

Value-conflict among adolescents: A study on locale differences

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■ **ABSTRACT :** Values are listed as motivational factors that determine an individual's lifestyle, while the conflict is part of human life which is inevitable to avoid. Value-conflicts lie at the very root of an individual's identity, they are extremely difficult to resolve and deescalation of the conflicts become an essential need for the welfare of mankind because they hold the seed of personality disorganization and inversely related to adjustment. Conflict regarding intrapersonal and interpersonal value preference starts occurring from late childhood, while it becomes more prominent among adolescents as they are more prone to various types of conflict. The present research has made an attempt to study value preferences and value-conflict among college students of Ludhiana district. The sample included 200 rural and 200 urban college students (400), in age range of 18-20 years. Value-conflict scale developed by Bharadwaj (2001) was used to measure value-conflict among adolescents. Result revealed that there was no significant difference in overall value conflict among rural and urban adolescents while, dimension wise there was significant difference in evasion vs fortitude, dependence vs self reliance and pragmatism vs idealism. On the basis of mean, in most of the dimensions respondents were in value conflict. Rural respondents had value conflict with a tendency towards evasion, dependence, selfishness and pragmatism while, urban respondents had value conflict with a tendency towards fortitude, self reliance, selfishness and fear. In hate vs love both rural and urban respondents had love value probability, in fear vs assertion rural respondents had fear value probability and in pragmatism and idealism urban respondents had pragmatism value probability.

■ **KEY WORDS:** Conflict, Values, Adolescents

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Values are the salient features of the behaviour. In the society, we observe various types of individuals. There are basic individual differences which are noted in personality make-up, attitudes, likings, behaviours, views, values, beliefs etc. The value is a learned 'good'. It is a type of norm found in various

cultures along with other patterns of behaviour (Singh, 1993). Values, as they posited, are the individual's cognitive response to basic needs, formulated as motivational goals.

Rokeach (1973) defined a value as an enduring belief, a specific mode of conduct or end state of

existence which is personally or socially preferable and divided the value system into two parts— one part devoted to instrumental or process- oriented values and one devoted to terminal or goal-oriented values. One of the most significant concepts in Rokeach's theory is that once a value is learned it becomes part of a value system in which each value is ordered in priority, relative to other values.

The psychological theory of development as set out by Erikson proceeds by stages. The fifth stage is called Identity versus role confusion. With a newly emerging cognitive structure the adolescent think about thinking. The questions become "who am I?" and "where am I going?" A sense of identity emerges; a feeling that one is a unique human being, with likes, dislikes, goals and some control of one's own destiny. The adolescents suffer more deeply than at any other time in life from a confusion of roles, or identity confusion. The adolescents may feel the expectations from others to make important decisions yet be unable to do so. Being rebellious, self- conscious or retreating of childishness are characteristics of this time. Parents and teacher may view the identity crisis of the adolescents as dangerous, the whole future of the individual and the next generation seeming to depend on it.

Simply stated, adolescence is a period of life characterized by several major changes that bring the person from childhood to adulthood (Lerner and Galambos, 1984).

Social behaviour of an adolescent seems to be interpersonal and determined by attitudes, beliefs and values. Adolescents can be both humanly pro-socio-cultural and destructively anti-social as they are not necessarily aware of all their basic values, some may be held sub-consciously and many even conflict with conscious values. If their value assumptions are unclear or contradictory, or they have little faith in them, they would likely to face untold difficulties in making their choices towards certain goals and life situations.

The necessity of making a choice among values commonly involves cognitive strain; it is difficult to make up one's mind especially when each alternative offers values that the others does not and the choice is an important one (Coleman, 1976). Conflict is a state of being torn between competing forces (Davidson and Neale, 1998) or in which more than one response tendency is aroused (Gottesfeld, 1979) strive simultaneously for expression where satisfaction of one drive is

accompanied by frustration of another drive, happens to be a central factor in human existence. Every conflict has a definite predisposition to escalate, to become more intense and hostile, to proliferate more issues and to involve stronger and more destructive attempts to control (Fisher, 1982), hence, it involves controlled and specified application of sanctions in a fashion of "increasing magnitude over time" and de-escalation-involves the same process with a "decreasing magnitude over time" (Bonoma, 1975).

Value-conflict is perceived incompatibilities of actions and goals (Myers, 1993) that prevents another, obstructs, interferes, injures or in some ways make another activity less likely or less effective. It occurs at all levels of human social functioning and, thus, value-conflict is natural and inevitable. When adolescents, people, groups, organizations and nations interact there are chances that some form of a value-conflict may take place. Whenever, two or more incompatible goals, motives, activities or impulses are active at the same time in relation to desirable or pro-social aspects of the well-being of the humanity, they can be said to be in value-conflicts. It involves incompatible principles, ideologies, religion, socio-politico-aspirations and cultural possessions and are found responsible for the promotion of social tensions (Bhardwaj, 1991; 1994 and Chauhan and Bhardwaj, 1992) and unrest.

Empirical research has linked values to behaviours among adult population; however, few studies have been conducted among adolescents. Given their developing moral reasoning and abstract thinking, adolescents may pursue different values from adults and sometime they just remained in a state of confusion.

It is important to note that inculcation of values is always to remain exposed to a complex network of environmental factors, such as home, school, peer group, socio-politico conditions and media at large. Various researchers have provided universal frameworks to compare values across cultures [Hofer and Peetsma (2005); Hofstede (1980 and 2001); Inglehart (1990, 1997 and 2006); Schwartz (1994, 1999 and 2006); Spini (2003)]. Researchers have been interested in whether some cultural similarities or differences (factors related to history, climate, socio-political structure or types of institutions within various regions or neighbouring countries that are geographically close) can influence the value priorities of groups.

Recent studies have increasingly shown the dynamic and complex interrelatedness of the socio cultural context and socialization values, as socialization value systems in all cultures (despite the specific cultural ideology or developmental model) include aspects of independence (Tulviste *et al.*, 2012). Obtaining values depends on the cultural context and values are influenced by a state's ideology, policy and economic resources.

In the lack of definite aim of life people are moving to and fro. The adolescents and youth of modern age are living in the stage of uncertainty as they have not been given proper affection, attention as well as guidance to cope with new situations.

There are a number of studies on value preferences and interpersonal conflict among adolescents, but conflict in intrapersonal context is quite untouched area in India. Not many studies have recorded incidences of value-conflict among adolescents and rural-urban comparative analysis of incidences. Hence, the present study was planned to gain a deeper understanding of intrapersonal value-conflict experienced by adolescents. The study was undertaken to explore and compare the incidences of value-conflict among rural and urban adolescents of Ludhiana district.

■ RESEARCH METHODS

Sample:

A sample of 400 college going students, equally distributed over gender (200 from rural and 200 from urban area) was randomly selected from government colleges of Ludhiana district. Rural sample was collected from purposively selected three blocks of rural Ludhiana and for urban sample; students were selected from government college of Ludhiana city by using random selection technique.

Tools :

Value-conflict scale :

Value-conflict inventory by Bharadwaj (2001) was used to assess incidences of value-conflict. It contains 24 items to be rated on five point scale, measuring value-conflict in six different dimensions; evasion vs fortitude, dependence vs self reliance, selfishness vs probity, hate vs love, fear vs assertion and pragmatism vs idealism. value-conflict was categorised into five category *i.e.* clear negative value, normal negative value, value-conflict, normal positive value and clear positive value.

Procedure :

The tool was administered to the randomly selected group of students, by distributing questionnaire. Answer sheets were scored following the scoring procedure given in the manual. On the basis of raw score percentages, Z value were calculated to determining the differences.

■ RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 highlights the per cent distribution of respondents as per level of their value-conflict in different dimensions. The result in Table1 highlighted that nearly half (49.5%) of rural respondents had value-conflict followed by normal positive value category (18%) while 17.5 per cent respondents had tendency towards fortitude. Higher percentage (40%) of urban adolescents had value-conflict followed by clear negative value *i.e.* evasion (19%) and normal negative value category.

Regarding Dependence vs self reliance, 42 per cent rural respondents and 48 per cent urban respondents were facing value-conflict. Data further explained that more rural respondents (18%) displayed inclination towards dependency against 13 per cent of urban respondents while in clear positive value, self-reliance, urban respondents were high (18%) in comparison to 11 per cent of rural respondents.

As far as selfishness vs probity is concerned, majority of the respondents (37%) from total sample were in value-conflict category which was slightly more for rural respondents (38.5%) as compared to urban respondents (35.5%) followed by normal negative value category by both rural (26.5%) and urban (28.00%) respondents.

In hate vs love dimension higher percentage (32%) of rural respondents were inclined towards love and 23.5 per cent respondents had value-conflict, whereas almost equal percentage of urban respondents had value-conflict (25%), normal positive value (25%) and clear positive value assumption (24.5%).

Results related to fear vs assertion revealed that majority of rural (37%) and urban (39.55) respondents had value-conflict, followed by tendency towards fear (24% and 21%) in case of both rural and urban respondents, while, only 10.5 per cent rural adolescents and 12 per cent urban respondents had tendency towards assertion.

Table further highlighted that higher percentage (32.5%) of the total respondents had value-conflict. Area

wise results depicts that majority of rural (28.5%) and urban respondents (36.5%) had value-conflict, followed by more rural respondents (22.5%) in normal positive value level *i.e.* pragmatism against 20 per cent of urban respondents in clear value assumption.

Data presented in Table 2 highlights the per cent distribution of respondents as per levels of value-conflicts and difference in the value-conflict of rural and urban respondents. It is evident from the data that higher percentage (33.0%) of the respondents was in value-conflict category.

The distribution through clear negative assumption (14.0%), clear positive value assumption (15.5%), and normal value assumption towards negative value

(15.25%) and towards positive value (12.25%) dimension were almost on similar line.

On probing the data with regard to rural and urban respondents the distribution of respondents in different category showed similar trend as higher percentage of respondents were in value-conflict category in both rural (44.5%) and urban (41.5%) area. Ten per cent rural respondents were in normal positive value assumption as compared to 14.5 per cent urban respondents, while in normal negative value assumption both rural and urban respondents had nearly equal proportion *i.e.* 15.5 per cent and 15 per cent, respectively.

Data further depicts that equal proportion (14%) of rural and urban respondents had clear negative value

Table 1 : Locale wise distribution of respondents as per levels of value-conflict dimensions

Dimensions	Levels	Rural (n ₁ =200)		Urban (n ₂ =200)		Total (n=400)	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Evasion vs fortitude	Clear negative value	27	13.5	38	19.0	65	16.25
	Normal value	18	9.0	38	19.0	56	14.0
	Value-conflict	99	49.5	80	40.0	179	44.75
	Normal value	21	18.0	18	9.0	39	9.75
	Clear positive value	35	17.5	26	13.0	61	15.25
Dependence vs self reliance	Clear negative value	36	18.0	27	13.5	63	15.75
	Normal value	36	18.0	19	9.5	55	13.75
	Value-conflict	84	42.0	96	48.0	180	45.0
	Normal value	22	11.0	22	11.0	44	11.0
	Clear positive value	22	11.0	36	18.0	58	14.5
Selfishness vs probity	Clear negative value	23	11.5	21	10.5	44	11.0
	Normal value	53	26.5	56	28.0	109	27.25
	Value-conflict	77	38.5	71	35.5	148	37.0
	Normal value	28	14.0	26	13.0	54	13.5
	Clear positive value	19	9.5	26	13.0	45	11.25
Hate vs love*	Clear negative value	16	8.0	20	10.0	36	9.0
	Normal value	29	14.5	30	15.0	59	14.75
	Value-conflict	47	23.5	50	25.0	97	24.25
	Normal value	44	22.0	51	25.5	95	23.75
	Clear positive value	64	32.0	49	24.5	113	28.25
Fear vs assertion	Clear negative value	48	24.0	42	21.0	90	22.5
	Normal value	40	20.0	33	16.5	73	18.25
	Value-conflict	74	37.0	79	39.5	153	38.25
	Normal value	17	8.5	22	11.0	39	9.75
	Clear positive value	21	10.5	24	12.0	45	11.25
Pragmatism vs idealism*	Clear negative value	19	9.5	31	15.5	50	12.5
	Normal value	27	13.5	24	12.0	51	12.75
	Value-conflict	57	28.5	73	36.5	130	32.50
	Normal value	45	22.5	32	16.0	77	19.25
	Clear positive value	52	26.0	40	20.0	92	23.0

assumption. There were 16.5 per cent of the rural respondents and 14.5 per cent of the urban respondents who were reported to have clear positive value.

Data in Table 3 indicated the mean rank score across the categories of value-conflict of rural and urban adolescents. Data further depicts that there was a significant difference ($Z=1.96$) between value conflict mean scores of rural and urban adolescents however, in all other categories there was no significant difference. Interpretation of mean score revealed that rural respondents scored higher than urban respondents in all categories.

The overall mean rank score of rural and urban respondents were reported to be 201.36 and 199.64, respectively and difference in their value-conflict was found non-significant ($Z= 0.148$). It can also be noted from Table 3 that locale has no significant influence on composite value-conflict of adolescents because the

distribution of the respondents across the levels of composite value-conflict was not significant. These findings were in contrast to Nepal (2012) who has reported significant difference ($t=2.81$) on internalizing conflicts among rural and urban adolescent.

Table 4 throws light on the differences in various dimensions of value-conflict of rural and urban respondents. It is evident that significant differences were observed between rural and urban respondents in the dimensions like evasion vs fortitude ($t=2.25$), dependence vs self-reliance ($t=2.55$) and idealism vs pragmatism ($t= 2.05$), whereas, non-significant differences were reported in dimensions like selfishness vs probity ($t=0.47$), hate vs love ($t=0.963$) and fear vs assertion ($t=1.43$).

On the basis of sten mean score, data revealed that both rural and urban had evasion vs fortitude value conflict with a tendency towards fortitude among rural adolescents ($M=5.72$) and towards evasion among urban respondents

Table 2 : Local wise distribution of respondents as per levels of value conflict

Value-conflict	Rural (n ₁ =200)		Urban (n ₂ =200)		Total n(n ₁ +n ₂)= 400	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Clear negative value assumption	28	14.0	28	14.0	56	14.0
Normal value assumption	31	15.5	30	15.0	61	15.25
Value conflict	89	44.5	83	41.5	172	43.0
Normal value assumption	19	9.5	29	14.5	49	12.25
Clear positive value assumption	33	16.5	29	14.5	62	15.5

Table 3: Difference between rural and urban adolescents in categories of value-conflict on the basis of mean score

Value-conflict	Rural (n ₁ =200)	Urban (n ₂ =200)	Z-value (By using Mann Whitney test)
	Mean rank score	Mean rank score	
Clear negative value assumption	29.68	27.32	.546 ^{NS}
Normal value assumption	32.60	29.35	.722 ^{NS}
Value conflict	90.99	81.69	1.96*
Normal value assumption	26.84	23.83	.724 ^{NS}
Clear positive value assumption	31.14	31.91	.172 ^{NS}
Overall score	201.36	199.64	.148 ^{NS}

* and ** indicates significance of values at P=0.05 and P=0.01, respectively; NS–Non significant

Table 4 : Difference between rural and urban adolescents in dimensions of value-conflict

Dimensions	Rural (n ₁ =200)		Urban (n ₂ =200)		t-value
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	
Evasion vs fortitude	5.18	2.38	5.72	2.40	2.25*
Dependence vs self reliance	5.05	2.40	5.67	2.44	2.55*
Selfishness vs probity	5.11	2.25	5.22	2.42	.470 ^{NS}
Hate vs love*	6.54	2.59	6.29	2.59	.963 ^{NS}
Fear vs assertion	4.65	2.52	5.02	2.54	1.43 ^{NS}
Pragmatism vs idealism*	5.75	2.62	6.29	2.57	2.05*

* and ** indicates significance of values at P=0.05 and P=0.01, respectively; NS= Non-significant

(M=5.18). In dependency vs self reliance dimension both rural and urban had value conflict with a tendency towards dependency (M=5.05) among rural respondents and towards self reliance (M=5.67) among urban respondents. Both rural and urban adolescents had selfishness vs probity value conflict with a tendency towards selfishness (M=5.11 and M= 5.22, respectively).

Rural adolescents had greater love probability (M=6.54) as compared to urban adolescents (M=6.29) while, fear (M=4.65) value found to be associated with rural respondents compared to fear vs assertion value conflict with a tendency towards fear (M=5.02) among urban respondents. In pragmatism vs idealism dimension rural respondents had value conflict with a tendency towards idealism while, urban respondent had clear pragmatism value assumption.

A comparison of mean rank scores of value-conflict and its various dimensions among rural and urban adolescents as shown in Table 4 implies that there was significant difference between the mean of evasion vs fortitude, dependence vs self reliance and pragmatism vs idealism. Rural respondents were high on dependency in making decision, carrying difficult task and were more idealistic in behaviour. This finding complements Boyd's (2001) study which stated that decision-making is higher among students, who live in urban areas. Billig (2002) discovered that urban youth has more boldness to face social or community problems, more action oriented in their solutions, create more solutions, and proceed with more rational solutions. Researchers found that students in a rural setting took a deeper, more analytic and idealistic approach to the problem solving (Billig and Meyer, 2002; Billig *et al.*, 2003).

Conclusion :

Results showed that rural and urban adolescents are facing value-conflict, however the difference in overall level of value-conflict is non-significant, but there is significant difference in different dimensions of value-conflict. It is evident that urban respondents had slightly greater tendency towards positive values in comparison to rural respondents. Sometimes social desirability causes a tendency to follow social norms but with severe intrapersonal conflicts, the suffering may flourish into a disturbed personality. So, as we know that value-conflict, not only amongst adolescent but also in all adults is inevitable and we cannot deny it but the experience of

adolescents could be improved and altered by proper guidance and counselling.

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