

Value preferences of adolescents across gender

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Abstract

The study focused on the preference of values of adolescents for which a total of 300 samples comprising of 150 boys and girls each in the age group of 12-18 years were selected using random sampling technique from various Schools and Colleges of Allahabad District, Uttar Pradesh, India. Personal Value Questionnaire devised by Sherry and Verma (1998) was used to ascertain the personal values of the selected sample. The results revealed that adolescent boys preferred power values the most, followed by Economic values, democratic, social value, family prestige value, knowledge value, health value, religious values, aesthetic value and hedonistic values respectively. On the other hand religious values as well as economic values were given a similar weightage by the adolescent girls followed by family prestige values, democratic values, social values, power value, aesthetic values, knowledge values, health values and hedonistic values respectively. A highly significant gender difference in the religious values, aesthetic values and family prestige values was revealed wherein the girls were found to possess higher values as compared to their male counterparts. A highly significant gender variation in power values was observed wherein boys showed higher level of power values as compared to girls.

Keywords: Values, Adolescents, Gender, Personal Value

1. Introduction

Values are the guiding principles of life that contribute to the all-round development of an individual. Values affect priorities on various elements of life. Values are usually influenced by the changing philosophical ideologies, cultural and religious perspectives, social, political and geographical conditions. In modern emerging society, there has been a revolutionary change in the field of values due to many factors in addition to the influence of modern culture, industrialization, modernization, urbanization, globalization and presence of multinationals.

One of the most important developmental task during adolescence is identity formation and values play an important role in identity formation. The parental and societal values help them to take decisions and evolve a value system which helps adolescents develop a unique personality. Hence, It is important to study the value preferences of adolescents so as to understand their personality. A clear understanding of the various values of adolescent boys and girls will pave a way to promote better understanding and healthy

relationships, help adolescents make right choices in life, build integrity, listen to their own conscience, encourage them to help others, be independent, discern between right and wrong and give them the ability to figure out how to be happy in life.

2. Methodology

2.1 Locale of the study – Allahabad district was purposively selected to carry out the study.

2.2 Selection of Sample - A total of 300 samples comprising of 150 adolescent boys and an equal number of girls in the age group of 12-18 years were selected using random sampling technique from various Schools and Colleges of Allahabad District

2.3 Tools and Tests - To find out the values of today's youth, Personal Value Questionnaire devised by Sherry and Verma (1998) ⁽⁷⁾ was administered.

3. Results and Discussion

Table 1: Ranking of different values among adolescent boys and girls

Ranking	Adolescent Boys n=150		Adolescent Girls n=150	
	Values	Mean	Values	Mean
1 st	Power values	7.15	Religious values Economic values	7.11 7.11
2 nd	Economic values	7.09	Family prestige values	6.69
3 rd	Democratic values	6.61	Democratic values	6.47
4 th	Social values	6.21	Social values	6.34
5 th	Family prestige values	6.07	Power values	6.11
6 th	Knowledge values	6.00	Aesthetic values	6.08
7 th	Health values	5.36	Knowledge values	5.92
8 th	Religious values	5.30	Health values	5.49
9 th	Aesthetic values	4.89	Hedonistic values	4.55
10 th	Hedonistic values	4.67		

Table 1 represents the ranking of various values among adolescent boys and girls. The table depicts the gender differences in the preference of different values among adolescents. It is clear from the table that adolescent boys preferred power values (7.15) the most, followed by Economic values (7.09), democratic (6.61), social value (6.21), family prestige value (6.07), knowledge value (6.0), health value (5.36), religious values (5.30), aesthetic value

(4.89) and hedonistic values (4.67) respectively. On the other hand religious values as well as economic values are given a similar weightage i.e. 7.11 by the adolescent girls and are their most preferred values followed by family prestige values (6.69), democratic values (6.47), social values (6.34), power value (6.11), aesthetic values (6.08), knowledge values (5.92), health values (5.49) and hedonistic values (4.55) respectively

Table 2: Comparative analysis of values of adolescent boys and girls

Type of Values	Boys		Girls		t cal	P value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Religious Values	5.30	1.579	7.11	1.256	11.01**	.000
Social Values	6.21	1.392	6.34	1.541	0.788 NS	.432
Democratic Values	6.61	1.501	6.47	1.441	0.863 NS	.389
Aesthetic Values	4.89	1.324	6.08	1.298	7.883**	.000
Economic Values	7.09	1.336	7.11	1.179	0.183 NS	.855
Knowledge Values	6.00	1.511	5.92	1.179	0.511 NS	.609
Hedonistic Values	4.67	1.235	4.55	1.314	0.770 NS	.442
Power Values	7.15	1.128	6.11	1.291	7.479***	.000
Family Prestige Values	6.07	1.403	6.69	1.336	3.962***	.000
Health Values	5.36	1.392	5.49	1.278	0.821 NS	.412
Total Values	68.91		61.88	4.373	0.731 NS	.465

**Highly Significant
 *Significant
 NS Non Significant

Table 2 depicts the comparison among adolescent boys and girls regarding various values. The table shows that there exists a highly significant difference in the religious values of boys and girls (p=0.00) wherein the religious values of girls were found to be higher as compared to their male counterparts. This may be attributed to the differential upbringing of the boys and girls where girls are trained to have stronger personal commitment. Women are inclined to be more religious because they are more submissive, passive, obedient and nurturing than men. The results of the study were found to be in accordance with the study conducted by Lowenthal *et al.* (2001) [4] who revealed that women are more religious than men.

Table 2 also reveals a highly significant difference among boys and girls regarding their aesthetic values as the calculated value of t was found to be 7.888 which was significant at 1 per cent probability level indicating that girls have a higher aesthetic value as compared to the boys which may be due to the reason that girls have their interests vested in the appearance and beauty of things whereas males appreciate functionality more than the aesthetics. A study conducted by Natasha (2013) [5] revealed a non-significant difference between the aesthetic values of males and females although the mean values indicated that females had better aesthetic values as compared to their male counterparts.

A highly significant difference in the power values of boys and girls is seen in the data depicted in the above table (p=.000) wherein the power values among boys were higher than the power values of girls i.e. the boys prefer jobs where they get opportunities to exercise authority over others and are deeply status conscious and can do anything to maintain the prestige of their position in the society. This may be due to the fact that boys are taught to assume leadership roles and exert dominance whereas females are brought up with the understanding that they should place the needs of others over

their own and exert collaboration. The differential upbringing can thus be responsible for the higher power values among the boys.

Regarding family prestige values it is seen that there exists a highly significant difference between boys and girls (p=.000) wherein the family prestige values of girls are better (mean value=6.69) than the values of the boys (mean value=6.07). The results reveal that adolescents respect their families and are conservative in their outlook and respect the tradition of the family. The results of the study contradict the study conducted by Bhutia (2013) [1] which showed a non-significant difference between boys and girls in family prestige value at 0.05 level of significance.

The above table also depicts a non-significant difference between gender regarding their social values, democratic values, economic values, knowledge values, hedonistic values, health values and total personal values. The non-significant results may be due to the fact that nowadays both the sexes have equal type of opportunities. Moreover, improved literacy in India, especially of the female population has led to encouraging and motivational environment for females both at home and in educational institutions. Social and Economic justice are also being showered on the home and in educational front. Social and Economic justice are being given liberally to females without any prejudice. Due to women’s empowerment, today’s women are more confident, more secure and self-assured and less afraid of insecurity in society which might the cause of non-significant gender differences

4. Conclusion

Gender differences in the preference of different values among adolescents were clearly observed. The study assessed that the most preferred value among adolescent boys was power values whereas adolescent girls had preference for

religious and economic values compared to all other values. Hedonistic values was the least preferred by both adolescent girls and boys.

A highly significant difference among boys' and girls' regarding their religious values, aesthetic values and family prestige value was also found wherein girls had a higher religious values, aesthetic value and family prestige values as compared to the boys. A highly significant difference in the power values of boys and girls was seen wherein the power values among boys were higher than the power values of girls. A non-significant difference between gender regarding their social values, democratic values, economic values, knowledge values, hedonistic values, health values and total personal values.

5. References

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