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## **ANALYSIS OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MORAL MATURITY AND HUMAN VALUES OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS**

*Research Article*

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# ANALYSIS OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MORAL MATURITY AND HUMAN VALUES OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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## Abstract

The aim of this study was to reveal the relationship between the moral maturity and human values of university students. The study was a quantitative research and was conducted with the correlational survey model. The study group of the study consisted of 764 students selected by simple random sampling method, one of the random sampling methods from five academic units (one college, one vocational high school and three faculties) among the students who continued their education in the 2019-2020 academic year at a state university. A data collection tool consisting of "Moral Maturity Scale" and "Human Values Scale" was used. Independent Samples t-Test, ANOVA and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient statistical techniques were used to analyze the data. According to the results of the study, it was found that there was a significant difference in university students' moral maturity levels in terms of gender, academic unit, father's level of education, mother's level of education, economic status and the number of books they read in the last month. Furthermore, it was found that there was a significant difference in the human values of university students depending on gender, academic unit and the number of books they read in the last month. It was revealed that there was a positive, strong and significant relationship between moral maturity and human values scores of university students. As a result, moral maturity and human values differed according to various variables, and there was a high relationship between the two concepts mentioned.

*Keywords:* Character development, human values, moral maturity, value education

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Moral Maturity

Moral maturity is a phase of maturation in which the person develops mental, affective and behavioral abilities that play a role in the occurrence of moral behavior in harmony, and displays an attitude that is compatible with the internalized moral understanding at the highest level (Tekin, 2017). According to Şengün (2008), moral maturity is described as gaining the standpoint in which having immoral characteristics is considered as risky as losing the purpose of creation and human dignity. On the other hand, according to Patterson and Hall (1998), who evaluated moral maturity, moral maturity for both men and women is to move from selfishness and false dilemma to increasing levels of anxiety and complexity for others, and thus it is a process that is accomplished by tackling questions about the nature of social good, the meaning of justice, the dimensions of responsibility and other dialectical dilemmas. According to Şengün's (2008) definition, moral maturity is a characteristic of personality involving the adoption of moral values, the establishment and taking root of moral values in the

consciousness, and not thinking of behaving incompatibly with the moral values in one's mind even when the individual is all alone with no one around. In this context, moral values such as honesty, responsibility, and justice are imperative, and it is seen as an obligation to keep the promise given, pay the bills, take care of children, and be fair in relations with other people (Lickona, 1991). Tekin (2017) defines moral maturity as the purification of the individual from bad habits and the improvement of the individual in terms of knowledge and behavior. Different from what has been stated, Şengün (2008) emphasizes that the ultimate moral maturity is to offer mature solutions to question what life is. As a matter of fact, Mathieson (2003) states that the last element of moral maturity is a sense of purpose in life. Based on these definitions, moral maturity is the control of the individual's actions according to the moral values that s/he holds and presenting himself/herself in a way that does not contradict moral values.

The moral maturity of the individual is linked to the increase in freedom, which causes them to choose the good and the right (Tekin, 2017). In this direction, Hogan (1974) argues that whether an action is moral or not is evaluated according to the intention of the individual. According to Mathieson (2003), a morally mature individual is also aware that he both is and is not a moral representative. In addition, individuals considered morally mature are consistent in terms of their interests, desires and behaviors (Başar, 2019). In this respect, Tekin (2017) mentions that moral maturity is the degree of perfection in the world of emotions and thoughts of a person, in his/her decisions, attitudes and behaviors which s/he exhibits. However, Mathieson (2003) mentions that most people probably will not reach complete moral maturity in their lifetime. In this context, developing moral maturity requires the integration of a life process approach that sees adults as adults emerging in a dynamic phase of life rather than seeing them as preformed individuals (Herzog, Harris, & Peifer, 2018). Within the framework of all stated, it can be argued that the morality criterion of the behavior of an individual who has the will to choose the good or the bad is the motivation of the individual to exhibit that behavior. A morally mature individual can be defined as a person who is aware that s/he is a good role model of morality as well as representing morality in the best way. In addition, it can be stated that individuals who have reached moral maturity display a compatible and consistent profile with their thoughts, behaviors and personalities.

Seven elements related to moral maturity were identified: moral representation, utilizing cognitive abilities, using emotional resources, using social skills, using principles, respecting others, and developing a sense of purpose (Mathieson, 2003). However, the dimension of moral maturity remains an unsolved dilemma (Hartnett, & Shumate 1980). In this direction, it is believed that it is necessary to meet the need in the literature in terms of studies on the elements or dimensions of moral maturity.

Moral maturity is intertwined with social, emotional, and intellectual development that are independent of each other and they cannot be clearly separated (Mathieson, 2003). In this context, moral development is provided by interaction with other people (Başar, 2019). However, moral development is not a clearly linear function of many rules within the individual (Hogan, 1974). In fact, moral maturity is the highest moral level a person can reach in terms of moral development (Yüksel, 2012). According to Tekin (2017), moral maturity means becoming equipped with the acquisition of moral skills. Although there is no gender difference in moral development, it should be known that the variables related to moral maturity may differ between genders (Walker, 1986). As a result, the moral development of the individual is also related to some other developmental areas and is also fed by the society in which the individual lives and should not be seen as a simple reflection of the principles that the individual has.

## **1.2. Human Values**

When values are considered, things that are important in an individual's life come to mind. Each individual clings to many values (e.g. success, safety, helpfulness) of varying degrees of importance (Schwartz, 2006). According to Dilmaç (1999), value means a reference point that the individual takes into account in the process of evaluating individuals in various structures, the characteristics of individuals, the desires and goals of the individuals, and the state, movement and behavior of the individuals (Dilmaç, 1999). In this context, Schwartz and Bilsky (1987) emphasize that values are concepts or beliefs, are related to behaviors or goals, that they are beyond certain situations, that they are a choice of path or evaluation of events and behaviors, and that they are ranked relatively by importance. According to another point of view, values are defined as desired goals beyond situations that function as guiding principles in one's life or other social identity, differing in importance, and implicitly understood points in this definition of values as goals can be expressed as: they serve certain social identity-related things, can provide motivation by guiding actions and emotional intensity, serve as standards for defending and evaluating actions, and are acquired both by adapting to dominant group values and through individuals' learning experiences (Schwartz, 1994).

The general purpose of Turkish National Education is to raise all members of the Turkish Nation, as citizens who are devoted to Atatürk's revolution and principles and Atatürk's nationalism as expressed in the Constitution, who adopt, protect and develop the national, moral, human, spiritual and cultural values of the Turkish Nation, who love their family, hometown and nation and always try to glorify them, who know and embrace their duties to democratic, secular and social state of law Republic of Turkey, which is based on human rights and the basic principles of the beginning of the constitution (Official Gazette, 1973). As a matter of fact, Ekşi (2003) states that raising citizens who have internalized basic human values is one of the main duties of the family, society and school, and thus emphasizes that the two main objectives of schools are to raise citizens with high academic success and human values.

Since the extremely important work of Rokeach (1973), human values have been defined as desired goals of various degrees, functioning as guiding principles in people's lives (as cited in Devos, Spini, and Schwartz, 2002). Human values are pillars of life. Human values and moral values are overlapping concepts (Kulaksızoğlu & Dilmaç, 2000). Conflicts between certain values (power versus universalism, tradition versus hedonism) are considered universal (Schwartz, 2007). In this context, while a certain value is very important for someone, it may be insignificant for another (Schwartz, 2006). The priorities of individual values stem from life experiences (Schwartz, 2007).

The aim of this study was to reveal the relationship between the moral maturity and human values of university students. The fact that the studies in the literature focus on mainly the relationship between moral maturity and religious belief, moral maturity and subjective well-being, moral maturity and religionism besides, there are not many studies focusing on this relationship in the literature indicates the importance of this study.

## **2. Method**

### **2.1. Research Model**

This research is a descriptive study aimed at determining the levels of moral maturity and human values of university students according to the factors of gender, hometown, academic unit, class level, education level of the father, education level of the mother, economic status and the number of books they read. It is also a correlational study as it examines the relationship between university students' moral maturity and human values. Among the survey models, both

the general survey model (Karasar, 2009) and the correlational survey model (Büyüköztürk, Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz, & Demirel, 2014) were used in the study.

## 2.2. Study Group

The study group of the study consisted of 764 students selected by simple random sampling method, one of the random sampling methods from five academic units (one college, one vocational high school and three faculties) among the students who continued their education in the 2019-2020 academic year at a state university. Demographic information about the participants of the study is provided in Table 1.

Table 1. *Demographic information related to the sample of the research*

Variables		Participant (N)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	495	64,8
	Male	269	35,2
Hometown	Countryside	452	59,2
	City center	312	40,8
Academic Unit	College of Physical Education and Sports	119	15,6
	Faculty of Theology	142	18,6
	Education Faculty	182	23,8
	Health Vocational High School	162	21,2
	Faculty of Science and Letters	159	20,8
Class Level	First Class	261	34,2
	Second Class	258	33,8
	Third Class	119	15,5
	Fourth Class	126	16,5
Father's Education Level	Illiterate	90	11,8
	Primary School	316	41,4
	Secondary School	164	21,4
	High School	113	14,8
	University and above	81	10,6
Mother's Education Level	Illiterate	375	49,1
	Primary School	256	33,5
	Secondary School and above	133	17,4
Economic Status	0-2500 Turkish Liras	432	56,5
	2501-5000 Turkish Liras	222	29,1
	5001 and above Turkish Liras	110	14,4
The number of books read in the last month	0 Book	135	17,7
	1 Book	218	28,5
	2 Books	183	24,0
	3 Books	124	16,2
	4 and above Books	104	13,6

According to the data in Table 1, 64.8% of 764 participants were girls and 35.2% were boys. 59.2% of the participants grew up in a rural area. 23.8% of the participants were studying at the education faculty. 34.2% of the participants were in the first year of the university. The father's education level of 53.2% of the participants and the mother's education level of 82.6% were primary school and below. The economic level of 56.5% of the participants was between 0-2,500 TL. 46.2% of the participants had read 1 or less books in the last month.

### **2.3. Data Collection Tools**

**Moral Maturity Scale:** It is a 5-point Likert-type scale with 66 items, developed by Şengün and Kaya (2007). 52 items of the scale are expressed as positive and 14 items as negative. The highest score that can be obtained from the Moral Maturity Scale is 330, and the lowest score is 66. The high score that can be obtained from the scale indicates the high level of moral maturity and the low score indicates the low level of moral maturity. The Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient of the scale was found to be 0.93. The high reliability coefficient obtained indicates that the scale is a reliable scale.

**Human Values Scale:** It was developed by Dilmaç (2007). The scale consists of 6 sub-dimensions (Responsibility, Fellowship / Friendship, Peacefulness, Respect, Honesty and Tolerance) and 42 questions. For the reliability study of the HVS, the internal consistency coefficients (Cronbach's alpha) were found as .92 for the whole scale and .73, .69, .65, .67, .69 and .70 for the sub-dimensions of the scale, respectively. For the reliability of HVS in terms of consistency, HVS was applied twice with an interval of 20 days to a group of 150 secondary school students, and the reliability coefficients were calculated using the test-retest method. These consistency coefficients were found to be .87 for the whole scale and .73, .91, .80, .88, .75 and .79 for the sub-dimensions of the scale, respectively. This scale is a 5-point Likert type scale that can be applied individually or in groups. Increases / decreases in the scores indicate that individuals have / do not have more human values.

### **2.4. Data Collection and Analysis**

Within the scope of the research, the ethics committee permission was obtained from the Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee of a State University for the data collection tools planned to be applied to the sample group. After the permission was obtained, the researchers went to the designated academic units of the university and distributed the data collection tools to the students in the form of forms by obtaining permission from the relevant instructor, and after about 30 minutes they collected the forms from the students.

First, the missing values in the data set were examined, and it was revealed that the missing values were below 5% in all data sets and did not show any pattern. The skewness and kurtosis values of the scales were found between -3 and +3, indicating that the data were distributed normally (Kalaycı, 2008). In addition, normality test was performed to determine whether the data showed normal distribution, and Levene test was performed to test the homogeneity of variances. All values were found to be  $p > .05$ , and normality and homogeneity assumptions were met. Based on these results, it was decided to use parametric tests for the analysis of all data meeting the assumption of normality and homogeneity.

Independent sample t-test was applied to determine whether there was a significant difference in moral maturity and human values attainment levels of university students according to the variables of gender and hometown. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to determine whether there was a significant difference in moral maturity and human values attainment according to the variables of academic unit, class level, economic status, father's education level, mother's education level and the number of books read in the last month. Scheffe test was used to determine the source of the difference between the groups. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient statistical technique was used to reveal the relationship between students' moral maturity and human values attainment levels. In the interpretation of the correlation coefficients obtained, the value ranges suggested by Evans (1996) were used. In other words, the correlation values between the range of .00 and .19 indicates a very weak correlation; the range between .20 and .39 indicates a weak correlation; and the range between .40 and .59 indicates a medium-level correlation; the range between .60



and .79 indicates a strong correlation; and the range between .80 and 1.00 indicates a very strong correlation.

### 3. Findings

The findings obtained from the moral maturity and human values attainment levels of the university students according to the factors of gender, hometown, academic unit, class level, education level of the father, education level of the mother, economic status and the number of books read are given below.

#### 3.1. Findings Obtained from the Moral Maturity Levels of University Students

The findings obtained from the moral maturity levels of the university students according to the gender variable were evaluated with the independent sample t-test and the results are given in Table 2.

Table 2. *Independent samples t-test results regarding the comparison of moral maturity scores by gender*

MMS	Group	N	$\bar{X}$	Sd	t	Sig(p)
Gender	Female	495	271,1232	24,91904	5,291	,000
	Male	269	260,2751	30,63273		

When Table 2 was examined, the average moral maturity score of girls was 271.12 and that of boys was 260.27. It was seen that the average score of moral maturity according to gender was 10.9 points higher for girls than boys. In order to examine whether this difference in scores was significant, an independent sample t test was conducted, and it was found that there was a significant difference in favor of girls in terms of gender variable at the level of moral maturity of university students ( $p = .000$ ;  $p < .05$ ).

The findings obtained from the moral maturity level of the university students according to the gender variable were evaluated with the independent sample t-test and the results are given in Table 3.

Table 3. *Independent sample t-test results regarding the comparison of moral maturity scores according to hometown*

MMS	Group	N	$\bar{X}$	Sd	t	Sig(p)
Hometown	Countryside	452	268,5310	27,03486	1,484	,138
	City center	312	265,5256	28,20742		

When Table 3 was examined, the average moral maturity score of those who grew up in rural areas was 268.53 and those who grew up in the city center was 265.52. According to the place where they grew up, it was seen that the average score of moral maturity was 3.0 points higher for those who grew up in rural areas than those who grew up in the city center. In order to examine whether this difference in scores was significant, an independent sample t-test was conducted, and it was found that university students did not differ significantly in terms of the place where they grew up in moral maturity level ( $p = .138$ ;  $p > .05$ ).

The findings obtained from the moral maturity level according to the academic unit variable of the university students were evaluated by one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and the results are given in Table 4.

Table 4. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) results regarding the comparison of moral maturity scores according to the academic unit students study

MMS	Group	N	$\bar{X}$	Sd	F	Sig(p)
Academic Unit	College of Physical Education and Sports	119	274,8235	26,25354	6,561	,000
	Faculty of Theology	142	262,5845	24,06175		
	Education Faculty	182	262,6813	30,78400		
	Health Vocational High School	162	272,8827	23,81278		
	Faculty of Science and Letters	159	265,4969	29,08061		

When Table 4 was examined, it was seen that the academic unit in terms of the highest moral maturity scores was the College of Physical Education and Sports (274.8 points) and the lowest academic unit was Islamic Sciences (262.5 points), and that the university students had significantly different moral maturity scores according to the academic unit they studied ( $F=6.561$ ;  $p=.000$ ;  $p<.05$ ). According to the results of the Scheffe test conducted to determine the source of the difference, there was a significant difference between the moral maturity scores of the students whose academic unit was Islamic Studies and the College of Physical Education and Sports ( $p=.011$ ) and the students studying at the Health Vocational High School ( $p=.029$ ), and the scores of the students whose academic unit was Education and the students studying at the College of Physical Education and Sports ( $p=.006$ ) and the Health Vocational High School ( $p=.017$ ).

The findings obtained from the moral maturity level according to the academic unit variable of the university students were evaluated by one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and the results are given in Table 5.

Table 5. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) results regarding the comparison of moral maturity scores by class level

MMS	Group	N	$\bar{X}$	Sd	F	Sig(p)
Class Level	First Class	261	268,1494	27,77639	,153	,928
	Second Class	258	266,5155	29,44536		
	Third Class	119	267,3109	25,39476		
	Fourth Class	126	267,1587	25,11969		

When Table 5 was examined, it was seen that there was no significant difference in moral maturity scores of university students according to their class level ( $F=.153$ ;  $p=.928$ ;  $p>.05$ ).



The findings obtained from the moral maturity level according to the father's education level variable of the university students were evaluated by one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and the results are given in Table 6.

Table 6. *One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) results regarding the comparison of moral maturity scores according to the father's education level*

MMS	Group	N	$\bar{X}$	Sd	F	Sig(p)
Father's Education Level	Illiterate	90	263,5556	32,19502	3,857	,004
	Primary School	316	269,4177	26,18790		
	Secondary School	164	270,7866	26,94707		
	High School	113	265,7965	26,71749		
	University and above	81	258,2716	27,52863		

When Table 6 was examined, it was observed that the father's education level with the highest moral maturity scores of university students was secondary school (270.7 points) and the father's education level with the lowest score was university and above (258.2 points), and that there was a significant differentiation in moral maturity scores in terms of the father's education level ( $F= 3.857$ ;  $p= .004$ ;  $p< .05$ ). According to the results of the Scheffe test conducted to determine the source of the difference, there was a significant difference in moral maturity scores between students whose father's education level was university and above and primary school ( $p= .031$ ) and middle school ( $p= .023$ ) students.

The findings obtained from the moral maturity level according to the mother's education level variable of the university students were evaluated by one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), and the results are given in Table 7.

Table 7. *One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) results regarding the comparison of moral maturity scores according to the mother's education level*

MMS	Group	N	$\bar{X}$	Sd	F	Sig(p)
Mother's Education Level	Illiterate	375	267,5707	28,02204	3,398	,034
	Primary School	256	269,6484	25,13262		
	Secondary School	133	262,0376	30,00944		
	and above					

When Table 7 was examined, it was observed that the highest moral maturity scores of university students were found in students whose mother's education level was primary school (269.6 points) and the lowest scores were found in students whose mother's education level was secondary school and above (262.0 points), and that there was a significant differentiation in university students' moral maturity scores according to the mother's education level ( $F= 3.398$ ;  $p= .034$ ;  $p< .05$ ). According to the results of the Scheffe test conducted to determine the source of the difference, there was a significant difference in moral maturity scores between students whose mother's education level was secondary school and above and those whose mother's education level was primary school ( $p= .035$ ).

The findings obtained from the moral maturity level according to the economic status variable of the university students were evaluated by one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), and the results are given in Table 8.

Table 8. *One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) results regarding the comparison of moral maturity scores by economic status*

MMS	Group	N	$\bar{X}$	Sd	F	Sig(p)
Economic Status	0-2500 Turkish Liras	432	269,7245	27,49631	2,954	,043
	2501-5000 Turkish Liras	222	267,0766	25,40938		
	5001 ve üzeri Turkish Liras	110	262,1818	31,24839		

When Table 8 was examined, the highest moral maturity scores of university students in terms of economic status belonged to students whose income level was between 0-2,500 TL (269.7 points) and the lowest scores were obtained by students with an income of 5,001 TL and above (262.1 points), and that there was a significant differentiation in student's moral maturity scores in terms of the economic status variable ( $F= 2.954$ ;  $p= .043$ ;  $p< .05$ ). According to the results of the Scheffe test conducted to determine the source of the difference, there was a significant difference between the moral maturity scores of students whose economic status was between 0-2,500 TL and those with 5,001 TL and above ( $p= .038$ ;  $p< .05$ ). In addition, it was observed that the higher the economic status of university students, the lower the average moral maturity score.

The findings obtained from the level of moral maturity according to the variable of the number of books read by university students in the last 1 month were evaluated by one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and the results are given in Table 9.

Table 9. *One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) results regarding the comparison of moral maturity scores by the number of books read in the last month*

MMS	Group	N	$\bar{X}$	Sd	F	Sig(p)
The Number of Books Read in the Last Month	0 book	135	256,1704	28,79976	7,904	,000
	1 book	218	268,2064	25,65598		
	2 books	183	268,1803	26,79583		
	3 books	124	273,4355	25,20396		
	4 and above books	104	274,0096	30,01795		

When Table 9 was examined, it was seen that the number of books read in the last 1 month by university students with the highest moral maturity scores was 4 and above (274.0 points) and the number of books read in the last 1 month by students with the lowest scores was 0 book (253.1 points), and that according to the number of books read in 1 month variable, there was a significant difference in moral maturity scores ( $F= 7.904$ ;  $p= .000$ ;  $p< .05$ ). According to the results of the Scheffe test conducted to determine the source of the difference, there was a significant difference between students whose number of books read in the last 1 month was 0 and those with 1 ( $p= .003$ ), 2 ( $p= .004$ ), 3 ( $p= .000$ ) and 4 and above ( $p= .002$ ) books read in terms of moral maturity scores ( $p< .05$ ). In addition, it was seen that as the number of books that university students read in the last 1 month increased, the average score of moral maturity increased.

### 3.2. Findings Obtained from University Students' Human Values Attainment Levels

The findings obtained from the level of attainment of human values according to the gender variable of university students were evaluated with the independent sample t-test, and the results are given in Table 10.

Table 10. *Independent samples t-test results for independent samples regarding the comparison of human values scores by gender*

HVS	Group	N	$\bar{X}$	Sd	t	Sig(p)
Gender	Female	495	159,5232	14,31298	5,189	,000
	Male	269	153,6617	15,95636		

When Table 10 was examined, the average score of human values is 159.52 for girls and 153.66 for boys. It was seen that the average score average of human values according to gender was 5.9 points higher for girls than for boys. In order to examine whether this difference in scores was significant, an independent sample t-test was conducted, and it was found that there was a significant difference in favor of girls in terms of gender variable at the level of moral maturity attainment of university students ( $p = .000$ ;  $p < .05$ ).

The findings obtained from the level of attainment of human values according to the hometown of university students were evaluated with the independent sample t-test, and the results are given in Table 11.

Table 11. *Independent samples t-test results for independent samples regarding comparison of human values scores by hometown*

HVS	Group	N	$\bar{X}$	Sd	t	Sig(p)
Hometown	Countryside	452	157,4358	15,16934	-,052	,959
	City Center	312	157,4936	15,17783		

When Table 11 was examined, the average score of human values of those who grew up in rural areas was 157.43 and those who grew up in the city center were 157.49. It was seen that the average score of human values according to where they grew up was 0.6 points higher for those who grew up in the city center than those who grew up in rural areas. In order to examine whether this difference in scores was significant, an independent sample t-test was conducted, and it was found that university students did not differ significantly in terms of the place where they grew up in terms of moral maturity level ( $p = .138$ ;  $p > .05$ ).

The findings obtained from the moral maturity attainment level according to the academic unit variable of the university students were evaluated by one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), and the results are given in Table 12.

Table 12. *One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) results regarding the comparison of human values scores according to the academic unit students studied at*

HVS	Group	N	$\bar{X}$	Sd	F	Sig(p)
Academic Unit	College of Physical Education and Sports	119	160,4622	15,98982	4,345	,002
	Faculty of Theology	142	154,4648	14,47701		
	Education Faculty	182	155,6593	15,84366		
	Health Vocational High School	162	159,9321	13,89809		
	Faculty of Science and Letters	159	157,4277	14,93507		

When Table 12 was examined, it was found that the highest human values scores obtained by the students of the College of Physical Education and Sports (160.4 points) and the lowest scores were obtained by the students of Islamic Sciences (154.4 points), and that there was a significant difference in human values scores in terms of academic unit ( $F= 4.345$ ;  $p= .002$ ;  $p < .05$ ). According to the results of the Scheffe test conducted to determine the source of the difference, there was a significant difference in human values scores between students whose academic unit was Islamic Sciences and those studying at the College of Physical Education and Sports ( $p= .036$ ) and Health Vocational High School ( $p= .041$ ).

The findings obtained from the moral maturity attainment level according to the class level variable of the university students were evaluated by one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), and the results are given in Table 13.

Table 13. *One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) results regarding comparison of moral human values scores by class level*

HVS	Group	N	$\bar{X}$	Sd	F	Sig(p)
Class Level	First Class	261	157,6245	15,70830	,154	,927
	Second Class	258	157,7209	14,70010		
	Third Class	119	157,3782	14,75506		
	Fourth Class	126	156,6587	15,47548		

When Table 13 was examined, it was seen that there was no significant difference in human values scores of university students according to their study year ( $F= .154$ ;  $p= .927$ ;  $p > .05$ ).

The findings obtained from the moral maturity attainment level of the university students according to the father's education level variable were evaluated by one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), and the results are given in Table 14.

Table 14. *One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) results regarding comparison of human values scores according to the father's education level*

HVS	Group	N	$\bar{X}$	Sd	F	Sig(p)
	Illiterate	90	156,7333	15,98440	1,367	,244

Father's Education Level	Primary School	316	157,2943	14,42723
	Secondary School	164	159,5549	15,62884
	High School	113	157,1858	15,80718
	University and above	81	155,0494	15,02656

When Table 14 was examined, it was seen that there was no significant difference in human values scores of university students according to the education level of the father ( $F= 1.367$ ;  $p = .244$ ;  $p > .05$ ).

The findings obtained from the moral maturity attainment level of the university students according to the mother's education level variable were evaluated by one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), and the results are given in Table 15.

Table 15. *One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) results regarding comparison of human values scores according to the mother's education level*

HVS	Group	N	$\bar{X}$	Sd	F	Sig(p)
Mother's Education Level	Illiterate	375	157,6080	14,95800	1,493	,225
	Primary School	256	158,2617	14,68886		
	Secondary School	133	155,4962	16,52346		
	and above					

When Table 15 was examined, it was seen that there was no significant difference in human values scores of university students according to the mother's education level ( $F= 1.493$ ;  $p = .225$ ;  $p > .05$ ).

The findings obtained from the moral maturity attainment level of the university students according to their economic status variable were evaluated by one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), and the results are given in Table 16.

Table 16. *One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) results regarding comparison of human value scores by economic status*

HVS	Group	N	$\bar{X}$	Sd	F	Sig(p)
Economic Status	0-2500 Turkish Liras	432	157,8194	15,94436	,469	,626
	2501-5000 Turkish Liras	222	157,3514	13,12670		
	5001 and above Turkish Liras	110	156,2636	15,90031		

In Table 16, it was observed that there was no significant difference in human values scores of university students according to the economic status variable ( $F= .469$ ;  $p= .626$ ;  $p > .05$ ).

The findings obtained from the level of moral maturity attainment level according to the variable of the number of books read by university students in the last 1 month were evaluated by one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), and the results are given in Table 17.

Table 17. *One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) results regarding comparison of human value scores by the number of books read in the last month*

HVS	Group	N	$\bar{X}$	Sd	F	Sig(p)
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The Number of Books Read in the Last Month	0 book	135	152,1481	15,68654	6,018	,000
	1 book	218	157,5183	14,94975		
	2 books	183	158,6339	13,69697		
	3 books	124	158,5887	15,62519		
	4 and above books	104	160,8173	15,38677		

When Table 17 was examined, it was seen that there was a significant difference in human values scores according to the variable of the number of books that university students read in the last 1 month ( $F= 6.018$ ;  $p= .000$ ;  $p< .05$ ). According to the results of the Scheffé test conducted to determine the source of the difference, there was a significant difference in terms of human values scores between the students whose number of books read in the last 1 month was 0 and those who read 1 ( $p= .003$ ), 2 ( $p= .004$ ), 3 ( $p= .000$ ) and 4 and above ( $p= .002$ ) books ( $p< .05$ ). In addition, it was seen that as the number of books that university students read in the last 1 month increased, the average score of human values increased.

### 3.3. Findings Regarding the Relationship Between University Students' Level of Moral Maturity and Human Values Attainment

Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient statistical technique was used to reveal the relationship between moral maturity and human values scores of the students participating in the study, and the findings are presented in Table 18.

Table 18. *The relationship between university students' moral maturity and human values scores*

		Moral Maturity	Human Values
Moral Maturity	Pearson's r	—	,715**
	p-value	—	,000
	N	—	764
Human Values	Pearson's r	,715**	—
	p-value	,000	—
	N	764	—

According to Table 18, there was a positive and strong relationship between the moral maturity and human values scores of university students ( $r= .715$ ) ( $p< .05$ ).

## 4. Discussion, Conclusion and Suggestions

Discussion, conclusion and suggestions section was tried to be formed based on the findings obtained from the examination of the moral maturity levels and human values of students studying at the university according to the variables of gender, hometown, academic unit, class level, father's education level, mother's education level, economic status and the number of books read in the last month.

It was revealed that there was a significant difference in the moral maturity level of university students in favor of girls according to the gender variable. Similar results were obtained in some studies. According to the results of the study conducted by Savaş (2019) on



453 university students, the moral maturity levels of female students were found to be higher than male students. According to the results of the study conducted by Alkal and K k (2018) on 478 university students, there was a significant difference in favor of girls in moral maturity scores in terms of gender. In the study conducted by Sancak, Tabakođlu, and  z (2013) on 482 university students from different universities, it was found that female students had a higher level of moral maturity than male students. According to the results of the study conducted by Bakiođlu (2013) on 1153 university students, it was observed that the level of moral maturity differed significantly according to gender. It was found that the moral maturity level of females was higher than the moral maturity level of males. According to the results of the study conducted by Bilgin (2017) on 335 university students, a significant difference was found between moral maturity and gender, and the moral maturity of females was higher than that of males. According to the results of the study conducted by Kaya and Aydın (2011) on 606 university students studying in different faculties, the mean scores of moral maturity of female students were found to be higher than the mean scores of male students. According to the results of the study conducted by  ořkun and Yıldırım (2009) on 392 university students, the moral values of female students were found to be higher than those of male students. According to the results of the study conducted by  ırak-Karakavak (2006) on 638 university students, moral judgment ability scores were found to be significantly higher in female students. The higher moral maturity levels of girls compared to boys may be due to their more empathetic, accepting, compassionate and sensitive structure stemming from their cultural and social gender roles.

It was found out that there was no significant difference according to the place where the university students grew up in terms of moral maturity level. Similar results were obtained in some studies. According to the results of the research conducted by  itemel (2010) on 542 graduate students, it was found that there was no significant difference in moral judgment scores in terms of the residential areas they lived in. According to the results of the study conducted by Savař (2019) on 453 university students, it was seen that the moral maturity of the students did not change according to where they spent most of their lives. According to the results of the study conducted by  ırak-Karakavak (2006) on 638 university students, it was determined that there was no significant difference in moral judgment scores of university students according to where they spent most of their lives. According to the results of the study conducted by Bilgin (2017) on 335 university students, no significant difference was found between moral maturity and the place where they lived. According to the results of the study conducted by  ořkun and Yıldırım (2009) on 392 university students, no significant difference was found in moral value levels according to where they lived. According to the results of the study conducted by G ltekin (2008) on 219 university students, it was found that there was no significant difference in moral judgment scores of university students according to where they spent most of their lives. With the development of technological possibilities, even people living in the most rural areas being aware of all developments and reaching all opportunities in a short time have created homogeneous people with similar opportunities, familial and cultural characteristics, and the differences according to the hometown have been minimized. Therefore, there may not be a significant difference in moral maturity levels according to the hometown.

It was observed that there was a significant difference in moral maturity scores of university students according to the academic unit they studied at. Similar results were obtained in some studies. In the study conducted by  ekin (2013) on 222 university students, a significant difference was found in the level of moral maturity according to the faculty-department variable. According to the results of the study conducted by Bakiođlu (2013) on 1153 university students, the level of moral maturity differed significantly according to the faculty and department they studied. According to the results of the study conducted by Cořkun and

Yıldırım (2009) on 392 university students, a significant difference was found in the moral value levels according to the faculty they studied, and similar to the result obtained from this study, the moral value level of the students of the Health Vocational High School was higher than the students of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. According to the results of the research conducted by Kaya and Aydın (2011) on 606 university students studying at different faculties, there was a significant difference in the moral maturity score averages of the students according to the department they studied. Unlike the results obtained from this study, the scores of the students of the Faculty of Theology were higher than the scores of the students studying at other faculties. According to the results of the research conducted by Söylemez and Oruç (2018) on 332 university students, there was a significant difference in moral judgment scores according to the department studied. In the studies conducted by Adıgüzel (2017) and Efek, Sivrikaya and Sadık (2018), a different result was obtained from the results obtained from these studies, and it was determined that the moral maturity of university students did not differ according to the faculty and the department they studied. The differentiation of moral maturity levels according to the faculty / department may be due to the quality of the education students receive about moral values rather than the quantity, the experiences they have about the level of acquiring universal moral values, the psychological factors such as anxiety and stress experienced by the students, and the differentiation of the orientation towards social cultural activities among the departments.

It was observed that there was no significant difference in moral maturity scores of university students according to their class level. Similar results were obtained in some studies. According to the results of the study conducted by Alkal and Kök (2018) on 478 university students, there was no difference between them in terms of moral maturity level according to their class level. According to the results of the study conducted by Çoşkun and Yıldırım (2009) on 392 university students, it was revealed that the moral development levels of students who just started university and those of senior students were similar. According to the results of the study conducted by Gültekin (2008) on 219 university students, it was determined that there was no significant difference between moral development and study year. According to the results of the study conducted by Çırak-Karakavak (2006) on 638 university students, no significant difference was found between moral judgment scores according to study year. Until the age of 18, a large part of personality is formed, and university education that emerges after this age does not sufficiently affect personality and the moral maturity level, which is a sub-dimension of personality. Therefore, university students at different years of study have similar characteristics since they are in a similar developmental period. The differentiation of moral maturity level according to class level can be explained with this reason.

It was observed that there was a significant difference in moral maturity scores of university students according to the education level of fathers and mothers. Similar results were obtained in some studies. According to the results of the study conducted by Gümüş (2015) on 1377 students, it was determined that there were significant differences in terms of the level of moral development according to the parents' education level. According to the results of the study conducted by Çırak-Karakavak (2006) on 638 university students, there was a significant difference in moral judgment scores according to the education level of the mother. According to the results of the study conducted by Bakioğlu (2013) on 1153 university students, it was found that the level of moral maturity differed significantly according to the education level of the parents. Similar to the result obtained from this study, Bakioğlu (2013) found that as the education level of the parents increased, the moral maturity level of the students decreased. Saylağ (2001) found in his research that the education level of the parents of the individuals negatively affected their moral maturity level. These results show that the high level of education of parents does not manifest itself as children who have adopted moral values, and

that it is important to what extent moral values can be adopted by children regardless of the education level of the family.

It was observed that there was a significant difference in moral maturity scores according to the economic status variable, and the higher the economic status of university students, the lower the average moral maturity score. Similar results were obtained in some studies. According to the results of the study conducted by Savaş (2019) on 453 university students, it was seen that the moral maturity levels of the students varied according to the income levels of the family. According to the study conducted by Bilgin (2017) on 335 university students, it was found that there was a significant difference in moral maturity scores according to the income level of the family. In the research conducted by Gümüş (2015) on 1377 students, he found that there were significant differences between parents' income level and moral development level in favor of students whose families have low economic status. According to the results of the research conducted by Alkal and Kök (2018) on 478 university students, it was concluded that the moral maturity levels differed significantly according to the monthly income of the family and in favor of those with low monthly income. According to the results of the study conducted by Bakioğlu (2013) on 1153 university students, it was revealed that there was a significant difference between the income level of parents and moral development in favor of those with low income. Students with a lower economic status of the family struggle with the difficulties of life more. These students cannot meet their needs adequately due to economic difficulties, they can improve their basic life coping skills and therefore their moral maturity levels due to situations such as delaying requests, being content with little opportunities, and being patient in difficult conditions.

It was observed that there was a significant difference in moral maturity scores according to the variable of the number of books read by university students in the last month, and the more books they read in the last month, the higher their moral maturity score average was. There is almost no research on this subject. One of the rare studies on this subject was conducted by Adıgüzel (2017) on 720 university students, and students' perceptions of moral maturity differed significantly according to the number of books read monthly. As the number of books read increases, the level of moral maturity increases as well. In this case, it can be said that the behavior of reading books improves the personality of students and increases the level of general culture, thus improving moral maturation.

In this study, it was determined that the human values score average of girls studying at university was higher than that of boys. Similarly, Myyry and Helkama (2001) observed in their research on university students that the human value levels of female students were higher than the human values of male students. In this direction, Metli's (2017) study revealed that the human value levels of female students in secondary school were higher than the human value levels of male students in secondary school. In addition, Kılınç and Gündüz (2017), Yiğit and Dilmaç (2011), Dereli and Aypay (2012) found that the human value levels of female students studying at high school were higher than the human value levels of male students studying at high school. The fact that the human values of female students are higher than the human values of male students suggests that human values do not have a very close relationship with the school level in general, but they have a close relationship with gender.

In this study, it was found that there was a statistically significant difference in the human values levels of university students according to the gender variable. However, in the study conducted by Karababa and Dilmaç (2015), no statistically significant difference was observed in the human value level scores of adolescents according to the gender variable. As a matter of fact, in Keskin and Sağlam's (2014) study, it was found that the human value levels of classroom teacher candidates did not statistically significantly differ according to gender. In

addition, Özkan and Soylu (2014) found that there was no statistically significant difference in the human value levels of students studying at the faculty of education according to gender. In the light of the aforementioned data, this study found that there was a statistically significant difference in human values levels of university students according to gender variable, but the reason for not detecting a significant difference in other studies may be that this study focuses on university students in general, not on a particular class or department.

In this study conducted on students studying at the university, it was found that there was a statistically significant difference in the human value level scores of university students according to the academic unit they studied at. Özkan and Soylu (2014) could not reveal a statistically significant difference in the human value levels of the students studying at the education faculty according to the type of education. Keskin and Sağlam (2014) also found that there was statistically no significant difference between the human value levels of classroom teacher candidates according to the type of high school they graduated from. It was revealed that the human values education program applied in Dilmaç's (2007) research played a role in increasing the human value levels of high school students. In this context, it is often stated that the development of individual values takes place long before university education (Robb, 1964). Although it was found in this study that there was a statistically significant difference in the human value level scores of university students according to the academic unit they studied at, it can be stated that the underlying reason for this may be the previous school level, the high school. As a matter of fact, it is believed that it will be useful to underline that the values of adolescents are also being shaped during the high school period, which includes adolescence.

Within the scope of this research, it was found that the human value levels of the students studying at the university did not show a statistically significant difference according to their study year. Similarly, in Özkan and Soylu's (2014) study, no significant difference was found in the human values of education faculty students according to the variable study year. In this direction, Kılınç and Gündüz (2017) found that there was statistically no significant difference in terms of human value levels adopted by high school students according to their grade levels. In addition, Keskin and Sağlam (2014) found that the human value levels adopted by pre-service teachers who studied classroom teacher education did not differ significantly according to the class level they were in. As a result, a strong and direct connection between the students' levels of human value and their class level could not be found.

In this study, it was revealed that there was no statistically significant difference in the human value levels of university students according to the education level of the father. Accordingly, Kılınç and Gündüz (2017) found that there was no statistically significant difference in the human values levels of high school students according to the education level of their fathers. However, in the study conducted by Erden and Yılmaz (2016), it was seen that the human value levels of Imam Hatip high school students showed a statistically significant difference according to the education level of the father. It was observed that the mentioned significant difference was against the students whose fathers were university or higher graduates and students whose fathers were primary, secondary and high school graduates, and students whose fathers were university and higher graduates. In this respect, the underlying reasons why the human values of Imam Hatip high school students were against students whose fathers were university and higher graduates may need to be examined.

In this study, no statistically significant difference was found in the human value levels of university students according to the education level of the mother. Similarly, Kılınç and Gündüz (2017) found that there was no statistically significant difference between high school students whose mothers graduated from primary school and high school students whose



mothers graduated from secondary school and above. However, Erden and Yılmaz (2016) revealed that there was a statistically significant difference between students, whose mothers were university graduates or received post-graduate education, and Imam Hatip high school students whose mothers were primary school graduates, middle school graduates, or high school graduates. As a matter of fact, it was determined that this difference was against students whose mothers were university and higher graduates. A similar situation is presented in the previous paragraph. In this context, the finding that the human value levels of Imam Hatip high school students were against students whose mothers were university and higher graduates can be investigated further through qualitative research.

Another finding of this study was that there was no statistically significant difference in the human values level of the students studying at the university according to their economic status. Accordingly, Keskin and Sağlam (2014) found that the human value levels of classroom teacher candidates did not statistically significantly differ according to the socio-economic status variable. However, Kılınç and Gündüz (2017) revealed that there was a statistically significant difference in the human values levels of high school students according to the variable of income level of their families. As a matter of fact, different human value judgments are expected to occur in students due to differences in economic levels. However, it is thought that financial grants such as scholarships, accommodation and nutrition opportunities provided to students, especially in the university environment, minimize economic differences among students, create a homogeneous environment with the same opportunities in the university environment and prevent different human values behaviors that may arise due to different economic conditions among students.

One of the most striking findings of this study was that there was a positive, strong and statistically significant relationship between the moral maturity levels and human values of university students. Similarly, Yalız-Solmaz (2018) revealed in their study that there was a positive and significant relationship between teacher candidates' human values and moral maturity levels. As a matter of fact, Kulaksızoğlu and Dilmaç (2000) underline that human values and moral values are concepts that have a close relationship. From this point of view, it can be stated that the actions, attitudes and behaviors of individuals within the moral maturity framework are a sign in terms of understanding and predicting the human values that individuals have.

The value problem is of great importance (Skolimowski, 1997). Due to the impact on those exposed to them and the people who transfer them, many values that cannot be called human values exist in every culture and are transmitted by people (Hopkins, 1953). It is also thought that the values cannot be observed, measured or calculated (Goldstein & Gordon, 1985). As a matter of fact, because human values, truth, beauty, goodness and sacredness cannot be measured or calculated, it is concluded that valid information cannot be obtained about them, and they cannot be anything but illusions arising from desires (Jensen, 1941). However, the idea that science does not recognize values is a false assumption. Science would never be science if it were not concerned with human values, because interest and curiosity trigger research (Herrick, 1946). In this context, although it is thought that values cannot be observed due to their abstract nature, it can be mentioned that it is important not to approach the idea that values such as human values can be subject to science with prejudice.

There is a sharp difference between the way individuals construct values through attaining values (Hopkins, 1953). Also, some people think that human values of the past are under attack (Friley, 1942). Today, people all over the world question their values, reflect on their values, and review their values (Hopkins, 1953). It is claimed that educational processes do not contain value in a basic sense; in other words, educational programs and institutions do not have a

direct relationship with the life philosophy of the student or have a direct responsibility over the life philosophy of the student (Robb, 1964). To transform into human value, the process must proceed collaboratively, interactively, mutually, socially and consciously (Hopkins, 1953). Human values exist in a work environment or culture when everyone understands people's basic psychological needs, appreciates their positive and unique contributions, and helps them reach their potential (Stallard & Pankau, 2008). There are values in all ethnic classes, values in all institutions, values in all schools, and creative values in all educators in the arts (Hopkins, 1953). It can be argued on the basis of these points that individuals or communities gathered around common grounds can generate common values, keep these values alive and pass them on to future generations. Although creating value requires a process, it should be remembered that they become relatively permanent within that society when values are created.

- This study, carried out with quantitative research method, can be expanded through qualitative research in order to obtain more detailed data.
- This research, which was carried out in the type of surveying and also by correlational design, can be carried forward with the regression study.
- This research, which was carried out on university students, can be carried out with different sample groups such as high school students and graduate students.
- It may be suggested that schools cooperate with families in order to improve the moral maturity and human values of students in a more general sense.
- In educational institutions, projects involving theory and practice can be implemented to improve the moral maturity and human values of individuals in society in a wider context.
- Necessary arrangements and improvements can be made in education programs in order to improve the moral maturity and human values of individuals.



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