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## A Study On Factors Responsible For Deteriorating Moral Values Among Secondary School Children

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### Abstract:

*Values are abstract concepts of worth — what we think is good or important. They guide the way we feel and act about certain ideas, things, situations and people. They are principles which guide decisions and actions. Values are formed through experiences over time. A value in itself is neither good nor bad. We are influenced every day by our values. The feelings and attitudes that we have about the relative worth or importance of things make up our values.*

*Deteriorating moral values are becoming a serious problem among the secondary school children. There are several factors which put immense influence for value inculcation in the students. The present paper aims to study those factors which are responsible for deteriorating moral values among the secondary school children. The study has been conducted on the 100 students of 4 different secondary schools of Patna. A self made value questionnaire was administered upon the students to find out the factors which influence their moral values and the result drawn that they are influenced by many sources — including parents, friends, teachers, the media and internet.*

### Key words:

Moral Values, Secondary Schools.

### INTRODUCTION

We are in a transition period between eras and the continuous change, renewals and transformations are dominant features. The current era has brought a breaking and blurring of all kinds of boundaries—national, social, political, technological and in communication. The era of globalization has begun in which the traditional boundaries are being broken and thus values are being challenged.

Value crisis is a global phenomenon of our time. Rapid scientific growth and technological advancements resulting in industrialisation have threatened our age-old moral standards. This atmosphere of valuelessness is leading to disintegration, though we notice at the same time best of progress in certain other fields. Nietzsche rightly remarked, “When a tree grows up to heaven, its roots reach down to hell”. We must realise that this process of value deterioration will prove disastrous and lead to disintegration of the society. It is the right time therefore for us to rise for action and make conscious efforts to reverse the trend and lead to the right direction.

Our children are the bright future of our country. We should not forget that quality of seed (childhood) determines the character of a tree (grown up) and finally its fruit-bearing capacity (responsible citizen). Thus, the children of the current generation need to be cherished and nurtured as per the future perspective.

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Deteriorating moral values are becoming a serious problem among the secondary school children. There are several factors which put immense influence for value inculcation in the students. The present paper aims to study those factors which influence moral values among the secondary school children — including parents, friends, teachers, the media and internet.

#### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

According to Dowling (1999), when it comes to the difficult matter of handling moral problems faced by young children, many of them are as a result of their social upbringing. Bezuidenhout and Joubert (2003) are of the opinion that the fault lies mainly in the moral guidance that the young child receives at home and in school. According to Angenant (1990) it has become more difficult to educate children on the basis of specific historical norms and values which seem to be losing the impact it used to have. Owing to misrepresentations in the media parents are often confused about what norms and values child rearing should embrace. Even young children are exposed to the confusion and question the norms that their parents wish to convey (De Witt & Booyesen, 1995).

Watching violence on television triggers increased aggressiveness in children (Bezuidenhout & Joubert, 2003). According to Gray (1999) when young children view violence or mean behaviour on television, they lose to some degree the opportunity to develop a healthy sense of innocence, serenity and sensitivity.

Kretzchmar (1998) says to be without morality is like someone trying to find his way around a foreign city without a map. He does not know where he is, where he comes from or where he wishes to go.

#### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

1. To find out the role of parents in developing moral values among the children.
2. To find out the role of teachers in developing moral values among the students.
3. To find out the influence of friends in developing moral values.
4. To study the role of media on the moral values of the students.
5. To study the effect of internet on the moral values of the students.

#### **METHODOLOGY**

##### **Population of the study**

The present paper aims to study those factors which are responsible for deteriorating moral values among the secondary school children. Hence the population of the study was all the secondary school students.

##### **Sample of the study**

100 students of 4 different secondary schools of Patna were taken as the sample of the study. The students were of standard IX and belong to R. P. S. Residential School, Baldwin Academy, Carmel High School and Ishan International Girl's School.

##### **Sample selection technique**

Random sampling technique was adopted to select a representative sample from the above mentioned population.

##### **Break-up of the sample**

S. No.	Name of the Schools	Sample size (students)
1.	R. P. S. Residential School	25
2.	Baldwin Academy	25
3.	Carmel High School	25
4.	Ishan International Girl's School	25
	<b>Total</b>	100

**Tools for Data Collection**

For the collection of relevant data, a value questionnaire was constructed and standardized by the researchers. The type of questions used in this study was closed ended.

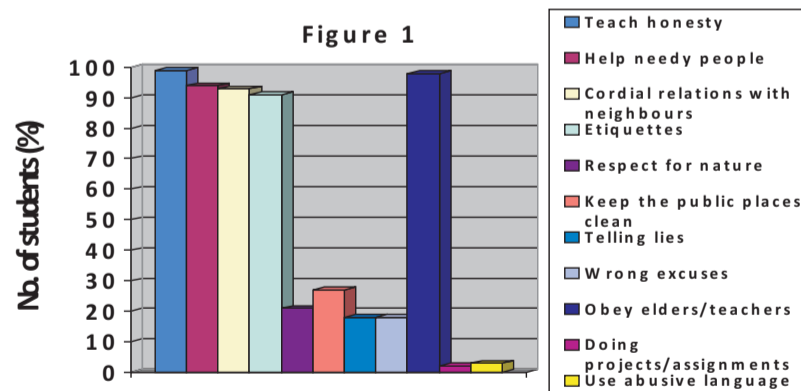
The value questionnaire was administered upon the secondary school students. It consisted of two sections, first section is for extracting personal information about the students and second section was divided into five sub-sections. First sub-section consists of 11 items related to the role of parents in developing moral values. Second sub-section consists of 8 items related to the role of teachers in developing moral values. Third sub-section consists of 5 items related to the influence of friends in developing moral values.

Fourth sub-section consists of 6 items related to the role of media on the moral values of the students. Fifth sub-section consists of 5 items related to the effect of internet on the moral values of the students.

**DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

**Role of Parents in Developing Moral Values**

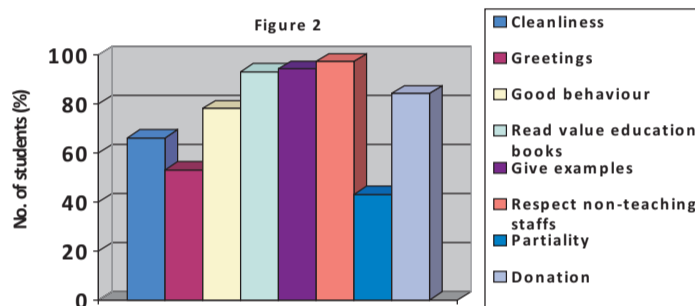
Parents are the most influential agents in the learning of morals by the child. Parental attitude and behavioural responses to right and wrong and good and evil, set the tone and direction of the child's development of morals. At each developmental phase the child needs his parent's moral guidance. The young child does most of his learning through imitation and his primary role models are his parents. The child picks up most of the skills and abilities from his parents. He also absorbs subtle nuances of expressions, attitudes and values that will have a lasting effect on who he becomes.



It can be clearly seen from the above graph that 99% students learn honesty from their parents. 94% students say that they are encouraged by their parents to help needy people. 93% students' parents have cordial relations with their neighbours. 91% students' parents teach social etiquettes. Very less percentage of students say that their parents teach them to respect the nature and keep the public places clean i.e. 21% and 27% respectively. The percentage of the students who admit that their parents ask them to tell lies under some circumstances and give wrong excuses in their leave application is same i.e. 18%. 98% do not dare to disobey their elders/teachers because they get scolding from their parents. Only 2% and 3% students' parents respectively do projects/assignments of their children and use abusive language while talking.

**Role of Teachers in Developing Moral Value**

Teachers serve as role models in the classroom for students. They are responsible for enforcing an environment that is free from prejudice and trying to maintain a sense of equality among students. Moral development usually begins in the home, but moral development can also be taught in the classroom. For example, children learn gratitude in the classroom by saying thank you when people give them things. Teachers can inspire children to strive for integrity in their lives and to live selflessly. Teachers also exemplify moral development through their behaviour. For example, when a teacher spends extra time after school to tutor a struggling student, he shows that he cares.

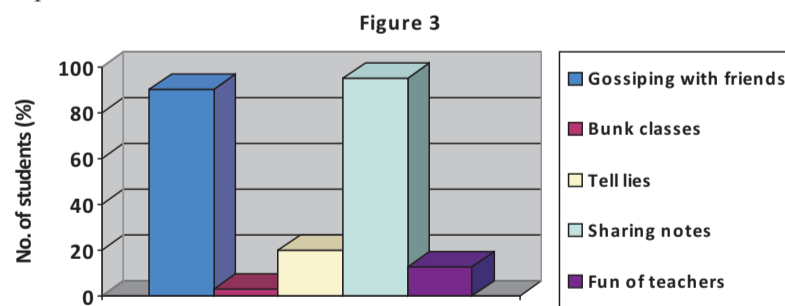


It is visible in the graph that 66% students are of the view that they are appreciated by their teachers for their cleanliness. 53% students say that their teachers are very particular about greetings. 78% students are of the opinion that their teachers praise them whenever they show good behaviour. 93% students said that their teachers

encourage them to read books on value education to inculcate various values in them. 94% students said that their teachers try to inculcate values in them through examples. Maximum number of students i.e. 97% said that their teachers teach them to respect the non-teaching staffs of the school. 43% students admitted that their teachers show partiality in the class. 84% students said that their teachers encourage them to donate for the victims of natural calamities.

**Influence of Friends in Developing Moral Values**

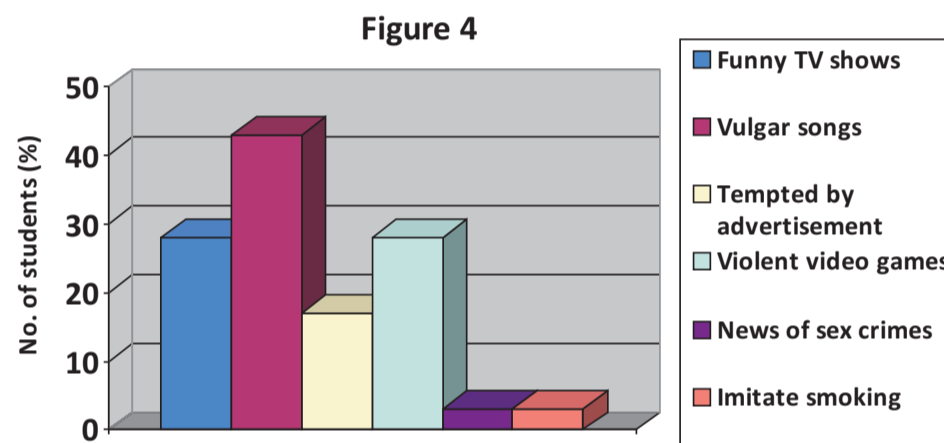
Friend is an affecting factor that can influence other students' moral values. If the friends will have immoral values like ignoring the hard work, escaping from responsibility, non-cooperative, disrespecting teachers, breaking rules etc. then that will be the attitude of the student. On the other hand, the positive moral values of the friends can create person with good moral value in the society such as leadership, tolerable and cooperative.



The graph displays that 90% students like to gossip with their friends. Only 3% students say that their friends force them to bunk classes. 20% students admit that they tell lies under the influence of their friends. 95% students have the sharing nature as they share notes with their friends. Only 13% students say that their friends and she also make fun of their teachers.

**Role of Media in Developing Moral Values**

Adolescence is one of the most influential times of self development in a person's life. Young children look beyond their family norms to define "selves" which may differ from their parents' ideal versions. Many influences may affect a teenager's development of self during this time. While countless environmental factors impact a growing child's personality, media plays significant role in determining the quality of their morals and values. There are many programs on network television that are offensive and promote objectionable material. While there are some informative programs, there are also many with negative influences, Reality television programs have made a colossal impact on present day television. The values being portrayed on reality television programs are often shameful and in which bad morals are depicted.



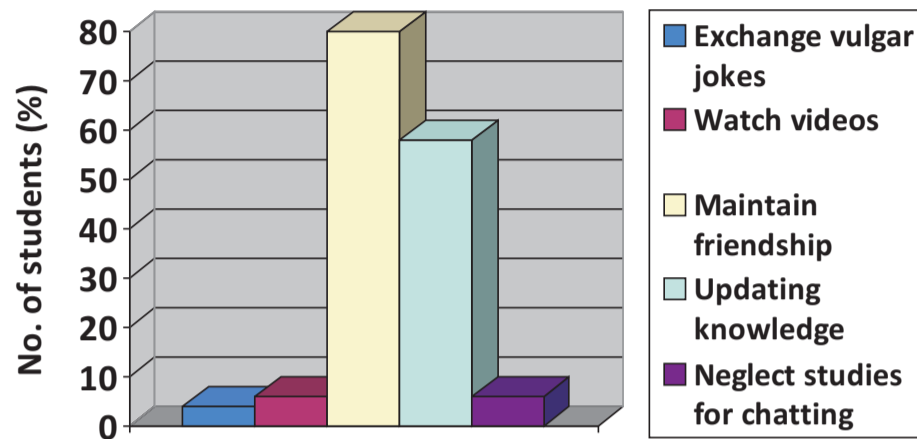
It is visible from the graph that 28% students like to watch those TV shows where people make fun of each other. 43% students listen to the songs with vulgar lyrics. Only 17% are tempted to buy products after watching their advertisement on TV. The percentage of students who are addicted to those video games which involves over powering and killing other players is 28. The percentage of students who enjoy reading news articles related to sex crimes and imitate acts of film stars which display their strength through smoking/alcohol is same i.e. 3% only.

**Role of Internet in Influencing Moral Values**

Social networking sites on internet have made us more densely networked than ever. Yet for all this connectivity, new research suggests that we have never been lonelier as we are today and this loneliness is making us mentally and physically ill. The Internet also takes away the importance of literacy by allowing people to communicate in videos, audio, skype, etc. and causing the creation of abbreviations like "wat r u doing 2nite?"

The internet could influence people and it could encourage the loss of people's moral values. For instance, some people write things that could harm other people's privacy on the internet. This is dangerous and we need to be careful about it to protect our moral values. People need to be aware that using the internet could influence other people. It is important to know the rules of using the internet to protect moral values.

**Figure 5**



The above graph depicts that only 4% students exchange vulgar jokes on internet. The percentage of the students who watch those songs/videos on internet which they cannot see publicly is very less i.e. 6% only. 80% students say that internet helps them maintain friendship with those who are far away. 58% students keep their knowledge updated through internet. Only 6% students admit that they neglect studies due to internet chatting.

**CONCLUSION**

From the findings of the study it can be concluded that –

- 1.The prominent factors responsible for deteriorating moral values among secondary school children are not only related with parents, teachers and peer group but also media and internet play an important deciding role in determining moral values among today's children.
- 2.Parents and the family are the first social institution where the foundation stone of the child's character is laid down. The family and specially the parents are responsible to a great extent for developing moral values among children. Children learn many values like honesty, truthfulness, helpfulness, cooperation, respect for nature, elders and teachers etc. from their parents.
- 3.After parents, it is the teachers who inculcate morals among children. Teachers by their own behavior and practices can develop many good values among children, so that they become a true and worthy citizen.
- 4.Children spend a lot of time with their friends and their values are greatly influenced by them. Friends influence goals, interests and attitudes and thus mould the personality and character of one another. Hence, a child learns both positive as well as negative qualities in their friends' company and so friends are also a key factor in development of moral values among children.
- 5.In today's world of globalization where on one hand media and technologies have become an integral part of our life and are proving beneficial for us and our society on the other hand are to a great extent responsible for deteriorating values among the young generation.

**SUGGESTIONS**

On the basis of the findings and conclusion of the study the following suggestions are given:

- 1.Child is imitative by nature. He imitates what he sees and hears. To him his parents, elders and teachers are ideals. He imitates them consciously and unconsciously. Hence, it is essential that teachers, parents and other elder members of the society place ideal examples of their own conduct and character. Every care should be taken by them that nothing undesirable is learnt by the children. They must be provided with healthy and inspiring atmosphere both inside the school and at their homes so as to inculcate right values among them.
- 2.School environment and teachers play a substantial role in helping the children in their proper growth and development. Secondary school children are mostly in their adolescence stage which requires proper



guidance on part of the teachers. Therefore the teachers should adopt proper means for the character development of their students. This can be achieved by the following practices-

Positive suggestions or guidance

Positive measures like rewards, praises, appreciation as incentive and encouragement for child's good behaviour

Including moral science or value education as an integral part of curriculum

Organization of community service programmes

Seeking proper involvement of parents and family

Presenting examples of great men and women

Proper training of the instincts, emotion and will power of the students so as to channelise their energies in constructive work

3. Every aspect has a positive as well as a negative side and so is friendship. Friends are an integral part of our life but it is also true that many of our conducts and values are influenced by them. Here it is the joint effort of the parents and the teachers to give them proper guidance.

4. Too much addiction of the children towards television, films, video games and internet is not conducive for his proper growth and development. Parents should monitor these activities of the child and should give them proper guidance in this direction. Proper sense of judgement should be developed among the children so that they can differentiate between the good and the evil and use media and advanced technologies (internet) for healthy entertainment and as a source of updating their knowledge.

5. Environment plays a vital role in the development of morals and character. Family, school, teachers, friends, community, media and all other social forces influence the conduct of the child. Therefore it is essential that all these forces join their hands in the task of moral development of the child. The social environment as a whole must be so suggestive and inspiring that the children can pick up the habits and values essential for proper character development.

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