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A Study on Moral Values and Self-Concept among higher secondary students in Chennai district.

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Abstract: The present study explores the moral values and self-concept of higher secondary students in Chennai District. The study aims to assess the levels of moral values and self-concept among students and to examine whether significant differences exist with respect to gender. It also explores the relationship between moral values and self-concept. A descriptive survey method was adopted for the study. The sample consisted of 300 higher secondary students selected through stratified random sampling from Government, Government-Aided and Private schools in Chennai District. Data were collected using the Moral Values Questionnaire developed by AlpanaSen Gupta and Arun Kumar Singh and the Self-Concept Questionnaire developed by Dr. R. K. Saraswat. The study employed descriptive, differential and relational statistical techniques for data analysis. The findings revealed that the majority of students possessed a moderate level of moral values (70.33%) and self-concept (65.33%). Significant differences were observed in moral values with respect to gender. Self-concept showed no significant differences in gender. Furthermore, a positive and significant relationship was found between moral values and self-concept among higher secondary students.

Keywords: Moral Values, Self-Concept, Higher Secondary Students, Adolescents, Value Education and School Education.

Introduction

Moral values and self-concept are essential components of students' overall personality and play a significant role in their academic, social and emotional development. Moral values help students develop ethical behavior, responsibility and respect for others, while a positive self-concept enhances confidence, motivation, and academic achievement. The higher secondary stage is a crucial period during which adolescents experience significant physical, emotional, and psychological changes that influence these qualities. Therefore, the present study examines the moral values and self-concept of higher secondary students in Chennai District and explores the relationship between these two variables to provide insights for improving value-based education and students' holistic development.

Need and significance of the study

In today's rapidly changing world, materialistic attitudes and unhealthy competition are weakening the moral and ethical values of adolescents. At the same time, a positive self-concept plays a vital role in shaping students' behaviour, confidence and overall development. Therefore, studying the relationship between moral values and self-concept is essential for promoting the holistic development of higher secondary students. This study, conducted among higher secondary students in Chennai District, aims to provide valuable insights for educators, parents, and policymakers to strengthen value-based education and foster responsible, confident and ethical citizens.

Review of related literature

Berkowitz and Bier (2005) reported that effective moral education programmes meaningfully improve students' ethical behavior, social responsibility and character development. The study insists that schools play an important role in promoting moral values among adolescents. Marsh and Craven (2006) found that self-concept is a strong predictor of students' academic achievement, motivation, and psychological well-being. Students with a positive self-concept demonstrated higher confidence and better academic performance. Saraswat (1984), the developer of the Self-Concept Questionnaire, stated that self-concept comprises multiple dimensions, including physical, social, intellectual, moral, educational and temperamental aspects, all of which influence an individual's personality and adjustment. Gupta and Singh (1984) developed the Moral Values Questionnaire to assess the moral values of adolescents. Their study highlighted that moral values can be measured effectively and are influenced by educational and social environments. The present review indicates that although several studies have independently examined moral values and self-concept, relatively few have investigated the relationship between these two variables among higher secondary students in Chennai District. Therefore, the present study attempts to examine the levels of moral values and self-concept and explore their relationship among higher secondary students.

Operational definitions of terms

Moral Values

Principles and standards which determine the extent to which human action or conduct is right or wrong are moral values. In this study, a moral value of the subject is determined by the scores obtained by him/her in the Moral Values Questionnaire.

Self-Concept

Self-Concepts are the individual's way of looking at himself. It also signifies his way of thinking, feeling and behaving.

Objectives of the study

- To find out the level of Moral Values and Self-Concept among higher secondary students.
- To find out significant difference between higher secondary students Moral Values based on their Gender.
- To find out significant difference between higher secondary students Self-Concept based on their Gender.
- To find out significant relationship between Moral Values and Self-Concept of higher secondary students.

Hypotheses of the study

- The level of Moral Values and Self-Concept among higher secondary students is Moderate in nature.
- There is no significant difference between higher secondary students Moral Values based on their Gender.
- There is no significant difference between higher secondary students Self-Concept based on their Gender.
- There is no significant relationship between Moral Values and Self-Concept of higher secondary students.

Methodology of the study

The investigator used the normative survey method.

Population and sample of the study

The population of the present study comprised all higher secondary students studying in government, government-aided and private higher secondary students in Chennai District, Tamil Nadu. A sample of 300 higher secondary students was selected from government, government-aided and private higher secondary students in Chennai District using the Simple Random Sampling Technique.

Tool used in the study

1. Moral Values Questionnaire constructed and standardized by Jaffna Sen Gupta and Arun Kumar Singh
2. Self-Concept Questionnaire constructed and standardized by Dr. R.K. Saraswat

Data analysis and interpretation

Null Hypothesis-1

The level of Moral Values and Self-Concept among higher secondary students is Moderate in nature.

Table 1 showing the frequency and percentage for the variable Moral Values and Self-Concept among the higher secondary students

Variable	No. of samples	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Moral Values	300	Low	16	5.33%
		Moderate	211	70.33%
		High	73	24.33%
Self-Concept	300	Low	48	16.00%
		Moderate	196	65.33%
		High	56	18.66%

From the above table, it is clear that most of the higher secondary students are moderately Moral Values and Self-concept. Specifically, 5.33% of students are at low level of Moral Values, 24.33% at high and a major of 70.33% at moderate, which shows that overall, the Moral values of students is moderate. The same thing when it comes to Self-concept, as 16.00% of students are classified at the low level, 18.66% are classified at the high level and the majority 65.33% at the moderate level. Thus, it is concluded that the overall Moral Values and Self-concept of the higher secondary students were mainly moderate.

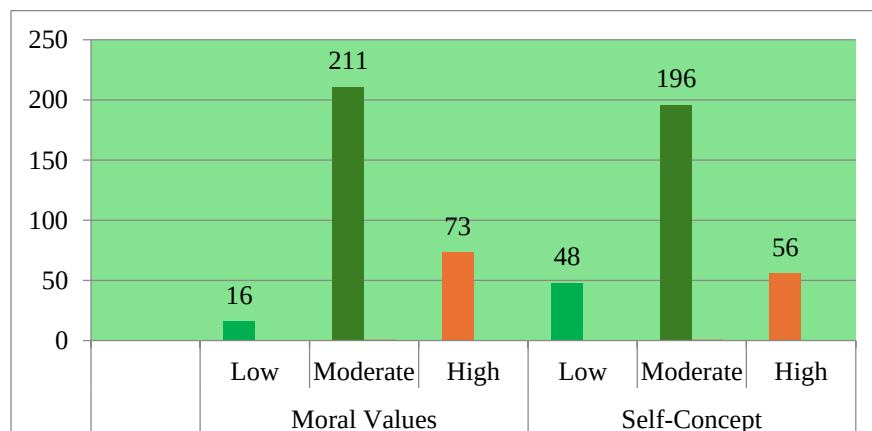


Figure 1 showing the frequency of the variable Moral values and Self-concept among the higher secondary students

Null Hypothesis-2

There is no significant difference in the Moral values of higher secondary students with respect to Gender.

Table 2 shows the significant difference in Moral values between male and female higher secondary students based on their mean scores.

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t - value	L.S
Moral values	Male	150	13.37	3.486	4.458	0.01
	Female	150	15.15	3.456		

From the above table, it is inferred that t- value (4.458) is greater than the table value (2.58) at 0.01 level. Hence there is a significance difference between Male and Female higher secondary students on their Moral Values mean scores. Therefore the above null hypothesis is rejected.

Null Hypothesis-3

There is no significant difference in the self-concept of higher secondary students with respect to Gender.

Table 3 shows the significant difference between the male and female of higher secondary students with respect to self-concept using mean scores

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t - value	L.S
Self-concept	Male	150	25.56	11.313	1.760	NS
	Female	150	23.49	8.952		

From the above table, it is inferred that t- value (1.760) is lesser than the table value (1.96) at 0.05 level. Hence there is no significance difference between Male and Female higher secondary students on their Self-Concept mean scores. Therefore the above null hypothesis is accepted.

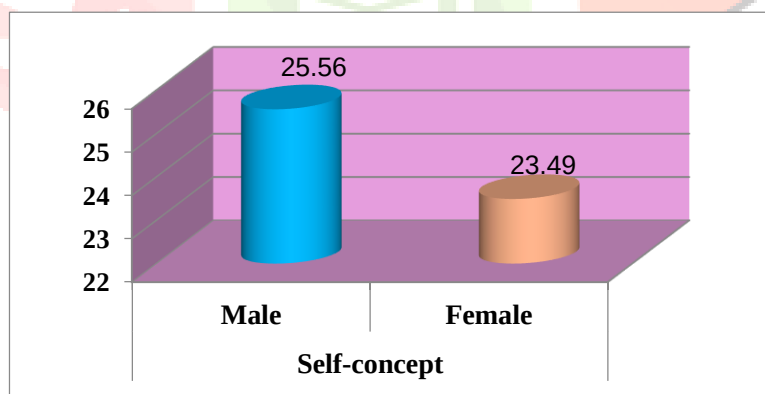


Figure 2 showing difference between the male and female of higher secondary students with respect to self-concept using mean scores

Null Hypothesis-4

There is no significant relationship between Moral values and Self-concept of higher secondary students.

Table 4 showing the relationship between the Moral values and Self-Concept of higher secondary students

Variable	Number	Correlation
Moral Values Vs Self-concept	300	0.639

From the above table, it is observed that there is a positive relationship between Moral Values and Self-Concept of higher secondary students. Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. There exists a positive relationship among these two groups.

Major findings of the study

- The study found that 70.33% of higher secondary students have a moderate level of Moral values, while 24.33% have a high level and 5.33% have a low level. Hence, the overall level of Moral values among higher secondary students is moderate.
- The study found that 65.33% of higher secondary students have a moderate level of Self-concept, while 18.66% have a high level and 16.00% have a low level. Hence, the overall level of Self-concept among higher secondary students is moderate.
- It is found that there exists a significant difference between the Male and Female of higher secondary students with regard to their Moral values.
- It is found that there is no significant difference between the Male and Female of higher secondary students with regard to their Self-concept.
- It is found that there exists a positive relationship between Moral values and Self-concept of higher secondary students.

Conclusion

The findings of the present study indicate that the majority of higher secondary students possess a moderate level of Moral values and Self-Concept. The results showed that there is a significant difference between the Moral values scores of male and female students while there is no significant difference between the scores of the male and female students in Self-concept. Based on the above, it is suggested that Moral values should be cultivated in the educational system through proper education practices, guidance and counseling programme in order to improve students' Self-concept performance. Hence, it is recommended that schools, teachers and parents collaborate to foster student's Moral values and Self-concept growth, potentially influencing educational results and well-being.

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