



A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF MORAL JUDGMENT OF SCHOOL GIRLS WHOSE MOTHERS ARE HOUSEWIVES AND THOSE WHOSE MOTHERS ARE EMPLOYED

*¹Vahid Motamedi, ²Majid Aliasgari and ³Azar Karimi

¹Department of Educational Technology, Faculty of Psychology and Education, Kharazmi University, Tehran, Iran

²Department of Curriculum Studies, Faculty of Psychology and Education, Kharazmi University, Tehran, Iran

³Graduate Student, Faculty of Psychology, Azed University, Tehran, Iran

ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received 27th February, 2014
Received in revised form
14th March, 2014
Accepted 19th April, 2014
Published online 20th May, 2014

Key words:

Moral judgment, Employment, 5th grade pupils, Rey city, Primary schools

ABSTRACT

Given the importance of the employment of women and its impact on the formation of the character of the children, the main purpose of this study was to compare moral judgment of children with employed mothers and children with housewife mothers. The population of this study consisted of 5th grade primary school girls in Rey city of Tehran. Sampling method was based on cluster random sampling. Sixty students with employed mothers and 60 students with housewife mothers were selected as the statistical sample. To collect the data, the moral judgment questionnaire was used. In order to analyze the data, in addition to descriptive statistics, conclusive statistics such as T test was also used. The results indicated that the average moral judgment among students having employed mother was higher than the ratio of the housewife mothers.

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INTRODUCTION

Moral psychology for a long time has been traditionally based on argument and reason. According to Wheatly and Haidt (2006), "Morality is often thought to come from a revered source – from God or reason" (p. 780). But this theory was based on recent evidence that moral judgment is more influenced by emotion and instinct. New findings from psychology and neuroscience have included multiple studies that examined the moral judgment of a cohesive format. Although the findings show the argument has a preventive role, but the role of moral judgment is not adequate and accurate study of anatomy and neuroscience. Piaget (1965) whose work is relevant to contemporary theories of moral development points out that individual construct and reconstruct their knowledge of the world as a result of interaction with the environment. Based on his observation of children's application of rules when playing, Piaget determined that morality can be considered a developmental process. Lawrence Kohlberg's (1969) theory of moral development is one of most used approaches to the examination of moral judgment. According to Biggs and Barnett (1981) Kohlberg (1978) and Rest (1973) describe a six stage model of moral judgment development: (1) punishment and obedience, (2) instrumental relativist, (3) interpersonal concordance, (4) law and order, (5)

social contract, and (6) universal ethical principles. Gibbs, Basinger, Grime, and Snarey (2007) state that for Kohlberg, "moral judgment consisting of reasons or justifications for decisions or values that pertain to just or benevolent social action ... is not merely integral to social or nonsocial cognitive development, but rather is a distinct, unitary domain with a parallel trajectory in its own right" (p. 445). They also referred to Gibbs (2007) to demonstrate Kohlberg argument that "although generic perspective coordination and working memory may be relevant to moral development, the perspective-taking process facilitating moral growth is distinctly social" (p. 445). With the advancement of technology the need for employed workers seems to be more and more in demand. One of the factors that will help economic and technological advancement of a country is women's work. Therefore, women are the core of a society in which a country advances and make progress. Women also have an important role in building children's characteristics.

All children should grow up as a social being in a family and should construct and reconstruct their knowledge with the environment. A family is the first place where a child grows mentally and physically. Bowlby (1988) points out that it is important for parents to keep their children mentally, physically, and emotionally healthy because it is crucial for their future. He states, "... children should grow up to be healthy, happy, and self-reliant" (p. 1). He further adds that for those parents "who have children but fail to rear them to be

*Corresponding author: Vahid Motamedi,
Department of Educational Technology, Faculty of Psychology and Education,
Kharazmi University, Tehran, Iran.

healthy, happy, and self-reliant the penalties in anxiety, frustration, friction, and perhaps shame or guilt, may be severe” (p. 1). According to Bowlby successful parenting is a principal key to the mental health of a child. A child also needs to have a good relation with his or her mother. Investigation on some issues in educational psychologist shows that employed mothers have a more positive effect on children growth when they are employed. Meanwhile, the child is much more responsible when he or she is at center of attention. To be clear, a mother has to cooperate and coordinate her job and that of a child. Thinking, feeling, and behaving of a child are all related and depend on the interactions between the mother and the child. Bowlby points out that what happens to us in childhood does affect who we become. The aim of this paper is to compare and contrast moral judgment between children who have employed mothers and children who have housewife mothers. The hypothesis is that there is a difference in moral judgment for children with employed mothers and children with housewife mothers. And the question is that how employed mothers will affect children’s moral judgment.

RESEARCH METHODS

The population of this study included all girls in 5th grade of primary schools in Rey city. According to the ministry of education of Ray city the total number of girls in 5th grade was 1780. In this study moral judgment questionnaires of Dorgandasinha and Miravrama (1988) was used. The moral judgment questionnaire contained 50 questions with six parts in which for every question there was one correct answer. It took about one hour for all students to answer all the questions. They also were recognized as who had an employed mother and who had a housewife mother by the teachers and the principal. Cluster random sampling method was used. Ray city is divided into two areas and the first area of the city was randomly selected as the main cluster area for the research. This area included 800 girls in 5th grade of which almost one third had employed mothers and the remaining two third had staying home mothers. Based on this, the researcher chose 60 girls with working mother and 60 girls with mothers at home as the representative sample. After correction of the questionnaire and an interview with the principals and the teachers and their confirmation, the researcher entered to the classrooms. The moral judgment questionnaire was presented with a brief introduction.

Table 1. Results of moral Judgments’ test for three age groups

Stability	Index	Number	Group
0.90	0.82	100	7 – 6 year
0.89	0.81	100	8 – 9 year
0.92	0.86	100	11 – 10 year

All of the girls whether they had working or housewife mothers answered the questions. All parents, teachers, and members in psychology sector have studied these questions and had careful analysis to be certain about the quality of questions on moral judgment.

DATA ANALYSIS

Descriptive statistics and inferential statistics were used to perform data analysis. Inferential statistics included T test for two independent groups and was analyzed by SPSS. Using moral judgment questionnaire, the statistical features such as mean and standard deviation related to components in moral judgment of students with working mothers and housewife mothers together with their sub-indexes had been extracted. For setting index stability of moral judgment in a test, the responses of 300 children to the questions were marked. The result by using Spirman – Brown formula was calculated (0.93). This for the three age groups is presented in the Table 1.

The 2 presents the dispersion of the numbers in the test which includes median and standard deviation by using moral judgment questionnaire. The result indicates that in general we can see more dispersal among children with employed mother. The total median in children with employed mothers in comparison with children with housewife mother is higher. This indicates that children with employed mothers have a better moral judgment. As can be seen from Table 3, the percent and the number of girls with employed mothers is higher than those with housewife mothers. For comparing median grades about moral Judgment in both groups T test is used and the result is presented in Table 4.

Consequently, it can be seen that median moral judgment and the amount of T in both groups are different. Therefore, it seems that there is a clear difference in the dispersion of moral judgment in both groups. Thus, the research hypothesis can be confirmed. According to the findings of Table 4 the children who have employed mothers are different from the children with housewife mothers with respect to moral comparison ability and the best moral response ($P < 0.5$). Thus, there is a difference in moral comparison ability and the best moral response among the children who have employed mothers in comparison with the children with housewife mothers. This confirms our hypothesis that there is a difference. Therefore, the hypothesis is accepted. For the other four indicators - recognizing the moral act, selecting the moral act, moral analysis and definition of moral act - there is no differences between the children with employed mothers and children whose mothers are housewife ($P > 0.5$). Therefore, the research hypothesis is rejected.

Table 2. Dispersion of the numbers in the test

Total 120		The girl with housewife mothers 60		Girls with employed mothers 60		Indicator
SD	Median	SD	Median	SD	median	
5.45	37.58	5.05	36.16	5.51	39.00	Total moral judgment
0.15	8.28	1.25	8.30	1.04	8.26	Moral recognition
1.44	7.43	1.37	7.26	1.48	7.60	Moral choice
0.92	6.17	2.27	5.60	1.27	6.73	Moral comparison
0.49	5.33	1.46	4.96	1.45	5.70	The best answer for M J
1.25	4.3	1.26	4.20	1.23	4.40	Logic judgment
1.53	5.9	1.59	5.86	1.51	5.93	Moral definition

Table 3. The percent and the number of girls with employed and housewife mothers

Total		The Girl with housewife mothers		Girls with employed mothers			Indicator
Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number		
23.23	28	23.23	14	20	12	low	Moral recognition
33.33	40	45	27	53.33	32	medium	
34.43	52	31.66	19	26.67	16	high	
100	120	100	60	100	60	total	Moral choice
31.7	38	33.33	20	30	18	low	
41.64	50	36.66	22	36.66	22	medium	
26.66	32	30	18	33.33	20	high	Moral comparison
100	60	100	60	100	60	total	
26.66	32	23.33	14	13.33	8	low	
16.66	20	53.33	32	63.33	38	medium	The best answer for M J
56.68	68	23.33	14	23.33	14	high	
100	120	100	60	100	60	total	
40	48	16.66	10	16.66	10	low	Logic judgment
8.33	10	60	36	46.66	28	medium	
51.66	62	23.33	14	36.66	22	high	
100	120	100	60	100	60	total	Moral definition
25	30	26.66	16	20	12	low	
41.66	50	43.33	26	50	30	medium	
33.33	40	30	18	30	18	high	Moral judgment (Total)
100	120	100	60	100	60	total	
21.66	26	20	12	30	18	low	
50	60	36.66	22	40	24	medium	Moral judgment (Total)
28.34	34	26.66	16	30	18	high	
100	120	100	60	100	60	total	
11.66	14	13.33	8	23.33	14	low	Moral judgment (Total)
67.5	81	40	24	66.66	40	medium	
20.84	25	16.66	10	10	6	high	
100	120	100	60	100	60	total	

Table 4. T test results for girls with employed and housewife mothers

Level concept of P	Freedom degree	Amount of T	Error deviation	SD	Median	Number	Group	Indicator Factor
0.004	118	2.93	0.71	5.51	39.00	60	employed	Total moral Judgment
			0.65	5.05	36.16	60	housewife	
0.874	118	0.159	0.13	1.04	8.26	60	employed	Moral recognition
			0.16	1.25	8.30	60	housewife	
0.205	118	1.275	0.19	1.48	7.60	60	employed	Moral choice
			0.17	1.37	7.26	60	housewife	
0.001	118	3.363	0.16	1.27	6.73	60	employed	Moral comparison
			0.29	2.27	5.60	60	housewife	
0.007	118	2.757	0.18	1.45	5.70	60	employed	The best moral answer
			0.18	1.46	4.96	60	housewife	
0.382	118	0.88	0.15	1.23	4.40	60	employed	Moral induction
			0.16	1.26	4.20	60	housewife	
0.815	118	0.234	0.19	1.51	5.93	60	employed	Moral definition
			0.21	1.59	5.86	60	housewife	

Conclusion

In this paper we have attempted to show how moral judgment among children with housewife and employed mothers are different and can help us better understand the morality of 5th grade female students by using regression equation with three predictor variable, the best response and the ability to compare the moral and ethical reasoning. According to our findings this study provides a boarder view regarding moral judgment among children with employed mothers and children with housewife mothers. Moral judgement average is different among the children with employed mothers and children with housewife mothers. In other words, moral judgement among children with employed mothers is higher than the children with housewife mothers and is different with respect to moral comparison ability and the best moral response. However, between other factors in both groups such as moral recognition act, moral choice, moral induction, and moral definition there were nothing remarkable and the hypothesis was rejected.

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