Chapter 4
At the Basic Education Level:
Values Education Research and Their Results – Turkey Example

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ABSTRACT

Values education aims to cultivate learners' values, discipline them according to established rules, and positively transform their characters by contributing to their moral development. This education, encompassing both cognitive and affective dimensions of teaching, represents one of the most significant goals of education systems. The objective of this section is to analyze research trends related to values education in Türkiye and the outcomes of these studies at the basic education level, alongside a systematic examination of doctoral dissertations. To achieve this, doctoral dissertations registered and available in the Thesis Center of the Turkish Council of Higher Education were reviewed using keywords such as value/values education, character education, moral education, and citizenship education. This study examines 102 doctoral dissertations, categorizing them based on the subject of values education, exploring how values education is defined within the dissertations, examining the research methods, and evaluating the findings at the basic education level.

INTRODUCTION

Education aims to develop individuals in all aspects, including clarifying their collective duties, roles, and responsibilities within society. Individual behaviors can be seen as a product of the social environment and may be influenced by the culture of the community and the pressure to conform to societal norms (Myers, 2011). The desired behaviors endorsed by educational systems can be considered the outcome of national values, principles, and virtues to shape individuals' character. Akbaş (2008) emphasizes that teaching values, disciplining learners according to established rules, and contributing to their moral development and character formation are critical goals of education.

This educational objective, which targets the attitudes of individuals/learners, encompasses both the cognitive and affective dimensions of teaching (Clement, 2009: 19). Values education, including character education, moral education, and citizenship education, is a multifaceted concept with applications in areas such as multicultural education, gender education, religious education, ethics education, legal education, critical thinking, empathy development, cooperation skills, decision-making skills, moral reasoning, life skills, sexuality education, drug education (Kirschenbaum, 1994), and more.

In this section, the focus is on evaluating values education as it is addressed in Türkiye. The analysis revolves around the content of values education in doctoral dissertations produced within the country. In Türkiye, values education is integrated not only with values education itself but also with citizenship, character, and moral education.

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BACKGROUND: VALUES AND VALUE EDUCATION

The concept of value can be defined in various ways depending on the context. In general, value refers to the worth, significance, or importance assigned to something, whether it is an object, a concept, a belief, or an action (Scholarly Community Encyclopedia, n.d.). For individuals or groups, values are the moral principles and ideas they consider essential in life and guide their actions and decisions (Sinclair, 1990: 1615).

There are several common interpretations of value. Moral values are concerned with principles of right and wrong, guiding ethical judgments and behaviors. They often stem from philosophical or religious frameworks and help individuals determine what is morally acceptable or unacceptable (Yudkin, Gantman, Hofmann & Quoidbach, 2021).

Personal values are deeply held beliefs and principles that shape an individual's attitudes, choices, and behaviors. They reflect what individuals consider important and meaningful in their lives, such as honesty, integrity, freedom, compassion, or personal growth (Sagiv, Roccas, Cieciuch & Schwartz, 2017).

Cultural values are shared beliefs, norms, and ideals that characterize a particular society or community. They influence collective behavior, social interactions, and decision-making within that culture. Cultural values include respect for elders, cooperation, individualism, and environmental stewardship (Von Suchodoletz & Hepach, 2021).

In addition to individual and cultural values, emotional, economic, and functional values are relevant within the business context (Lee, Lee & Choi, 2010). These different interpretations of value highlight its multifaceted nature and the various dimensions in which it can be understood and applied.

It is essential to acknowledge that value is subjective and can vary among individuals and cultures. What holds value for one person or group may not have the exact understanding of the notion of value requires taking into account the specific context and perspective involved (İşisağ, 2010; Özen, 2022). However, despite these variations, Schwartz (1992) argues that specifics tend to become standard across

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