

Full Length Research Paper

An evaluation of occupational ethical values of geography teacher candidates in Turkey

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Geographers can be influenced by the occupational ethical values in their cultures. In this research, the opinions of the geography teaching candidates were determined according to occupational ethical values at Marmara University, Faculty of Education, Department of Geography Teaching. Occupational ethical values identified are used to collect data by help of survey which ethical values are seen as important by geography teacher candidates. 126 geography teachers participated in the study. Findings obtained in the study and 18 ethical and 13 unethical values included in the survey were interpreted according to the results of their priority orders. The study revealed that the teachers' expectancy of ethical values, "justice" comes first as the unethical values order topped by "discrimination". The sub-outcomes that led to this conclusion of general outcome were presented in findings and discussion in the context of research aims.

Key words: Ethics, values, occupational ethical values, geography teacher candidate.

INTRODUCTION

Ethics is a word derived from the Greek word "ethos" and it deals with one's moral values personally and socially. Ethics and morality, which are the practice of ethics, are used together (Mengüşoğlu, 1965). This is because ethics consist of rules, while the essence and role of morality are the norms and values of social life, individual-society relationships, the needs of humans to live together and the aim and meaning of individual life. With ethical rules, individuals learn how to separate good from bad and right from wrong conducts. This means, people develop the consciousness of becoming individuals who form the society.

Value concepts have various definitions. Values are consolidated beliefs that end-state of existence

personally or specific behavioural patterns (Rokeach, 1973). Values are described by some researches related to culture inseparably by some researchers. Because culture is actually a combination of values and practices in the community (Geertz, 1973; Swidler, 1986), ethical education has been seen as an important increase in interest over the last decades (Melé, 2005; 97). Expectations of the individual and society stand out in the concept of values education. For this reason, it is important to acquire the younger generation whose values are seen as constructors of the future. Values need to be planned or programmed activities because they will not be automatically acquired or acquired later (Dilmaç and Ekşi, 2007).

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People try to use their learning background and educational knowledge as a tool to meet their needs and solve their problems. Education is affected by the social, cultural, political and economic conditions of the society where it is given. It contains national and global values. Individuals who shape their old or new behaviour develop a new behaviour, which is part of training. The process of education and training is a continuous activity; it started with the existence of humans. Educational process is planned by teachers in schools; therefore, teachers play an important role in education. Qualified and eligible teachers affect students positively. They make students who are the leaders of tomorrow qualify by inculcating in them the cultural values of the country in which they live. In this context, it is important that teachers with good cultural values lead the society.

School has a special role to play in the formation of national and democratic environment in society. It is one thing to know and another thing to have the ability to teach. For this reason, teaching is a profession that requires special education (Binbaşı, 2009). Teachers need to be well equipped with the educational environment and educators to deliver value education completely well. Teacher candidates who choose this profession should at least be well equipped as teachers, because they must have the values expected of tomorrow's teachers and have comprehensive knowledge of value education. In this sense, their ethical expectations must be high too.

Temperament, habit, character, is the plural form of morality that contains the spiritual principles and rules observed in interpersonal relations. The influence of morality and its sanction and compelling power are one's conscience. People see their feelings, thoughts, behaviours, attitudes and actions as right or wrong, good or bad and positive or negative by listening to the voice of their conscience. Thus, people ensure balance, order, control and harmony between themselves and others (Köknel, 1996).

Moral values may change from one society to another. Therefore, every society wants to know and applies its own values and ethical values. This can be obtained through education. Education is the act of introducing and conveying scientific, social and cultural facts to society from the earliest ages. Teachers carry out this systematically and legally. Teachers are the legal representatives and practitioners of education. That is why it is important for candidate teachers to have ethical values.

Occupational ethics and ethical values in geography teaching

Occupational ethics is a set of principles that regulate people's conducts in their profession (Şentürk, 2009).

Occupational ethics is the guiding principle for professionals; it explains the basic rules guiding any profession. Therefore, occupational ethics foresees that a profession should be carried out by competent people in accordance with the profession's needs, merits and dignity (MEB, 2016). Fulfilling the profession ethics is a question of attitude as to whether it conforms to those ethical rules or not. By observing the occupational ethics, the interests of the profession are protected and the requests of the service members and recipients can be fulfilled appropriately.

In terms of occupational ethics, whether a conduct is ethical or not is limited by that profession's basic ethical values; examples: the correctness of one's behaviour, its fairness and the public approval of this behaviour or your acceptance of the mentioned behaviour done to you. 'Is this my behaviour legal? If I was not in this profession, could I do it? Are these extra benefits given in any profession proper, like getting sick report when one is not sick, leaving classes constantly due to personal affairs, reflecting one's problems happening at home or social environment to one's students? Can one do these conducts in private sector? These unethical conducts such as discrimination, cronyism, bribery, psychological pressure, neglect, exploitation, selfishness, violence, insult, malpractice, failure to do business, request for donation and help, embezzlement and gossip can be assessed based on the ethical occupational values.

It is the duty of teachers to provide education and training service in a professional manner and it is the right of the person doing it to make a living out of it. So, teaching is the mission of an individual, who chooses this profession, aims to teach and makes a living from it. Teacher candidates acquire systematic academic knowledge and skills in relevant departments of faculties and colleges to learn how to teach. Teacher candidates are required to obtain university qualifications by receiving 15 to 20% of the total courses in world knowledge, 50 to 60% in field information and 25 to 30% in professional teaching knowledge. He/she must also obtain ethical values determined legally and socially.

It is a fact that teachers are important in the deterioration or amelioration of the ethical structure of the society in which they live. As training leaders, teachers must be a model to the society with their own conducts. They need to be aware of the necessity of setting standards for the society. Otherwise, wrong doing would become a normal conduct for them and this causes trouble for both individuals and society (Pelit and Güçer, 2006). This is because teachers are teachers of all other professions. This means that they are always respected by all segments and professions of the society. Teaching in society is accepted as a sacred duty with guiding educative role. The sacredness of the occupational ethics forces and helps teachers to be qualified and sensible to ethical values.

The professional principles of teachers consist of professionalism, respect, honesty, justice, responsibility, and tolerance (Aydın, 2015b). The responsibilities of teachers are not only restricted to themselves; they are also responsible for students and their families, colleagues, the institution where they work and the society in the wider frame. In this respect, teaching ethics has more responsibilities and liabilities than other professions. To standardize and make clear these responsibilities and liabilities, Ministry of National Education issued a circular under the heading Occupational Ethics Principles for Educators in 24.06.2015. Occupational ethics are gathered under the following headings in this circular: relations with the students, relations concerning occupational ethics, relations between educators and students' parents, school administrations and the society, school administrators and teachers and students and parents (MEB, 2015). Standards to be followed include: teachers should focus on the character development of students and have a broad world knowledge. Also, they must be professionally sufficient, be able to use self-renewing techniques, use appropriate teaching techniques, be able to use the developing teaching tools in education, and be able to identify the needs of students correctly. They must establish right relationship among the school, family and community, have a good understanding of the relationship between the philosophy of education of the country and its teaching and be able to put it into practice and be able to use the skills and abilities to the fullest (Örenel, 2005).

The implications of the major changes in geographical thought in discipline, has an influence on geography education. Just as in every discipline, geography can influence citizenship education by contributing to the education of values. Geography teachers' interest in ethical values' education has been a very important part of the history of geography teaching since the 1970s (Slater, 2001). The essence of the geography is embedded with values related to what are significant in terms of perspective and content. Some values are based on ideological and conceptual frameworks that give more priority than others such as scientific objectivity and social justice. Some educational concepts used to teach geography can be values under another name. Values can be based on a variety of educational perspectives, including liberal and constructivist paradigms. General educational objectives are always part of our specific geographic training goals (Slater, 1998).

This study is mainly interested in value-loaded content and analysis. This is obvious if someone thinks about ideological frameworks for geography. All geography is about values and preferences related to means and purposes. However, geography has many issues that give rise to the need for a discussion of rightness and

wrongness in its field (Slater, 2001). Katılmış and Balcı (2017), aimed to determine opinions of the geography teachers towards values education. The findings of this study have shown that the participants emphasize that the teacher should be a role model within the classroom activities. Morgan (2000) notes that in recent years, geographers have pointed out the role of geography in the citizenship, within which lie concepts of identity, inclusion and exclusion.

Geography provides other attitudes and values of geography as well as teaching ethics. These attitudes and values are included in the Geography Lesson Curriculum (CDÖP in original), which brings students' responsibilities in terms of having geographical awareness about our country and the world. These include the following:

- (1) Using space correctly and effectively by understanding the factors of nature and human,
- (2) Thinking about the future by paying attention to the quality of the environment,
- (3) Raising individuals who are faithful to national values and protect their country,
- (4) Having a sense of responsibility of protecting the world and humanity,
- (5) Understanding the ecological, economic, social and political relations formed by human and nature relations; being aware of the interactions of people, places and environments around the world,
- (6) Providing better opportunities for future generations and ensuring that they are raised as conscious citizens.

Attitudes and values are significant elements of the CDÖP. Attitude is the tendency of an individual, not the behaviour that can be observed; it is a condition that controls one's behaviour. Value is the common thought, aims, basic moral principles or beliefs that are accepted by the majority of the members of a group. It will be useful to keep attitudes and behaviour such as values and attitudes, solidarity, tolerance, being scientific, love, respect for individual differences, sensitivity, patriotism, peace, aesthetics, responsibility in the CDÖP (2005) within the perception of geography. It is stated that students should develop the feelings of love, respect and appreciation for people who serve Turkey, Turkish flag, Turkish army and its homeland (MEB, 2005). These values will primarily serve to protect, maintain and develop the space and spatial characteristics, which constitute the main subject of geography. They support people in learning their homeland by loving it, learning and accepting its values. As emphasized in the general aims of geography education, the social development and citizenship responsibilities of students are backed up in the CDÖP and also value education together with all the elements of the program is reinforced. In this sense, from geographical consciousness, attitudes concerning

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of the students.

Gender			
Male		Female	
f	%	f	%
60	47.6	66	52.4

nature and human are the requirements that will be developed through the program (Ünlü, 2014). The occupational ethics of geography teachers must include these values mentioned earlier.

The direction of the study determines that it is expected of the geography teacher candidates that prepare personals for the future to have good morals and values. This article selectively investigates priority order of occupational ethical values of geography teacher candidates in Turkey.

METHODOLOGY

In the study, survey was used to collect data. The sample of the study consists of students of geography teaching department, Ataturk Faculty of Education at Marmara University in Turkey. It was applied to all geography students receiving training in 2016-2017. The data collection tool used in the study was developed by the researcher Aydın (2015a).

This study was designed according to opinions of the geography teacher candidates focusing on been previously educated about ethical values. The behaviour observed correctly in occupational ethics is defined as ethical; otherwise, it is defined as unethical. The secondary focus was on the examination of occupational ethical values. A third focus was on the investigation of occupational unethical values. Particularly, the following research questions guide this exploration:

- (1) Are geography teacher candidates already trained in occupational ethics education?
- (2) Which occupational ethical values should be found in the geography teacher according to priority order?
- (3) Which occupational unethical values should not be found in the geography teacher according to priority order?

Table 1 shows the distribution of the sample by gender. Female 66 (52.4%) and male 60 (47.6%) teacher candidates totalling 126 participated in the study.

FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION

Geography teacher candidates 33 (26.2%) had not previously been trained on occupational ethics education, while 93 (73.8%) were previously trained in occupational ethics.

In the study, 18 ethical and 13 unethical values included in the survey were interpreted according to the results of their mean values. The distribution of the results is shown in Table 2.

To make clear the expectations of teacher candidates' occupational ethical values, an order of the importance of ethical and unethical behaviors was made (Table 2). Here, the most important ethical value is the sense of justice, with 2.71. Later concepts are seen to be collected at certain values. Values around 6 are honesty and integrity, respect, and equality. Values around 8 are neutrality, democracy, remuneration, tolerance, love, justification, and freedom. Around 10 values, responsibility is positive human relationships and openness. The last cluster's concepts include: humanism, resistance to illegal orders, loyalty to the institution, raising the standards of the service and lastly springiness with 14.93 in order of importance.

According to the order of priority of non-ethical behaviours, discrimination (4.27) is in the first place. Then favouritism, bribery, malpractice and violence follow. Another group consists of violence, insult and neglect of one's duties followed by exploitation, mobbing, and embezzlement. In the last group, selfishness, neglect and gossip (8.98) were listed.

The concept of "justice" comes first in the ethical behaviours and its opposite meaning "discrimination" also comes first in its ranking. Likewise, "honesty and accuracy" and its opposite favouritism get the same position in their rankings. This indicates that teacher candidates' answers are consistent and this helps to raise the reliability of the study.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

In recent years, values education has been an issue discussed frequently in academic and popular publications. In this study, the priority order of occupational ethics values is determined by geography teacher candidates.

In the order of teacher candidates' expectation of ethical values, "justice" comes first as the unethical values order topped by "discrimination".

It has been determined that a geography teacher candidates attach great importance to the value of justice in the sense of occupational ethics and then honesty and accuracy, respect, equality, impartiality, democracy, doing justice, tolerance, love, right and freedom, responsibility, positive human relationships, openness, humanism, resisting to illegal orders, commitment to institution, raising service standards, and springiness. However, candidates place importance on discrimination, favouritism, bribe, malpractice, violence, insult, not perform duly one's duties, exploitation, mobbing, embezzlement, selfishness, neglect, and gossip as unethical values, respectively.

The values about occupational ethical and unethical values put forward by the geography teacher candidates and their implementation will raise expectations on forming an equitable and fair education considering the

Table 2. The occupational ethical value opinions of geography teacher candidates.

Which occupational ethical values should be found in the geography teacher according to priority order? Sort			Which occupational unethical values should not be found in the geography teacher according to priority order? Sort		
Ethical values	Rank	Point average	Unethical values	Rank	Point average
Justice	1	2.71	Discrimination	1	4.27
Honesty and accuracy	2	5.09	Favouritism	2	4.72
Respect	3	6.64	Bribe	3	4.92
Equality	4	6.78	Malpractice	4	5.13
Impartiality	5	7.51	Violence	5	5.62
Democracy	6	8.07	Insult	6	6.53
Doing justice	7	8.12	Not perform duly one's duties	7	6.78
Tolerance	8	8.29	Exploitation	8	7.27
Love	9	8.56	Mobbing	9	7.55
Right and freedom	10	8.58	Embezzlement	10	7.56
Responsibility	11	9.83	Selfishness	11	8.75
Positive human relationships	12	10.75	Neglect	12	8.90
Openness	13	10.93	Gossip	13	8.98
Humanism	14	11.83			
Resisting to illegal orders	15	13.89			
Commitment to institution	16	13.92			
Raising service standards	17	14.27			
Springiness	18	14.93			

responses given in the table. Obeying and applying the ethical and unethical behaviours put forward by the geography teacher candidates will help keep our expectations high.

Training programs need to be structured to cover occupational ethical values. This study was carried out with attendance of geography teaching candidates. For this reason, the results of the study can give more opportunity to evaluate the occupational ethics values determined by geography teacher candidates.

The values that geography teachers carried out in schools were mentioned in the introduction part of this work that there is a need to establish education. For this reason, a study that focuses on the thoughts and activities of the geography teachers about the teaching of values in order to see the current practices is suggested. In other studies on other disciplines, the expectations of occupational ethics in teaching can be done. In-service training could be helpful in the education of occupational ethics that might remain uncompleted during undergraduate study.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The author has not declared any conflicts of interests.

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