A Study On Morality In Children In Relation To Their Age.

T SANTOSH

Research scholar, University College of Education,

Osmania University, Hyderabad-500007.

Abstract

The present investigation was undertaken to study the relation between morality and age amongst children. Data was collected from a sample of 300 students of the age group 9-10 years and 11-12 years from various government and public schools of Hyderabad through Moral Values Scale. The results showed that there is an improvement in the moral values as the children progress in age. The study indicates that as children mature with age their ability to reason at a higher moral level increase.

Keywords: Children, age, morality, relationship

Introduction

Throughout the history of humanity, there has been talk of teachings based on moral values, like truthfulness, compassion, tolerance, understanding etc. Psychologists, philosophers and educationists have often talked about the concept of moral values or moral development in children. The three stages of moral development as given by Kohlberg (1981) are also known to us.

The famous Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget has done a lot of work on moral values. His work primarily focused on the study of young children and their developmental process. He also tried to study the concept of morality in young children compared to the older ones. Piaget (1997) observed that young children are not able to form their own views of things from the perspective of others' viewpoint (Duska and Whelan, 1975). He found that young children often behaved well because of the fear of punishment. This attitude, he felt changes with maturity. Encouraged by the observations of Jean Piaget on the aspect of moral issues amongst children, a comparative study has been conducted on children between the age groups of 9-10 years and 11-12 years.

Discussion

Objective of the study

The objective of the study was to establish and critically evaluate the relation between morality and age.

Hypothesis of the study

On the basis of the objectives stated above, the research hypothesis:

• There is a significant difference between moral values of children between age groups of 9 – 10 years and 11-12 years; was formulated.

Delimitations of the study

Keeping in view the limited resources, finances, time, capacity and energies, the present problem was delimited as follows:

1. Only two types of schools were covered under the study viz. Govt. and Public schools.

2. Gender was considered to have no effect on the responses made by them.

3. All schools regardless of the region were considered at par in terms of infrastructure and socio-economic background of the students.

4. A limited sample was taken which cannot be generalised.

Sample

A random sample of three hundred students was drawn from the age group of 9-10 years and 11-12 years (150 each group). The sample comprised of 300 boys and girls in the aforesaid age groups from various government and public schools of Hyderabad.

The English version of the consumable booklet of Moral Values Scale (MVS) Gupta and Singh was used for this study. This scale consists of 36 items to be responded and is based on four factors i.e. Lying, Dishonesty, Stealing and Cheating. Analysis of data was carried out on the basis of the manual for the same scale.

Collection of data

The consumable booklets of MVS were given to a group of thirty students (mixed group of boys and girls). The time for the test was chosen to be between 10.00 – 11.00 A.M. The group of students taken at a time, belonged to a particular class. Government school students were covered first. After collecting the data of 150 students of the age group 9-10 years and 11-12 years, public schools were taken for data collection. The size of the group and the time of administering the test remained the same for both the types of schools. It was ensured that students were comfortable and the settings were as natural as possible. The students were asked to read the questions carefully and give their opinion by marking tick (√) either on yes/no answers. No question was however right or wrong.

Analysis of data

As per the MVS testing scale, two age groups had to be taken for collection of data. The age group of 9-10 years, has been named young group and the age group of 11-12 years has been referred to as Old group for the sake of convenience.

The items were analysed on the basis of the answer selected by the respondent. The choice of 'yes' was given 1 mark and the choice of 'no' was given 0 marks and the total marks obtained by each student was calculated. The data were then tabulated in class intervals and the frequency was computed. From this frequency, cumulative frequency was calculated.

On the basis of cumulative frequency, cumulative frequency percentage was obtained. This cumulative frequency percentage was then smoothened to iron out minor kinks and irregularities in the data. (Table 1 & 2)

Table 1:Young Group (9 – 10 years)

Class interval	Frequency	Cumulative frequency	Cumulative frequency % (CF x Rate)*	Smoothened cumulative frequency %
0 – 5	3	3	2.01	2.46
5 – 10	5	8	5.36	15.41
10 – 15	50	58	38.86	41.54
15 – 20	62	120	80.4	67.35
20 – 25	18	138	82.8	83.60
25 – 30	8	146	87.6	90.00
30 – 35	4	150	100	95.87
35 – 40	0	150	100	100

*Rate is calculated by the formula (1/N x 100). Therefore, the rate is 1/150 x 100 = 0.67

Table 2: Old Group (11 – 12 years)

Class interval	Frequency	Cumulative frequency	Cumulative frequency %	Smoothened cumulative frequency %
0 – 5	0	0	0	0
5 – 10	0	0	0	6.7
10 – 15	30	30	20.1	31.26
15 – 20	80	110	73.7	55.4
20 – 25	25	135	90.45	87.1
25 – 30	10	145	97.15	95.87
30 – 35	5	150	100	99.05
35 – 40	0	150	100	100

Percentile norms were then determined for percentile ranks on the basis of table 1 and 2. For example, by direct interpolation it is clear that 10th percentile for young group, lies 3.30% above 6.70%. Using simple proportion, the distance of the 10th percentile from 9 is 0.67 [(5 x 3.30)/ 24.56]. Therefore, the integral score of 10th percentile is 9 + 0.67 = 9.67. Likewise integral scores for the remaining percentile ranks were calculated for both young and old group.

Table 3: Percentile Norms

Percentile Rank	Young 9 - 10 yr N = 150 Integral Score	Old 11 - 12 yr N = 150 Integral Score
90	29	26
80	23	23
70	20	21
60	17	20
50	16	18
40	14	16
30	12	14
20	10	12
10	07	10

Table 4 was constructed on the basis on table 1 and 3 for young group. The integral score from table 3 of the young group was placed in the class intervals of table 1. For example, P90 has an integral score of 29, which falls in the class interval 25-30 of table 1. Hence P90 and above would include class interval 25 and above (25-40) with a frequency of 12.

Table 4: Young Group (9 – 10 years)

Percentile Rank	9 – 10 yr N = 150 Integral Score	Class Interval	Frequency
90 & Above	29	Above 25	12
70 – 89	20 & 23	20-25	18
50-69	17 & 16	15-20	62
30-49	14 & 12	10-15	50
29 and below	10 & 7	Below 10	8

Similarly Table 5 was constructed on the basis of table 2 and 3 for Old group. The integral score from table 3 of the old group was placed in the class intervals of table 2. For example, P90 has an integral score of 26, which falls in the class interval 25-30 of table 2. Hence P90 and above would include class interval 25 and above (25-40) with a frequency of 15.

Table 5: Old numbers (11-12 years)

Percentile Rank	11 – 12 yrs	Class Interval	Frequency
	N = 150		
	Integral Score		
90 & Above	26	Above 25	15
70 – 89	20 & 23	20 – 25	25
50-69	18 & 16	15 – 20	80
30-49	12 & 14	10 – 15	30
29 and below	10 & 7	Below 10	0

Interpretation of Data

The MVS booklet provides the following qualitative description on the basis of the obtained percentile ranks.

Percentile Rank	Description
P90 and above	Very High
P70 to 89	High
P50 to 69	Medium
P30 to 49	Low
P29 and below	Very Low

On the basis of the data collected and its analysis, following figures have emerged for interpretation.

Percentile Rank	9 – 10 yr	11– 12 yr
	N = 150	N = 150
	Frequency	Frequency
90 & Above	12	15
70 – 89	18	25
50-69	62	80
30-49	50	30
29 and below	8	0

From the above data it is obvious that:

- For percentile rank 90 and above, the frequency for 9 - 10 years and 11 – 12 years is 12 and 15 respectively.
- For percentile rank 70 – 89, the frequency for 9 - 10 years and 11 - 12 years is 18 and 25 respectively.
- For percentile rank 50 – 69, the frequency for 9 – 10 years and 11 – 12 years is 62 and 80.
- For percentile rank 30 – 49, the frequency for 9 – 10 years and 11 – 12 years is 50 and 30.
- Percentile ranks 29 and below has the frequency of 8 and 0 for 9 – 11 years and 11 – 12 years respectively.

It is evident from the above data that maximum number of students in the 9 – 10 years and 11 – 12-year age group fall in the percentile rank range of 50 to 69 i.e. the medium moral value level.

The second highest in this regard is in the percentile range 30-49 i.e. Low moral value level. The least number of students from both the age groups fall in the percentile rank range of 29 and below, indicating very Low moral value level.

As we observe the data, it appears that in the age group 9-10 years, maximum students lie between medium and low moral value level, with as many as 60 students in the medium moral value level. As the students' progress in age, their morality increases, which is indicated by the number of students in the 11-12 years age group moving towards the medium moral value level i.e. 80. There is also an increase in the number of

students falling in the high and very high moral value category in the 11-12 years age group as against the 9-10 years age bracket.

Conclusion

After the analysis of data, the hypothesis has been retained as a significant difference has been found between the moral values of the two age groups under study. It indicates that there is an improvement in the moral values as the children progress in age. As they mature, they gain awareness about what morally one ought to do. It is evident through the study that there is a significant difference in the level of moral values of children of the age group 11-12 years as compared to the 9-10 years.

The findings stay consistent with research in the area of moral values and education levels. The study shows that as children mature with age their ability to reason at a higher moral level increase.

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