



A STUDY OF THE CORRELATION BETWEEN PRO-SOCIAL ORIENTATION
AND CHARACTER STRENGTH AMONG THE ADOLESCENT STUDENTS OF
KARACHI

¹Syed Moeenuddin Peerzada, ²Dr. Nasir Sulman

¹Ph.D. Scholar, Teacher Education Department, University of Karachi

²Professor / Dean, Teacher Education Department, University of Karachi

Abstract

The study analyzed Prosocial orientation in Karachi's youth and its correlation with moral values: teamwork, fairness, leadership, kindness, emotional intelligence, forgiveness, religiousness, prudence, self-regulation, modesty, and valor. The research used a quantitative approach with a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire. 210 graduate students (119 boys and 91 girls) from three Karachi universities participated. Inferential statistics tested the hypotheses. The findings showed that Karachi's youth lack the desired Prosocial orientation, with girls scoring slightly better than boys. Prosocial orientation varied based on prior education, with students having higher school certificates showing higher Prosocial orientation than those from the Cambridge system. The youth were deficient in all moral values except religiousness. Teamwork, fairness, leadership, kindness, emotional intelligence, forgiveness, religiousness, and modesty correlated significantly with Prosocial orientation, while prudence, self-regulation, and valor did not. Religiousness had the strongest correlation with Prosocial orientation.

Keywords: Prosocial orientation, character strength, affective domain, teamwork skills, fairness, leadership skills, kindness, emotional intelligence, forgiveness, religiousness, prudence, self-regulation, modesty, valor.

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Corresponding Authors*:

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of education has historically been to shape individuals' character and instill moral and ethical values, thereby producing good citizens (Arthur, 2005). However, society is in a constant state of flux, and these changes are reflected in the attitudes and behaviors of young people. Social problems such as rule violations, drug use, abuse, oppression, robbery, and killings have become increasingly prevalent in both Western countries and Pakistan. This moral decline among youth has been emphasized by Masath (2013). Consequently, it is crucial to investigate how moral development is fostered among students in Pakistan and how educational institutions and society promote ethical practices and contribute to students' moral growth (Lodhi & Siddiqui, 2014).

Students typically do not learn in isolation; rather, they learn in collaboration with teachers, classmates, and families. Emotions can significantly influence their academic commitment, work ethic, dedication, and, ultimately, academic success. Given the impact of social interactions and emotional development on students' learning, schools and families must prioritize these aspects of the learning process (Joseph, Roger, Allison, Rebecca, & Kriston, 2011).

This research aims to examine Prosocial orientation and its correlation with moral values, specifically teamwork, fairness, leadership, kindness, emotional intelligence, forgiveness, prudence, modesty, valor, religiousness, and self-regulation, among the youth of Karachi. The study also seeks to understand the level of these moral values in Karachi's youth.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the level of Prosocial orientation among adolescent students in Karachi?
2. What is the character strength of adolescent students in Karachi?
3. Is there a correlation between Prosocial orientation and character strength among adolescent students in Karachi?
4. Is there a difference in Prosocial orientation and character strength among adolescents based on their education system?

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To explore the Prosocial orientation of adolescent students in Karachi.
2. To explore the character strength of adolescent students in Karachi.
3. To study the correlation between Prosocial orientation and the character strength of adolescent students in Karachi.
4. To study whether there is any difference in Prosocial orientation and character strength of adolescents based on the system of education.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

1. The adolescent students of Karachi possess the desired level of Prosocial orientation.
2. The adolescent students of Karachi possess the desired character strength.
3. Prosocial orientation and character strength are correlated among the adolescent students.
4. There is no variation in Prosocial orientation and character strength among adolescent students across the three education systems.

RELATED LITERATURE REVIEW

PROSOCIAL ORIENTATION

Prosocial orientation is defined as an individual's action to help another person or prevent them from encountering any problems. It encompasses various forms of interaction. A study by Margret et al. (2015) illustrated this with examples such as spontaneously saving someone from physical danger, helping someone push a stalled car, and listening sympathetically to another person's troubles.

Humans are inherently social beings, interacting with family members, classmates, coworkers, friends, and neighbors in various social settings governed by specific rules, social roles, customs, obligations, expectations, and restrictions. These elements provide a framework

for understanding and decision-making. However, Prosocial orientation has received limited attention in the context of social systems or with specific consideration to the influence of particular settings (Montada & Hans Werner, 2012).

Montada & Hans Werner (2012) examined altruism in social systems, using the family as a model. Their research focused on why adult children tend to help their elderly parents, even when public services are available. The study identified six predictor variables: (1) demographic characteristics; (2) the psychological characteristics of the relationships between daughter and mother; (3) generalized temperaments of the daughter; (4) habitual Prosocial behavior of the daughter toward her mother; (5) Prosocial attitudes and personal Prosocial standards; and (6) appraisals believed to be related to decision making. A longitudinal study involving 673 adult daughters with living mothers was conducted using a questionnaire. The results indicated that the quality of the relationship between the daughter and the mother was the most significant predictor of help. Similarly, habitual Prosocial behavior was a significant predictor, as were general attitudes toward Prosocial behavior in daughters toward their mothers' needs and desires. Lastly, the perceived ability and opportunity to help was the most crucial predictor of help.

Youth participation in social activities involves engaging in responsible actions to assist others in genuine need, with opportunities for decision-making and planning. This engagement can manifest as selfless acts of caring and kindness or civic engagement aimed at addressing community issues and fostering social change. Contributing to the betterment of the community can signify developing social competence in youth and enhance their social identity. By helping others, young people develop a sense of belonging and stakeholding in society (Scales & Peter, 2003).

Scales & Peter (2003) explored the indicators of positive youth, Prosocial orientation, and community service. They surveyed 5,136 students from grades 6 to 12 in Colorado Springs. The results indicated that females demonstrated more Prosocial responses than males, and white students and those whose parents had higher education levels also exhibited more Prosocial responses. Prosocial orientation was positively correlated with a positive orientation to schoolwork, school belonging, respect for diversity, being appreciated as a leader, active coping, and resilience in challenging conditions.

PROSOCIAL ORIENTATION IN PSYCHOLOGY

Prosocial behavior extends beyond simple good deeds; it can range from holding a door open for someone to dedicating one's life to a cause that benefits others. The key elements are the intention and the outcome: the behavior must be voluntary, motivated by a desire to help others, even in the absence of immediate personal gain.

The study of prosocial conduct in psychology has evolved over time. Initially viewed as the opposite of antisocial behavior, the concept has become more nuanced, encompassing a wide range of actions, motives, and outcomes (Caprara, G. V., Alessandri, G., Eisenberg, N., 2012).

PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOR TYPES AND EXAMPLES

Prosocial behavior exists on a continuum, from minor, routine actions to significant, life-altering choices. Altruism represents the extreme, characterized by selfless concern for others' well-being, even at personal cost.

THE PSYCHOLOGY BEHIND PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOR

Several factors motivate individuals to act prosocially. Empathy, the ability to understand and share others' feelings, is a primary driver. Studies have shown that empathy activates brain regions associated with emotional processing and decision-making, prompting individuals to help those in need.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOR

Prosocial behavior develops throughout an individual's lifespan, beginning in early childhood. Research indicates that even infants exhibit empathetic responses to others' distress. As children

mature, they internalize social norms and values, further shaping their prosocial tendencies. Parenting style, peer interactions, and cultural influences all play a role in this development.

PROSOCIAL ORIENTATION AND MORAL VALUES

Prosocial orientation is closely linked to moral values. Moral values provide the framework for determining what is right and wrong, influencing individuals to act in ways that benefit others.

Key moral values that foster Prosocial behavior include:

- **Teamwork:** The ability to collaborate effectively with others toward a common goal.
- **Fairness:** Treating others equitably and justly.
- **Leadership:** Guiding and inspiring others to act prosocially.
- **Kindness:** Showing compassion and concern for others.
- **Emotional Intelligence:** Understanding and managing one's own emotions and recognizing and responding to the emotions of others.
- **Forgiveness:** Letting go of resentment and anger toward those who have wronged us.
- **Prudence:** Exercising caution and good judgment in decision-making.
- **Modesty:** Being humble and unselfish.
- **Valor:** Demonstrating courage in standing up for what is right.
- **Religiousness:** Adhering to religious beliefs and values that promote prosocial behavior.
- **Self-regulation:** The ability to control one's impulses and behavior.

These moral values provide the foundation for individuals to develop a Prosocial orientation, motivating them to act in ways that promote the well-being of others and society as a whole.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

PURPOSE AND DESIGN

This research aims to investigate Prosocial orientation and its correlation with moral values—teamwork, fairness, leadership, kindness, emotional intelligence, forgiveness, prudence, modesty, valor, religiousness, and self-regulation—among the youth of Karachi. The study employs a quantitative paradigm, utilizing a survey questionnaire to gather data relevant to the research objectives.

The study uses a survey research method. There is no data manipulation; any differences in the means result from pre-existing differences in variables such as gender, education level, parents' education level, parents' income level, and residential area.

Survey research involves converting research questions into questionnaires, which are then distributed to respondents. The completed questionnaires are coded to generate data (Newman, 2000). This method allows researchers to measure various variables based on respondents' reports of their experiences and behaviors, providing insights into the thoughts and attributes of the population under study (Newman, 2000).

PARTICIPANTS

The study population comprises higher education students in Karachi. The sample for this research consists of 210 students from three higher education institutions in Karachi. The participants were selected using a convenience sampling technique. The sample included both male (119) and female (91) students.

INSTRUMENT

A survey questionnaire was used to collect data for this research. The questionnaire consisted of 60 items, using a five-point Likert scale, along with questions about the respondents' demographic information.

DATA COLLECTION

The instrument was administered in person. In total, 210 students completed the questionnaire, including 119 males and 91 females.



ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Prior permission was obtained from the management of the institutions, and participation was voluntary. The identity and responses of each participant were kept confidential and will not be disclosed under any circumstances.

STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES

To analyze the data and test the research hypotheses, the following statistical techniques were employed:

- One Sample T-test
- Independent sample T-test
- One Way ANOVA
- Correlation analysis

These analyses were conducted using IBM SPSS version 22.

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

The research on Prosocial orientation and its relationship with moral values among Karachi's youth involved collecting data through a 60-item, 5-point Likert scale survey questionnaire. The survey was conducted at three higher education institutions in Karachi, with 210 students participating (119 boys and 91 girls).

RELIABILITY OF THE INSTRUMENT

The reliability of the data was assessed using statistical tests. The questionnaire, comprising 60 items, was analyzed in SPSS. The Cronbach's alpha value for the overall questionnaire was 0.795, exceeding the minimum acceptable threshold of 0.5, thus confirming the data's reliability. The Cronbach's alpha values for each variable are shown in Table 1.

Variable	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Prosocial orientation	10	0.741
Teamwork	6	0.691
Fairness	4	0.712
Leadership	4	0.721
Kindness	5	0.731
Emotional Intelligence	4	0.685
Forgiveness	4	0.714
Religiousness	5	0.668
Prudence	4	0.711
Self-regulation	4	0.694
Modesty	5	0.724
Valor	5	0.681
Overall	60	0.795



DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

The table below provides the means and standard deviations for Prosocial orientation and the moral values under study.

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation
Prosocial orientation	3.7714	0.47892
Teamwork	4.1500	0.68161
Fairness	4.0714	0.76218
Leadership	3.9667	0.82245
Kindness	4.2476	0.64797
Emotional Intelligence	3.8571	0.77189
Forgiveness	3.9619	0.74128
Religiousness	4.3190	0.63574
Prudence	3.9476	0.74128
Self-regulation	3.8667	0.74612
Modesty	3.2410	0.75905
Valor	3.4676	0.80652

HYPOTHESES TESTING

HYPOTHESES 1

- **H01:** The youth of Karachi possess the desired level of Prosocial orientation.
- **Ha1:** The youth of Karachi do not possess the desired level of Prosocial orientation.

A one-sample t-test was conducted to compare the sample mean to a hypothesized mean of 4. The results indicate a statistically significant difference ($p < 0.05$), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. The Prosocial orientation level of Karachi's youth is not at the desired level.

HYPOTHESES 2

- **H02:** Prosocial orientation is correlated with teamwork skills, fairness, leadership skills, kindness, emotional intelligence, forgiveness, prudence, modesty, valor, religiousness, and self-regulation.
- **Ha2:** Prosocial orientation is not correlated with these moral values.

Correlation analysis was used to examine the relationships between Prosocial orientation and the specified moral values. The results are presented in Table 4.

Variable	Prosocial orientation
Prosocial orientation	1
Teamwork	0.174
Fairness	0.139



Leadership	0.256
Kindness	0.233
Emotional Intelligence	0.218
Forgiveness	0.153
Religiousness	0.366
Prudence	0.089
Self-regulation	0.103
Modesty	0.144
Valor	0.116

The table shows that Prosocial orientation has the strongest correlation with religiousness (0.366), followed by leadership skills (0.256), kindness (0.233), emotional intelligence (0.218), teamwork skills (0.174), forgiveness (0.153), fairness (0.139), and modesty (0.144). However, prudence, self-regulation, and valor show no significant correlation with Prosocial orientation.

HYPOTHESES 3

- **H03:** There is no significant difference in Prosocial orientation among youth based on gender.
- **Ha3:** There is a significant difference in Prosocial orientation among youth based on gender.

An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the Prosocial orientation scores of male and female respondents. The results showed no significant difference ($p > 0.05$), indicating that gender does not affect Prosocial orientation levels among the youth in Karachi.

HYPOTHESES 4-7

Additional independent samples t-tests and ANOVA were conducted to examine differences in Prosocial orientation based on education level, parental education level, parental income level, and residential area. The results indicated some differences in Prosocial orientation based on the education system and parental education level. Youth with higher secondary school certificates from intermediate boards showed higher Prosocial orientation than those from the Cambridge system. Also, students whose parents had higher education levels showed more Prosocial orientation. No significant differences were found based on parental income level or residential area.

HYPOTHESES 8

- **H08:** The youth of Karachi possess the anticipated level of moral values.
- **Ha8:** The youth of Karachi do not possess the anticipated level of moral values.

One-sample t-tests were used to compare the means of the moral values with a hypothesized value of 4. The results indicated that the youth of Karachi do not possess the anticipated level of moral values.

DISCUSSION

FINDINGS

The research aimed to study Prosocial orientation among Karachi's youth and its correlation with moral values. The results indicate that the Prosocial orientation level of Karachi's youth is not at the desired level. However, religiousness, teamwork skills, fairness, leadership skills, kindness,

emotional intelligence, forgiveness, and modesty are significantly correlated with Prosocial orientation. Prudence, self-regulation, and valor are not correlated with Prosocial orientation.

The study also found that Karachi's youth generally lack the desired levels of moral values, except for religiousness, which was the only moral value found to be positive. Prosocial orientation was most strongly correlated with religiousness, suggesting that religiousness may be a significant factor influencing Prosocial behavior among these young people.

IMPLICATIONS

The findings suggest a need for interventions to enhance Prosocial orientation and moral values among the youth of Karachi. Educational institutions and families should focus on fostering these qualities in young people.

LIMITATIONS

The study has some limitations that should be considered. The sample was drawn from three higher education institutions in Karachi, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Future research could include a more diverse sample from various educational backgrounds and regions. Additionally, the study relied on self-report measures, which may be subject to social desirability bias.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Future research could explore the factors that contribute to the development of Prosocial orientation and moral values in youth, such as parenting styles, peer influences, and cultural factors. Longitudinal studies could examine how these qualities change over time and their impact on long-term outcomes. Additionally, interventions aimed at promoting Prosocial behavior and moral values could be developed and evaluated.

CONCLUSION

This research provides valuable insights into the Prosocial orientation and moral values of the youth in Karachi. The findings highlight the importance of religiousness in promoting Prosocial behavior and the need to enhance other moral values, such as teamwork, fairness, and leadership, among young people. By addressing these issues, educational institutions and families can help foster the development of responsible and ethical citizens.

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