

Personality Of Middle Age Children In Relation To Values Of Parents

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ABSTRACT:

Middle childhood is most often defined as the period beginning at approximately ages 5 or 6 and ending at approximately ages 10 to 12 (Craig & Baucum, 2002). Cognitively and socially, middle age children gain skills and competencies that will provide the foundation for their sense of who they are and how they fit in the world. These new levels of understanding help to guide them as they progress into adolescence, young adulthood and beyond. Even though a middle age child's interest in the ever widening social arena outside family increases and their desire for independence move them into a world that is a little distant from that of their parents, values of parents and their beliefs strongly influence the overall personality of their middle age children. And therefore the present study was designed to examine the personality of middle age children in relation to values of parents. For the study a sample of 200 middle age children (6-8 years) from different schools of Jodhpur city and 200 parents (N = 400) were selected through purposive random sampling. Questionnaires were used by the researcher to obtain the data related to the values of parents (Study of values by Raj Kumar Ojha (1984)) and personality of children (Early school personality questionnaire (ESPQ) by J. N. Lal, 1987). The findings of the study revealed that most prominent value among parents was economic value (32%) and aesthetic value was the least preferred parental value (10.5%). Furthermore the results exhibited that most of the parental values are either positively or negatively related to the personality of the middle age children indicating the influence of parents' value and belief system on the overall personality development of their middle age children.

Key words - Middle childhood, Personality, parental values

INTRODUCTION

Middle childhood is a stage that is marked by the child's entrance into the formal schooling wherein a child's social world expands dramatically. They move from being preschoolers into middle childhood, from a life dominated by fantasy to one that is beginning to be governed by logic and reason. It is the beginning of a stage wherein for the first time a child is able to make choices based on their past experiences and knowledge rather than from options provided by an adult. A middle age child is exposed to expanding roles and environments to which they need to

adjust and they move into ever-widening social surroundings where their daily life unfolds, like school, neighborhoods, and peers etc., which strongly influence their development. Even though this age is marked by their desire for growing individuality and a shift of focus from family to peers but still parents and family do remain one of the most significant and relevant forces in a middle age child's life that influence their overall development of personality. A middle age child never fails to imitate his/her parents. They learn a great deal about how to act by watching their parents. Therefore it is very important for a parent to model the values and traits they wish to cultivate in their child. Chan, Kai Man Edmond (2016) too emphasized in his study that a family's or parents internalized values, such as moral and family values, affect the decisions and perceptions of all family members regarding different matters, which in turn affect their relationship with peers, friends and family members including their children thereby affecting their development,

Parents play a big role in a child's value or belief system. They express their beliefs about how to be and act, by telling their children what they want them to do or what not to do. They might be conscious beliefs used in the home or unconscious beliefs that all members of the family follow but never openly express (Sharma, 2004). Either way, values of parents have a remarkable influence on the values that the children adopt and their overall personality development. It is believed that sound family/parental values can create a healthy and happy family, which in turn encourages its children to move towards a healthy and happy family life of their own. Values of parents and their behavior are inter-related. The values adopted by the parents help them guide their relationship with their children, thereby influencing their decisions about how to raise them and their behavior and attitude towards them, which ultimately affects their child's overall personality. We all know that the values of adults influence the children's behavior and values of the new generation. However which value will be influenced or transmitted depends upon the parent's own value orientation. Thus it is quite imperative for the parents to adopt value patterns that positively influence the personality and behavior of their middle age children thereby helping them develop into better adults.

Therefore in the present study because of such a significant place given to the parental values an effort was made to examine the relationship between values of parents and personality of their middle age children. The study also attempted to assess the value preferences of Indian parents. This might help in getting an insight into how the values adopted by the parents can affect their middle age children, which will help them understand and guide their little ones accordingly.

Review of literature

Bagga, I. (2017) investigated the pattern of values and value conflicts between parents and adolescents in her study "Value conflicts and resolution strategies to improve parent-adolescent relationship". The sample comprised of 300 respondents {100 children and their parents (fathers – 100 and mothers – 100)}. A self designed Personal Information Sheet, Personal Value Questionnaire (Sherry and Verma, 1971), Parent Child Relationship Scale (Rao, 2001) and a Self

Constructed Conflict Resolution Strategies Questionnaire was used to collect relevant information for the study. The results of the study revealed that most parents had average or below average religious (85.5%), social (85%), aesthetic (83%) and knowledge (87%) values and average or above average economic (92.5%), family prestige (84.5%) and health (80.5%) values.

Verma, N. (2015) concluded in her study “Coherence and influence of home school and modernization on value preference of higher secondary school students” that parents have ‘average’ preferences towards theoretic, economic, political and religious values. However, their value preference for social value was found to be ‘high’ and ‘poor’ for aesthetic value. It was also noticed that a significant number of parents show ‘high’ preference towards theoretic, economic, and political values while ‘average’ preference towards social value. Further, it was also reported that the parents have ‘poor’ preference towards religious value and ‘very poor’ preference towards aesthetic.

Nuran Hortaçsu (2010) examined the “Parents' Education Levels, Parents' Beliefs/values, and Child Outcomes” wherein relationships between parents' education levels, parents' beliefs/values concerning children, children's cognitions related to themselves and their relationships, and academic achievement were investigated in a sample of Turkish fourth-grade children and their parents. Structural equations were used in data analysis. Level of parents' education was a significant predictor of parents' beliefs/values for both parents. Relationships between parents' beliefs/values and child outcomes were somewhat different for mothers and fathers. In addition, level of mother's education was directly related to child perceptions of external control, child endorsement of insecure attachment prototype, and child academic achievement; level of father's education was directly related only to child perceptions of efficacy.

Grolnick, Friendly, & Bellas, (2009) also suggested that the parenting behavior is different among different populations, and as parents express different values and behaviors, children's motivation is affected differently. Through their parenting choices and actions, parents communicate a set of values and family characteristics to their children; these can affect how children conceive their own identities, abilities, and goals.

Objectives

The following objectives were laid down for the present study

1. To study the value preferences of parents of middle age children.
2. To correlate the personality of middle age children and values of parents.

Research design

For this study, the researcher employed **descriptive research** as it is an investigation effort to explore and describe the relationship between behavioral problems of middle age (6-8 years) children and parental involvement in the educational activities of their child.

Locale of the study

The present study was conducted in the primary schools lying within the municipal limits of Jodhpur city, Rajasthan.

Sampling

A total sample of 400, 200 middle age children (sample A) and 200 parents (sample B), fulfilling the criteria required for the present study was selected through purposive random sampling for the present study.

Tools used

- Early school personality questionnaire (ESPQ) by J. N. Lal (1987)
- Study of values by Raj Kumar Ojha (1984)

Result and discussion

Table 1: Distribution of respondents according to the Dominant Parental Value

Parental Value	N	%	Mean	SD
Theoretical Value	29	14.50	50.83	3.42
Economic Value	64	32.00	51.48	7.31
Aesthetic Value	21	10.50	49.90	3.18
Social Value	33	16.50	47.94	3.68
Political Value	34	17.00	51.53	4.89
Religious Value	34	17.00	50.35	7.03

Figure 1(a): Percentage of dominant value for the entire sample

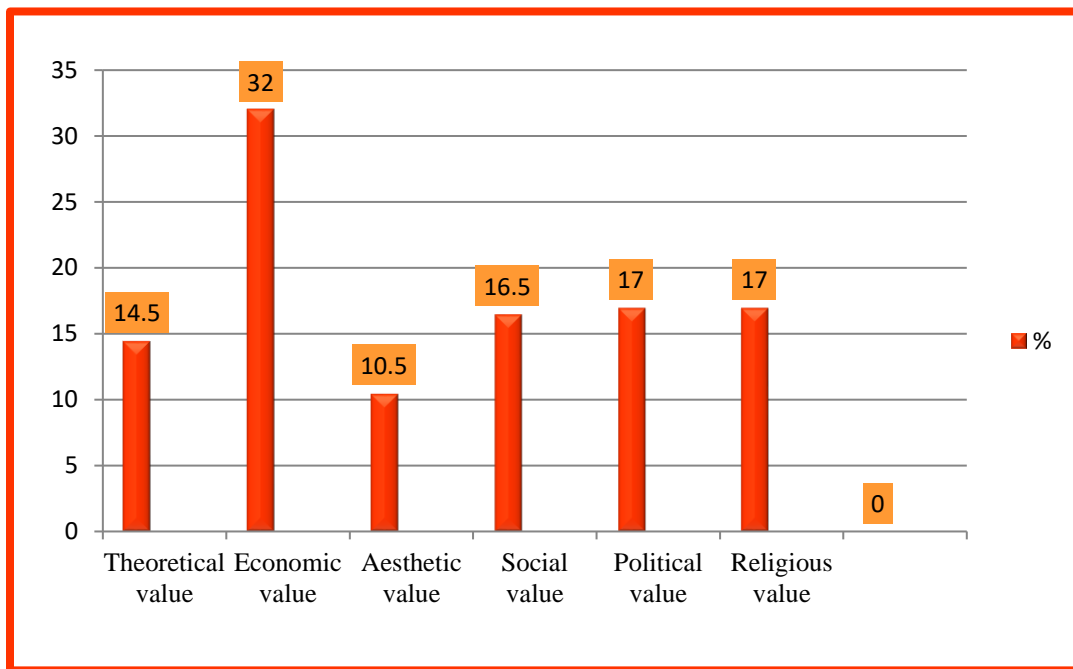
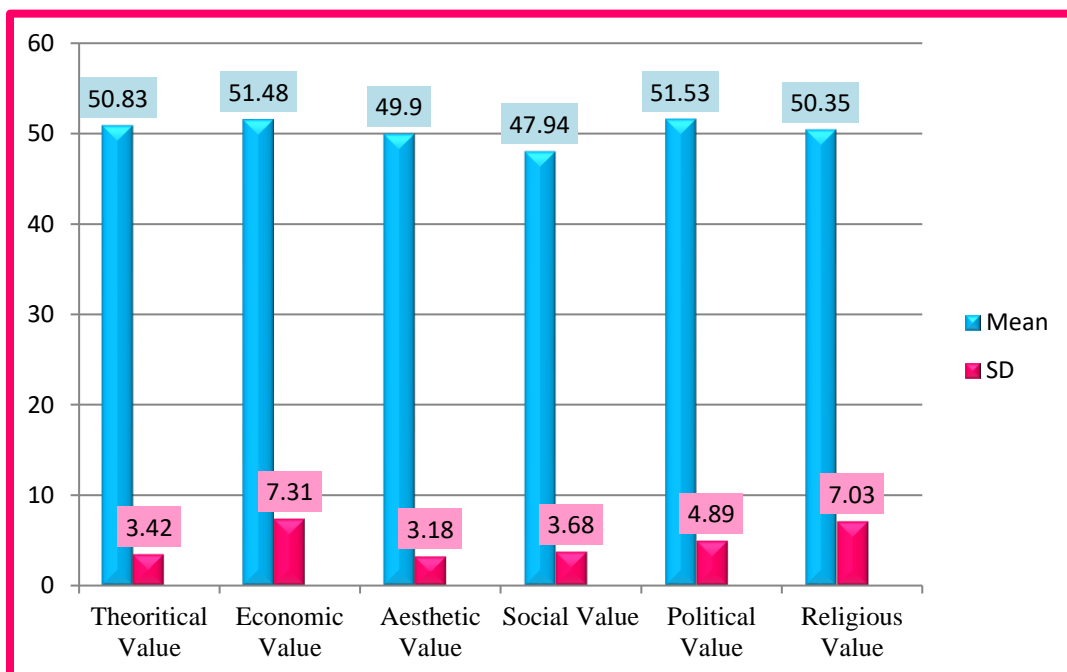


Figure 2(b): Mean and SD of different parental values



The above tables and figures depict the percentage, mean and the standard deviation of the entire sample for various dominant parental values. It reveals that most prominent value among parents was economic value (32%) with a mean and SD of 51.48 and 7.31 respectively while aesthetic value was found to be the least preferred value (10.5%) with a mean and SD of 49.90 and 3.18

respectively. Political and religious value accounted for 17% each with a mean and SD of 51.53 and 4.89 respectively for political value and 50.35 and 7.03 respectively for religious value. This was followed by 16.50% of parents who preferred social value (mean 47.94 and SD 3.68) whereas there were 14.50% respondents who preferred theoretical value with a mean and SD of 50.83 and 3.42 respectively.

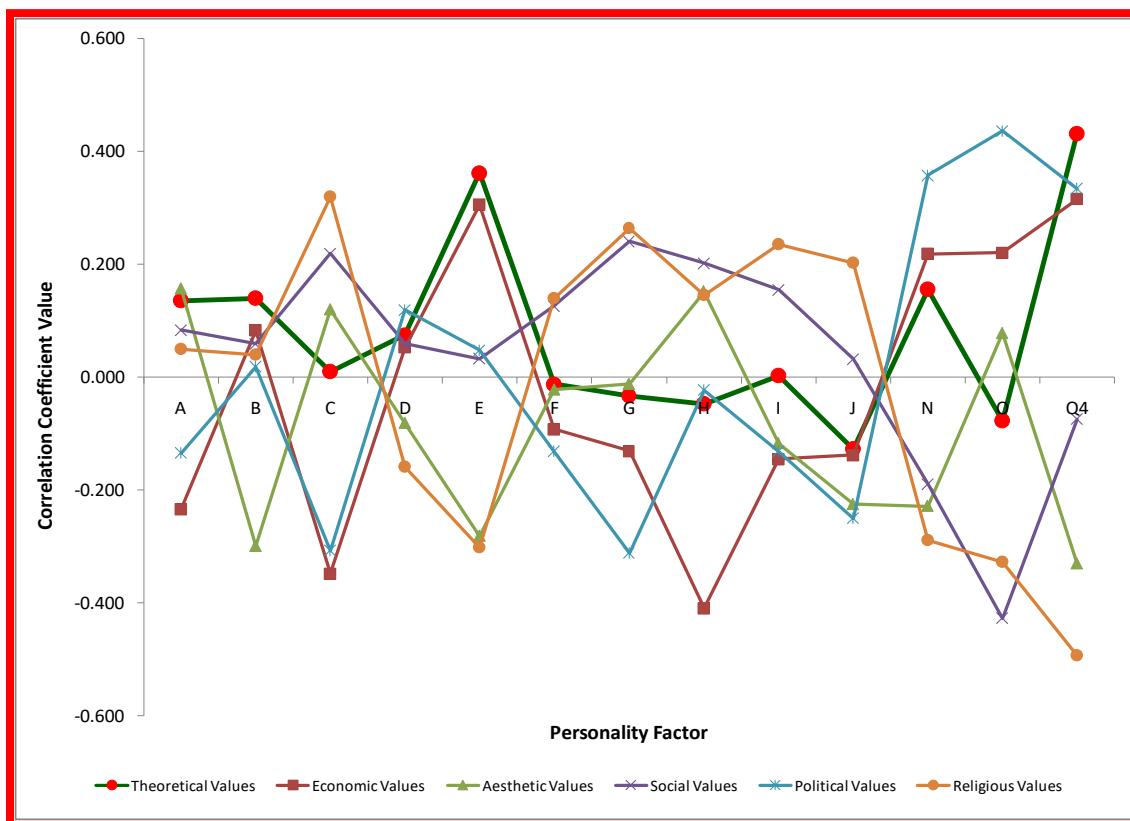
It is quite clear from the above given figures that majority of parents are economically, politically or religiously inclined. They are practical and characteristically interested in what is useful. While the least preferred values in today's modern society was aesthetic, theoretical and social value, which was found to be in line with a study by **Verma, N. (2015)** wherein it was reported that most of the parents had a high preference for economic and political values whereas a poor or low preference for aesthetic value. However the results were found to be contradictory to what was reported in a study by **Padmanan (1992)** wherein highest inclination was found towards social value and a least inclination towards political and religious values.

Table 2: Correlation between Personality Factors of children and Parental Values

Personality Factor	Theoretical Values	Economic Values	Aesthetic Values	Social Values	Political Values	Religious Values
A	0.136 NS	-0.233 ***	0.157 *	0.084 NS	-0.134 NS	0.050 NS
B	0.140 *	0.083 NS	-0.299 ***	0.060 NS	0.019 NS	0.040 NS
C	0.010 NS	-0.348 ***	0.120 NS	0.219 **	-0.307 ***	0.320 ***
D	0.075 NS	0.053 NS	-0.081 NS	0.060 NS	0.119 NS	-0.159 *
E	0.362 ***	0.306 ***	-0.281 ***	0.033 NS	0.048 NS	-0.301 ***
F	-0.012 NS	-0.092 NS	-0.022 NS	0.127 NS	-0.131 NS	0.140 *
G	-0.033 NS	-0.130 NS	-0.012 NS	0.241 ***	-0.311 ***	0.264 ***
H	-0.047 NS	-0.409 ***	0.152 *	0.202 **	-0.023 NS	0.145 *
I	0.003 NS	-0.145 *	-0.117 NS	0.155 *	-0.131 NS	0.235 ***
J	-0.127 NS	-0.138 NS	-0.225 **	0.032 NS	-0.249	0.203 **

N	0.156 *	0.219 **	-0.228 **	-0.189 **	0.358 ***	-0.288 ***
O	-0.077 NS	0.221 **	0.078 NS	-0.427 ***	0.436 ***	-0.327 ***
Q4	0.432 ***	0.316 ***	-0.330 ***	-0.074 NS	0.334 ***	-0.493 ***
*** correlation significant at 0.001 level						
** correlation significant at 0.01 level						
* correlation significant at 0.05 level						

Figure 2



It is evident from the above table and figure that most of the parental values are either positively or negatively related to the personality of the middle age children. However there were few personality factors which were not found to be significantly related to the parental values.

Theoretical value was found to be positively related to factor B, E, N and O revealing that parents who were more inclined towards theoretical value had children who were intelligent, assertive, calculative and tensed/frustrated. Children of parents who had a high preference for economic value were found to be more aloof, emotionally less stable, dominant, calculating, insecure and tensed as economic value was found to be positively related to factor E, N, O and Q4 and negatively related to factor A, C, H and I whereas children of parents who were more inclined towards aesthetic value were more outgoing, mild, spontaneous, uncritical, sentimental and relaxed as aesthetic value was found to be positively related to factor A and H and negatively related to factor B, E, J, N and Q4. Social value was found to have a positive relation with personality factor C, G, H and I and negative relation with factor N, O and Q4 exhibiting that parents who had a high inclination towards social value tend to have children who are emotionally stable, rule bound, independent, confident, relaxed and social/participating. However children whose parents were more politically inclined and believed more in power and politics were more insecure, frustrated, shrewd, and emotionally less stable and were not very rule bound. Religious value was found to positively related to personality factor C, F, G, H, I and J and negatively related to factor D, E, N, O and Q4 revealing that parents who had a liking or preference for religious values tend to have children who are more calm, patient, mild, happy go lucky, rule bound, tender minded, sentimental, placid, relaxed however they were found to be more internally restrained than the rest.

Therefore we can conclude that parental values do have an impact on the overall personality of the child and middle childhood being the crucial age where children are still learning and imbibing whatever they see and listen in their surrounding environment, parental values significantly influence their personality and how they behave. **Bhatia (2002)** too stated that values provide the basic foundation for understanding a person's personality, perceptions and attitudes. And therefore parental values, affect the decisions and perceptions of all family members including children regarding different matters, which in turn affect their relationships with peers, friends and family members during their development. **Verma, N. (2015)** also observed somewhat similar results in her study and reported that parent's theoretical and religious values did have a significant positive effect on their children. Compatible results were also obtained by **Bartkowski, J. et al. (2008)** wherein it was revealed that the kids whose parents have high preference for religious value and who regularly attended religious services and talked with their kids about religion, such kids tend to have better self-control, social skills and approaches to learning.

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