

VALUES OF ADOLESCENT GIRLS: A CROSS CULTURAL STUDY

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*"Values are concepts that conserve, comfort, promote and protect life.**They foster peace, order, dignity, beauty, grace and light, revealing the divine side of man."***Abstract**

A value is a belief, a mission, or a philosophy that is meaningful. Whether one is consciously aware of them or not, every individual has a core set of personal values. Values can range from the commonplace, such as the belief in hard work and punctuality, to the more psychological, such as self reliance, concern for others and harmony of purpose, (John 2009). Values are the nexus to future progress. It is the call of the Divine to the minds of men to seek a better life to pursue ultimate delight and fulfilment in life, (Momen, 2009). The present study was formulated to investigate the values of adolescent girls of Imphal West of Manipur and Coimbatore city of Tamil Nadu to see the differential pattern in values. By looking at people from different culture and ethnic groups, researchers can learn which aspects of development are universal and are culturally determined, (Papalia et al 2007). Explore and compare the values of the selected girls of Imphal west and Coimbatore city in relation to selected variables was the objectives of the research.

Keywords: *values, adolescence, adolescent girls, cross cultural study*

The world is passing through great crises in almost all spheres of life. Social living in today's changing trends, which is marked by tremendous scientific and technological advancement, has resulted in an explosion of aspiration for achieving material goals. Globalization has brought an upheaval in the economic scenario world wide. These, in turn, have brought about a corresponding decline in human's moral, spiritual and ethical values creating many problems, tension, conflict, competition, social distance, alienation and rivalries. These are nothing but manifestation of violence of one form or the other. In short materialization is the keyword among new attitudes to life and living. The changes in lifestyles, family patterns and environments as a result of industrialization, urbanization and modernization have contributed to the growth of delinquency rates as to become a cause of concern.

Today, India is also in the grip of octopuses of problems to its neck. The whole country is experiencing a massive erosion of values, Chenera,(2009). Das (2009) is of the opinion that modern civilization is becoming increasingly more materialistic, socially-insensitive and disoriented. Now-a-days newspaper, magazines, and other channel of media are flooded with reports of crimes, murder, agitation, eve-teasing, disputes between parents and children, teacher and students, husband, wife and in-laws are not rare anymore. Incidence of violence, destruction, killing each other in the name of insurgency, strikes and lock-out are becoming more and more common. These entire occurrences indicate the deterioration in environments, ethical standards, moral and social values and their aspiration for acquisition of more power that is money and more money by fair means or foul.

Methodology: The research conducted at Imphal West of Manipur and Coimbatore city of Tamilnadu was selected purposively. Two girls higher secondary of Imphal West and Sri Avinashilingam Girls Higher Secondary School were selected based on purposive sampling techniques. A sampling frame was developed with the strengths

of the girls student with the age of 13-17 years from class viii, ix, x & xii. From this sampling frame, selection of the sample was done based on simple random technique. A sample of 400 was selected from each state to trace out the values of the selected girls. Hence, a total of 800 samples were selected as the sample of the study. Personal Value Questionnaire (PVQ) developed by G.P. Sherry and Verma was used to assess the personal values of the selected girls. It consists of 40 questions with 10 kinds of values having an equal number of 12 items for each value. For the scoring 2 marks were given for showing the most preferred value, 0 for a cross showing the least preferred value and 1 for the blank or unmarked items showing the intermediate preference for the value.

Result and discussion

The results of the study on, "Values of Adolescent Girls: A Cross Cultural Study" are discussed on the following headings.

A. Personal profile of the selected girls; B. Personal values of the selected girls; C. Values of the selected girls in relation to selected socio demographic variables

A. Personal profile of the selected girls

The family background information of the sample is an important variable in any research as it helps to understand clearly the diverse factors that affect an individual. Hence the general background information of the selected girls was probed into and shown in the below given Table 1.

Table 1 Personal Profile Of The Selected Girls

Particulars		Coimbatore		Imphal west	
		No = 400	%	No = 400	%
Age	13 – 15 Yrs	220	55	169	42
	16 - 17 Yrs	180	45	231	48
	Total	400	100	400	100
Type of family	Joint	116	29	147	38
	Nuclear	284	71	253	63
	Total	400	100	400	100
Income	Economically weaker (<= 3300)	43	11	94	24
	Low (3301 – 7300)	227	57	125	31
	Middle (7300- 14,500)	93	23	87	22
	High (> 14,500)	37	9	94	24
	Total	400	100	400	100
Place of residence	Urban	285	71	212	53
	Rural	115	29	188	47
	Total	400	100	400	100

From the above table it is understood that 42 percent and 55 percent of the girls of Imphal west and Coimbatore respectively are in the age range of 13-15 years, the others belonged to the age group of 16-17 years. Regarding family structure, it is traced out that majority of the sample of both places (63 percent of Imphal west and 71 percent of Coimbatore) stayed in nuclear families which is the outcome of societal change due to modernization and urbanization. The rest belonged to joint families. It implies that traditional culture of living in joint and extended families was slowly but definitely declining and with that the support system within family for adolescents was ultimately diminishing. This finding supports the view of Mishra (2008) that over the years, the family structure has changed, nuclear families are replacing the joint families which is also evident from the sample of the present study. This emphasized the need

for strengthening good home environment to counteract negative influences of other forces such as peers, media etc (Whitaker and Miller,2000). As far as the locality is concerned 53 and 71 percent of the selected girls of Imphal west and Coimbatore respectively are living in urban areas.

According to Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO,2008), economically weaker section are those whose income is less than Rs 3300, low income group ranges between Rs 3301 to Rs 7300 and middle income group is between the range of Rs 73001 to Rs 14500. Income which falls above Rs 14500 is high income group. A higher percentage of the sample of 57 percent of Coimbatore and 31 percent of Imphal west area belonged to low income group, while 23 percent of girls of Imphal west and 22 percent of Coimbatore were from the families of middle income group. A smaller percent of 11 percent of Coimbatore and 24 percent from Imphal west belonged to economically weaker income group. Rests of the sample were from families of high income group for both areas.

B. Comparison of personal values(VE) of the selected girls

Values are universal principles or ideals that are implicitly accepts as quality for action. In order to find the values of the selected adolescent girls, data was collected and presented in Table 2.

Table 2 Comparison Of Personal Values (Pv) Of The Selected Girls

Kinds of values	Coimbatore (N : 400)		Imphal west (N : 400)		't' value
	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	
Religious	11.35	2.72	11.72	3.63	1.621 ^{NS}
Social	12.13	3.05	12.85	3.87	2.950**
Democratic	15.43	3.19	15.07	3.23	1.617 ^{NS}
Aesthetic	13.38	2.95	11.88	3.13	6.998**
Economic	12.13	2.88	10.57	3.33	7.705**
Knowledge	13.43	3.14	14.21	3.45	3.345**
Hedonistic	11.94	2.86	10.64	3.06	6.225**
Power	9.76	3.06	9.99	2.77	1.126 ^{NS}
Family prestige	11.84	3.53	11.50	3.25	1.418 ^{NS}
Health	10.25	2.86	13.09	3.19	13.260**

*: Significant at 5% level; **: Significant at 1 % level; NS: Not significant

The above given table projects the kinds of values which are such as religious, social, democratic, aesthetic, economic, knowledge, hedonistic, power, family prestige, and health value, which are given in the personal value questionnaire, the mean scores obtained by the selected girls of both the areas and 't' value. Of the 10 values enlisted in the table the selected girls of Coimbatore secured higher mean scores for aesthetic, economic and hedonistic values than their counterparts from Imphal west. This implies that the girls of Coimbatore scored higher mean scores for aesthetic value in terms of the cleanliness of the place, has articles of latest model for drawing room decoration, considers the fine arts that create aesthetic ideas and spend vacation by decorating the flower garden or completing a literary competition. The mean scores of the selected girls of Coimbatore and Imphal west were 13.38 and 11.88 respectively, with 't' value of 6.998 denoting the significance at one per cent level indicating that Coimbatore girls place a high provision for art and more interested in the aesthetic aspects of life than girls of Imphal west.

Opportunity to earn a lot of money, keeping a personal assistant who is a very needy person and education for earning livelihood are the components of economic value,

for which the selected Coimbatore girls' mean scores were 12.13 and 10.57 by the girls of Imphal west. This difference was statistically significant with 't' value 7.075 at one per cent level. It can be inferred as Coimbatore is regarded as industrially rich district, it can be concluded that one's economic value is very much related to environment. For hedonistic value also girls of Coimbatore had the mean scores as 11.94 whereas their counterparts scored 10.64, which implied the difference significant at one per cent level. Similar to aesthetic and economic values, hedonistic value also was given more importance by the girls of Coimbatore, which means being a modernized city, Coimbatoreans had given priority for the fulfilment of the personal desires and were more pleasure loving persons. The urbanized living style of Coimbatore would have influenced the young girls to choose these aspects, on the other hand, Imphal west being an agriculture based one, less importance would have been given by those girls. It is a surprise to find that girls of Imphal west secured higher mean scores for social, knowledge and health values. Considering the welfare of the friend, offering food with love, regarding the persons who help needy persons, not troubling others, and fruitful labour are the features of social value. The results indicate in respect of social value, the 't' value (2.960) was statistically significant at one per cent level, that denotes the girls of Imphal west were giving weightage to the above mentioned values. Regarding knowledge value the Imphal west girls obtained higher mean scores (14.21) than Coimbatore girls (13.43). The 't' value (3.345) was highly significant at one percent level revealing that both the groups have dissimilarity in knowledge value. It means that Imphal west girls were more inclined towards wanting to know more, explore theoretical principles of any activity and love for discovery of truth. With regard to health value significant difference exist among the two groups at one per cent level as the 't' value was found to be 13.260. On this basis it can be said that Imphal west girls were more health conscious than their counterparts at Coimbatore.

There was no significant difference between Imphal west and Coimbatore on religious, democratic, power and family prestige values. Devotion to God, fear of punishment by God, firm belief in his /her religion, worshipping or meditating God, belief that God is omnipotent and fear of religion are few of the components of religious value as per personal value. Girls of both the areas obtained more or less similar mean scores revealing that all the selected girls of this research irrespective of the areas were possessing similar religious value. Girls of both the areas had given weightage to treating all people equally, all castes equally, ensuring equal rights to all and denies discrimination among caste, colour, religion and language, which is ultimately stated as democratic value. The difference in mean scores obtained by the girls of both the groups was just 0.36. Hence it is not statistically significant. With concerned to power and family prestige values as the 't' values were 1.126 and 1.418 respectively proved its insignificance. Regarding family prestige value, Coimbatore girls acquired higher mean scores of 11.84 compared to girls of Imphal west with mean values of 11.50. This indicates that Coimbatore girls were very much concerned about family prestige and put more emphasis on aspects of family prestige value showing difference of some degree.

C. Values of the selected girls in relation to selected socio demographic variables

C.1 Personal values of the selected girls in relation to age groups

School children with different age groups varied in their values (Verma, 1990). Studies have proved the significance of age in value development. For value inculcation early

adolescent is most important (Rekha, 2008). Hence it was felt necessary to trace out the value pattern and variation during two age groups i.e., 13-15 and 16-17.

Table 3 Personal Values Of The Selected Girls In Relation To Age Groups

Kinds of values	Coimbatore					Imphal west				
	13 – 15 (N : 220)		16 – 17 (N : 180)		't' value	13 – 15 (N : 169)		16 – 17 (N : 231)		't' value
	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D		Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	
	Age (years)									
Religious	11.36	2.67	11.34	2.77	0.074 ^{NS}	11.74	3.72	11.70	3.57	2.871 ^{NS}
Social	11.77	3.10	12.56	2.94	2.604 ^{**}	13.50	3.88	12.38	3.81	2.8971 ^{**}
Democratic	15.45	3.18	15.42	3.22	0.090 ^{NS}	14.79	3.13	15.26	3.29	3.29 ^{NS}
Aesthetic	13.24	2.94	13.56	2.96	1.076 ^{NS}	12.12	3.28	11.69	3.01	1.364 ^{NS}
Economic	12.24	3.02	11.99	2.71	0.870 ^{NS}	10.67	3.36	10.49	3.31	0.537 ^{NS}
Knowledge	13.36	3.13	13.51	3.16	0.481 ^{NS}	13.85	3.47	14.47	3.41	1.797 ^{NS}
Hedonistic	11.95	2.50	11.92	3.26	0.112 ^{NS}	10.34	3.10	10.85	3.03	1.667 ^{NS}
Power	9.65	3.00	9.89	3.13	0.780 ^{NS}	10.12	2.74	9.90	2.80	0.797 ^{NS}
Family prestige	11.20	3.38	12.62	3.55	4.105 ^{**}	11.60	3.60	11.42	2.97	0.558 ^{NS}
Health	10.00	2.51	10.57	3.22	1.994 [*]	12.92	3.41	13.22	3.01	0.941 ^{NS}

* : Significant at 5% level; ** : Significant at 1 % level; NS : Not significant

A close review of the table reveals that only social value, family prestige value and health values came out to be significant for Coimbatore girls of 13-15 years and 16-17 years age group; while social value was the only significant value, among the ten different values for Imphal west girls. One striking and interesting findings of this study was that 't' value for social value was 2.604 for Coimbatore sample with 16-17 age group getting a higher mean scores (M : 12.56) compared to 13-15 years (M : 1.77) ; while the 't' value was 2.871 for Imphal west girls of 13-15 years who obtained higher mean scores of 13.50 against the mean scores of 12.38 of 16-17 years age group. The 't' value of both the areas were significant at one per cent level. From this it can be opined that what is true or prevalent in one culture may not be accountable for another culture. Further studies can be conducted to explore the factors responsible for such differentiation among the age groups for social value as it is an important tool for social development of the individual and society.

Further, 't' value of family prestige value for Coimbatore girls was 4.105 significant at one per cent level among the age groups but no significant difference was observed for Imphal west adolescent girls as the 't' values was found to be .558 which was insignificant. This indicated that girls of Coimbatore have more family prestige value compared to Imphal west girls. Adolescent girls of 16-17 years scored higher mean scores of (12.62) compared to 13-15 age group (11.20) indicating that late adolescent girls had more concern of their family and its prestige. This might be due to their more mature thinking abilities and experience of outer world as they are on the threshold of adulthood. On the other hand girls of Imphal west of 13-15 age group obtained higher mean scores of 11.60 against the mean scores of 11.42 of 16-17 age group though not significantly proved.

A significant difference was also prevailed for health value with 't' value of 1.994 significant at five per cent level with 16 -17 year age group getting higher mean scores of 10.57 against mean scores of 10.00 for 13-15 years age group. This implies that as it was in family prestige value, the late adolescent girls obtained higher health value and very conscious of their health. But no significant difference was observed for Imphal

west girls as the 't' value was statistically insignificant but the mean scores highlighted that as it was in Coimbatore sample that 16-17 age group scored a higher mean scores of 13.22 compared to 13-15 age group's mean scores of 12.92 indicating that 16-17 age group girls were very much concerned about their health in their life. It can be concluded that variation exist among the age group of Coimbatore girls in social, family prestige and power values while there was variation in social value for Imphal west girls of 13-15 years and 16-17 years age groups. In other values there was no variation among these two age groups of both areas as the statistic analysis of 't' value prove to be insignificant. The finding reveals that girls from Coimbatore were more sensible with family prestige value.

C.2. Area of residence and personal values of the selected girls

Table 4 displays the personal values of the selected adolescent girls in relation to area of residence.

Table 4 Area Of Residence And Personal Values Of The Selected Girls

Kinds of value	Coimbatore					Imphal west				
	Place of residence									
	Urban (N=285)		Rural (N=115)		't' value	Urban (N=212)		Rural (N=188)		't' value
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	
Religious	11.44	2.51	11.14	3.18	0.986 ^{NS}	11.64	3.55	11.81	3.73	0.471 ^{NS}
Social	11.84	3.10	12.84	2.82	3.021 ^{**}	12.80	3.84	12.91	3.92	0.303 ^{NS}
Democratic	15.54	3.12	15.17	3.38	1.063 ^{NS}	14.87	3.14	15.29	3.33	1.296 ^{NS}
Aesthetic	13.24	2.92	13.74	3.02	1.549 ^{NS}	11.63	3.26	12.15	2.96	1.652 ^{NS}
Economic	12.15	2.91	12.06	2.81	0.293 ^{NS}	10.86	3.11	10.24	3.54	1.876 ^{NS}
Knowledge	13.43	3.09	13.42	3.28	0.041 ^{NS}	13.86	3.39	14.60	3.48	2.159 [*]
Hedonistic	11.95	2.84	11.91	2.93	0.119 ^{NS}	10.40	3.14	10.90	2.96	1.659 ^{NS}
Power	9.48	3.09	10.45	2.87	2.891 ^{**}	10.00	2.70	9.99	2.86	0.002 ^{NS}
Family prestige	11.66	3.58	12.29	3.38	1.622 ^{NS}	11.69	3.31	11.28	3.18	1.282
Health	9.92	2.69	11.09	3.10	3.766 ^{**}	13.15	3.24	13.03	3.14	0.358 ^{NS}

* : Significant at 5% level ** : Significant at 1 % level NS : Not significant

The study reveals that among the girls of both areas there was no significant difference for the religious, democratic, aesthetic, economic, knowledge and hedonistic values between the adolescent girls of rural and urban areas. For Coimbatore girls living in rural and urban areas significant difference was observed for social, power and health values; the 't' values were 3.021, 2.891 and 3.766 respectively which were significant at one per cent level with rural girls getting higher mean scores. Imphal west girls residing in urban areas also got higher mean scores in power and health values but rural girls obtained higher mean scores in social value. This signifies that rural girls were more inclined towards social value. The rational thinking, more adjustment abilities, more favorable social life and less competitive feeling in their social environment might have played a role for more social value. Environment might have played a role for higher scores for social value. This finding is in consonance with the finding of Verma et al (1993) whose study revealed difference in social values between rural and urban found in favour of rural inhabitation. It may be due to the fact that rural environment is not predominated by indoctrinations, modernization and materialism. For Imphal west sample a significant difference was observed for knowledge value. The calculated 't' value was 2.15 with mean scores of 14.60 for rural girls whereas it was 13.86 for urban girls. Concerning power and health

values for both areas, the difference in the mean scores of rural and urban areas is understandable. From this, it can be assumed that a big gap and diversity is still prevalent between rural and urban areas. This might have tended for the variation scores in health and power value.

C.3. Comparison of personal values of the selected girls based on type of family

Family influences one's values and behaviour throughout life and helps in the transmission of culture. Value got transmitted from older generation to younger generation. Types of family have more contribution to make value transmission. Hence an attempt was made to assess and compare the values of girls hailed from joint and nuclear families.

Table 5 Comparison Of Personal Values Of The Selected Girls Based On Type Of Family

Kinds of value	Coimbatore					Imphal west				
	Type of family									
	Joint		Nuclear		‘t’ value	Joint		Nuclear		‘t’ value
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	
Religious	11.84	3.02	11.15	2.56	2.341*	11.82	3.06	11.66	3.93	0.414
Social	13.14	3.14	11.71	2.92	4.336**	12.74	4.17	12.92	3.70	0.436 ^{NS}
Democratic	15.69	2.94	15.33	3.29	1.029 ^{NS}	14.61	3.26	15.33	3.19	2.145*
Aesthetic	14.03	3.13	13.11	2.84	2.860**	11.68	3.01	11.99	3.20	0.948 ^{NS}
Economic	12.50	2.87	11.98	2.88	1.656 ^{NS}	10.10	3.12	10.84	3.42	2.153*
Knowledge	14.03	3.20	13.18	3.09	2.451*	14.39	3.42	14.10	3.47	0.796 ^{NS}
Hedonistic	12.56	3.07	11.69	2.74	2.793**	11.24	2.81	10.28	3.15	3.068**
Power	10.47	3.33	9.48	2.90	2.967**	10.25	2.56	9.85	2.88	1.413 ^{NS}
Family prestige	12.75	3.87	11.46	3.31	3.349**	11.61	3.11	11.43	3.33	0.538 ^{NS}
Health	11.45	3.22	9.76	2.55	5.538**	13.09	3.36	13.09	3.09	0.019 ^{NS}

* : Significant at 5% level; ** : Significant at 1 % level; NS : Not significant

It is very alarming to observe that girls of joint families of both places preferred and obtained more hedonistic value scores which are highly significant at one per cent level. This shows that girls of joint families have a tendency to seek and enjoy more pleasurable things in life compared to those from nuclear families, which is not a healthy trend. This may be outcome of exposure to different channels of media. Hence parents and teachers should give serious attention to this trend prevailing among girls in joint families as this might lead to serious behaviour problems. A significant difference was also exhibited in religious and knowledge values which are significant at five per cent levels for Coimbatore girls while it was insignificant for Imphal west girls. It is also highlighted that ‘t’ values for social (4.336), aesthetic (2.860), power (2.967), family prestige (3.349) and health (5.538) values were statistically significant at one per cent level for Coimbatore girls. This result is in line with the finding of Bahadur and Dhawan (2008) that family structure affects children's social value. Contrasting to this finding, the ‘t’ value was insignificant for Imphal west adolescent girls of joint and nuclear families in religious, social, aesthetic, knowledge, power, family prestige and health values. But significant difference was observed in democratic and economic values which were significant at five per cent level respectively. This shows that there was a significant difference with girls of nuclear families getting higher mean scores. From the above findings it can be concluded that a wide disparity prevailed among the girls of joint and nuclear families of Coimbatore as significant difference existed in all kinds of values except democratic and economic values. But such wide disparity did not exist among girls of joint and nuclear families of Imphal west.

Conclusion

The study revealed that significant difference exist between Coimbatore and Imphal west girls on social, aesthetic, economic, knowledge, hedonistic and health values which is significant at one percent level. This implies that significant variation exist among the girls of both areas. The findings also shows that social, family prestige and health values come out to be significant at one percent level for Coimbatore girls between 13-15 and 16-17 age groups while social value was the only significant value among the ten different values for Imphal west girls indicating that these two age groups of both areas do not differ much. No significant difference was observed between rural and urban girls in other kinds of values except social, power and health for Coimbatore and knowledge value for Imphal west girls. Significant difference was observed in religious, social, aesthetic, knowledge, hedonistic, power, family prestige and health values between girls of joint and nuclear families. For Imphal west girls only for democratic and economic values significance difference exist.

A nation is great by the quality of the value possession of its citizens and not by their numbers. Providing right type of environments for proper value acquisition and imparting value education is the pre requisite for development in every aspect of life. So it is high time that parents, teachers and all segments of the populations to work towards these goals.

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