyde, Pethe, and Dhar on a sample of 400 B.Ed. students, the findings revealed that urban students demonstrated significantly higher scores in certain dimensions of moral values such as self-discipline and social values due to greater exposure to diverse social environments and formal ethical discussions. The study concluded that both urban and rural students possess moral values shaped by their respective sociocultural environments.

Research Gap

Although several studies have examined moral values among adolescents and teacher trainees, limited research has investigated differences in moral values among B.Ed. students considering only age and gender within the Tamil Nadu context.

Objectives of the Study

- To analyze the differences in Moral Values of B.Ed. students with respect to gender.
- To analyze the differences in Moral Values of B.Ed. students with respect to age.

Hypotheses of the Study

- H₀₁: There is no significant difference in Moral Values of B.Ed. students with respect to Gender.
- H₀₂: There is no significant difference in Moral Values of B.Ed. students with respect to age.

Methodology

The investigator conducted the study through survey method and the collected data was analysed for the differences in the mean scores and relationship between the variables. The population of the study is B.Ed., students. The data was collected from 250 B.Ed., students. The study focuses on examining Moral Values among B.Ed., students with respect to gender and age.

Tool Used

Moral Values Scale

The tool used for the study is Moral Values Scale developed and standardized by Anne A. Epsibai (2010). It is designed to measure the level of moral values among individuals. The scale consists of 38 items in total, with each item offering five response alternatives: Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree and Strongly Disagree.

Findings

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference in Moral Values of B.Ed. students with respect to Gender.

Table 1 Independent ‘t’ Test to Show the Significant Difference in the Mean Scores of Moral Values with Respect to Gender

Variables	Group	N	Mean	SD	t value	P value	LOS
Moral Values	Male	55	158.9	14.96	-3.7984	<0.001	S**
	Female	195	166.6	12.86			

Note: S - Significant at 0.05 level; S** - Significant at 0.01 level; NS – Not Significant*

The above table reveals that there is a significant difference in Moral Values among B.Ed. students with respect to gender, as the obtained t-value (-3.7984) is significant at the 0.001 level ($p < .001$). The mean scores indicate that female students (Mean = 166.6) possess higher Moral Values compared to male students (Mean = 158.9).

Hence the hypothesis stating that “There is no significant difference in Moral Values of B.Ed. students with respect to Gender” is rejected.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference in Moral Values of B.Ed. students with respect to Age.

Table 2 One Way ANOVA to Show the Significant Difference in the Mean Scores of Moral Values with Respect to Age

Variables	Age	N	Mean	ssb	ssw	F	df	P value	LOS
Moral Values	Below 25 years	178	165.3	1675	45075	4.591	2,247	0.011	S**
	25 to 30 years	47	160.4						
	Above 30 years	25	170.2						

Note: S - Significant at 0.05 level; S** - Significant at 0.01 level; NS – Not Significant*

The above table reveals that there is a significant difference in overall Moral Values among B.Ed. students with respect to age, as the obtained F-value (4.591) is significant at the 0.05 level ($p = 0.011$). The mean scores indicate that students above 30 years (Mean = 170.2) possess higher Moral Values compared to those between 25 and 30 years (Mean = 160.4) and those below 25 years (Mean = 165.3).

Hence the hypothesis stating that “There is no significant difference in Moral Values of B.Ed. students with respect to Age” is rejected.

Discussion

The present study found a statistically significant difference in the overall Moral Values of B.Ed. students with respect to gender ($t = -3.7984$, $p < .001$). This finding is supported by the study of Singh and Kaur (2018), which reported that female students exhibited higher moral values than their male counterparts, attributing this to the greater emphasis on value-based socialization in the upbringing of girls. The consistently higher scores of female students in social values and spiritual values suggest that gender-specific socialization patterns play a significant role in the internalization of moral values among teacher trainees.

The present study found a statistically significant difference in overall Moral Values among B.Ed. students with respect to age ($F = 4.591$, $p = 0.011$). This finding is supported by the study of Verma and Nair (2019), which reported that older teacher trainees demonstrated higher moral values, attributing this to greater life experience, maturity, and a deeper understanding of ethical responsibilities. The higher moral values observed among students above 30 years may reflect their broader life experiences, greater personal reflection, and stronger commitment to professional and ethical responsibilities.

Educational Implications

Teacher education has focused primarily on developing pedagogical knowledge and instructional skills. However, this study highlights the low to moderate levels of Moral Values among B.Ed. students, underscoring the need for a deliberate emphasis on character education in teacher training. Moral development is not incidental — it requires systematic cultivation through the curriculum.

The significant gender difference in Moral Values, with female students outperforming male students, suggests the need for gender-sensitive interventions in teacher education. The significant age-based differences in Moral Values suggest that older and more experienced students bring stronger moral frameworks into the teacher education programme. Institutions can leverage this diversity.

Conclusion

The study highlights the importance of examining moral values among prospective teachers using demographic characteristics such as age and gender. The study also reveals that gender and age emerge as key influencing factors for Moral Values. Students who possess stronger moral frameworks tend to demonstrate higher levels of social responsibility, interpersonal sensitivity, and cooperative behaviour — qualities that are fundamental to effective teaching. Understanding these differences will contribute to improving teacher preparation and promoting ethical professionalism in educational institutions.

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