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Teaching Values' Programme: It's Impact on Urban Children (5-7 Years)

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ABSTRACT The present study was undertaken to assess the impact of teaching values programme on urban children. The study was based upon the sample of 450 children of a randomly selected school of Ludhiana City. A 'teaching values' programme was designed to inculcate eleven universal values in children by means of stories, songs, discussion, art etc. A self-structured teaching values questionnaire was used to collect relevant data for the present study. The results revealed that there were statistically significant differences in the proportion of scores of the children of the experimental and control group at all age levels. No significant gender differences were found among children between 5-7 years of age in both the experimental and the control group. Statistically significant differences were also present among children of experimental and control group across all age levels.

INTRODUCTION

With the globalization effect of IT revolution and resultant globalization of knowledge, our social cultural norms and organizational structures are crumbling. There is a big threat to a culture, values, individuality, and lifestyle. The culture of any society is greatly influenced by technological advancements due to changes in lifestyle and concepts—a sudden shift in values is experienced. There is a lot of confusion in the minds of young person of today about what to believe, how to believe, what to follow and what type of lifestyle to copy. The paradox is that while the parents offer one set of values, religion proposes another set of moralization and media, yet another type of lifestyle. High expositions of the laws of morality, discovery and evolving those basic and general principles on which all rules of moral conduct must depend are cardinal to all the religions. *Dharma* is the name for the code of conduct prescribed for doing what is proper, right and good in Hindu religion. *Padam Puran* has provided ten chief practices of *Dharma* – non-violence, forgiveness, truth, shyness, faith, control of senses, charity, sacrifice, contemplation and knowledge. These are recommended to be followed strictly by the one who desires to lead a *dharmic* (moral) life.

Moral education is becoming an increasingly popular topic in the fields of psychology and education. It has been felt that the weakening of social and moral values in the younger generations is creating many serious social and ethical conflicts in the world. Walker and Taylor (1991) studied parent's role in the childrens moral development. Parents level of moral reasoning and interaction styles used in discussions of moral issues with their child were used to predict the child's moral development. They concluded that children's moral development was best predicted by parental discussion, styles that involve socratic questioning and supportive interactions combined with the presentation of higher level of moral reasoning.

There is already a desire among the western thinkers to balance the knowledge and skills that science and technology bring with the values and insights of ethics and religion at the best. There is a consensus on the point that in a situation that is developing nowadays, it is very important for us to give a proper value orientation to our education system. The education policy document has laid stress on the imparting of value-oriented education. It is assumed that a part of the solution to growing social problems and a lack of respect for each other and the world, is to lay emphasis on teaching values to children as early as possible. Stevahn et al. (2000) examined the effects of conflict resolution training integrated into a kindergarten curriculum of American mid-western suburban elementary school. Significant differences between trained and untrained children occurred in their knowledge and retention of the conflict resolution procedure, willingness and ability to use the procedure in conflict

situations and conceptual understanding of friendship.

Prencipe and Helwig (2002) studied the development of reasoning about the teaching of values in school and family context. Results showed that a variety of factors were considered in evaluating the teaching of values, including context, the valence of values and the type of values being taught. Students reasoning about value education was found to be multi-faceted and included destinctions between moral values that reflect justice and rights and values that reflect other forms of personality traits and social values. The findings suggested that school was perceived as an institution for value education over which governments were judged to have considerable regulatory power. At all ages it was judged acceptable for governments to prohibit the teaching of negative values in schools.

Teachers from Lebanon and Kenya reported that school children (In the age group of 3-7 years) showed lesser aggression in class and in play-ground after administration of value education programme (Annonymus 2004). They were able to re-correct themselves when they make a mistake. They were aware of good manners and restrained from hurting others. They became more responsible, loving and sharing. The program had a great effect on the characters like self-confidence, honesty, love, tolerance and respect towards elders and classmates. Teachers of children in the age group of 8-14 years reported that most of the students became more responsible and respectful which enabled them to achieve more in academics. Students responded positively and enjoyed practicing the values. It raised much of their creativity. Values became a sort of foundation or base to their behaviour. Older students practiced the values not only in schools but also in their homes.

Attitudes and values are important if any change is to be expected in an individual. It is the attitude and value of individual to themselves, to their fellows and their surroundings which determine the decision they take and activity they conduct. The process of value formation begins from earliest stages in an individual's life. There are many questions that arise during value formation - What in children's life stimulate them to moral maturity? Why do some children eventually develop into paragons of moral virtue, whereas others develop into misfits of society? What is about children's socialization context that contributes to such different developmental trajectories and outcomes? In view of the above, the present study was planned with the following specific objectives:

1. To study the impact of teaching values programme on children for learning values.
2. To assess and ascertain the gender and age differentials in the effectiveness of 'teaching values' programme for children between 5-7 years of age.
3. To study the impact of parent's education on children for learning values through teaching values programme

METHODOLOGY

The data for the present study was collected from one school of Ludhiana City (Punjab), namely D.A.V. Public School. Four sections were randomly selected from each class/standard i.e. UKG, 1st and IInd class. Two of the four sections were randomly labeled as the control group and the other two as the experimental group. All children who met the criteria of age were selected from each section and formed the final sample for the given age range. Hence, 150 children from each of the three classes i.e. UKG, 1st and IInd grade were selected and comprised the sample (N=450) for the present study.

Following in-depth examination of literature, eleven universal values were identified which were either personal or social. These were Peace, Respect, Love, Responsibility, Happiness, Cooperation, Honesty, Humility, Tolerance, Simplicity and Unity. A value education programme was then designed to inculcate these among children. The programme included stories, sharing and discussion, songs, artistic-expression- activities and action-oriented-activities for each value.

Children's knowledge about different values was assessed using a self-structured questionnaire, which was pre-tested for its reliability. The children were approached in their respective classrooms. The 'teaching values' programme for each value was conducted for one week in each of the selected experimental group. Each selected subjects both from experimental and control groups were assessed for their knowledge about different values using the self-structured 'teaching values' questionnaire. Information regarding each of these values was collected using questionnaire and interview method.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data given in table 1 presents the propor-

tion of scores of the children between 5 to 7 years of age in the experimental and control group. It is evident from the table that there were statistically significant differences in the proportion of scores of the children of the experimental and control group at all age levels. The proportion of the scores of children in the experimental group at all age levels was higher than the proportion of scores of their counterparts of the control group. The mean proportion of scores of the children was maximum at 7 years of age (0.798) and minimum at 5 years of age (0.720). The interaction of the groups with age levels was found to be statistically significant at 5% level of significance. It was also found that the maximum impact of teaching values programme was visible at 5 years of age, since the differences between the proportion of scores was maximum at this age level. Therefore the teaching values programme has made its impact on all topics of teaching values programme on children at all age levels. It needs to be mentioned over here that values can be taught to the children in formal setting like classroom. Here the role of school becomes imperative in teaching values to children.

The results regarding gender-wise distribution of mean scores for 'all values' combined of 'teaching values' programme for both experimental and control group are presented in table 2. It is evident from the table that the mean scores of female children (36.87) in the experimental group are almost at par with the mean scores of male children (36.73). However, in the control group, mean scores of male children (21.19) are higher than the mean scores of female children (20.72). The male-female differences were found to be statistically non-significant. A comparison of the female children in the experimental and control group showed that female children of the experi-mental group scored higher than their female counterparts of the control group. The variation of mean scores was much higher in female control group (C.V. 22.19) than female experimental group (C.V. 1.22). A comparison of male children of both experi-mental and control group showed a similar trend. There were no significant gender differences observed for experimental and control group.

Table 3 reveals the results regarding the distribution of mean scores for 'all values' combined of 'teaching values' programme in experimental and control group by age. It is evident from the table that at all the age levels children in the experimental group scored much higher than their counterparts of the control group. The variation of mean scores was found to be higher among the children of the control group especially at 5 years of age, followed by 6 years and which further reduced at 7 years of age. A similar trend regarding the variation of mean scores was found for the children of experimental group. The difference between the mean scores (experimental-control combined) of children at various age levels showed that with the increase in age, the scores also tend to increase. The above observations indicate that there were statistically significant differences between the experimental and control group. Also, significant differences in mean scores were found at different age levels. The interaction of group and age level was also found to be statistically significant.

The results regarding the distribution of the mean scores of children (5-7 years) of experimental group by education level of the parents are presented in table 4. It is clear from the table that

Table 1: Distribution of the proportion of scores of children (5-7 years) by age in the experimental and control group

	Groups		
Age	*Experimental*	*Control*	*Mean*
5 years	0.984	0.456	0.720
6 years	0.995	0.527	0.760
7 years	1.0	0.597	0.798
Mean	0.99	0.52	

CD (Groups) at 5% level of significance = 0.008
CD (age) at 5% level of significance = 0.011
CD (groups x age) at 5% level of significance = 0.015

Table: 2: Genderwise distribution of mean scores (±SD) for 'all values' combined of 'teaching values' programme for experimental and control group

Groups	*Female*	*C.V.*	*Male*	*C.V.*	*Mean (Female/Male combined)*
	Mean±SD		*Mean±SD*		
Experimental	36.87±0.449	1.22	36.73±0.749	2.04	36.81±0.636
Control	20.72±4.459	22.19	21.19±4.981	23.51	20.95±4.724
Mean	28.79±8.598	11.7	28.96±8.501	12.77	

Table: 3: Distribution of mean scores for 'all values' combined of 'teaching values' programme in experimental and control group by age

Age	*Experimental*	*C.V.*	*Control*	*C.V.*	*Mean (Expt.- Control combined)*
	Mean±SD		*Mean±SD*		
5 years	36.43±1.09	2.99	18.35±5.106	27.82	27.39±9.767
6 years	36.94±0.153	0.414	20.93±5.067	24.20	28.95±12.40
7 years	37(-)	0	23.541±4.039	17.15	30.27±7.31
Mean	36.79±0.838	1.702	21.27±6.398	23.05	

CD (Groups) at 5% level of significance - 0.62
CD (Gender) - 0.75
CD (Groups x Gender) - 1.06

at 5 years of age mean scores of children in the experimental group where parents were post-graduates are almost at par with mean scores of children where parents were graduate or under-graduates. The values of 'F-ratio' (0.35) of both the parents clearly indicate non-significant differences in the mean scores of children with regard to educational level of the parents.

A similar trend could be observed for children of experimental group at 6 years and 7 years of age. It is also evident from the table that children irrespective of educational level of the parents, remained at par with each other i.e. children of undergraduate parents scored equally well as those of graduate and post-graduate parents. Hence, the children of any age between 5 - 7 years with any educational level of the parent could learn the 'values' equally well through the present 'teaching values' programme. It illustrate that the teaching values programme is effective and cuts down the differences in learning values which were otherwise observed in the control group due to the difference in education level of parents.

Table 5 shows the distribution of mean score of children (5-7 years) of the control group by education level of the parents. It is clear from the table that at 5 years of age, the mean scores of children of postgraduates, graduate or under-graduate parents were not statistically significant. At 6 years of age the observed mean scores of children with regard to education level of father (postgraduate, graduate and undergraduate). The F-ratio showed non-significant differences at 5% level of significance. Similar results were found

Table 4: Distribution of the mean scores of 'all values' combined of 'teaching values' programme for children (5-7 years) of experimental group by education level of parents

		Educational Level				
Age	*Parents*	**PG*	**G*	**UG*	*F-Ratio*	*CD (5%)*
5 years	Father	36.28	36.52	36.35	0.35	NS
	Mother	36.57	36.34	36.42	0.35	NS
6 years	Father	36.97	36.94	36.9	1.35	NS
	Mother	36.95	36.94	36.94	0.33	NS
7 years	Father	37	37	37	0.00	NS
	Mother	37	37	37	0.00	NS

* PG: Postgraduate, G: Graduate, UG: Undergraduate

Table 5: Distribution of mean scores of 'all values' combined of 'teaching values' programme for children (5-7 years) of control group by education level of parents.

		Educational Level				
Age	*Parents*	**PG*	**G*	**UG*	*F-Ratio*	*CD (5%)*
5 years	Father	18.08	18.02	20.38	0.91	NS
	Mother	17.79	19.22	19.37	0.75	NS
6 years	Father	21.57	20.73	20.54	0.23	NS
	Mother	19.89	20.06	22.67	2.13	NS
7 years	Father	23.54	24.12	19.95	3.47	S
	Mother	23.83	24.12	19.95	3.61	S

* PG: Postgraduate, G: Graduate, UG: Undergraduate

with regard to education level of mother. At 7 years of age the F-ratio was found out to be 3.47, which was found to be statistically significant at 5% level of significance. Statistically significant differences in the mean scores were also observed for children in the control group with regard to mothers' education. Children of graduate mothers scored significantly higher than children of undergraduate mothers.

From the above observations, it could be concluded that the education level of the parents of the children in the control group is not making significant difference in the mean scores for various values for the children at 5 years and 6 years of age. However by the time the child reaches 7 years of age, the education level of the parents has a significant role to play. The education of parents at 7 years of age was seen to make significant differences in learning values in the control group. That is children whose parents were more educated scored more than those whose parents were less educated.

The results of the study of Tripathi and Mishra (1981) yielded a significant positive interaction between age, sex, socio-economic status and moral development. Rodrigues (1983) studied the effect of socio economic status, sex and age on the moral development of young children (6-12 years). He found that socio-economic status had a positive influence on the moral judgement of children; younger children showed less mature judgement, females were slightly mature than males of the same age group. This confirms present findings that age is an important factor in moral development. Srivastava and Romani (1988) revealed a difference in the value pattern among the age groups and between the two sexes. Older children and females were better in learning values than the younger children and males, which is in consonance with the findings of the present study. Silberman (1990), studied the relationship between children's' level of moral reasoning and family environment, and found gender differences favouring girls which is similar to the findings of Joshi and Pooranchand (1994). They found adolescent girls from joint families having higher moral values than the adolescent boys from joint families. The study by Saraswati and Sundaresan (1989) found no sex differences in the development of moral judgment among Indian children as has been found in the present study.

The present study is also in line with the previous studies where Newton (1984) found that socio-economic status of the parents and achievements were not significantly correlated with the stage of moral development in young children. The study by Jayapoorani and Arunakumari (1992) found positive association between rewards and learning of moral values. Further, mother is a very important person for inculcating moral values among children. The studies of Chaudhary and Kaur (1993), Kang and Thakur (2002) have observed significant association between status, and positive parenting style with moral values and judgement. Papenoe (1998) and Grusec et al. (2000) suggested that parents are the primary source of children's acquisition of values although not the only ones. Further family conditions for modeling values for children have three key processes - forming emotional attachments, being taught pro-social behaviour and learning respect for authority and compliance with rules. Parents' contributions are important: parenting has adaptive evolutionary origin; long term relationships enable parents to know their children intimately and to be responsive to their behaviour. While studying the relationship of parents education and occupation with value system of students, Purang and Sharma (2000) found positive correlation of father's education and occupation with knowledge power, stimulation and social value, while mothers education was found to be correlated positively with economic value. Whereas, fathers occupation was found to have a negative correlation with economic, stimulation and traditional values.

The developed countries, like USA, have tripled their national budget for character educa-tion in public schools to encourage the teaching of values like respect, responsibility, family commitment, and civic duty in schools. These countries have made the fostering of childrens' character as a national priority for public educa-tion (Bennet 1997 and Bruni 1999). Studies of Johnson et al. (1994) and Stevahn et al. (2000) have examined the effects of conflict resolution training integrated into the kindergarten curriculum and found significant differences between trained and untrained children with respect to their knowledge and retention of conflict resolution procedures. They also concluded that the young-er children learned the integrative negotiation procedures as well as older children (sixth graders). The studies conducted by Figley (1982) and Brandi (1989) have shown that schools physical education curriculum i.e. schools sports practice sessions can provide ample opportunities for authentic

socio-moral issues to evolve; an environment that invites total involvement of students is most conducive to moral development. Director NCERT, Rajput (1999) has also mentioned that more verve and vigour have to be added to value inculcation and value development in Indian schools. Further, it is necessary that the curriculum interpret traditional values in modern context. Therefore it can be concluded that, because of the growing concern over the erosion of essential values and an increasing cynicism in society has brought to focus the need for readjustments in the curriculum in order to make education a forceful tool for the cultivation of social and moral values. Also successful childrearing requires the active and continuing physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual presence of parents in the lives of their children.

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