

# The Degree of Adherence to Educational Values by the Students of the University of Jordan—In Their Point of View

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## Abstract

The study aimed to probe the degree of adherence by students of the University of Jordan to moral values. To achieve this, a survey was prepared and distributed to a random sample of 1769 students in the second semester of the 2013-2014 school year. The study showed a high degree of adherence to religious, social and behavioral values, and a moderate degree of adherence to emotive and mental values. The results revealed statistical significant variations in the degree of adherence to moral values within the sample, attributed to gender, and skewed towards females. There were no statistically significant variations found across students of different faculties.

**Keywords:** adherence, University of Jordan

## 1. Introduction

Values are the most important matters in the lives of people and nations, as it can elevate humanity to the highest echelons. Any imbalance in values inevitably leads to imbalance in human lives. Values maintain the cohesiveness of society and set its goals, ideals and a stable system of principles. Values regulate human relations and serves as the foundation for social life. That's why societies strive to raise their future generations based on the system of principles they believe in, such that these principles become the applicable preference. This is achieved by making the future generations absorb and adhere to these principles, until they become part of their personality's fabric from their earliest days. Interest in values has a historical dimension. Through man's quest for knowledge, and his mastery of it in various ways, and through his attempt to achieve prosperity in all fields, he discovered that values are behind all human activity. That's why, for the longest time, many philosophers and sociologists took interest in studying values and considered them the first principle of existence, and the principle that regulates all shapes and images of the real world (Perry, 1988).

Despite the importance of values in psychological and behavioral studies, the subject has remained confined to philosophical musings, unaddressed by scientific inquiry until the 1930s. The first studies of values through the scientific method are credited to two psychologists; Thurstone who introduced a vision for processing values in the framework of the scientific method, and Spranger who published his theorem on human behavior and values, in which he categorized 6 dimensions of values: Theoretical, economic, aesthetic, social, political and religious, which were formulated by Allport, Vernon and Lindzey into a measurement scale named after them (Khalifa, 1992).

Values have different meanings. Scientists disagreed in coming up with a definition of values, due to their different directions and specialties. Economists took interest in everything that has material benefit and satisfied the basic needs of the individual, whereas Education specialists focused on three domains for studying values: First, the study of differences in values between groups and individuals, second the study of the origins and development of values and third, the function and effect of values on individuals (Beoumi, 1981).

Thus it can be seen that values are tied to the meaning of life itself. So long as human beings are alive, they will always seek to achieve goals and ends that would elevate their standing. Values define the selection process by which individuals choose these goals and ends whether they are overt or covert. Based on these values, the individual seeks to achieve his goals and validate his existence (Alsaleh, 1994).

Values are considered a major empowerment of human life, as they define and motivate human behavior.

Observing the nature of man, and his inclination to live in groups that he can influence and be influenced from, it becomes evident that there's a need for a mechanism to regulate his daily movements and interactions with the group to achieve the collective ends that the group yearns for. That's where values come in. The goal humans seek to achieve in this direction is to create value formats that they can fall back to. The sum of moral values that any individual or group has creates determinants and social pressures that directly influence the behavior of individuals within the group (Murad, 2005). An individual's behavior is closely linked to values, which stand behind behavior and orientation to give it meaning. Values are thus tied to the meaning of life, because it is tied to the impulse of behaviors, hopes and goals. It follows that the prevalent values among individuals and groups create a form of social pressure that directly influences the individual's behavior (Diab, 1980).

For this reason, interest in the development of values made it major domain in education field, considering that values are the safe entry point for confronting many of the society's issues. Moreover, the development of values and its mechanisms is considered one of the supporting factors of national security in its holistic sense (Makroum, 2004).

The values of an individual are ordered hierarchically in a fully integrated system known as the values matrix. What this means is that each individual is oriented towards achieving the various values, which take a specific hierarchical order based on their strength. This order can differ among individuals of one society (Otoum & Khasawneh, 1999). Zaher (1984) considers that the values closest to the top of the pyramid are the values that influence an individual's behavior and thinking the most.

The system of values reflects the way in which an individual from a certain culture or a certain time period thinks. It also directs individuals and their judgment and orientations as it relates to what is desirable behavior and what is not desirable, in light of what rules and specifications society places for the development of human resources. It may also surpass the immediate goals of behavior to define higher goals of life (Kishk & Jamal, 2010).

The system of values plays such a major role in the lives of individuals, groups and societies that it became the concern of education. That is because education in itself is a value-based process. Values define educational philosophies, goals and processes and dictate the behaviors of individuals. Values are present in each step and stage of the education process. Without values education becomes chaotic. For example, any turbulence in human processes can be attributed to the lack of adherence to a coherent system of values that defines individuals' behaviors and orientations. Additionally, one of the major calls for interest in the study of values is the cultural and informational invasion that Arab societies were subject to, and which resulted in the dilution of values and cultures in intended and unintended ways that rendered individuals unable to resist or adapt to changes (Kishk et al., 2010).

On that basis, the issue of values greatly occupied the interest of educational researches. Values represent the center of formation of the individual's behavior, personality, knowledge system and orientations. Values also avail the chance to look at a person as an being interactive with surrounding environment, not only as a being composed from rigid theoretical features. Values play a major role in individuals' behavior and in making their actions derive from the system of values they possess to help them succeed in their lives. With this perspective, this study aims to shed light on the degree of adherence of University of Jordan students to moral values.

Since the declared goal of university education is not confined to furnishing students with knowledge, specialized qualifications and practical skills, but also the development of moral values, it follows that the study of moral values and its status among university students is important. As such, this study comes to probe the degree of adherence by the students of the University of Jordan to the moral values, and it is affected by demographic variables.

### *1.1 Problem of the Study*

This study aims to probe the degree of adherence to moral values among youth who are enrolled to the University of Jordan. Specifically the study aims to find answers to the following questions:

- What is the degree of adherence of UJ students to moral values from the faculty staff point of view?
- Are there any statistically significant differences in the degree of adherence to moral values from the student's point of view that can be attributed to faculty and gender?

### *1.2 Importance of the Study*

This study takes its importance from the liveliness of the subject addressed, and the objectives it is trying to achieve. Since values play an important role in controlling and directing human behavior, this study's importance

comes from its attempt to probe the adherence of UJ students to moral values. Our hope is that researchers and enthusiasts benefit from the results of this study. We hope that researchers are encouraged to undertake similar studies in different segments of society.

*Objectives of the Study* The objective of this study is to identify the degree of adherence among JU students to moral values, through their answers to survey questions, and to identify whether there are any variations based on gender and faculty.

## 2. Literature Review

The following are some of the studies that were seen by the researcher:

Mustafa and Abu Douf (2000) which aimed to know the degree of moral values adherence by the students of the Islamic University, and whether there are some essential differences between the two genders in adopting these values. The study sample consisted of 210 students from the second and the forth groups in the Islamic University. Of the students, 139 are male and 17 are female. The researcher built a measurement for some of the moral values in light of Al Quran. The study concluded that the students of the Islamic University practice some of the moral values and this goes with philosophy of the university which cares to establish the personality of the student according to the Islamic teachings and provide them with moral values.

Clarence study aimed to identify the moral methods for the black students in North America. The sample consisted of 304 students. Of the students, 156 are female and 148 are male. The researcher used the general moral directive tool which was used by (Taylor, 1977) in his study. The study consists of the following orientations: personal, family, religious, political, moral, and economical and the general goals in life. The results revealed that females and males prefer the economical, religious and family orientations more than the others.

Khawaldeh study aimed to show the influence of the Islamic studies teachers in giving the secondary students the social values from the point view of their students. The study consisted of 457 students from Al-Ain in UAE. The result showed a medium score for all the fields of study. The contribution of the teachers was medium-level in bringing educational situations, which help students to absorb social values. There were no differences related to the varieties of the study (gender, academic degree and the academic average)

Al Qarni (2011) study aimed to put a suggestible vision which can apply the modern technique in building up the values mechanism of the educated in Saudi Arabia. The sample was consisted from 205 employees from the educational team of the secondary and elementary stage who applies technology in their educational process in Jeddah for the academic year (2012-2011). The results showed that the highest influence for the modern technique on the orientations was on the personal orientation, the nationalistic orientation came in the second place. The highest value was the striving toward a private electronically cultural development. The lowest values which influenced by the modern technology was the value of calligraphy. The results didn't show any statistical differences between the average responses of the sample about the influence of the system value elements that the study contained, with the difference of the educational sector type or the educational level. Depending on the study results, a suggestible vision was drawn to employ the technology in establishing the value system for the teachers.

Ghaleb (2012) made a study aimed to know the relationship between the growth of the moral rules with the emotional balance and social maturity of the respondents. As well as revealing the level of the moral values that is prevalent among them. The study sample consisted of students from 4<sup>th</sup> grade and 6<sup>th</sup> grade from the elementary official schools in Yemen and Damascus who are about 2400 students. 1200 students are from Damascus and 1200 are from Taaz-Yemen. The study used the Colbrige moral judgment test and the measurement of the emotional and social stability. The study showed the following results: the second moral phase controls the individuals of the study sample. There is a relationship between the moral rules and the emotional stability and a relationship with the growth of the moral rules and the social maturity for the study sample.

Whereas the study of Rbeaan (2013) which aimed to identify the degree of moral adherence by the students of the secondary school in Hael-Saudi Arabia from the point view of the students themselves and its relationship with some variables . Its sample has been generated from 370 male students for 2012/2013. The results showed that the degree of adherence was high. The results showed as well that there were no statistical significant differences between the estimations of the students for the degree of their moral adherence because of their average and

Specialty .but having a statistical significant difference went for the educational degree of the parents, for the benefit of the highest degrees holders.

The study of Qwariq (2013) came to identify the fact of the value system for the teachers in Nablus from their point of view. For achieving this, Allport, Vernon, Lindsey measurement was used to study the status of teachers' values system. The study sample consisted of 343 teachers for the years (2012-2013) the study concluded that the order of the values for the secondary teachers in Nablus was as the following: (the beauty value, the religious value, the theoretical value, the social value, the economic value, and the political value). The study results showed that there is no statistical significant difference for the theoretical and social value in the reality of the value system for the secondary teachers and this was attributed to the study variables (gender, educational degree and the years of experience). The study showed that there is no statistical significant difference regarding the beauty value which was attributed to the gender and years of experience. The study showed also that there was no difference in the political value and the religious one and this was because of the two variables (the educational degree, and the years of experience) and it was shown that there were significant differences in the economic values and this was attributed to the educational degree for the benefit of Bachelor degree holders. And there was a statistical significant difference in the beauty value because of the gender variable for the benefit of the males, and the educational degree for the benefit of master's degree holders. Also, there were differences in the political and religious value and were attributed to the gender variable for the benefit of females.

### 3. Methodology and Procedures

This study is based on the descriptive - correlative approach using the questionnaire as an instrument to gather Information for its appropriateness of this approach to the nature of the study and its objectives

#### 3.1 Population of the Study

The study's population consists of all undergraduate students in the University of Jordan for the academic year 2014/2015 during the first semester. The total population is 1450 students. Table 1 shows the population's breakdown per gender and faculty.

Table 1. Breakdown of the study population by gender and faculty

Variables			Variables			G. Total
Gender	Faculty	Total	Gender	Faculty	Total	
Male	Science	104	Male	Science	40	272
	Humanities	100		Humanities	28	

#### 3.2 Sample of the Study

The sample consists of 19% of the study population, selected in a categorical, random manner. The resulting sample was 272 students of which 204 are males and 68 are females. Table 2 shows the sample breakdown per gender and faculty.

Table 2. Breakdown of the study sample by gender and faculty

Grand total	Total	Variables		Total	Variables	
		Faculty	Gender		Faculty	Gender
272	40	Science	Female	104	Science	Male
	28	Humanities		100	Humanities	

#### 3.3 Instruments of the Study

The researcher developed a measure of moral values based on educational literature. The measure included 58 passages that measure 5 dimensions: Religious values, Affective values, Social values, Behavioral values and Mental values. The study sample was asked to evaluate each passage using a 5-step ladder. The formula adopted is to subtract the lower limit (1) from the upper limit (5) and divide the result by (3). Based on this formula, if the mean value is less than 2.33, the score is considered low, and if it is between 2.34 and 3.66 it is considered medium. A score above 3.66 is considered high.

### 3.4 Validity of the Instruments

The study methodology was presented to 15 of the Educational sciences faculty staff, who reviewed the passages of the survey and expressed their opinions regarding its clarity and its ability to measure what it was designed to measure. An 80% standard agreement was adopted by the arbitrators to modify or remove passages. The arbitrators had consensus regarding the accuracy and suitability of the methodology to measure the students' degree of adherence to moral values.

### 3.5 Reliability of the Instruments

To check the reliability of the study methodology, the researcher used the test-retest method on a sample of 20 students. Table 3 shows reliability values for each of the value dimensions studied and for the study as a whole.

Table 3. Reliability values for value dimensions

Dimension	Reliability value
Religious	0.85
Affective	0.8
Social	0.81
Behavioral	0.84
Mental	0.88
Total	0.9

### 3.6 Statistical Analysis the Researcher Used Adequate Statistical Processors for the Study, as Follows

- For answers of the first question, the arithmetic mean and standard deviations were calculated for the answers on the passages of each value dimension, and for the study as a whole.
- For answers of the second question, One Way ANOVA was used.

## 4. Results of the Study and its Discussion

First: To answer the first question "What is the degree of adherence to moral values by UJ students from their point of view?" the arithmetic means and standard deviations were calculated for responses on all dimensions of the study, and on all passages of each dimension. Table 4 shows the results as a total and per study dimension.

Table 4. Arithmetic means and standard deviations of responses to study dimensions

Number	Dimension	Rank	Degree	Mean	Standard Deviation
1	Religious values	1	High	4.52	0.29
2	Social values	2	High	4.17	0.43
3	Behavioral values	3	High	3.88	0.64
4	Affective values	4	Medium	3.65	0.49
5	Mental values	5	Medium	3.34	0.47
	Total	0.33	High	4.07	0.54

Table 4 shows that the dimensions of religious and social values and all dimensions as a whole had a high score with arithmetic means ranging between 2 and 3.34 and standard deviations ranging from .29 to .64. Meanwhile affective and mental values received medium scores, with arithmetic means of 3.65 and 3.35 and standard deviations of .49 and .47, respectively. This shows that UJ students adhere to moral values which were measured in accordance with the study tool, especially in religious, social and behavioral values, and the sum total. This can be attributed to the subject of these value dimensions, which are usually related to the religious bond with Allah manifested in prayer, fasting and good deeds, and social matters relating to the Jordanian society, which is a society that still clings to social habits and traditions, and behavioral tendencies related to these two facets.

Therefore it is no surprise that these two dimensions and the tool as a whole achieve high scores, seeing how they are compatible with the Jordanian individual.

As for the dimensions of affective values and mental values, their attainment of medium degrees can be attributed to their nature which is tied to controlling reactions, which requires effort and self-control from the individual. This may be difficult for university students due to their nature and affective traits. These results are consistent with the results of Abu Daf (2000), Ajlouni (2000), Clarence (2004) and Rubaian (2013).

Second: Results relating to the second question (Are there any statistically significant variances with a level of significance  $\alpha = 0.05$  attributed to gender and faculty in the degree of adherence of UJ students to moral values from their point of view?). To answer the question, one-way ANOVA was used and the results were as follows.

1) Table 5 shows the arithmetic means and standard deviations for gender across the dimensions.

Table 5. Arithmetic mean and standard deviation for the gender variable versus study dimensions

Dimension	Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Dimension	Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Religious	Male	4.5091	0.304	Behavioral	Male	3.8039	0.62115
	Female	4.5787	0.2754		Female	4.1176	0.66234
Affective	Male	3.6797	0.48147	al	Male	3.3216	0.47533
	Female	3.7882	0.51536		Female	3.4118	0.46087
Social	Male	4.1516	0.42933	Mental	Male	4.0453	0.32889
	Female	4.2537	0.44012		Female	4.1587	0.33713

Table 5 reveals visible differences between the arithmetic means. To test the statistical significance of the variances between arithmetic means, One-way ANOVA was used. Results are shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Three-way ANOVA of the effect of gender on study dimensions

Sig.	F	Mean Square	Df	Sum of Squares		
0.096	2.798	0.247	1	0.247	Between Groups	Religious
		0.088	270	23.842	Within Groups	
0.115	2.499	0.6	1	0.6	Between Groups	Affective
		0.24	270	64.854	Within Groups	
0.093	2.85	0.532	1	0.532	Between Groups	Social
		0.187	270	50.397	Within Groups	
0	12.582	5.02	1	5.02	Between Groups	Behavioral
		0.399	270	107.716	Within Groups	
0.173	1.864	0.415	1	0.415	Between Groups	Mental
		0.223	270	60.096	Within Groups	
0.015	5.99	0.656	1	0.656	Between Groups	Total
		0.11	270	29.573	Within Groups	

The results reveal statistically significant variances at  $\leq 0.05$  in the degree of adherence to moral values by UJ students in the behavioral values and total dimensions attributed to gender, and skewed towards females across all dimensions of the study and as a total as shown in table 6. This may be attributed to the female's nature which is inclined—perhaps due to family upbringing—to adhere more than males to moral values and virtues of behavior. Females often look towards values in respect and admiration which reflects in her abidance to these values.

2) Table 7 shows the arithmetic mean and standard deviation for the faculty variable per dimension.

Table 7. Arithmetic mean and standard deviation for the faculty variable versus study dimensions

Dimension	Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Dimension	Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Religious	Science	4.5201	0.31916	Behavioral	Science	3.8634	0.6263
	Humanities	4.5336	0.27365		Humanities	3.9036	0.66719
Affective	Science	3.7333	0.49539	Mental	Science	3.3083	0.45242
	Humanities	3.6771	0.48721		Humanities	3.3844	0.49285
Social	Science	4.1615	0.4097	Total	Science	4.07	0.34636
	Humanities	4.1947	0.45981		Humanities	4.0777	0.3208

Table 8. Three-way ANOVA of the effect of faculty on study dimensions

Sig.	F	Mean Square	df	Sum of Squares		
0.711	0.138	0.012	1	0.012	Between Groups	Religious
		0.089	270	24.077	Within Groups	
0.347	0.887	0.214	1	0.214	Between Groups	Affective
		0.242	270	65.239	Within Groups	
0.529	0.397	0.075	1	0.075	Between Groups	Social
		0.188	270	50.854	Within Groups	
0.609	0.263	0.11	1	0.11	Between Groups	Behavioral
		0.417	270	112.626	Within Groups	
0.186	1.76	0.392	1	0.392	Between Groups	Mental
		0.223	270	60.119	Within Groups	
0.85	0.036	0.004	1	0.004	Between Groups	Total
		0.112	270	30.225	Within Groups	

The results in table 8 do not show any statistically significant differences based on faculty.

This means that the adherence to moral values in the study sample is not affected by specialty. This may be because these moral values stem from the religion of Islam and therefore, adherence to them is not related to the student's specialty. This might explain the low variance based on specialty.

#### 4.1 Recommendations and the Proposed Researches Based On the Results of This Study, the Researcher Provided the Following Recommendations

- The university's administration should work on developing moral values among the students especially affective and mental values since their means were moderate. This can be done by focusing on these values through learning materials in the university, especially educational subjects.
- Conducting more studies on values and their effect on variables that are significant to university students' lives.

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