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## The effectiveness of a moral intelligence training program in reducing secondary school students' academic entitlement

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### Abstract

The research aimed to investigate the effectiveness of a training program based on moral intelligence components in reducing academic entitlement among secondary school students. The study sample consisted of a single experimental group of (32) students. The researchers administered the Academic Entitlement Scale (pre-test) to the participants before the moral intelligence-based training program, then after the program (post-test), and again a month later (as a follow-up assessment). Through statistical data processing using the t-test, the study results revealed significant differences in the mean scores of the experimental group on the Academic Entitlement Scale and its components between the pre-test and post-test in favor of the post-test. However, there were no statistically significant differences in the mean scores of the experimental group on the Academic Entitlement Scale and its components between the post-test and follow-up test (a month later). The researchers provided a comprehensive discussion of the study variables: academic entitlement and its components, and the moral intelligence-based training program in the current study. Additionally, recommendations and proposed future research were presented.

**Keywords:** academic entitlement, adolescence, moral intelligence, secondary school students, training program.



### **Public Interest Statement**

This research investigates the effectiveness of a new approach - utilizing a training program rooted in moral intelligence - to reduce academic entitlement among secondary school students. The study demonstrates a notable decrease in academic entitlement following the implementation of this program. These findings suggest that moral intelligence training can promote values like accountability, respect, and humility, which are crucial for academic success and personal development. By addressing academic entitlement, educators and policymakers can create a more inclusive and equitable educational environment. Integrating moral intelligence training into educational frameworks can empower students to approach learning with integrity and empathy, fostering a culture of responsibility and fairness in education.

### **Introduction**

In the present era characterized by dynamic socio-technological transformations, the imperative for moral intelligence has assumed heightened significance. Amidst the intricate moral quandaries that define contemporary society, the capacity to discern morally sound choices and manifest empathetic conduct emerges as pivotal. Moral intelligence transcends conventional cognitive faculties, encompassing a profound comprehension of values, ethics, and the repercussions of individual actions on the collective. Within a milieu contending with pervasive global predicaments—ranging from climate change to social disparities and the expeditious evolution of technology—individuals endowed with moral intelligence are strategically poised to negotiate the nuances of moral decision-making. The contemporary milieu underscores the indispensability of cultivating moral intelligence not solely for individual maturation but also for the cultivation of a more compassionate and conscientious global collective.

The educational landscape has encountered a critical juncture marked by the emergence of moral and educational challenges of a psychological nature. The advent of e-learning and the ubiquity of social media, exacerbated by the global COVID-19 pandemic, have significantly impacted learners accustomed to concise learning formats and summaries (Yan et al., 2021). The resultant challenge lies in acclimating students to the comprehension of extensive texts and navigating essay questions that assess higher-order cognitive skills.

Furthermore, the pervasive influence of social media has given rise to a spectrum of moral predicaments, with some manifesting in an academic context, such as the proliferation of unrealistic academic entitlement and instances of cheating (Asadi & Ali, 2021; Stiles et al., 2018), alongside broader moral concerns like academic dishonesty (Elias, 2017; Kelly, 2021). Additionally, behavioral moral issues, encompassing manifestations of disrespect, aggression, and non-compliance with regulations and laws, have become increasingly prominent (Al-Dabea, 2020; Bertl et al., 2019; Gotschall, 2016; Keener, 2020). This multifaceted landscape necessitates a comprehensive exploration to discern and address the intricate interplay between technological advancements, psychological dimensions, and moral challenges within the contemporary educational milieu.

Academic entitlement is the student's inclination to possess an expectation of academic success without feeling personally responsible for achieving that success (Chowning & Campbell, 2009). It involves having a certain (often high) expectation that does not correlate with the effort exerted or the quality of work (Wasioleski et al., 2014). It is also defined as the student's anticipation of receiving privileges and positive outcomes in academic situations, setting them apart from their peers without putting in significant effort or achieving actual academic accomplishments (Jackson et al., 2020). According to Carollo (2020), academic entitlement involves a low sense of personal responsibility in

academic tasks, a belief in deserving rewards regardless of the effort exerted, and unrealistic expectations with an excessive claim to what is undeserved.

Within the framework of academic entitlement, the widely employed model introduced by Chowning and Campbell (2009) delineates two integral components. The first component, external responsibility, gauges the degree to which students attribute their academic successes or failures to the performance and conduct of their teachers and peers. Conversely, entitlement expectations, the second component, pertain to the conviction that favorable grades are deserved without requiring substantial effort.

Entitlement, particularly in academic contexts, can yield adverse repercussions as previous studies have affirmed. The most academically entitled students exhibited immoral behaviors, particularly a higher tendency to resort to cheating and engaging in academically dishonest conduct (Elias, 2017; Borgmeyer et al., 2022; Keener, 2020). It predicts cheating, establishing a positive correlation with narcissism (Stiles et al., 2018). Many studies have indicated that students with high academic entitlement tend to receive lower evaluations on their tests and perform weaker academically (Bonaccio et al., 2016; Greenier & Rubino, 2018; Kopp & Zinn, 2016; Taylor et al., 2015; Wasieleski et al., 2014).

Academic entitlement not only negatively impacts the learning process but also affects social life in general (Bertl et al., 2019; Lockett, 2017). These negative behaviors include hostility, control issues, difficulty in interpersonal relationships, intentional harm, greed, aggression, and increased conflicts between students and teachers. Moreover, it is associated with many maladaptive behaviors such as selfishness, aggression, and decreased self-control (Campbell et al., 2004; Chambers, 2018; Zare, 2022). This aligns with what Reysen et al. (2020) have mentioned, that academic entitlement is directly associated with student behaviors that do not contribute to effective learning in the classroom. These behaviors are linked to disruptive behaviors or what is commonly referred to as disruptive conduct in the classroom (Knepp & Kneep, 2022).

Certainly, numerous studies have consistently reported elevated levels of academic entitlement among learners (Al-Dabea, 2020; Blincoe & Garris, 2017; Bonaccio et al., 2016; Pilotti et al., 2022). For more clarification, Delucchi and Korgen (2002) illustrated that 73% of students expressed a preference for receiving high grades, even if their learning outcomes were lacking. Furthermore, 24% of the students anticipated that professors would take into account non-academic factors when determining grades. Additionally, 53% of the participants agreed with the notion that it is the professor's duty to ensure the student remains actively engaged in the classroom. Moreover, 36% concurred with the statement asserting entitlement to a favorable grade on the grounds of tuition payment.

In alignment with the conceptualization of academic entitlement by Chowning and Campbell, a set of nine specific behaviors has been identified as particularly immoral. These behaviors encompass exhibiting boredom in the classroom, displaying anger, demonstrating rudeness towards the teacher, sleeping during class, engaging in side conversations with peers, talking on the phone, disrespectfully disputing grades, leaving the classroom without the teacher's permission, and utilizing technology in a manner that disrupts the learning process. Moreover, students may deviate from and occasionally transgress mandatory rules within the educational environment. This comprehensive enumeration provides a delineation of behaviors that collectively constitute manifestations of academic entitlement (Chowning & Campbell, 2009; Ifill-Fraser, 2019; Fromuth et al., 2019).

Moral values constitute a pivotal focus within contemporary research, particularly emanating from the field of positive psychology (Griffiths et al., 2009). Moral intelligence is a crucial factor in an individual's ability to regulate themselves within the environment and society. It serves as a monitor for their behaviors to prevent them from freely heading towards destruction, hostility, or violating societal

laws (Aldarabah et al., 2015). The components of moral intelligence when developed in adolescents have the potential to impact every aspect of their lives. This influence extends to the quality of their future relationships, their skills, productivity, and their contributions to fields such as art, literature, commerce, and the local community (Borba, 2003). Indeed, it can extend to society as a whole. This may be why the foundation we provide for adolescents fundamentally shapes their reputation as individuals. The term moral intelligence, as articulated by Borba (2003), denotes “an individual’s capacity to differentiate between right and wrong, characterized by moral beliefs that guide conscientious behavior through the adherence to seven moral virtues. These virtues encompass empathy, conscience, self-control, respect, compassion, tolerance, and justice”. Lennick & Kiel (2005) depict it as “a collection of mental faculties oriented towards promoting goodness”. Nobahar & Nobahar (2013) define it as the aptitude to discern moral distinctions and act morally”. According to Abdellatif (2020), it is “the individual’s capability to adopt correct behavior through self-monitoring, motivating them to engage in work without external rewards or supervision. This is accomplished through conscientious participation, providing assistance as needed, respecting others, treating them justly, and demonstrating tolerance”.

Individuals can adhere to righteous behavior grounded in their belief in Allah’s oversight, motivating them to engage in work without expecting rewards or external supervision. This is realized through conscientious participation, providing assistance as necessary, showing respect, ensuring just treatment, and demonstrating tolerance towards others. The operational assessment of this concept is gauged through the moral intelligence scale, with the student’s score reflective of their proficiency in components such as God-consciousness, patience and self-control, respect, compassion and mercy, forgiveness and pardon, justice, responsibility, and courage (Abdellatif, 2022).

Moral intelligence is a comprehensive field encompassing various dimensions related to the ability to make moral decisions and understand values and morals. Both Fard (2012) and Hosseini et al. (2013) identified four main components of moral intelligence, measured by ten sub-components: honesty, responsibility, compassion, and tolerance. They explained that the interconnection of these components forms the Golden Rule of Morality, serving as a moral compass for individuals. Lotfy et al. (2020) outlined the dimensions of moral intelligence as including empathy, conscience, self-control, respect, tolerance, and justice. Al-Samadi and Al-Zaghloul (2019) identified the dimensions of moral intelligence as emotional representation, conscience, kindness, respect, tolerance, justice, and self-control.

While most educational institutions focus their programs on equipping students with skills and capabilities related to reading, writing, critical thinking, and other cognitive variables that aid in academic success, there is a diminishing emphasis on developing their moral dimensions. Without these, students may lack the motivation to learn. Therefore, educational institutions should pay attention to nurturing virtues and ethics among students. The need for good ethics has grown parallel to academic education (Park & Peterson, 2009; Peirone & Maticka-Tyndale, 2017).

The role of the school complements what the family provides in terms of the development of moral intelligence in learners. Discussing moral problems arising from classroom situations requires effort from the teacher. By addressing these issues through methods and means that foster moral intelligence in learners (Elliott et al., 2000; Barbara, 2013; Alhadabi et al., 2020), the teacher contributes to the holistic development of moral intelligence in students.

Moral intelligence in educational situations for learners reflects the ability to comprehend and assess moral issues related to learning and to positively engage with moral challenges in the educational environment (Strike & Soltis, 2017). It also involves the ability to make informed moral decisions and act responsibly within the learning community (Nucci & Turiel, 2009). Berkowitz (2017) mentioned that moral intelligence in the context of learning is related to learners’ understanding of moral values

and principles and their ability to apply them in their daily lives and interact with others. If an individual lacks moral intelligence, they lack all other forms of intelligence and become outside the moral constraints of society (Coles, 2007).

The researcher deduces from the previous presentation that the concept of moral intelligence is a multi-component concept, such as compassion, mercy, forgiveness, tolerance, justice, monitoring, responsibility, and mutual respect. These components operate with an internal self-driving force through conscience and religious restraint. This prompts individuals to engage in their interactions with others by offering goodness and preventing harm to them.

Teenagers are vulnerable to problems, pressures, and challenges imposed by the rapid and successive pace of scientific and technological advancements, which is a fundamental characteristic of the era. This has led to the exacerbation of many psychological, emotional, and behavioral problems and disorders. Therefore, they need a personality characterized by moral intelligence capable of facing all these challenges (Coles, 2001; Alhadabi et al., 2020).

The relationship between moral intelligence and academic entitlement is a complex interplay that reflects the moral dimensions of one's behavior within an educational context. Moral intelligence involves the capacity to discern right from wrong, make moral decisions, and consider the impact of one's actions on others. In the realm of academia, individuals with high moral intelligence are likely to display a sense of responsibility, fairness, and integrity in their academic pursuits. On the contrary, academic entitlement refers to a mindset characterized by an exaggerated belief in one's deservingness of academic success, often accompanied by a lack of effort and an expectation of special treatment (Bertilet et al., 2019; Bonaccio et al., 2016; Greenberger et al., 2008).

The connection between these two concepts lies in the recognition that individuals with greater moral intelligence may be less prone to exhibiting entitlement behaviors. A morally intelligent individual is more likely to appreciate the importance of hard work, humility, and moral conduct in the pursuit of academic excellence, mitigating the manifestation of entitlement attitudes that can hinder personal and collective educational growth (Abdellatif, 2022; Goodboy & Frisby, 2014; Jones, 2013; Kurtyilmaz, 2019; Mohamed, 2020).

Through the researcher's work as a supervisor for student teachers during field training and interactions with some teachers during field visits to schools, the researcher conducted a survey study through interviews with student teachers, teachers, and school principals. By reviewing their reports on student behavior, the researcher found common characteristics among teenage students, including the presence of conflicts and fights among some students, instances of cheating in exams, a decrease in students' academic responsibility, a misalignment between their expectations and efforts in the educational process, blaming teachers if their grades decline, lobbying teachers to adjust their grades, comparing themselves with their peers, and feeling entitled to better grades than their peers. Reviewing the psychological literature in this field revealed the scarcity of Arabic studies in this area, and, to the researcher's knowledge, no study has addressed the relationship between research variables among high school students.

Considering the aforementioned observations, the researcher posits that academic entitlement encompasses various immoral behaviors with the potential to adversely impact a student's overall personality and, more specifically, academic performance. It exhibits a negative correlation with personality traits characterized by elevated moral intelligence, including honesty, humility, tolerance, conscience, and responsibility. Moral intelligence, recognized as a contemporary positive psychological approach, is instrumental in mitigating the prevalence of negative behaviors. The researcher identified a dearth of psychological studies and interventions dedicated to addressing and remedying

this phenomenon. Consequently, there exists a perceived necessity to undertake a study focusing on secondary school students in Wadi Al Dawasir, which, being a rural area, grapples with numerous academic and behavioral challenges among its students. Hence, the primary objective of this research is to assess the efficacy of a training program grounded in moral intelligence dimensions in mitigating academic entitlement among secondary school students.

Thus, the research problem can be formulated as follows: “What is the efficacy of a training program grounded in moral intelligence dimensions in mitigating academic entitlement among secondary school students?” From this main question, the following hypotheses were developed:

1. There are statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental group on the Academic Entitlement Scale and its components in both the pre-and post-measurement in favor of the post-measurement.
2. There are no statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental group on the Academic Entitlement Scale and its components in the post-assessment and follow-up assessment (after one month).

## Methodology

### *Research Model*

The experimental research methodology based on a quasi-experimental design (one experimental group) was employed to assess the effectiveness of the training program based on moral intelligence components (independent variable) in reducing the level of academic entitlement (dependent variable). This was achieved through pre-test, post-test, and follow-up measurements using the academic entitlement scale developed and utilized in this study for the experimental group.

### *Participants*

The research sample, comprising first-grade secondary school students in Wadi Al Dawasir Governorate, Saudi Arabia, was divided into two distinct groups. The Survey Sample, consisting of 102 students (mean age=16.19, SD= 1.67) was specifically selected to validate the psychometric properties of the academic entitlement scale. The Main Sample, consisting of 135 first-grade secondary school students, excluding those from the survey sample, underwent the application of the academic entitlement scale using T Scores. These scores, standardized with an average of 50 and a standard deviation of 10, facilitated the ranking of students, with the top quartile, comprising 32 students (mean age=16.14, SD= 1.45) retained for assessing the effectiveness of the training program aimed at reducing academic entitlement levels. It is noteworthy that only male students were included in this subgroup to control for potential gender-related influences on academic entitlement.

### *Research Tools*

#### *The Academic Entitlement Scale*

In this study, the researchers conducted a thorough review of the existing literature and psychological heritage on academic entitlement. To meet the research objectives, the Chowning & Campbell (2009) scale was translated and adapted as a tool, comprising 15 items categorized into two components: Externalized Responsibility (10 items) and Entitled Expectations (5 items). The former assesses the extent to which students attribute responsibility for their academic success to external factors, while the latter gauges students' expectations from professors. The Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree (scored 1-7), was employed, with specific items reverse-scored. Exploratory factor analysis revealed the scale's reliability, identifying two factors: Externalized Responsibility and Entitled

Expectations. Internal consistency, assessed through correlation coefficients, demonstrated values ranging from 0.40 to 0.58 for Externalized Responsibility and 0.27 to 0.51 for Entitled Expectations, indicating good internal consistency. Cronbach's alpha coefficients further affirmed the scale's stability, with values of 0.81 for the first component and 0.62 for the second component. These findings underscore the reliability and suitability of the adapted scale for measuring academic entitlement among university students.

To enhance the linguistic precision of the translated scale, the researchers subjected it to scrutiny by a panel of three specialists in translation. These experts, possessing field-specific expertise, offered valuable suggestions for refining the wording, all of which were incorporated into the scale by the researchers. Following these modifications, the translated version underwent a re-evaluation by an additional expert in translation, specifically from Arabic to English. The results demonstrated a high level of consistency between the translated and original versions, affirming the accuracy of the translation and establishing the scale's suitability for application. This meticulous process of linguistic validation not only ensured the fidelity of the translation but also confirmed the psychometric properties of the scale, bolstering its reliability for use in academic research.

Aligned with the extensively documented evidence regarding the psychometric characteristics of the scale, an assessment involving (102) participants was undertaken to validate its psychometric properties. Construct validity was explored through exploratory factor analysis utilizing the principal factoring method with Diagonally Weighted Least Squares (DWLS). The measurement model for the academic entitlement scale, comprising (15) items distributed across two dimensions, underwent rigorous testing. The outcomes demonstrated that the model exhibited an acceptable fit to the data [ $\chi^2=284$ ;  $DF=89$ ;  $\chi^2/df=3.1$ ; TLI (Tucker Lewis Index) = 0.97; CFI (Comparative Fit Index) = 0.98; RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation) = 0.073). The goodness-of-fit indices exhibited favorable values, falling within acceptable limits, indicating congruence between the measurement model and the actual data. Moreover, all factor loading values surpassed .4 and held statistical significance at the .01 level, thereby affirming the structural validity of the academic entitlement scale.

The results of calculating the internal consistency coefficients of the scale via Pearson's correlation coefficient revealed noteworthy positive correlations at the .01 significance level between each item's score and the overall score of its corresponding dimension. This correlation was observed after excluding the scores of the items from the total score of the dimension. Furthermore, Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient was employed to assess the reliability of the scale. The reliability coefficients for both the overall scale score and individual dimensions exceeded the threshold of (.7), affirming the reliability of the scale. The Composite Reliability (CR) values were calculated, where Composite Reliability is defined as the ratio of true variance to total variance (Kline, 2015). The Composite Reliability (CR) values for the Academic Entitlement Scale were all greater than 0.7, indicating the scale construct's reliability.

#### *The Moral Intelligence Training Program*

*The Program Objectives* were determined according to the definitions of moral intelligence and its components. This included defining each component and its expressions. The program's content, methods, techniques, and evaluation approaches were selected in alignment with the pre-defined objectives. The overall goal of the program was determined first, followed by sub-objectives and then specific operational objectives for each session. The overall goal of the current program is to "enhance moral intelligence among secondary school students" and the sub-objectives of the program are determined in light of the components of moral intelligence.

*Program Content:* The program encompasses topics and skills essential for every teenager. The selection of program content was based on a pre-survey study conducted by the researchers. In this study, the researchers gathered students' opinions on the most prominent academic, psychological, and social challenges they face, as well as their dissatisfaction with their behaviors in these situations.

*Training Techniques and Methods in the Program:* Lecture, Dialogue, and Discussion, Cooperative Learning, Brainstorming, Think-Pair-Share Method, Direct and Symbolic Modeling, Role-playing, Storytelling, Imagination, the High-Low Method, Past Change Method, Other Person's Style, Redefinition Method, High-Value Method, Alternative Method, Individual and Group Training Exercises: What do you do in the following situations?

*The program duration and number of sessions:* The program is scheduled over twelve weeks, during which twenty-four training sessions are conducted. Each session lasts 45 minutes, with two sessions held weekly. The sessions are structured progressively, ranging from easy to difficult. Additionally, there is a session dedicated to pre-assessment and post-assessment, as well as follow-up assessment.

#### *An outline of the program sessions*

*The first and second sessions:* Breaking the ice between the researchers and the trainees, understanding the nature of the work and the objectives of the program, outlining its implementation plan, and the preliminary application of research tools.

*The third and fourth sessions:* Understanding the concept of moral intelligence, deducing the components of moral intelligence from examples, and providing real-life and situational examples for each component of moral intelligence.

*From session five to session eight:* Understanding the concept of empathy, employing empathy development methods through scenarios, embodying empathy towards others in various situations, and exploring its impact on peers through training scenarios.

*From session nine to session twelve:* Understanding the concept of respect, employing methods for developing respect through scenarios, demonstrating respect towards others in various situations, and committing to assigned tasks.

*From session thirteen to session sixteen:* Understanding the concept of self-discipline, deducing instances of self-discipline in life situations, employing methods for developing self-discipline through scenarios, and distinguishing between righteous and unrighteous actions.

*From session seventeen to session twenty:* Understanding the concept of tolerance, deducing instances of tolerance in life situations, employing methods for developing tolerance through scenarios, and practicing tolerance towards others in various situations.

*From session twenty-one to session twenty-four:* Understanding the concept of justice, deducing instances of justice in life situations, employing methods for developing justice through scenarios, and dealing justly with others in various situations.

*Program evaluation:* A preliminary assessment of academic entitlement and moral intelligence was carried out on the participants in the experimental group before the program implementation. Additionally, a structural evaluation was conducted during the program sessions to monitor progress, utilizing a form designed by the researchers to assess program session objectives. Subsequently, a final evaluation was performed upon completion of the program, employing a measure to gauge the effectiveness of the experimental procedures. Furthermore, a follow-up measurement was undertaken a month after the moral intelligence training on the experimental group members to ascertain the persistence of the learning effects post-training.

*Program Validity:* The program was presented to a group of expert reviewers, consisting of (9)



professors in the fields of psychology and mental health (see Annex 7). They were asked to assess the validity of the training program, its procedures, objectives, and content. Their opinions were sought regarding the appropriateness of the assessment for the session objectives, the suitability of multiple-choice tests for verifying training session objectives, and the adequacy of the self-assessment survey and observation card to ensure that students effectively employed the components of moral intelligence. The reviewers' opinions affirmed the suitability of the evaluation elements for the program. The percentage agreement among the reviewers on the scale's evaluation elements ranged from (77% - 100%). This indicates a high level of consensus among the experts regarding the effectiveness and appropriateness of the assessment tools for the program.

**Results**

Before answering the research questions, the researchers verified the normal distribution of grades by calculating the Shapiro and Kolmogorov equations as indicated in Table 1.

Table (1): Tests of Normality for Academic Entitlement

	K o l m o g o r o v - Smirnova			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Pre-test	.104	31	.200	.959	31	.268
Post-test	.108	31	.200	.956	31	.233

From Table (1), it is evident that all Shapiro & Kolmogorov test p-values are greater than 0.05. This indicates statistical non-significance at the 0.05 significance level, suggesting normality in the distribution. Therefore, the t-test can be employed to assess the significance of differences.

*Result of the First Hypothesis*

'There are statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental group on the Academic Entitlement Scale and its components in both the pre-and post-measurement in favor of the post-measurement'. To test this hypothesis, the researchers employed a Paired Samples t-test to calculate the differences between the related groups. The following table illustrates these results.

Table (2): Means, Standard Deviations, t-Values, and Significance for Academic Entitlement and Components in the Pre- and Post-measurements (n=32)

Paired Samples Statistics				
Paired Samples Statistics		Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Pair 1	External Responsibility (pre)	29.4688	32	3.12105
	External Responsibility (post)	14.2500	32	1.84915
Pair 2	Anticipated Entitlement (pre)	16.2500	32	2.59030
	Anticipated Entitlement (post)	7.8125	32	1.02980
Pair 3	The overall Degree (pre)	45.7188	32	4.78731
	The Overall Degree (post)	22.0625	32	2.34091

Paired Samples Test

Paired Samples Test		Mean	Standard Deviation	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Effect Size (Cohen's d)
Pair 1	External Responsibility (pre/ post)	15.218	4.085	21.071	31	.000	3.725
Pair 2	Anticipated Entitlement (pre/post)	8.437	2.781	17.158	31	.000	3.003
Pair 3	The Overall Degree (pre/post)	23.656	5.711	23.430	31	.000	4.142

It is evident from the previous table that there are statistically significant differences between the mean scores of individuals in the experimental group in the pre-assessment and post-assessment in the direction of the post-assessment. Moreover, from the aforementioned table for the values of the t-test, it is apparent that these differences are attributed to the effectiveness of the program used in the study. This is an indicator of its ability to reduce the level of academic entitlement among individuals in the experimental group.

To confirm the effectiveness of the training program used in reducing academic entitlement and its components, the researchers calculated the effect size for the employed program using Cohen's d formula, as outlined by Kotrlik and Williams (2003). The effect size is calculated by dividing the mean difference between pairs by the standard deviation of the differences.

Upon reviewing the results of the first hypothesis, it becomes clear that there are statistically significant differences between the pre-assessment and post-assessment in academic entitlement and its components for individuals in the experimental group in the direction of post-assessment. Additionally, the training program, as an independent variable, demonstrates a very strong effect size in the academic entitlement dependent variable. This implies that individuals in the experimental study experienced a significant reduction in their level of academic entitlement and its components after the program implementation compared to their level before the program. This confirms the effectiveness of the moral intelligence program in reducing the level of academic entitlement. Hence, the first hypothesis is accepted. Furthermore, it is evident from the previous table that the effect size value is positive due to the nature of the program used. Academic entitlement and its components increase with an increase in the scale score and decrease with a decrease in this score. Therefore, the program works towards reducing the level of academic entitlement, resulting in a positive effect size value. This table also indicates that the utilized program has a high degree of effect size in academic entitlement. The effect size of the program was found to be significant, demonstrating a large impact on academic entitlement and its components.

**Results of the Second Hypothesis**

The second hypothesis states that 'there are no statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental group on the Academic Entitlement Scale and its components in the post-assessment and follow-up assessment (after one month).' To investigate this hypothesis, the researchers employed a Paired Samples t-test to calculate the differences between the associated groups. The following table illustrates these results.

Table (3) Means, Standard Deviations, t-Values, and Significance for Academic Entitlement and Components in the Post- and Follow-up-measurements (n=32)

Paired Samples Statistics		Mean	N	Standard Deviation	t	df	Significance (2-tailed)
Pair 1	External Responsibility (post)	14.2500	32	1.84915	21.071	31	.000
	External Responsibility (Follow-up)	14.5313	32	2.06326			
Pair 2	Anticipated Entitlement (post)	7.8125	32	1.02980	17.158	31	.000
	Anticipated Entitlement (Follow-up)	7.7188	32	1.14256			
Pair 3	The Overall Degree (post)	22.0625	32	2.34091	23.430	31	.000
	The Overall Degree (Follow-up)	22.2500	32	2.70006			

From the foregoing, it is evident that ‘t’ value is not statistically significant, indicating the absence of significant differences in the scores of individuals in the experimental group in the post-assessment and follow-up assessment for the Academic Entitlement Scale and its components. This suggests the enduring impact of the training according to the activities, tasks, and strategies of the program on the performance level of the experimental group in academic entitlement. Therefore, this leads to the acceptance of the fourth hypothesis, signifying the ongoing effectiveness of the training program in reducing the level of academic entitlement.

**Discussion**

The preceding analysis has provided a comprehensive exploration of the impact of the moral intelligence training program on academic eligibility and its components among the participants in the experimental group. The study delved into the pre-assessment, post-assessment, and follow-up assessment to discern any discernible changes over time. This discussion aims to synthesize and interpret the findings, shedding light on the implications of the results, the effectiveness of the training program, and the potential avenues for future research and interventions. By critically examining the statistical outcomes and considering the broader context, this discussion seeks to contribute to the understanding of how moral intelligence training can influence academic eligibility, providing valuable insights for educators, researchers, and practitioners in the field of education.

Relation to the first hypothesis and the possible reduction of academic entitlement among the members of the experimental study group after implementing the program can be attributed to the development of moral intelligence and its components in the individuals of the experimental group. High moral intelligence is characterized by compassion, responsibility, and a high level of self-control that contributes to regulating individual behavior. This results in making correct choices and avoiding mistakes, thereby preventing aggression in general and academic entitlement in particular. Moral intelligence also encompasses respect, making students more attentive to the rights of others and, consequently, considering their feelings and respecting their privacy, refraining from any form of aggression.

Justice is also considered one of the components of moral intelligence. Individuals with a sense of justice are characterized by respecting roles and fair participation. They seek the rights of others and attempt to solve problems reasonably. Consequently, this has an impact on reducing the level of academic entitlement among students. Moral intelligence also includes an individual’s ability to forgive others, foster friendliness, and prevent aggression or academic entitlement. The concept of academic entitlement

is based on unrealistic expectations from learners, anticipating high grades, exceptional treatment, and roles performed by the teacher without taking responsibility or exerting effort. This contradicts the fundamental concept of moral intelligence, which revolves around learners taking responsibility for their learning from the outset.

The success of the experimental group can be attributed to the content of the program they were trained on, which included values and moral beliefs supported by evidence from the Quran, Sunnah (traditions of Prophet Muhammad), and stories from the righteous predecessors. All of this contributed to regulating the behavior of the students and reducing their level of academic entitlement. The success of the experimental group can be attributed to the role of the trainer in the program, providing an environment based on respect, consideration for the feelings and rights of others, instilling religious values, and fostering an atmosphere of warmth, love, affection, and fun, which the researchers attempted to create during the training. These factors contributed to reducing their level of academic entitlement. Additionally, the trainer's utilization of methods, techniques, and activities present in the program may have been a factor in lowering academic entitlement among the students. This is supported by a study conducted by White (2011), which found that reinforcement, dialogue, and the development of life skills contribute to reducing academic entitlement among learners.

The results of this hypothesis align with findings from studies such as (Bertl et al., 2019; Head, 2016), which demonstrated that honesty and humility are strong indicators of academic entitlement. Students with higher integrity exhibit lower academic entitlement. This is also consistent with a study by (Al- Dabea, 2018), which showed the effectiveness of a counseling program in developing humility and reducing academic entitlement among a sample of university students with varying levels of humility and academic entitlement. Similarly, a study by Khalifa (2023) confirmed the effectiveness of a training program based on self-regulated learning strategies in reducing academic entitlement among university female students. Furthermore, these results are in agreement with studies by (Campbell et al., 2004; Greenberger et al., 2008; Elias, 2017; Luckett, 2017; Stiles et al., 2018; and Kinne et al., 2022) that demonstrated a negative correlation between moral intelligence and academic entitlement. If moral intelligence is developed in students, their level of academic entitlement tends to decrease.

Moral intelligence also encompasses the fear of God, and mindfulness of Him, and subsequently serves as a regulator for an individual's behavior by refraining from demanding what one does not deserve. Furthermore, moral intelligence includes justice, and respect for others, including teachers and school administration. It also involves taking responsibility, religious conscientiousness, respect for others, self-regulation, forgiveness, and forbearance—all of which are characteristics negatively associated with high academic entitlement. As the level of moral intelligence increases, the level of academic entitlement tends to decrease.

Individuals with high academic entitlement exhibit immoral behaviors such as disrespecting teachers, not adhering to school rules, disrespectfully objecting to grades, leaving the classroom without the teacher's permission, using phones during class, and avoiding personal responsibility. This is supported by the findings of both (Chowning & Campbell, 2009; Reysen et al., 2020), who assert a direct correlation between academic entitlement and immoral student behaviors related to the educational process. These behaviors include sleeping in the study hall, inappropriate use of technology hindering the learning process, impertinent behavior, especially towards teachers, side conversations with others, leaving the room without permission, answering phone calls, showing boredom, and displaying anger. For the second hypothesis, the result, indicating no significant difference in the mean scores of the experimental group in both the pre-test and post-test measurements of the academic entitlement scale, can be explained as follows: the continued impact of the training program used by the individuals

in the experimental group. Through mastering the components of moral intelligence, reaching a level of proficiency in these components, and practicing them in their educational and life situations, self-regulation and religious conscientiousness have remained effective in reducing the level of academic entitlement among students.

The content of the program, supported by Quranic texts and Prophetic traditions, deepens religious conscientiousness, self-regulation, justice, respect, and conscience in the minds of the students. Linking the content to real-life situations made them retain and recall what they learned when needed in different circumstances, implying a longer-lasting impact of the training. Additionally, the activities, exercises, and situations the students trained on contributed to their effective and continuous application. The program included indirect modeling through impactful video clips and compelling stories, encouraging students to represent and apply these situations continuously.

Furthermore, the program incorporated multiple assessment methods that refined students' experiences and skills through homework assignments and performance-based evaluations. This contributed to the mastery of moral intelligence components by the students and sustained its impact in reducing the level of academic entitlement among them.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, this research illuminates the profound influence of the moral intelligence training program on diminishing academic entitlement among students. The experimental group, exposed to a curriculum enriched with Quranic texts and Prophetic traditions, exhibited sustained enhancements in moral intelligence facets, including self-regulation, religious conscientiousness, justice, respect, and conscience. These findings align with prior studies, reinforcing the inverse relationship between higher moral intelligence and lower academic entitlement. The program's enduring impact underscores the importance of integrating religious and moral values into educational interventions. The success of the program is attributed to its comprehensive methodology, encompassing theoretical content, real-life applications, impactful narratives, videos, and diverse assessment methods. Beyond equipping students with moral intelligence, the program facilitated a continuous and effective application of these principles across various scenarios. This research contributes to the burgeoning evidence supporting the pivotal role of moral intelligence in shaping positive student behaviors, ultimately reducing academic entitlement. It advocates for the integration of moral training programs into educational curricula, fostering a more respectful, responsible, and conscientious academic environment.

### **Recommendations and Further Research**

Several recommendations emerge for educators, institutions, and researchers. Firstly, educational institutions should consider integrating moral intelligence training programs into their curricula to foster a positive academic environment. These programs, enriched with religious and moral values, have proven effective in reducing academic entitlement and promoting responsible behavior among students. Additionally, ongoing professional development for educators could focus on strategies to incorporate moral intelligence principles in their teaching methodologies. Further research could delve deeper into the long-term effects of such programs and explore variations in their impact across different educational levels and cultural contexts. Comparative studies assessing the effectiveness of various training methods and content modifications would provide valuable insights. Additionally, investigating the role of parental involvement and societal influences in shaping students' moral intelligence and academic entitlement could be a fruitful avenue for future research. By expanding our understanding of these dynamics, we can refine interventions and contribute to the cultivation of a more morally conscious and academically responsible student body.

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All authors contributed to the research of the literature, collection of data, analysis, and interpretation of the collected data.

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