



RESEARCH PAPER

Divergent Educational Paradigms and Moral Development: Public versus Religious Schooling

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ABSTRACT

The main objective of the study was to find out the level of moral development of students from public schools and Deeni Madrasahs. The study was descriptive in nature with quantitative design. 172 Madrasah students and 281 public elementary schools' students were taken as a sample through SRS technique. The desired sample for this study was 453 students. Two self-developed questionnaires comprising five factors of moral development: integrity, self-control, courage, honesty, obedience, and respect were utilized in this study. The collected data was analyzed with the help of SPSS. Parametric tests of significance like t-test, and one way ANOVA were applied for better interpretation of results. The summary of result shows that Deeni Madrasahs students have higher level of moral development as compare to public school students. This study recommends that; Schools should promote activities that emphasize the importance of ethical behavior; ensuring students internalize honesty and fairness in their actions.

Keywords: Moral Development, Public Schools, Deeni Madrasahs, Integrity, Self-Control, Courage, Honesty, Obedience, and Respect

Introduction

Moral education has been considered as a tool for the purposeful teaching of specific values, manners and spirit to support the pro social behavior and students' moral development (Arthur, 2019). Character is one of the key components of personality and every person's life depends greatly on it. Schools serve as the primary channel for delivering and disseminating societal values and have a crucial role to play in helping students develop moral ethics by providing them with the necessary intellectual, emotional, social, and moral training. Societies fundamentally believe that education is a tool for social transformation and improvement. Philosophers and scientists alike have demonstrated a growing interest in the study of moral behavior, concentrating on how individuals differ from one another in terms of obedience, social behavior, sympathy, and moral development as members of society (Carr, 2017).

According to Crooks (2019), moral education can be used to firmly instill moral principles as well as social graces and manners. Many people have regarded education as a moral activity. Respectful people are always cooperative and dependable, positive thinkers who inspire their friends, family, neighbors, and fellow community members to uphold the golden rule of "give respect, take respect" in all aspects of their lives. One of the fundamental elements of value education is respect, which is heavily stressed and given priority in modern, high-caliber institutions (Lee, & Sanders, 2017).

The nature of respect makes it possible to exhibit authentic leadership qualities including patience, listening, having a good attitude, moral maturity, sympathy, empathy, and kindness (Carr, 2017). Crooks, 2019 asserts that respectful people always behave respectfully and listen to others' opinions with great patience, without creating any obstacles or disturbances. Respectful people are typically free of stress, depression, frustration, conflicts, enmity, fighting, hatred, and war, but they constantly work to foster an environment that is fair and friendly for everyone.

Elffers (2020) found that it is crucial for children to make respect a permanent part of their life, conduct, and attitudes in order to succeed and assure moral adjustment in society. It is also crucial that they pay close attention to the feedback from their parents, instructors, and elders. According to Haslip (2019) "when a nation seeks to hold on its traditional values by creating a dogmatic instruction for school children in the traditional religion of that country" (Meisel, & Cochran, 2021)

According to Milson (2017), kids that have a high level of moral development demonstrate respect towards elders, parents, and instructors, which contributes to their positive integration into society. According to Diener (2018), individuals demonstrate respect, civility, and kindness, hence exhibiting good behavior and attitudes. According to Levinson (2020), these children place a high importance on receiving direction from their parents, elders, and instructors. Diener (2018) highlighted the need of instructing pupils to exhibit politeness and respect. According to Smith (2022), tolerance is the act of acknowledging and embracing the behaviors and attitudes of others in a constructive manner. According to Haslip (2019), those who possess high moral character exhibit qualities such as honesty, loyalty, and compassion.

In Pakistan now a day, there are three different ways to receive an education: through public schools, madrassahs, and private schools. It is the major role of these institutions to assist moral values education, which is seen as the primary aim of education. The Pakistan Education Conference (1947) makes it very apparent that educational institutions are responsible for educating the general public.

According to Pakistan National Education Policy (NEP, 2019), All school systems in Pakistan are required to give pupils equitable chances. According to Hood bhoy (2019), there are 73% of pupils in public schools, 26% in public schools, and 1% in madrasahs. He also believed that Pakistan's educational system had failed to instill values and skills in its students. The 18th constitutional amendment states that the provinces have primary responsibility for education. Montoya (2020) identified five key moral values: integrity, self-control, courage, honesty, and respect for both humans and non-humans. The fundamental principles of moral education, which also include fundamental human and religious values, aim to develop children's personalities and help them develop into well-behaved, disciplined citizens of a prosperous society.

In Pakistan, educational institutions are making every effort to start a program that will encourage students to develop their moral character and respect for others. "Respect" is a prophetic quality; one of the important roles of schools and colleges is to instill this value in students in order to help them become good citizens and true Pakistanis. China teaches moral principles from elementary school through graduate school in an effort to develop a moral society. The development of children's character is the responsibility of teachers, who are professionals in education similar to doctors and lawyers. Psychologists and educators contend that kids are not born with morals and values. As part of their fundamental human rights, they must acquire these qualities through education (Safder, 2018).

Now a day's our society has confronted with many social, behavioral problems, resultantly crime rate is increasing day by day, which indicates failures in developing the moral maturity in the members of the society. Our daily media print and electronic both are

complaining against terrorism, riots, conflicts in religions, sects, parties and other ethnic groups (Bureau of Police Research & Development Ministry of Interior, 2012). So, it is the time to investigate the moral level of youngsters.

The conceptual framework for the moral development of public school students and students in Deeni Madrasahs may differ based on their respective educational philosophies and cultural contexts. In public schools, moral development usually develops values such as tolerance, civic responsibility, and ethical decision-making within a secular framework (Bergdahl, & Langmann, 2018). Contrary to this, Deeni Madrasahs, being religious institutions, typically focus on moral development within the context of a specific religious tradition. Concepts like integrity, respect, compassion, integrity and justice are taught in alignment with religious teachings.

Public schools have inclusive approach while Deeni Madrasahs may prioritize the transmission of religious values and moral principles. The effectiveness of these frameworks may vary based on the educational objectives, community values, and the degree of integration between moral education and the overall curriculum (Green, & Harding, 2021). Keeping in mind the above mentioned views of educationists, psychologists, professionals and main focus of every educational policy of Pakistan, it is proved that there is a world – wide revival of interest in moral, spiritual and religious education and becomes an important area to be researched as it belongs to the character building of the students.

The development of students' moral character is the prime objective of education and educational system. Moral and religious instructions have been taught in the country's educational system since its inception; as a result, moral education is given a significant place in all of our educational plans. Pakistan is truly suffering as a result of the constantly declining moral standards at all sectors of education. This study was conducted to examine how successfully our educational systems foster students' moral development and how Deeni Madrasahs and public school students' moral perspectives vary from one another.

Hypotheses

Following null hypothesis was tested in this study:

Ho₁: No Significant difference exists between Deeni Madrasah and Public School Students on moral development factor "Integrity".

Ho₂: No Significant difference exists between Deeni Madrasah and Public School Students on moral development factor "Self Control".

Ho₃: No Significant difference exists between Deeni Madrasah and Public School Students on moral development factor "Courage".

Ho₄: No Significant difference exists between Deeni Madrasah and Public School Students on moral development factor "Honesty".

Ho₅: No Significant difference exists between Deeni Madrasah and Public School Students on moral development factor "Obedience".

Ho₆: No Significant difference exists between Deeni Madrasah and Public School Students on moral development factor "Respect".

Material and Methods

The study was descriptive in nature with quantitative design. Data from the students was gathered by using a questionnaire in order to compare the moral development of the

students from two types of educational institutions, elementary public schools and the Deeni Madrasahs situated in Dera Ghazi Khan. All Public and Deni Madrasahs of Dera Ghazi Khan District were the population of the study. This study was delimited to registered Deeni Madrasahs and Public Elementary Schools students in Dera Ghazi Khan.

Only male students of 7th grade from elementary schools and Darja Awal Students from Deeni Madrasahs were included in the study. There were 11 Deni Madrasahs and 24 Elementary schools situated in tehsil DG Khan. 343 Darja awal students were studying in 11 Madrasahs and 1021 elementary level students studying there in 24 public elementary schools.

Table 1
Overall Population of Students from School and Madrasahs

Sr.	Sector	School/ Madrasahs	N
1.	Deni Madrasahs	11	343
2.	Elementary schools	24	1021
	Total	35	1364

The sufficient sample size was taken from the two sample frames one from elementary school students and other from Madrasahs students. Random sampling technique was applied for selection of the students for the study sample. Simple Random Sampling (SRS) technique was used for the purpose of selecting sample from the sample frames. With the help of this technique 172 Madrasah students and 281 public elementary schools' students were taken as a sample after consulting "Research Advisor Table". So, the desired sample for this study was 453 students.

Table 2
Sample size for the study

Sr.	Sector	N
1.	Deni Madrasahs	172
2.	Elementary schools	281
	Total	453

To compare the moral development of students from public schools and Deeni Madrasahs, two self-developed questionnaires were utilized. These questionnaires assessed five factors of moral development: integrity, self-control, courage, honesty, obedience, and respect. The content and face validity of the instrument were ensured with the help of the supervisor and Educational experts. After their review, the questions/items were rearranged, and unnecessary questions/items were omitted. Cranach's Alpha was used to analyze and assess the internal consistency of the research instrument. The analysis of the data shown is given as under:

Table 3
Moral Development of Students from Public Schools and Deeni Madrasah

Factors	Public Schools		Deeni Madrasahs	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Integrity	3.81	1.9	5.25	2.65
Self-Control	3.75	1.8	4.98	1.94
Courage	3.99	1.7	2.84	2.18
Honesty	3.66	1.8	5.11	2.88
Obedience	4.03	1.6	5.68	2.46
Respect	4.18	1.7	5.29	1.93

Table 3 provides a comparative analysis of the moral development factors among students from Public Schools and Deeni Madrasahs. The table shows six key moral factors: Integrity, Self-Control, Courage, Honesty, Obedience, and Respect, each represented by a mean score and standard deviation (SD). On five factors, the Madrasahs students showed better level like "Integrity", "Self-Control", "Honesty", "Respect" and "Obedience" as

compared to the Public schools students with mean score The public school students were rather better on the moral factor "Courage" only.

Table 4
T-test Results for "Integrity" by Group (H₀₁)

Factor	t	df	p	Mean Difference	95% CI
Integrity	-3.45	451	.001	-0.18	[-0.28, -0.08]

Table 4 shows that Deeni Madrasah Students scored higher on integrity compared to Public School Students. The t-value of -3.45 indicates a significant difference in integrity scores between the groups, with a degree of freedom (df) of 451. The p-value of .001 further supports this significance, as it is below the conventional threshold of 0.05. Additionally, the statistics confirms that this difference is significant.

Table 5
T-test Results for "Self-Control" by Group (H₀₂)

Factor	t	df	p	Mean Difference	95% CI
Self-Control	-2.92	451	.004	-0.21	[-0.35, -0.07]

Table 5 presents that Deeni Madrasah Students reported higher self-control compared to Public School Students. The t-test comparing self-control scores between Public School Students and Deeni Madrasah Students shows its value of -2.92 indicating a statistically significant difference in self-control scores between the two groups, with a degree of freedom (df) of 451.

Table 6
T-test Results for "Courage" by Group (H₀₃)

Factor	t	df	p	Mean Difference	95% CI
Courage	-2.81	451	.005	-0.23	[-0.33, 0.06]

Table 6 displays the results of t-test comparing courage scores between Public School Students and Deeni Madrasah Students. The t-value of -2.81 indicates a significant difference in courage scores between the two groups, with a degree of freedom (df) of 451. The p-value of .005 is below the conventional significance threshold of 0.05, suggesting that the observed difference is statistically significant.

Table 7
T-test Results for "Honesty" by Group (H₀₄)

Factor	t	df	p	Mean Difference	95% CI
Honesty	-3.21	451	.001	-0.15	[-0.24, -0.06]

Table 7 presents the mean difference of -0.15 suggests that Deeni Madrasah Students reported higher honesty scores compared to Public School Students. The t-value of -3.21 indicates a significant difference in honesty scores between the two groups, with a degree of freedom (df) of 451. The p-value of .001 further confirms this significance, as it is well below the critical threshold of 0.05.

Table 8
T-test Results for "Obedience" by Group (H₀₅)

Factor	t	df	p	Mean Difference	95% CI
Obedience	-2.73	451	.007	-0.15	[-0.26, -0.04]

Table 8 provides the mean difference of -0.15 suggests that Deeni Madrasah Students have higher obedience scores compared to Public School Students. The t-test comparing obedience scores between Public School Students and Deeni Madrasah Students. The t-value of indicates a significant difference in obedience scores between the two groups, with a degree of freedom (df) of 451.

Table 9
T-test Results for "Respect" by Group (H₀₆)

Factor	t	df	p	Mean Difference	95% CI
Respect	-2.11	451	.035	-0.14	[-0.27, -0.01]

Table 9 presents that Deeni Madrasah Students scored higher in respect compared to Public School Students. The t-value of -2.11 indicates a significant difference in "respect" scores between the two groups, with a degree of freedom (df) of 451. The p-value of .035 further reinforces this significance, as it is below the threshold of 0.05.

Conclusion

The comparative analysis of this study shows that the level of moral development of students from Public Schools remained low as compared to the students from Deeni Madrasahs. Moral factors like Integrity, Self-Control, Courage, Honesty, Obedience, and Respect were analyzed on the study sample and resultantly the level of moral and ethical development of the students from Deeni Madrasahs remained better than the public school students. It is usually assumed that the curriculum and the educators from Public Schools inculcate such traits and characteristics in the students that further emphasize their critical thinking, ethical reasoning, and civic sense. This result gives rise to a lot of questions; this may be because of the curriculum or its way of dissemination or the institutional environment or simply because of the Teachers' commitment. This shows that the value system in schools is alive just in the form of book content only while its transaction and transactional sources seem less committed regarding its inculcation.

The findings of this study on moral traits seem align with the results of the study conducted by Ahmad & Rehman, 2018; Iqbal et al., 2022 in which Madrasahs students were found better in ethical behavior as compare to the students from Government schools in Pakistan. Studies indicate that the organized setting in religious schools frequently fosters an increased sense of moral responsibility and personal accountability (Yousaf et al., 2021). The public schools are lacking in the development of this crucial factor among their students as compare to the students from Deeni Madrasahs. This is also wonderful and seems a reverse phenomenon that may tell a story of non-seriousness of the public schools management with special reference to Islamic touch.

In the domain of Self-Control, Deeni Madrasah students achieved higher scores (4.98 and 3.75). Self-control is frequently highlighted in religious education, where students are urged to follow disciplinary practices like regular prayer and fasting, which may enhance self-regulation (Hassan et al., 2020). Research conducted between 2018 and 2021 indicates that students in religious environments frequently exhibit enhanced self-discipline, attributed to the various curricular and extracurricular expectations they encounter (Qureshi, 2021).

In contrast, a different trend is noted with Courage, as Public School students achieve a higher score (3.99) compared to Deeni Madrasahs students (2.84). The concept of "Courage" here might be associated with self-expression and risk-taking, traits that are often highlighted in secular or public education settings that promote critical thinking and open dialogue (Iqbal et al., 2022). Earlier studies indicate that students in more progressive educational environments frequently demonstrate higher self-confidence and a greater willingness to articulate differing opinions, characteristics that may be associated with bravery (Saleem, 2018). The Madrasah students usually belong to the poor and deprived background and psychology indicates that poverty itself generates fear and discourage among the holders. So, it may be natural due to this aspect among the Madrasah students as compare to Public School students.

Regarding Obedience and Respect, Deeni Madrasahs students achieved higher scores (5.68 and 5.29, respectively) compared to Public School students (4.03 and 4.18). A

lot of research studies show that the moral factors like obedience and respect are usually considered fundamental and core values adhered to religious educational frameworks, where students learn to honor authority figures and follow prescribed rules (Farooq & Baig, 2020). This shows that the Public schools do not take more interest in moral values. While, on the other hand, Public Schools apparently seem to cultivate courage through a curriculum that may emphasize independence and open expression. The results of the study align with contemporary studies that emphasize the influence of diverse educational settings on the moral and ethical growth of students in distinct manners (Javed & Khan, 2021).

The elevated mean score for Integrity among Deeni Madrasahs students indicates a robust religious framework that prioritizes moral values, instilling principles of honesty and truthfulness from a young age. Ahmad and Rahman (2018) highlight that Deeni Madrasahs focus on ethical teachings from religious texts, consistently reinforcing integrity as a fundamental value. Qureshi (2019) observed that students attending religious schools frequently demonstrate a high level of commitment to moral standards. This may be linked to the regular engagements with religious leaders who serve as exemplars, thereby continually promoting a greater appreciation for integrity (Yousaf, 2021).

Researches indicate that educational environments rooted in ethical and moral principles foster a lifestyle characterized by ethical traits. Rahim and Qureshi (2020) in his study emphasized that students in Madrasahs are often immersed in settings that require impulse control, particularly through the promotion of patience and humility as essential religious virtues. Furthermore, a study conducted by Khan et al. (2020) indicates that organized activities in Deeni Madrasahs promote habits of discipline and patience, which can greatly enhance self-control.

Public School students demonstrated a greater level of "Courage" compared to their Deeni Madrasahs peers. In a study, Iqbal et al. (2022), concludes that public school settings promote individuality and self-expression, frequently facilitated by open classroom discussions, debates, and a curriculum that emphasizes questioning and critical thinking. These practices can enhance students' confidence to take risks and articulate divergent ideas, which are frequently regarded as acts of bravery.

The elevated levels of honesty noted among Deeni Madrasahs students indicate a clear focus on honesty within religious teachings. Ali et al. (2021) conducted a study that emphasizes the importance of honesty as a fundamental virtue in Islamic education, The observations made by Javed (2021) align with these findings, noting that students from religious institutions frequently exhibit a stronger dedication to ethical principles such as honesty, attributed to the ongoing reinforcement of these values.

The trait of obedience is significantly greater among Deeni Madrasahs students compared to Public School students. This aligns with the findings of Khan (2021), which indicate that religious schools typically prioritize obedience to authority as a demonstration of respect and devotion. Siddiqui (2022) discusses that in Madrasahs obedience is regarded not just as an academic requirement but also as a moral obligation, deeply embedded in the respect for teachers, elders, and figures of religious authority. The emphasis on hierarchical respect can result in increased levels of obedience, as students learn that adhering to rules is a crucial component of moral growth.

Finally, the elevated "Respect" scores observed among Deeni Madrasah students indicate the influence of the cultural and religious teachings that are prominent in these educational settings. Madrasahs environments typically foster a deep respect for others, especially those in positions of authority, as an ethical obligation (Hassan & Malik, 2020). This is consistent with the findings of Rahman and Iqbal (2021), which emphasizes that an organized setting in Madrasahs promotes respect for both elders and peers as an indication of moral virtue. Khan (2022) discovered that students in religious schools perceive respect

as a manifestation of their personal values and religious beliefs, indicating that it is a profoundly internalized principle.

Recommendations

- Moral and religious values should be integrated across all school subjects. with structured lessons on honesty, fairness, and ethical decision-making embedded into the curriculum.
- Teachers particularly, in public schools, should be given training in order to actively reinforce and instill strong ethical behavior within the students.
- The divide between schools and Deeni Madrasahs should be reduced by incorporating religious education into school systems while introducing modern, professional, and social subjects into Madrasah curricula.
- Activity-based programs such as discussions, case studies and project based learning should be adopted in both types of institutes in order to promote critical thinking, ethical reflection, and responsible decision-making.
- Parents, communities and educational institutions should be encouraged to develop a unified approach to moral development and reinforce values beyond the classroom.
- Leadership and character-building programs should be introduced, especially in Deeni Madrasahs.

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