

Views of Pre-service Teachers on Values and Value Education*

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to explore pre-service teachers' values and views about value education. 434 pre-service teachers who are at third and fourth year of their university education in 5 different departments of Ondokuz Mayıs University have participated in the research. While determining departments, "Practices of Community Service" course which can be effective in value acquisition has been considered. The research data have been collected using both qualitative and quantitative research methods. "Schwartz Values Scale" has been applied to pre-service teachers in order to obtain their views on values. In addition, a form including five open-ended interview questions about how the values are gained and transferred by pre-service teachers has been applied. Descriptive statistics and linear regression have been used for analysing the data obtained from the scale. Qualitative data has been analyzed with the descriptive analysis techniques. As a result, pre-service teachers possess universalism, benevolence and security types mostly; and their value education views fall under different headings such as programs, thoughts of being a model, enjoyment of experience and providing students with environment to demonstrate their thoughts.

Key Words

Value, Value education, Preservice Teachers.

Values can be described as true behavior standards, which are agreed and shared by most of people (Hökelekli, 2010) or they can be defined as attributes that determine the significance of the events and objects in terms of a society, a class or a person (Türk Dil Kurumu [TDK], 2010). Values are the criteria that are used to determine what is right or wrong, what is good or bad (Şişman, 2002), and they are generalized and shared attitudes (Yapıcı &

Zengin, 2003). It is believed that values have a lasting effect on individual's behaviors and attitudes and it is stated that they are related to our decisions about the things that are appropriate, inappropriate, favored or unfavorable in life (Rokeach, 1973; Robbins, 1994). Beliefs and attitudes are mostly used as a combination to embrace ideals and are called as values. Mostly, values are the total of many attitudes that provide personal obligation and consistency (Hunsaker & Cook, 1986). Values (*i*) are opinions and beliefs that are classified (*v*) according to their order of importance and that they conduct (*iv*) our assessments of our choices, events and behaviors about preferred life styles and attitudes (*iii*) under particular circumstances (*ii*) (Rokeach, 1973; Kluckhohn, 1951; Schwartz & Bilsky, 1987, 1990 as cited in Aavik & Allik, 2002). The notion of value and the concept of lifestyle can be used as synonymously (Çetin, 2004; Sağnak, 2004). Values do not tell us exactly what we have to do but they guide us to do the right things (Gudmundsdottir, 1991 cited

* This study was presented at the Values Education Symposium, October 26–28, 2011, Eskişehir Osmangazi University, Eskişehir, Turkey.

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in Akbaba- Altun, 2003). The values that individuals have and the attitudes that are developed depending upon these values affect their individualistic and organizational behaviors (Turan & Aktan, 2008).

Schwartz identified ten value types at individual level as a result of his studies. These are power, achievement, hedonism, stimulation, self-direction, universalism, benevolence, tradition, conformity and security (Dilmaç, Bozgeyikli, & Çıkkılı, 2008; Ros, Schwartz, & Surkiss, 1999; Schwartz, Caprara, & Vecchione, 2010; Yılmaz, 2008; Yılmaz, 2009).

Gömlüksiz and Cüro (2011) have stated that social sciences course program enabled the students to develop a positive attitude towards the values of patriotism, cultural values, respect, environment, nature, responsibility and scientific attitude. According to another view, without making a limitation of field, values are included in the teachers' arrangement of learning atmosphere within classroom, application of activities, teaching strategy, choice of context/content, allowed and reinforced behaviors within classroom, teaching style, imposition of discipline and in their behaviors and attitude towards their students (Veugelers & Vedder, 2003). The fact that the staff members who work in school, which is one of the basic structures of societies should unite around common values, will enhance school productivity (Ivancevich & Matteson, 1996 cited in Aktepe & Yel, 2009). However, what values are more important in school organizations is a matter that can change. Which ones are the most important virtues for the teachers who have to make tough choices about incommensurable values?

Chen, (2005) has expressed honesty, courage, concern, integrity and practical reasoning as the five basic moral characters for the teaching profession. Besides how can we develop basic virtues for teachers' professional ethics principles? As an answer to these questions, Sockett mentions honesty, courage, care, justice and practical wisdom as the five main ethical characters for teaching profession. Doğanay and Sarı (2004) emphasized that schools must attach importance to gaining democratic values and suggested developing models for value education/training. Teaching profession needs having many values such as honesty, hard work, openness, fairness/justice, equality, scientific, self-devotion, respect to people (Yılmaz, 2006) and willingness. It is important to know what kind of acculturation and socialization processes candidate/pre-service teachers are in, in other words, what kind of value systems they have as future teachers. There are research findings, which show that teachers' values

affect students' behaviors (Gözütok, 1995; Varış, 1973). Naturally, individuals who are educated by teachers that are fully qualified about value education will contribute to the society they are in by gaining democratic citizenship qualifications (Yıldırım, 2009). For example, in the USA in 1995, twelve core values were designated/determined in a program, which was called 'Core Values Training' and studies were done to teach these values (Tillman & Hsu, 2000 cited in Oruç, 2010).

Values education helps young people to develop values and contributes to individual to maintain a satisfactory quality of life (Kirshenbaum, 1995). Doğanay (2006) states that value education has taken place among the general objectives of education, however, it has remained deficient because it has not mentioned how it is taught and he adds that it is a field, which can be implicitly slightly seen in formal education without planning. Thornberg (2008) introduced similar results from a study that he conducted in Sweden about values education. In Sweden, values education or moral training do not take place as a particular subject at schools.

Character education is to develop skills and abilities that enable students to make reasonable choices to bear their responsibilities (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999 cited in Ekşi, 2003). Character education in the most general sense is the common name of the efforts in order to help growing new generation gain core humanistic values, raise awareness towards values and turn them into behaviors through implicit or explicit program (Anderson, 2000 cited in Ekşi, 2003). According to Dilmaç (2002), all humanistic values can be developed through activities, that are carried out in groups. As a result of the studies that were conducted to find out which values must be taught in schools, various/different values were suggested (Leming, 1998 cited in Akbaş, 2004). Bennet suggested the values/virtues of compassion, self-discipline, responsibility, friendship, work, courage, perseverance, honesty, loyalty and faith. Ryan suggested the values of justice, prudence, temperance, courage, trust/faith, hope, benevolence, responsibility. As for Lickona suggested the values of responsibility, respect, tolerance, prudence, self-control, benevolence, compassion, courage, honesty, justice and democratic values (cited in Akbaş, 2004).

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to introduce the values that teacher candidates have and put forward their ideas related to values education.

Method

Research Design

In the study, the pattern of multiple regression is used, in which the opinions of teacher candidates about values are taken as dependent variable and gender, their departments and classes are used as independent variable. In the study, gender is coded as GND, their departments as DEP and class variable is coded as CLS.

Research Group

The research group is formed with third and fourth year teacher candidates who are taking the course of "Community Service Practices" at 19 Mayıs University. Four hundred and thirty-four teacher candidates who are from five different departments participated in the research. Teacher candidates' fields of study were taken into consideration in deciding the departments. 67.7 % of the participants are female (n=294) and 32.3 % of them are male (n=140). 50 % of the participants are third grade students (n= 217) and 50 % of them are fourth grade students (n=217). The distribution of teacher candidates is as follows according to their departments; 37.1 % of the students study science and technology teaching (n=161), 21% study foreign languages teaching (n= 91), 18 % study social sciences teaching (n=78), 12.9 % of them study primary school teaching (n= 56) and 11.1 % study psychological counseling and guidance (n=48).

Instrument

Both quantitative and qualitative data collection tools are included in the study. Schwartz value list that contains fifty-seven values was used in the study as quantitative data collector tool. The opinions of candidate teachers about value education were collected through a semi-structured form, which contains five open-ended questions.

Schwartz value inventory was translated into our language by Kuşdil and Kağıtçıbaşı (2000) and its validity and reliability studies were done. Reliability co-efficient was found to be changing between 0.51 and 0.77 for value dimensions.

Process

The analysis of data was conducted in three stages. In the first stage the opinions of pre-service teachers about values were found through descriptive statistics.

In the second stage, the relationship between value types that pre-service teachers have and their gender, department and class was studied by doing multi regression analysis. During the analysis stage, variables like gender, their departments and classes were included in the analysis as "dummy variable." Accordingly, variables are applied as dummy variable in this way; for the gender variable females were coded as "1" and males were coded as "0". Five different departments at which candidate teachers study were coded respectively as dummy variable. For the class variable, fourth grade as "1" and third grade was coded as "0". After dummy variables were generated, multi regression analysis was used to determine to what degree gender, department and class variables explain the ten sub dimensions of value inventory respectively. As for the third stage, the opinions of candidate teachers about value training were studied through descriptive analysis. For the opinions of candidate teachers, gender was coded as (F-M); for their departments, science and technology teaching as (SCT), foreign languages (FL), psychological counseling and guidance as (PCG), social sciences teaching as (SST), primary school teaching as (PT) and class levels were coded as (3-4).

Results

Candidate teachers mostly agreed with value types like *universalism*, *benevolence*, *security* and as for the least, they agreed with *stimulation*, *hedonism* and *conformity*. According to the results of regression analysis, there is a correlation between *stimulation* value type that candidate teachers have and class and department variables. In addition, there is a correlation between *self-control* and gender variable, *universalism* and class variable, *benevolence*, department variable, *tradition*, department variable, *conformity*, class variable, *security*, and gender and department variables.

The answers to the question of what can be done to help candidate teachers gain these values are as follows. Among these answers, giving education about values, increasing the number of in training and the practices of social service courses, giving courses about values in earlier classes, the need for an objective and egalitarian education in faculties of education and providing more responsibilities for students can be mentioned.

The question of how values can be gained in primary and secondary school levels was asked to candidate teachers. They mostly stated that as candidate teachers they themselves must gain knowledge about values first to be able to be a model for their future students

by having classroom activities and gain these virtues through social-cultural activities, enjoyment of real life stories, assignments and projects.

Discussion

In this study, value types that candidate teachers have and their opinions about value education are studied. According to research data, candidate teachers most agreed with universalism, benevolence, security and as for the least, they agreed with stimulation, hedonism and conformity. According to Dilmaç et al. (2008), candidate teachers mostly attach importance to universalism, security, benevolence and self-direction. In another study, which was conducted over candidate teachers by Sarı (2005), students specify the most important values as political, public morality, religious, economic, esthetic, social and scientific values. In a study, which was conducted among candidate teachers by Bacanlı (2002), it was found out that male students prioritize respect, the tradition and religion. According to Dilmaç, Deniz, and Deniz (2009), it is seen that there is a relationship between students' self-concept points and sub-dimensions of value inventory such as achievement, hedonism and stimulation. Yazıcı (2011) conducted a study about the democratic values of social sciences candidate teachers from different universities and he stated that they considerably get high scores/points in total and in dimensions of collaboration, the right of education, freedom.

Similar results were obtained in some other researches about teachers (Memiş & Gedik, 2010; Unca, 2008; Yılmaz, 2009). According to a study by Fırat (2007), the most embraced value dimensions of teachers are universalism, self-direction, security, benevolence and conformity value types. According to Taşdan (2008; 2010), in public primary schools, the five individual values to which teachers attach utmost importance are respectively justice, honesty, human-centered, security and diligence (hard work). According to Aktepe and Yel (2009) while the three values that teachers consider most important are social justice, national security and family, the least important ones are spirituality, wealth/prosperity and social status. Akengin, Tuncel, Şirin, and Sargın (2009) stated that candidate teachers from two different universities consider family security, world peace and wisdom values most important. According to Balcı and Yanpar-Yelken (2010), teachers identified value concept in seven different themes. According to Yılmaz and Dilmaç (2011), there is a meaningful relationship between

teachers' job satisfaction and sub-dimensions of personal values such as power, achievement, hedonism, stimulation, self-discipline, universalism, benevolence, tradition and security.

According to the findings of the study, there is a positive relationship between self-direction, universalism, benevolence, security value types and gender. Altunay and Yalçınkaya (2011) found out a similar result. According to Başçiftçi, Güleç, Akdoğan, and Koç (2011), although value preferences of candidate teachers in terms of gender do not show any differentiation in power, achievement, stimulation, self-discipline, tradition and security sub-dimensions, it differentiates in hedonism, universalism, benevolence, conformity, competence and diligence sub-dimensions.

As candidate teachers indicated that community service practices course has an important role in gaining values, Yılmaz (2011) also emphasized that this course will develop values like benevolence, cooperation, collaboration, equality and social justice. In his study on training of candidate teachers, Töremen (2011) pointed out that candidate teachers need to internalize the values of responsibility to have personal and social responsibility. As being an important unit and educational organization of universities, there must be "scientific", "humanitarian", and "esthetic" values in organizational culture of faculty of education (Erdem, 2007). Similar results were obtained by Kurtdede Fidan's (2009) research.

Nowadays, however perfect an education institution is, if the teachers who work in this institution do not have necessary qualifications, the benefit expected from education process will not be obtained (Gökçe, 1997). In many researches about teacher qualities, personal characteristics of teachers, behaviors, attitudes, interests and their academic qualifications have an important role in learning and teaching processes (Erdem, Gezer, & Çokadar, 2005).

In respect to value education, Ekşi (2003) defined some of the most important functions of schools as training academically successful individuals who embrace core values. Yazıcı (2006) mentioned the approaches used in value education under the headings like teaching through inspiration, explaining the value, analysis of the value and moral reasoning. However, Uysal (2008) identified the approaches in character education as teaching values directly, inspirational approach, literature-centered character education, explanation of values, values analysis approach, moral dilemma negotiations, service training, public service, integration of syllabus and multi-strategic approach.

Demirhan İřcan (2007) states that students gain the related knowledge successfully through value education that are applied to them. According to Tezcan (2003), value education can be given through experiences. The purpose of value education is to discover child's best side, which he/she has by birth and to provide him/her to develop his/her personality at all sides (Aydın, 2010).

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