

Investigate the Relationship between Moral Judgment and Behavioral Problems among Early Adolescents.

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Abstract

The study was designed to investigate the relationship between Moral Judgment and Behavioral Problems among Early Adolescents. The study was correlational in nature and 200 sample comprising of 100 (males) and 100 (females) of age range 12/13-15 were taken from Azad Jammu Kashmir district sudhnoti. Two measures (Comunian, 2004) and (Achenbach & Edelbrock, 1991) were used. The present study was designed to find out the relationship between the level of Moral Judgment and Behavioral Problems among early adolescents. The main purpose was to determine the correlation between Behavioral problems and moral judgment. The study might be helpful for the adolescence and for their caregiver. Additionally, it gave information for the parents of adolescence to control poor moral judgment and behavioral problems they suffer. Furthermore it provided useful information regarding way to build a positive outlook on life and knowing the importance of believing the potentials and abilities among adolescence. It's also beneficial for youth in this way that it may definitely give awareness about them as how to minimize behavioral problems and poor moral judgment and how to behave according to society.

KEY WORDS: Moral Judgment, Behavioral Problems, Correlation

Introduction

The entire concept of "morality" requires that the moral agent be held responsible for their choices and actions. The entire concept of "responsibility" requires that the acting agent have a choice. Without an ability to influence the consequences, we cannot be held accountable for them. The freedom to choose the "right thing to do" is fundamental to our conception of moral responsibility. If there is no freedom to choose the "best" of the available alternatives, there is no moral responsibility for the consequences. "If there

is no moral responsibility, there is no moral justification for praise or blame, reward or punishment. In every aspect of our relations with other individuals, the concept of moral responsibility governs how we react to the behavior of others. The argument of Moral Responsibility states that if determinism were true, no person would be able to change his actions, therefore no one could ever be held morally responsible for his own actions. We assume that other people are just like ourselves. We assume that the best way of teaching other people to make "good" choices, and steer clear of "bad"

ones, is to make plan what kind of choices are considered "good" and "bad". Hence a compatibilist's judgments (moral and otherwise) on the choices made or contemplated. The judgments we make, and the emotional reactions we feel, about the choices we and others make, serve the purpose of training the evaluative processes of the mind". We cannot learn to choose more wisely, unless we can recognize when someone makes a particularly good or bad choice. We react the way we do because we are learning machines, and that is how this particular kind of learning machine learns (Lind, et.al, 1985).

Although morality has been a topic of discussion since the beginning of human civilization, the scientific study of moral development did not begin in earnest until the late 1950s. Prior to Kohlberg's work, the prevailing positivist view claimed that science should be "value-free"-that morality had no place in scientific studies. By choosing to study moral development scientifically, Kohlberg broke through the positivist boundary and established morality as a legitimate subject of scientific research (Feng, 2014).

Models explaining Moral Development /Judgment & Behavioral Problems

Theoretical Issues

How Development Occurs?

The psychoanalytic, learning, and cognitive-developmental theories each focus on a different aspect of moral development.

Psychoanalytic theory emphasizes emotions in explaining moral development. According to Freud, the child learns moral rules by identifying with the same-sex parent during the phallic stage. The rules a child learn from her same-sex parent from her superego, or her internal moral judge. The superego has two parts a conscience and an ego ideal. **Conscience:** the conscience is a list of things that "good boys" and "good girls "do not do such as telling lies. **Ego Ideal:** the ego ideal is a list of things that "good boys" do such as obeying parents.

Kohlberg, it is important to remember, is a close follower of Piaget. Accordingly, Kohlberg's theoretical positions, including that on developmental change, reflect those of his mentor. Kohlberg says that his stages are not the product of maturation. That is, the stage structures and sequences do not simply unfold according to a genetic blueprint.

Neither, Kohlberg maintains, are his stages the product of socialization. That is, socializing agents (e.g., parents and teachers) do not directly teach new forms of thinking. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine them systematically teaching each new stage structure in its particular place in the sequence.

Piaget proposed that true mental stages meet several criteria. They (1) are qualitatively different ways of thinking, (2) are structured wholes, (3) progress in an invariant sequence, (4) can be characterized as hierarchic integrations and (5) are cross-

cultural universals.. Let us consider these points one at a time (Piaget, 1952).

Carol Gilligan and the Morality of Care, Carol Gilligan deemed Kohlberg's research biased because he only used male subjects to reach his findings. Because of this, his model is based on a concept of morality based on equity and justice, which places most men in stage five or six. Gilligan found that women, who value social interaction more than men, base their moral decisions on a culture of caring for other human beings. This would place them at stage three, making women appear to be inferior morally to men. Men determine immorality based on treating others unfairly, and women base it on turning away someone in need. Gilligan believed that Kohlberg's theory exhibited a gender bias. Her theory did not focus on specific stages, but rather by more generalized modes of thinking and reasoning. She associated these modes, *the ethic of care and the ethic of justice*, with male and female differences and based them on two divergent ethics of moral reasoning. The ethics of justice were similar to Kohlberg's post-conventional stages, where participants based their responses on principled reasoning (Gilligan, 1982).

Gibb's Theory of Moral Judgment

Kohlberg eliminated Stage 6 from his scoring system for lack of finding empirical cases for Stage 6 thinking. Thus, Gibbs, Basinger, and Fuller (1992) have revised Kohlberg's six stages, three-

developmental level framework, in favor of a four stage, two level framework, by regarding stages 3 and 4 as representative of mature moral judgment Stages 1 and 2 represent immature or superficial moral judgment; an adolescent or adult operating at these stages would have a developmental delay in moral reasoning. Stages 3 and 4 represent mature or profound moral judgment and should be the norm for any culture (Gibbs et al., 1992).

PBT Theory –Behavioral Problems

The Problem-behavior theory signifies that the probability of involvement in problematic behavior relies on unified domains of its impact including social & environmental factors, personality characteristics and involvement of those related to the orthodox values. Furthermore this theory intricate that, a child brought up in an environment where there is high-risk situational factor of single parent with the peak level of poverty and poor school performance is grounded by higher potential of deviant behavior among children those suffered with such kind of deprivations. This theory provides a platform for knowing the numerous psychosocial threats for involvement in problematic behaviors. As an example, problem behavior theory relies more upon a “conceptualization of personality”, perceived environment and “behavior systems” within the social structure of the adolescent (Jessor, 1987).

The research the conducted in 2005 based on two major goals. The first one was to observe the structure of both externalizing and internalizing problem behavior during the early adolescence period. The second goal was to explore the stability of these issues for boys and girls entirely. A total of 650, 13–14-year-olds filled out (an expanded version of) the Youth Self-Report [YSR; *Manual for the Youth Self-Report and 1991 Profile*. By using confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) to test a series of competing models, a hierarchical model provided the best representation of the structure of problem behavior at both Time 1 and Time 2. Absolute stability for both externalizing and internalizing problems appeared to be higher for boys scoring in the lower range of problem behavior (Reitz et al., 2005).

Period of early adolescence plays a very significant role because at this point a value system and behavioral code of conduct is largely shaped. So it leads toward the govern of moral reasoning and moral codes. Additionally, at this stage the aim of exploring the moral issues has implications not only for schools as well as for parents and society as a whole. This study originates that early adolescents use a diversity of modes to make moral decisions. These comprise of care - where they wish others not to suffer; justice - where decisions are made according to principles (golden rule), and “narrowly concerned” or selfish. All three modes were used by males and females; however, males were much more likely to choose the narrowly concerned mode than were females (Perry & McIntire, 1995).

The present study was conducted to study the moral judgment ability of pre-adolescent (9-11 years) of public school. Precisely it involves a mental capacity to describe situation in terms of right and obligation. It is notion that the teenagers can explore themselves in a better way from other's view so that this can enhance their ability of awareness to find out moral issues. The sample contained 200 children, 100 of which were in the age group of 8 -9 years and 100 in the age group of 10-11 years. Sex ratio was also maintained. Results revealed a significant difference in the moral judgment ability between two groups with “older children (10-11 years) score higher than younger ones (8-9 years)”, suggested that maturity is essential (though not sufficient) condition for development of moral judgment ability. Numerous antecedently situations to morality were also studies among which mothers' and fathers' education was found to have a dominant effect on Childs' moral judgment. But gender shows a insignificant impact on moral judgment ability of the child (Gupta, 2010).

Oakland Growth (H. E. Jones, 1939) studied 98 adolescent offspring (aged 10–18 years) responded to Kohlberg Moral Judgment Interviews (A. Colby et al, 1987) and stated their insights of family contact during two surfs of longitudinal follow-up at the Institute of Human Development, University of California, Berkeley. Associations between adolescent moral judgment and parent and adolescent perceptions of, “family structure, decision making, value orientation, moral

transmission, and interpersonal relationships” were measured, with age, sex, IQ, and parent moral judgment controlled. Adolescent moral judgment was greatest steadily related to reports of positive interfamilial relationships and cognitive incentive of moral reasoning (Speicher, 1992).

In spite of a current world-wide surge of hypothetical interest in moral and character education, little is known about pupils’ character development in schools, especially in the UK context. In order to assess an important module of character—moral judgment, a study was conducted among 4053 pupils aged 14–15. Data were generated in 33 UK schools of varying types between February 2013 and June 2014. Results showed that paralleled with US samples, the pupils’ scores were, on average, low, suggestive of tendencies towards ‘self-interest’, ‘not getting involved’ and ‘conformity/loyalty to friends’. Judgments diverse by subscales measuring ‘action’ and ‘justification’ choices; pupils more successfully recognized good actions than good justifications, but generally struggled more to successfully categorize poor actions and poor justifications. Highest scores were for a dilemma stressing ‘self-discipline’ and lowest for ‘honesty’, with ‘courage’ in between. Generally, average results were significantly and positively associated with being female, having (and practicing) a religion and doing specific extra-curricular activities. Differences in schools were also noted, although the kinds of school (e.g. public/private, religious/secular) were

distinct to student scores (Walker et al., 2017)

Operational Definitions of Variables

Moral judgment: Moral Judgment is operationally defined as on the basis of scores obtained by Padua Scales of Moral Judgment developed by Communion in 2004.

Behavioral problems: Behavioral Problems is operationally defined as on the basis of scores obtained by Child Behavioral Problems Checklist developed by Achenbach and Edelbrock in 1991.

Significance of the study

The result of this study might be helpful for the adolescence and for their caregiver. This study might give information for the parents of adolescence to control poor moral judgment and behavioral problems they suffer. Furthermore it provides useful information regarding way to build a positive outlook on life and knowing the importance of believing the potentials and abilities among adolescence. It also beneficial for adolescence in this way that it may definitely give awareness about them as how to minimize behavioral problem and poor moral judgment and how to behave according to society. So, it will bring

healthy environment in which the performance of adolescence in every field of life that will increased with the help of psychologists.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were as follows;

1. To determine the relationship between Moral Judgment and Behavioral Problems among early adolescents
2. To explore Gender differences in Moral Judgment.
3. To Investigate Gender differences in Behavioral Problems.

Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were formulated to achieve the above objectives.

1. There is a significant relationship between Moral Judgment scores and Behavioral scores among early adolescents.
2. There is a significant difference between Mean Moral Judgment scores of male and female early adolescents.
3. There is a significant difference between Mean Behavioral Problems of male and female early adolescents.

The above research hypotheses were tested through the following Null hypotheses;

1. No significant relationship between Moral Judgment scores and Behavioral Problems scores among early adolescents.
2. No significant difference between Mean Moral Judgment scores of male and female early adolescents.
3. No significant difference between Mean Behavioral Problems of male and female early adolescents.

Statement of the Problem

This study was designed to investigate the relationship between Moral Judgment and Behavioral Problems among Early Adolescents.

Methodology

Design of the study was correlation. Random sampling was used to select the sample from the population. Population of the study includes all the male and female students of two private schools. The approximate size of the population according to the authorities of both the schools was 1000.

Participants

Participants included 100 boys and 100 girls of early adolescents. Sample was taken from two institute of Azad Kashmir as Yadgar model public school and Mong City public school. All the subjects belong to class 7th, 8th & 9th and their age range is 13/14-15years.

Instruments

One Scale and one Checklist used in the research, scale for moral judgment and Child Behavioral Problems Checklist. Details of the instrument are given below.

Padua Scales of Moral Judgment

Moral Judgment scale was used which was originally developed by Comunian in 2004.

Child Behavioral Problem Checklist

A Child Behavioral Problem Checklist used to access the behavioral problems in children, developed by Achenbach and Edelbrock in 1991. There were 37 statements with 7 response categories, these 37 common behavioral problems and among the children of 10-13/14 years old. These 7 categories were totally “false” and “false to greater extent”, “false to some extent”, “do not know”, “true to some extent”, “true to greater extent”, “totally true”. There corresponding scores were 1,2,3,4,5,6,7 respectively (Achenbach & Edelbrock, 1991).

Procedure

Table 1

Correlation Coefficient among Moral Judgment Scale and Child Behavior Problems Checklist (N = 200)

Scales	r	p
MJS	.163	.106
		CBPC

Note. MJS = moral judgment scale ; child behavioral problems checklist ; M = mean; SD = standard deviation.

From the above table it illustrates that Correlation coefficient r is .163 and the level of significant is .106, which indicates

The researcher’s setup appointments with the authorities in order to carried out the mandatory requirements. After establishing the level of rapport with adolescents that was deemed adequate, the researcher’s proceeded to collect the data.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed through SPSS Version 26 .In the analysis of present study following tests were used. T- Test, mean, standard deviation and correlation. The level of significant use to test the null hypotheses was .05. Definitions and Abbreviations were also used in the study.

Results

In the present study data were analyzed statistically through SPSS (Special Package for Social Sciences). Mean, Median, SD, t-test (test of significance) and Pearson correlations were computed for behavioral problems and Moral Judgments.

that there is no significant relationship between Moral Judgment and Behavioral Problems. So the first null hypothesis of the study “No significant relationship between Moral Judgment scores and Behavioral

Problems among early adolescents” was accepted.

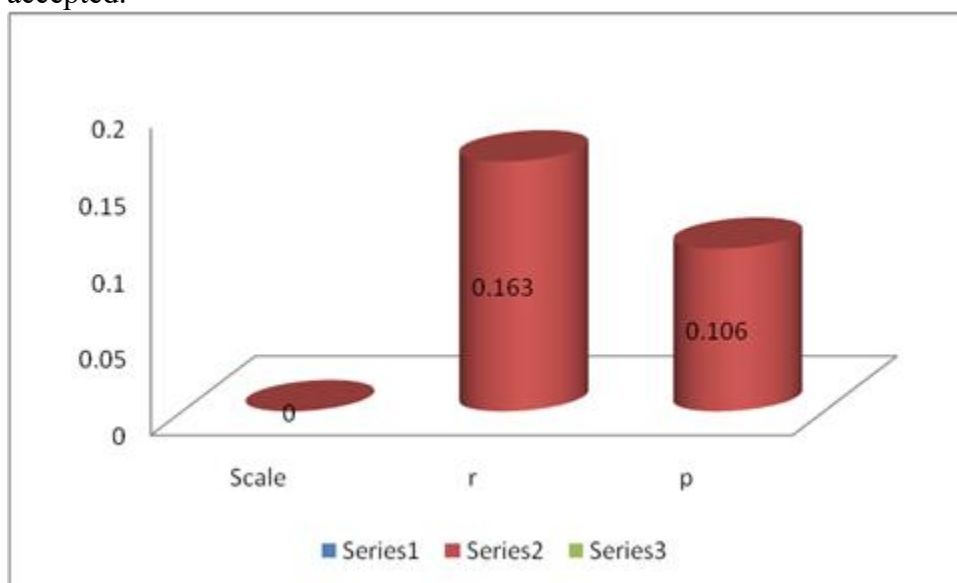


Figure 1

This figure shows graphical representation of correlation between Moral Judgment and Behavioral Problems.

Table 2

Mean, Standard deviation and t-values of males (N=100) and females (N=100) on Moral

Variables	Male M	(100) SD	Female M	(100) SD	t	p
MJS	71.54	11.15	71.74	8.46	.101	.920

Note. MJS Moral Judgment scale; M = mean; SD = standard deviation

The above table indicates that mean value of male is 71.54 and SD is 11.15, and the mean value of female is 71.74 and SD is 8.46. The t value is .101 and the significance level is .920. According to the

results there is no difference exist between them. So the 2nd null hypothesis of the study “No significant difference between mean Moral Judgment scores of male and female early adolescents” was accepted.

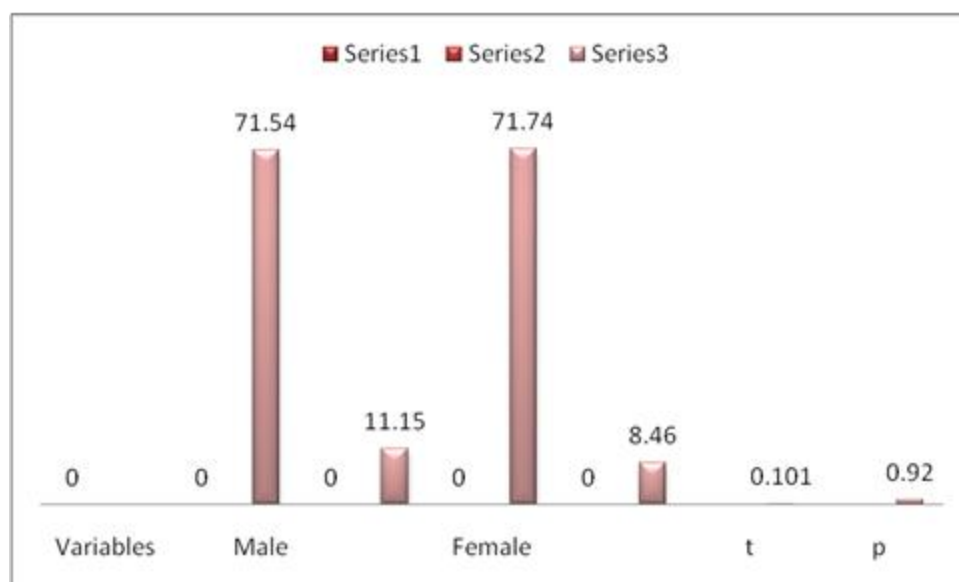


Figure 2

This figure shows graphical representation of males and females on Moral Judgment.

Table 3

Mean, Standard deviation and t-values of males (N=100) and females (N=100) on Behavioral Problems

Variables	Male M	(100) SD	Female M	(100) SD	t	p
BP	107.60	28.16	107.22	31.37	-.064	.949

Note. BP= behavior problems; M=mean; SD= standard deviation

The above table indicates that mean value of male is 107.60 and SD is 28.16, and the mean value of female is 107.22 and SD is 31.37. The t value is -.064 and the significance level is .949. So according to

the results there is no significant difference between Behavioral Problems among male and female early adolescents. So the 7th null hypothesis of the study was accepted.

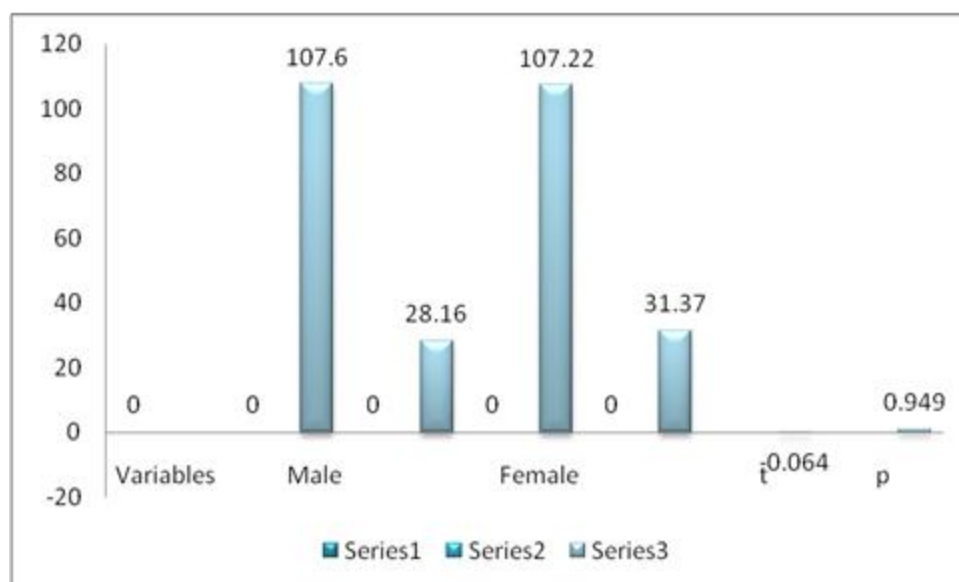


Figure 3

This figure shows graphical representation of males and females on Behavioral Problems.

Discussion

In the present study no significant relationship found between Moral Judgment and Behavioral Problems. If we see the previous studies on Moral Judgment and Behavioral Problems among early adolescents, we will find that the results were different in the past. “People ordinarily distinguish between behaviors that are performed ‘intentionally’ and those that are performed ‘unintentionally.’ At first glance, this distinction seems to be a perfectly familiar part of our ordinary approach to understanding the mind, right alongside the concepts of belief and desire. Yet recent experimental work has revealed a surprising fact about the way in which people

ordinarily apply this concept. It seems that people’s ordinary intuitions about intentional action can actually be affected by their *moral* judgments. In particular, there seem to be cases in which people’s intuitions about whether a behavior was performed intentionally depend in some way on their moral appraisal of the behavior itself”. (Brugman, D. 2009).

According to the 2nd hypothesis of the study, “No significant difference exists between Mean moral judgment scores of male and female adolescents”. If we compare this hypothesis with previous study the result differed; we elaborate it with example of previous research. “Recent studies have been done to examine gender differences in moral judgments. The results showed that females did score higher on the care-based scale than males, although females did not tend to score any differently than males on the justice scale (Gump et al., 2000).

The 3rd null hypothesis of the study: “No significant difference between mean Behavioral Problems of males and females early adolescents” was accepted. There was also difference in this study with previous researches. It could be better understood by examples related to previous researches. For Example “The prevalence of behavioral problems in the united states is somewhere between 5 and 16% for children identified with a specific behavior, depending on the nature of the population sampled and methods of assessment. During childhood and early adolescent age, the number of boys referred and identified as having psychological and behavioral problems is much higher than girls, particularly for problems with aggression, anxiety, moodiness or other conduct problems.

Gilligan believed that Kohlberg's theory exhibited a gender bias. Her theory did not focus on specific stages, but rather by more generalized modes of thinking and reasoning. She associated these modes, *the ethic of care and the ethic of justice*, with male and female differences and based them on two divergent ethics of moral reasoning. The ethics of justice were similar to Kohlberg's post-conventional stages, where participants based their responses on principled reasoning (Gilligan, 1982).

Conclusion It was determine that although no relationship found between Moral Judgment and Behavioral Problems,

but here point to be noted that is “Moral Judgment is necessary for moral behavior but is not sufficient” so it is not necessary to have relationship between these two as some people are morally well developed but they are poor in their behavior. As compared to present, in the past parents have leisure time and they gave their attention to their children and were properly guide their children about moral values and behavior; but now the parents are busy in their own works they are not able to give proper time and attention to their children. It leads toward behavioral problems. Additionally, it should be the responsibility of parents/ caregivers as well as teachers to educate the children about moral code of conduct. To deeply involved them on focusing the moral values, so that they can be aware about this fact and its importance and apply those in their lives. This in returns creates balance atmosphere and is beneficial for the welfare of society as well. Furthermore the issued related to behavior and we can say that the causation factors behind the problematic behavior or delinquent one should be need to address and resolve the co-occurring factors behind this act of behavior.

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