

Assessment of Attitudes Towards Values Among Adolescent School Students in West Bengal

Dr. Amit Das

Ph.D. (Education), Faculty of Education, University of Kalyani, India

ABSTRACT

The present study aimed to investigate the attitudes of values among school-going adolescent students in West Bengal and to examine the differences in values across various demographic and socio-educational variables. A quantitative approach using the descriptive survey method was adopted for the study. The sample consisted of 552 students of Class XI selected through simple random sampling from different districts of West Bengal. Data were collected using a self-constructed and standardized Values Scale. Statistical techniques such as Mean, Standard Deviation, Skewness, Kurtosis, t-test, and one-way ANOVA were employed for data analysis. The findings revealed that there was no significant difference in values based on gender and caste. However, significant differences were found with respect to residential status, participation in co-curricular activities, and parental education. Students who were non-hostelers, participated in co-curricular activities, and belonged to higher parental education backgrounds exhibited higher values. The study highlights the importance of socio-educational factors in shaping adolescent values and provides implications for educators and policymakers.

Keywords: Values, Adolescents, Co-curricular Activities, Parental Education, Social Factors

INTRODUCTION

Values play a crucial role in shaping the behaviour, personality, and social adjustment of individuals, especially during adolescence. Adolescence is a formative stage of life where individuals develop attitudes, beliefs, and value systems that guide their future actions. In the context of a rapidly changing society, the development of positive values among adolescents has become increasingly important. School-going adolescents are influenced by multiple factors such as family environment, educational experiences, peer interactions, and socio-cultural background. Institutions like schools not only impart academic knowledge but also play a vital role in inculcating moral, social, and cultural values. Moreover, participation in co-curricular activities, parental education, and residential status significantly contribute to value formation. Values are guiding principles that shape an individual's attitudes, behavior, and decision-making, and they play a central role in adolescents' psychosocial development. In adolescence, values are not static; they are influenced by family, school, peers, culture, and broader societal norms. Values serve as internalized standards that help adolescents differentiate right from wrong, make informed choices, and prioritize goals in personal, social, and academic contexts. The development of values during adolescence is important because this period is marked by cognitive, emotional, and social maturation. Adolescents begin to engage in reflective thinking, question authority, and form independent perspectives, making them more receptive to complex moral, democratic, and environmental concepts (Lewis-Smith, Pass, & Reynolds, 2020).

In a diverse state like West Bengal, where students come from varied socio-economic and cultural backgrounds, it becomes essential to study how these factors influence the development of values. Understanding these differences can help educators and policymakers design appropriate interventions to foster positive values among adolescents. Therefore, the present study attempts to analyse the values of school-going adolescent students and examine the influence of selected variables on their value system.

REVIEW OF RELATED STUDIES

Gupta & Devi (2017) conducted “Self-Disclosure and Values of Adolescents in Relation to Their School Environment.” The study examines the relationship between adolescents’ values, self-disclosure, and perceptions of the school environment. The findings revealed positive correlations between self-disclosure and values, indicating that adolescents who feel safe and open in their school environment are more likely to express and engage with their values.

Ali & Ahmad (2018) conducted a study titled “Study of Personal Value Orientation Among Adolescents as a Function of Gender Effect.” The study aimed to examine personal value orientations of adolescents and to explore gender differences across various value domains. The findings revealed that boys and girls did not differ significantly in some values, including religious, knowledge, hedonistic, power, family prestige, and health values.

Balunde (2020) studied “Sustainability in Youth: Environmental Considerations in Adolescence and Their Relationship to Pro-environmental Behavior.” The study aimed to investigate how biospheric values, environmental self-identity, and personal norms predict pro-environmental behaviors in adolescents. The findings revealed that adolescents’ biospheric values and environmental self-identity significantly predicted pro-environmental behaviors through the mediation of personal norms.

Lewis-Smith et al. (2020) conducted a study titled “How adolescents understand their values: A qualitative study.” The study aimed to explore how young people conceptualize “values” and how they experience and articulate their own values across life contexts. The findings revealed that adolescents understand values as guiding principles that influence their behavior, but they also see them as flexible and context-dependent shaped by family, peers, and school.

Ratra & Singh (2022) conducted a study titled “Personal Wellbeing Among Adolescents and Youth in India.” The study aimed to examine adolescents’ subjective wellbeing and associated value priorities within the Indian cultural context. The study highlights that while not a direct value-orientation study, it provides insight into what adolescents in India value in life and how these values relate to their overall wellbeing.

Stattin & Amna (2022) conducted a study titled “Basic Values Transform Political Interest into Diverse Political Values, Attitudes and Behaviors.” The study aimed to investigate whether adolescents’ basic human values, based on Schwartz’s theory, explain differences in political values, environmental attitudes, and democratic engagement among politically interested youth. Overall, the study demonstrated that basic human values play a significant role in shaping how adolescents transform political interest into meaningful, value-based behaviours.

Popovska et al. (2023) conducted a study titled “Values and moral attitudes among adolescents.” The study examined the terminal and instrumental values (based on Rokeach’s value theory) and moral attitudes (traditional vs. liberal) among adolescents aged 16–21 in North Macedonia. The findings revealed the value priorities among adolescents (e.g., which terminal and instrumental values they rank highest) and showed variation in moral attitudes (some favour more traditional moral norms, others lean liberal).

Bhasin & Raj (2024) Studied “Value Orientation and Spiritual Intelligence of Adolescents: A Correlational Study”. The study examined how value orientation in adolescents is related to spiritual intelligence across gender and school board type. The findings revealed that spiritual intelligence was significantly associated with value orientation. These results highlight that school context and gender both influences how adolescents internalize values, and that spiritual intelligence plays a differential role in value orientation.

Kumar et al. (2024) studied on “Deterioration of Values Among Adolescents: An Analytical Study”. This study work pursues mainly two objectives, such as- to study the causes of deterioration of values among adolescent students and to study the remedies to reduce the value deterioration among adolescent students. This study concludes that, the joint family system partially fulfilled the need for value education, but now that this system has disappeared, it is the responsibility of schools and colleges to play a crucial role in imparting values.

McKenzie & Jensen (2024) studied “The Globalization and Localization of Moral Values: A Cultural-Developmental Study of Adolescents and Their Parents.” The study aimed to examine how exposure to global and local cultures shapes moral value priorities in adolescents and their parents. The findings revealed that adolescents living in the globalized urban environment placed greater importance on Autonomy and less on Community compared to those from the rural community, suggesting that exposure to global culture influences moral priorities.

Saini et al. (2024) conducted a study titled “An Empirical Study on Human Values and Moral Values Regarding Adolescents.” The study aimed to examine the status of human and moral values among adolescents in India. The findings revealed that moral and human values were perceived to be declining among adolescents, with factors such as generation gaps, material desires, and socio-economic pressures contributing to this trend.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

After studying and analysing the above-mentioned studies, the researcher found a research gap and identify the title as “**Assessment of Attitudes towards Values among Adolescent School Students in West Bengal**”.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the values among school-going adolescent school students in West Bengal.
2. To compare the values of adolescents based on gender.
3. To examine the difference in values between hostelers and non-hostelers.
4. To study the impact of participation in co-curricular activities on values.
5. To analyze the differences in values among adolescents belonging to different caste groups.
6. To examine the influence of parental education on adolescents’ values.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

The hypotheses of the present study are as follows:

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the mean score of Values between Male and Female school-going Adolescent students.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in the mean score of Values between Hostelers and Non-hostelers school-going Adolescent students.

H03: There is no significant difference in the mean scores of Values between participating and non-participating school-going Adolescent students in co-curricular activities.

H04: There is no significant difference in the mean scores of Values among General, OBC, SC and ST school-going Adolescent students.

H05: There is no significant difference in the mean scores of Values among school-going Adolescent students belonging to different levels of their Parental Education.

METHODOLOGY

Method: The study adopted a quantitative approach using the descriptive survey method to examine the attitudes towards values among adolescent school students. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics inferential statistics.

Variables involved in the study: In the present study, one main variable and five categorical variables were identified for the research purpose. These variables are as follows-

Main Variable:

- Values

Categorical Variables:

- **Gender** (Male / Female)
- **Residential Status** (Hosteler / Non-hosteler)
- **Participation in Co-curricular Activities** (Participating / Non-participating)
- **Parental Education** (Illiterate / Primary / Secondary / Higher Secondary / Higher Education)
- **Caste Status** (General / OBC / SC / ST)

Population: The population of the study comprised school-going mid-adolescent students (aged 16-17 years) studying in Class XI under the West Bengal Council of Higher Secondary Education and West Bengal Board of Madrasa Education in West Bengal during the 2024- 2025 academic session. The estimated population was approximately 900,000 students.

Sample: A sample of 552 students was selected for the study. The sample size was determined using Taro Yamane's formula (1967) at a 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error, which suggested a minimum sample of 400; however, the sample size was increased to enhance reliability.

Sampling Technique: A simple random sampling technique was employed. West Bengal was divided into five administrative divisions, from which one district was randomly selected from each division. Subsequently, four schools were randomly selected from each district, resulting in a total of 20 schools. Data were initially collected from 615 students, and after data cleaning, 552 valid responses were retained for final analysis.

Tools and Techniques: Data were collected using a self-constructed and standardized Values Scale. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (Mean, Standard Deviation, Skewness, Kurtosis) and inferential statistics, including t-test and one-way ANOVA.

DATA ANALYSIS

Researchers have analyzed data according to the research objectives-

Research Objective- 01

The first objective was achieved on the basis of descriptive statistics. Histograms were also used to examine the normality of the data. The overall descriptive statistics related to Social Support are presented in the tables below.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Values Scores of Adolescents

Descriptives Statistic		Statistic	Std. Error	
Values	Mean	103.2572	.55779	
	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	102.1616	
		Upper Bound	104.3529	
	5% Trimmed Mean	103.4561		
	Median	104.0000		
	Variance	171.745		
	Std. Deviation	13.10515		
	Minimum	62.00		
	Maximum	135.00		
	Range	73.00		
	Interquartile Range	17.00		
	Skewness	-.228	.104	
	Kurtosis	-.172	.208	

The table shows that the Mean (103.26) and Median (104.00) are very close, indicating consistency in central tendency. The Skewness value (-0.228) suggests a slight negative skew, while the Kurtosis value (0.172) indicates a near-normal distribution. The above statistics proved that the deviation does not differ significantly from the normality. The following graphical presentations make it more evident.

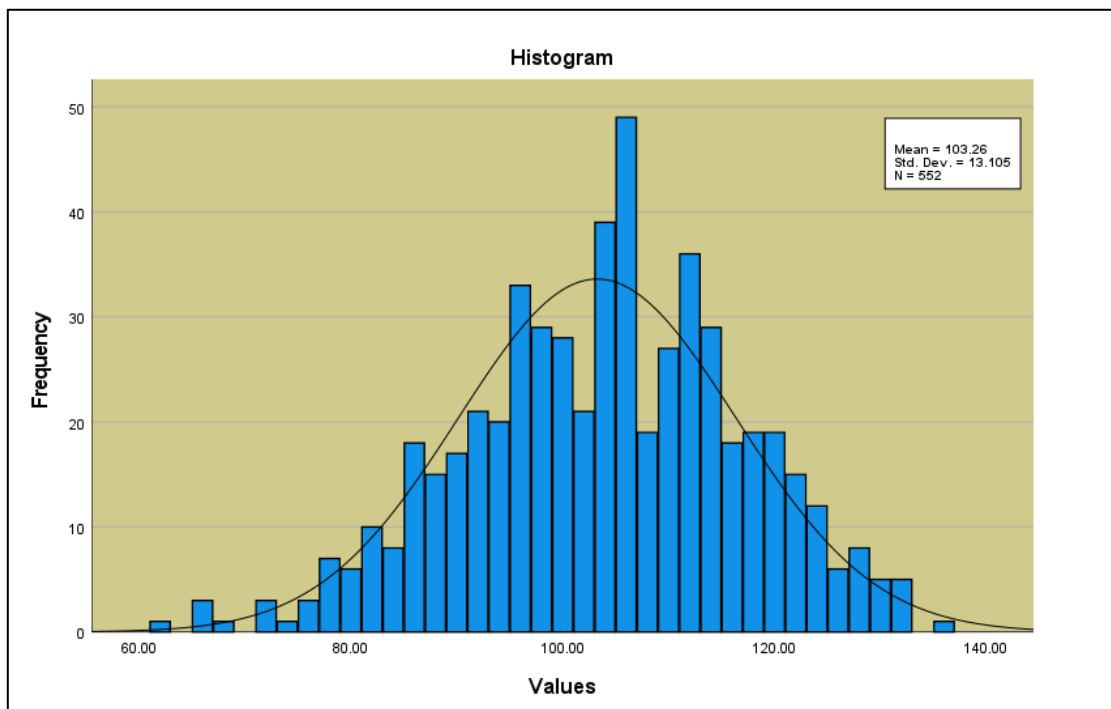


Figure 1: Histogram of Values Score with Normal Curve

Table 2: Adolescents Values of Various Categorical Variables

Variables	Mean	SE	Median	Mode	SD	Var	Sk	Ku	Range
Male	103.73	0.85	105.00	105.00	14.08	198.33	-0.22	-0.50	69.00
Female	102.80	0.72	103.00	99.00	12.08	145.92	-0.28	0.28	69.00
Hosteller	101.60	0.93	102.00	105.00	12.14	147.31	-0.01	-0.16	65.00
Non- Hosteller	104.01	0.69	105.00	105.00	13.47	181.41	-0.33	-0.12	73.00
Participant	104.15	0.63	105.00	105.00	12.77	162.96	-0.33	-0.03	69.00
Non- Participant	100.72	1.15	99.00	95.00	13.75	189.16	0.06	-0.27	69.00
General	104.11	0.95	105.00	105.00	12.31	151.53	-0.24	-0.29	60.00
OBC	103.46	1.20	103.00	115.00	13.33	177.58	-0.01	-0.91	57.00
SC	103.30	0.93	104.00	105.00	13.48	181.63	-0.31	0.36	73.00
ST	99.56	1.93	100.50	81.00	13.35	178.21	-0.32	-0.56	54.00
Illiterate	101.33	1.70	102.50	103.00	13.19	173.85	-0.09	0.29	69.00
Primary	101.14	0.90	101.00	105.00	12.50	156.32	-0.04	0.51	69.00
Secondary	102.29	1.18	102.00	86.00	13.92	193.75	-0.18	-0.63	60.00
Higher Secondary	107.42	1.51	109.00	103.00	13.30	176.92	-0.81	0.47	64.00
Higher Education	107.18	1.22	108.00	105.00	11.23	126.00	-0.19	-0.87	43.00

The Mean scores of the students proved that with respect to the Values of Adolescent students, differed in strata. Adolescent students belonging to the Higher Education had the highest mean value (107.42), whereas the category of ST had the lowest mean value (99.56). It is also interpreted that the mean, median and mode of all categorical scores are fairly nearby.

Research Objective- 02

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the mean score of Values between Male and Female school-going Adolescent students.

Table 3: t-test of Values between Male and Female Adolescents

Group	N	Mean	SD	MD	SE _D	df	t- Stat	p-value
Male	273	103.73	14.08	0.93	1.12	550	0.84 ^{NS}	0.40
Female	279	102.80	12.08					

NS= Not Significant

Analysis: From the table, it is observed that the computed *t*-value is 0.84, which does not exceed the critical *t*-values at both the 5% level (1.96) and the 1% level (2.58) of significance (0.84 < 1.96 & 2.58). Also, the obtained *p*-value is 0.40, which is greater than 0.05 (*p* > 0.05).

Interpretation: Hence, the result is not statistically significant at both levels. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H₀₁) is accepted and the alternative hypothesis does not exist. This indicates that there is a no significant difference in Values based on Gender.

Research Objective- 03

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in the mean score of Values between Hostellers and Non-hostellers school-going Adolescent students.

Table 4: t-test of Values between Hostelers and Non-hostelers Adolescents

Group	N	Mean	SD	MD	SE _D	df	t-Stat	p-value
Hostelers	172	101.60	12.14	2.41	1.20	550	2.00*	0.05
Non-hostelers	380	104.01	13.47					

*Significant at 0.05 level

Analysis: From the table, it is observed that the computed *t*-value is 2.00, which exceeds the critical *t*-values at the 5% level (1.96), but does not exceed at the 1% level (2.58) of significance ($2.00 > 1.96$ & $2.00 < 2.58$). Additionally, the obtained *p*-value is 0.05, which is equal to 0.05 ($p = 0.05$).

Interpretation: Hence, the result is statistically significant at 5% level. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis exists. As the mean score for Non-hostelers Students is higher than that of Hostelers Students, it can be concluded that Non-hostelers Adolescents exhibit higher Values than their Hostelers counterparts.

Research Objective- 04

H₀₃: There is no significant difference in the mean scores of Values between participating and non-participating school-going Adolescent students in co-curricular activities.

Table 5: t-test of Values between Participating and Non-participating Adolescents

Group	N	Mean	SD	MD	SE _D	df	t-Stat	p-value
Participating	408	104.15	12.77	3.44	1.26	550	2.72**	0.00
Not-participating	144	100.72	13.75					

**Significant at 0.01 level

Analysis: From the table, it is observed that the computed *t*-value is 2.72, which exceeds the critical *t*-values at both the 5% level (1.96) and the 1% level (2.58) of significance ($2.72 > 1.96$ & 2.58). Additionally, the obtained *p*-value is 0.00, which is less than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$).

Interpretation: Hence, the result is very statistically significant at both levels. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis exists. As the mean score for Participating Students is higher than that of Not-participating Students, it can be concluded that Participating Adolescents exhibit a higher level of Values compared to their Not-participating peer counterparts.

Research Objective- 05

H₀₄: There is no significant difference in the mean scores of Values among General, OBC, SC and ST school-going Adolescent students.

Table 6: ANOVA of Values among various Caste Status

Data Summary	Groups	N	Mean	SD	SE _D	Variance	Sum
	GENERAL	168	104.11	12.31	0.95	151.53	17,491.00
	OBC	124	103.46	13.33	1.97	177.58	12,829.00
	SC	212	103.30	13.48	0.93	181.63	21,899.00
	ST	48	99.56	13.35	1.93	178.21	4,779.00

	Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
ANOVA Summary	Between Groups	783.73	3.00	261.24	1.53 ^{NS}	0.21	2.62
	Within Groups	93,847.74	548.00	171.26			
	Total	94,631.47	551.00				

NS= Not Significant

Analysis: From the table, it is observed that the computed *F*-value is 1.53, which does not exceed the critical *F*-values at both the 5% level (2.62) and the 1% level (3.86) of significance ($1.53 < 2.62 \ \& \ 3.86$). Additionally, the obtained *p*-value is 0.21, which is greater than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$).

Interpretation: Hence, the result is statistically not significant at both levels. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_{04}) is accepted and the alternative hypothesis does not exist. This implies that various caste status has a not statistically significant influence on the Values of Adolescent students.

Research Objective- 06

H₀₅: There is no significant difference in the mean scores of Values among school-going Adolescent students belonging to different levels of their Parental Education.

Table 7: ANOVA of Values across different levels of Parental Education

Data Summary	Groups	N	Mean	SD	SE _D	Variance	Sum
	Illiterate	60	101.33	13.19	1.70	173.85	6,080.00
	Primary	191	101.14	12.50	0.90	156.32	19,317.00
	Secondary	139	102.29	13.92	1.18	193.75	14,219.00
	Higher Secondary	78	107.42	13.30	1.51	176.92	8,379.00
	Higher Education	84	107.18	11.23	1.22	126.00	9,003.00

	Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
ANOVA Summary	Between Groups	3,855.41	4.00	963.85	5.81**	0.00	2.39
	Within Groups	90,776.06	547.00	165.95			
	Total	94,631.47	551.00				

**Significant at 0.01 level

Analysis: From the table, it is observed that the computed *F*-value is 5.81, which exceeds the critical *F*-values at both the 5% level (2.39) and the 1% level (3.34) of significance ($5.81 > 2.39 \ \& \ 3.34$). Additionally, the obtained *p*-value is 0.00, which is less than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$).

Interpretation: The result is statistically significant; hence, the null hypothesis (H_{05}) is rejected. This indicates that parental education has a significant influence on adolescents' values. Further differences among groups were examined using Post Hoc analysis.

Table 8: Tukey's HSD: Comparisons of Values across Parental Education

Parental Education	Parental Education	MD	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Illiterate	Primary	0.20	1.91	1.00	-5.02	5.42
	Secondary	-0.96	1.99	0.99	-6.41	4.48

	Higher Secondary	-6.09*	2.21	0.05	-12.14	-0.04
	Higher Education	-5.85	2.18	0.06	-11.80	0.11
Primary	Illiterate	-0.20	1.91	1.00	-5.42	5.02
	Secondary	-1.16	1.44	0.93	-5.09	2.77
	Higher Secondary	-6.29*	1.73	0.00	-11.02	-1.55
	Higher Education	-6.04*	1.69	0.00	-10.66	-1.43
Secondary	Illiterate	0.96	1.99	0.99	-4.48	6.41
	Primary	1.16	1.44	0.93	-2.77	5.09
	Higher Secondary	-5.13*	1.82	0.04	-10.12	-0.14
	Higher Education	-4.88*	1.78	0.05	-9.76	-0.01
Higher Secondary	Illiterate	6.09*	2.21	0.05	0.04	12.14
	Primary	6.29*	1.73	0.00	1.55	11.02
	Secondary	5.13*	1.82	0.04	0.14	10.12
	Higher Education	0.24	2.03	1.00	-5.30	5.79
Higher Education	Illiterate	5.85	2.18	0.06	-0.11	11.80
	Primary	6.04*	1.69	0.00	1.43	10.66
	Secondary	4.88*	1.78	0.05	0.01	9.76
	Higher Secondary	-0.24	2.03	1.00	-5.79	5.30

* Significant at the 0.05 Level

Analysis and Interpretation: The Tukey HSD Post Hoc results indicate significant differences were found between Higher Secondary and lower education groups, as well as between Higher Education and Primary and Secondary levels ($p < 0.05$). This shows that students whose parents have higher educational qualifications possess significantly higher values.

CONCLUSION

The present study offers a clear understanding of attitudes towards values among adolescent school students in West Bengal and shows that students generally possess a moderate and well-balanced level of values. The absence of significant differences based on gender and caste suggests that value orientation is broadly similar across these groups. However, the findings reveal that residential status, participation in co-curricular activities, and parental education significantly influence adolescents' values. Students who are non-hostelers, actively engaged in co-curricular activities, and belong to higher parental education backgrounds demonstrate higher value orientation. These results indicate that value development is strongly shaped by family and school environments. Therefore, there is a need to strengthen value-based education through meaningful school experiences and supportive home environments.

Overall, socio-educational factors play an important role in shaping adolescents' values, highlighting the need for supportive family and school environments. In conclusion, a combined effort from educators, parents, and policymakers is essential to promote positive values among adolescents and ensure their holistic development in a changing society.

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