Elementary School Teacher Candidates' Perceptions and Definitions on Morality and Moral Education

İlköğretim Okulu Öğretmen Adaylarının Ahlak ve Ahlak Eğitimi Algıları ve Tanımları

Yeliz TEMLİ*   Derya ŞEN**   Hanife AKAR***
İnönü University   METU   METU

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to understand how elementary school teacher candidates define morality and moral education, (ii) evaluate their pre-service education in terms of their preparation for the role of supporting moral development of their prospective students, and (iii) envision their role in students' moral development. Data were collected by using a survey questionnaire which required content analysis. The findings showed that teacher candidates (N=84) defined morality around universal values such as honesty, respectfulness and social rules. According to teacher candidates, raising a moral person was initially the responsibility of families, teachers' role was complementary. The negative effect of media and social surrounding were criticized by the participants. Teacher candidates had concerns related to how to address moral development in their professional lives and thought that Classroom Management and Development and Learning courses were important for addressing moral issues through cases.

Keywords: Moral education, morality, teacher training, teacher candidates.

Öz

Bu çalışmanın amacı, öğretmen adaylarının ahlak ve ahlak eğitimini nasıl tanımladıklarını belirlemek, hizmet öncesi eğitimlerini öğretmenlik hayatlarında ahlak eğitimine değinmek için ne derece yeterli gördüklerini değerlendirmek ve öğrencilerin ahlak gelişimlerine nasıl katkı sağlamayı planladıklarını belirlemektir. Bu tarama çalışmasına, 84 öğretmen adayı gönüllü olarak katılmıştır. Tarama yöntemi kullanılarak veriler toplanmış ve içerik analizi yapılmıştır. Katılımcılar ahlakı, dürüstlük, saygılı olma ve sosyal kurallar gibi başlıklar altında evrensel değerlere atıfta bulunarak açıklamışlardır. Ahlak eğitiminde öncelikli sorumluluğun ailelere ait olduğunu vurgulayan katılımcılar, öğretmenlerin rolünün ancak ailede verilen eğitimin destekleyicisi olabilmek olduğunu belirtmişlerdir. Sosyal çevre ve medyanın olumsuz etkisini eleştiren katılımcılar, Sınıf Yönetimi ve Gelişim ve Öğrenme derslerinde kullanılacak örnek olay çalışmalarının, ahlak eğitimine değinmek için etkili bir yol olacağını belirtmişlerdir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Ahlak eğitimi, ahlak, öğretmen eğitimi, öğretmen adayları.

Introduction

The most radical relationship between teacher and the students is moral relationship in educational settings (Ruiz, 2004). Teachers are held responsible for edifying students (Barone, 2004). People's need for preparation for parenting, intimate relationships and questioning loyalty concepts to protect especially younger generation of the society from exploitation and harmful habits is inevitable. Therefore, educational goals for the 21st Century mainly emphasize caring, loving and the encouragement of students' moral competencies (Noddings, 2006). A widely

accepted idea is that the contributions of teachers to the moral development of their students are important for the well-being and the improvement of a society (Raulo, 2000). This idea is valid for Turkish student teachers as well. Social injustice and apathy may cause poverty in a society, and moral and religious values should be developed in schools by education (Aksu et. al., 2010).

It is expected that teachers encourage students to evaluate the consequences of their actions and to acquire rational thinking and criticism skills (Raulo, 2000). In addition to rational and critical thinking skills, Straughan (1988) states that learning about emotional, social and sexual development stages and providing students with resources for discussion during their formal schooling are effective ways for moral education. In this sense, providing cooperation among students, rewarding and encouragement of positive behaviors are some strategies expressed in Straughan's (1988) study.

The expectations from teachers regarding the moral development of students are to encourage students to act in morally acceptable ways through the approaches some of which are stated above and also to be a good role model (Kasen, 2006; Raulo, 2000). As role-models, teachers have the control over the messages conveyed to students and affect students' moral education by implementing values (Lickona, 1997). Nevertheless, it is essential to remember that teachers' background experiences and beliefs may influence their classroom practices (Pajaras, 1992) and students' beliefs and actions (Joseph & Efron, 2005). Therefore, teachers are expected to attend classroom by leaving their moral dispositions outside of the class and adopt universal moral values as a teacher. Consequently, putting moral values into implementation requires two steps: to define morality and to evaluate the importance of the values (Haydon, 2007).

There is evidence that creating a moral learning environment through the interpretation of the hidden curriculum facilitates internalization of moral principles (Haydon, 2004; Lickona, 1997; Power & Kohlberg, 1986). Acceptance of questionability of absolute truths is the key issue in order to create an ideal facilitative learning environment. So as to help the internalization of this principle, teachers are suggested to set up democratic learning environments where children have the opportunities to express themselves (Kabapınar, 2002) and make moral decisions and engage in moral actions (LePage, Darling-Hammond, & Akar, 2005).

Aksu and her colleagues (2010) conducted a research project with 18226 freshmen registered in faculties of education to understand student teachers' future behaviours, and attitudes towards political engagement, institutions and fatalism as the indicator of socio-cultural values. The results show that student teachers describe themselves as democratic people and the least trustable institution is the media. Kabapınar (2002) attracts attention on creating democratic learning environments. As the creator of democratic learning environment, teachers should facilitate moral development of the students with the help of instructional materials or activities which can help children to develop the essential moral competencies and acquire intended behaviors such as showing tolerance to different opinions and criticisms. Yüksel (2005) also emphasizes the importance of democratic learning environment in which students should be able to develop critical thinking skills, creative thinking skills, and ask higher order questions to construct students' own moral judgments.

Literature Review

When definitions of morality are investigated, it is difficult to reach a well-stated common definition. Rather, the definition of morality shows differences like the concept of beauty (Wilson, 1990) that reflects individual understanding and preferences. Morality takes form by being taking effects of culture of a community, social innovations, history of a nation, or social culture (Georgiev, 1994). Socrates defines morality as knowledge and science. He claims that career in science and developments in moral character are similar as both of them provide individuals with higher status within the society (Yayla, 2006). Dewey underlines the importance of two social domains, schools and civil society, which influence one's moral inquiry skills. Personal moral conclusions are subject to social changes (Dewey, 1994). Durkheim highlights the

importance of being accessible to all people when defining morality. Moral definition of oneself or moral definition of others is not the core of morality but the sum of moral perceptions of total individuals creates morality (Durkheim, 2002). While Durkheim underlines social phenomena and facts (Chazan, 1985), Aristotle places friendship at the center of moral life (Noddings, 2006). Kant stresses the concept of "freedom", which is not limited to being free and being who one wants to be or which is not related with avoiding punishment or seeking praise. Indeed, what is moral is struggling for freedom of who one wants to be or what they believe in (Kant, 1987). Morality is also explained through referring to concepts of empathy (Warnich & Stemberg, 2007), respect and responsibility (Lickona, 1991) and justice-oriented reasoning (Kohlberg, 1981, as cited in Carter, 1984). Haydon (2007) explains morality as the major part of decision making process and experiences; additionally he asserts that although a person experiences the moral decision making process, one might not have a clear understanding of values.

Philosophical studies of morality have different focuses for moral judgments. Divine Command Theory reflects theological properties and the key point is: if an act possesses a moral property, it does so in virtue of possessing some theological property (Wierenga, 1983, p. 388). Being commanded by God shows that the action is morally true (Wainwright, 2005). Deontological ethics stress the relationship between duty and moral actions and stresses the action itself not the product of an action (Mizzoni, 2010). Virtue ethics stresses helping people develop good personality traits and the ways to help people to break bad habits (Hooft, 2006). As the forms of Consequentialism, Altruism focuses on help and serving others; Egoism rests on self-interest; and Utilitarianism focuses on promoting happiness, not only performers' happiness but also everyone affected by the action. The common characteristics of these 3 forms of Consequentialism are that goodness or rightness of an action solely depends on their consequences (Driver, 2012).

As for moral education, from Kant's point of view, education is the only way to reach perfectionism and he defines moral education and socializing as two essential gains of ideal education. Indeed, moral education helps children comprehend the rules by explaining it. The key point is that people should avoid introducing moral rules by creating fear or psychological pressure (Yayla, 2005). Sockett (2008) points out the evaluation process and explains the responsibility of teachers in the evaluation process. As the implementers of moral actions in education, teachers stress the criteria of fair assessment and cooperation among students as important points that teachers must take into account in teaching profession.

Lack of consensus on the definition of morality is also valid regarding the moral values to be communicated (Sichel, 1998) and in what form the content should be taught (Straughan, 1988). Althof and Berkowitz (2006) assert that the content of the moral education is shaped through the answers to the following questions: a) what kind of a person do we want to rise? and b)what kind of a person do we want our children to be? The responsibilities of adults; especially, the educators, are not only to communicate moral values to the new generation, but also to help them develop their own empathy skills towards their social environments. In this respect, responsibility for our own decisions and empathy require an affective basis that should exist in every human being's soul (Wardekker, 2004). It is suggested that teachers must look beyond their self-interests and encourage students to develop a broader view of morality taking into account different cultures, racial and ethnic backgrounds (Cummings, Harlow & Maddux, 2007).

As for the main factors affecting one's moral perception, social structure is uttered as the most effective factor (Hardy, 2008). Social structure includes schools, family, friends, neighborhood and institutions like community organizations or religious organizations. Families' responsibilities in moral education were examined in several studies. The results of these studies show that families have important effect on children's moral emotions and behaviors and moral growth (Hardy, 2008; Spinrad et. al., 1999; Şen & Akar, 2008). Specifically, while families are the main factors that affect moral identity, effective teachers support students' potential for moral identity gained from the families (Fitzmaurice, 2008).

Teachers' understanding of morality can directly affect their in-class actions and decision

making processes. The curriculum in the Turkish context reveals a need to create democratic learning environments that lead to the moral development of students without imbuement of teachers' personal values and beliefs as if they are absolute facts. Teacher Education programs have an important role in developing teachers who are well-equipped with the essential tools to undertake issues of morality and moral education in their professional lives. In that sense, the question of whether the teacher candidates perceive **themselves** as competent and adequately **prepared** and also the question of how they envision their role in the moral development of students are important questions to be asked. Consequently, this study attempts to answer the following questions: i) How do elementary school teacher candidates define morality and moral education? (ii) How do elementary school teacher candidates evaluate their pre-service education in terms of their preparation for the role of supporting moral development of their prospective students? (iii) How do elementary school teacher candidates envision their role in students' moral development?

Method

A survey study was designed to gather data on teacher candidates' perceptions about morality and moral education at a public university. Survey research was employed, especially, as it is advantageous in defining the characteristics of a population (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2005). In this section, participants, instrument, data collection procedures, and data analysis procedures are respectively presented.

Participants

The population of this study were senior students who were teacher candidates attending Faculty of Education in a prestigious public university in Turkey. There are five departments in the Faculty of Education, and several classes from those departments, were selected through a cluster sampling method. The groups in the sample included senior students in the following departments: Department of Elementary Education (ELE), Department of Foreign Language Education (FLE), and Department of Computer Education and Instructional Technology (CEIT).

A survey questionnaire was administered by the first author to all senior students on a voluntary basis. Ultimately, 84 volunteer senior teacher candidates participated in the study. Among those participants, 33 (39.3%) were in FLE, 28 (33.3%) in ELE, and 23 of the participants (27.4%) were in CEIT. In terms of gender distribution, 45 of the participants (58.3%) were female and the remaining 34 (41.7%) were male.

Among these participants, 39 participants (46.4%) had attended field practice in private elementary schools, 25 participants (29.7%) in Anatolian High Schools, which are well-respected public schools where the medium of instruction is in a foreign language. Students register this type of school after getting high scores in a nation-wide selection exam. Slightly less than one fifth of the participants (n=16 19%) had completed their field experiences in public schools and four of the participants had done their field practice in private kindergartens. The mean age of the participants was 22.52 years ranging from 19 to 26 (SD=1.103).

The participants had taken Classroom Management Course offered for 3rd year students and Development and Learning course in their 2nd year. Teacher candidates are required to take the courses three hours per week in a semester as must courses. Both courses included issues relevant to moral education that encompass emotional and social development, academic achievement and character development, encouraging students to develop self-responsibility and intrinsic self-monitoring, as well as behavior modification (LePage, Darling-Hammond & Akar, 2005). In addition to those, Development and Learning Course includes moral development theories and views such as Piaget's, and Kohlberg's Theories of Moral Development, and Gilligan's views on moral development.

Instrument

Relevant literature review about how teacher candidates are trained about moral education was examined. Next, three informal interviews were conducted with junior teacher candidates to explore issues on how they experience moral education in their undergraduate classes. An open-ended survey instrument was developed, and a pilot study was conducted with some senior students. The respondents were requested to elaborate on items related to their experiences during field practice. Based on their comments, additional open-ended items were included.

Two field experts interested in Moral Education and instructors of Curriculum and Instruction provided consensus for the content and face validity of the instrument as suggested by Maxwell (1996). One of the experts suggested change in the order of the question, namely, "What is your definition of morality." The reason was that the question might be perceived as a personal question and would evaluate students' concept knowledge when asked as an opening question. Ultimately, the sequence of the questions was rearranged; the questions about the definition of morality and factors affecting individual's moral perceptions were replaced with the items concerning experiences during field practice.

Next, the final version of the questionnaire was validated with three teaching assistants and a field expert who were involved in the teaching of Development and Learning that partially deals with moral education. Face validity included issues of clarity of printing, space for writing the answers, and appropriateness of language (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2005). The instrument includes two parts: demographic information; and eleven- open ended questions on teacher candidates' definitions and opinions on morality and moral education. These questions delved on issues of strengths and weaknesses of moral education during pre-service teacher education (e.g., "What do you think about the qualification of your pre-service education in terms of moral education?"), teacher candidates' evaluations on morality during field practices (e.g., "Have you ever had a moment thinking if I were the teacher, I would prefer to use a different method to deal with a particular moral issue? Please explain"), definition of morality (e.g., "Related to your answers above, what is the definition of morality from your point of view?"), the main factors that affect one's moral perception (e.g., "How do people acquire moral values/behaviors?") and teacher candidates' plans to deal with moral education in their professional life (e.g., "How are you planning to implement moral education in your professional lives?").

Data Collection Procedures

The surveys were administered during the final two weeks before spring semester of 2007. The first author was personally involved in the administration of the surveys as the data collector. Data collection lasted for 15 minutes based on an appointment system with the instructor of the particular classroom and the surveys were administered to volunteer students as a group. Data collection procedure was carried out under the monitoring of the researcher herself. Teacher candidates were first informed about the purpose of the study, the content, and the duration of the survey. Participants were informed that they might quit filling out the survey questionnaire and leave the classroom anytime they wanted to. The completed surveys were collected randomly in a closed envelope.

Data Analysis Procedures

Demographic Information was analyzed and reported based on descriptive statistics that included means, standard deviations, and percentages.

The qualitative data included the analysis of the eleven open-ended items. First, all answers were written successively for each question under one document by the authors. Then, for each item the main categories were explored through multiple negotiations between the authors. During the analysis, it was found that some participants tended to provide responses of some questions under other questions too. The authors examined the type of responses provided by participants, and after reaching an agreement they decided to classify the responses under five

main categories to avoid losing data (Erkan, 1997). The related answers were clustered together, and a non-participant researcher expert in qualitative research provided external checks. In order to minimize threat to theoretical validity, the authors and the non-participant researcher read all of the expressions several times and analyzed data together and read some unclear expressions and discussed until reaching an agreement (Maxwell, 1996). Consequently, general preliminary themes emerged as (1) definitions of morality, (2) concepts related to morality, (3) factors influencing one's morality, (4) effectiveness of teacher training on moral education, and (5) prospective classroom planning for moral education. So as to provide internal validity, the coherent concepts were clustered together (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Codes under each theme were reported in frequencies and good quotes that described the codes were used in the reporting of the findings (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2005).

In some questions, participations passed the questions without writing his/her opinions. For this reason, the number of participants who voluntarily participated in the study did not equal to participant number of responders. Sometimes, the participants opt for answering a question while writing another questions' answer. In this case, the researchers organized the responses under the related question.

Results

The results of the study have been presented under five categories; namely, definition of morality; concepts related to morality; the factors that shape one's moral perceptions; teacher training; and plans for dealing with moral education respectively.

Definition of Morality

It was important to understand how student teachers defined morality as this might have an influence on their perceptions of moral education and its practices. Teacher candidates defined morality by addressing six main themes: social values and rules, respect for others, universal values, teachers' responsibility and morality, religion, and nationalism. Participants defined morality in terms of social values and rules as follows. Regarding the first theme, the theme social values and rules emerged into five codes (Table 1).

Table 1.
Theme: Social Values and Rules (n=26)

Codes	f
Acting in a socially acceptable way	14
Being sensitive and helpful to create a peaceful society	5
Building empathy	3
Obeying unwritten rules for a peaceful society	3
Judging from one's own perspective	1
	26

As it can be seen in Table 1, the participants defined morality in relation to social values and rules that contribute to the maintenance of a peaceful society that emphasized social aspects. Acting in socially acceptable ways (n=14) was defined mostly in describing morality. The focus of the participants' statements was related to social peace. They believed that the members of the society must follow social rules, be helpful and sensitive to others to keep the peace in the society (n=5). The following two quotes were selected from the dataset that indicate how teacher candidates see morality.

Act like you want to be treated (CEIT, 23 year old male; ELE, 22 year old female).

Moral people can think by putting themselves in other's shoes (FLE, 22 year old female).

It was underlined that unwritten social rules help people to live together (n=3). One of the participants defined "judging from one's own perspective" as a code in drawing the attention to how others see morality and how that may shape ones thinking about morality and acting in a moral way.

Besides social values and rules, respect for others', regardless of age and occupation, constructed another theme. This theme can be perceived as the same with the theme of universal values as it was presented in Table 3, the participants preferred to formulize morality under universal value as the combination of universal concepts. Respectfulness has great importance for the participants; they stated "respectfulness" as the most important feature of morality both as a universal value and as a social value.

Twelve of the participants (23.8%) stated that "being respectful towards others' opinions, rights and freedoms" defines one's morality. Three of the participants, stressed the importance of adopting positive attitudes towards others' decisions as more important than feeling respect. Additionally, "acting respectfully and being respected in a community" (n=3), were also described as components of morality. Being sensitive to unjust treatments damaging others (n=2) was stated as more important than being in the same community or group. In other words, participants emphasized that it did not matter what country people live in, or what socio-economic status people have, everybody can be sensitive to unjust treatments damaging others. That also brought another requirement which is being fair (n=1) as a new code.

Some participants opted for stressing some concepts related to universal values and they defined morality as a combination of different universal concepts. Definition of morality was summarized as a synthesis of honesty and respectfulness (n=6). Some participants arranged different concepts and offered different combinations to define morality. Combination of altruistic behaviors, respectfulness and honesty (n= 6) was one of the combinations. The definition was extended by adding self-esteem (n=3). Similarly, honesty, respectfulness, fairness, goodwill and hard work were conveyed as descriptions of morality (n= 2).

Another definition consisting of universal values was constructed by three concepts: fairness, goodwill and conscientiousness (n=2). All of the characteristics written above were noted as the most important qualities to be of a human being. Some participants just put emphasis on universal values without explaining it. In other words, loyalty to universal values (n= 1) was another formulized definition that included all other expressions under universal values (see Table 2).

Table 2.
Theme: Universal Values (n=20)

Codes	f
Synthesis of honesty and respectfulness	6
Combination of altruistic behaviors, respectfulness and honesty	6
Combination of altruistic behaviors, respectfulness, honesty and self-esteem	3
Combination of fairness, goodwill and conscientiousness	2
Combination of honesty, respectfulness, fairness, goodwill and hard work	2
Loyalty to universal values	1
	20

Under another theme, teacher candidates discussed individual's personal characteristics and the conflict between social values and individual beliefs. They argued the importance of different points of view in constructing a better society, in that respect encouraging students to live according to their own beliefs was a crucial point to raise self-actualized people (n=8). Indeed, as mature people, teachers' tolerance towards students was claimed as a supportive attitude in getting students and expecting moral behaviors (n=3).

Concepts that Describe Morality

Teachers were asked to write down the main concepts that described morality. The concepts were clustered under 4 themes; social values, universal values, ethics, and religion. The first theme includes issues of respect for social values, empathy, tolerance, and respect for customs and traditional values.

Like the previous question, which was related to the definition of morality, concepts regarding morality were perceived as connected with being in peace and harmony with the community. In order to realize this aim, members of the society must have respect for social values (n=12). Empathy was another highlighted concept regarding morality. Members of the society can encounter different types of problems, and the suggested solution was to develop empathy (n=4). In a similar way, being a tolerant person was defined as another important concept (n=3). One 22 year old female participant attending the department of ELE expressed her opinion by saying that:

Moral people are able to deal with unpleasant situations. Tolerance to small mistakes is essential in daily life and in the learning environment/ classrooms as well.

Similar to the results of definitions of morality, when asked about concepts related to morality, they emphasized the same universal values. The term "Universal values" was uttered as an umbrella term. In other words, the participants agreed on the close relationship between morality and universal values like respectfulness (n=23). According to the participants, a person should be respectful (n=23) in order to be called as a human being. In addition to this, the participants mentioned the concepts of honesty (n=12) and honor (n=8) (Table 3).

Table 3.
Theme: Universal Values (n=46)

Codes	*f*
Respectfulness	23
Honesty	12
Honor	8
Protection of living organisms	1
Avoiding self-centeredness	1
Trust	1
	46

The results show a correlation between the values mentioned by the teacher candidates and the issues that the faculty and content of the program attached special importance to. Student teachers in the department of CEIT emphasized the importance of cyber ethics (n=11) by supporting their ideas with examples mentioned in classes.

Developing technological facilities brings about some disputes. Respecting others' privacy and technicians' effort to create unique materials are very important in technology (CEIT, 22-year-old male).

Likewise, plagiarism was mentioned by foreign language education students (n=4) as an immoral action. Because of the instructor's sensitivity to ethics of writing assignments, they are very sensitive to ethical rules as well.

Teacher Training

The researchers asked the respondents to express their opinions about three aspects of

moral education in teacher training process; namely, what subjects regarding moral education were covered in classes, to what extent they were satisfied with the moral education content and what they would like to learn to deal with moral issues in their professional life effectively. The participants listed the theories they learnt as in Table 4.

Table 4.
Theme: Commonly Covered Subjects (n=42)

Codes	f
Stages of Moral Development	15
Cyber ethics	14
Ethics of teaching profession	10
Importance of avoiding plagiarism	3
	42

The participants believed that they learned stages of moral development (n=15) in detail. Teacher candidates thought that the content of classroom management, educational planning and evaluation, and guidance courses enabled them to learn Kohlberg's moral development stages, evaluation of students' performance and effective classroom management without causing any conflict and to create a respectful learning environment.

As mentioned in the theme of "Concepts that describe morality", the participants from department of CEIT strongly emphasized "cyber ethics". Cyber ethics (n=14) was cited as an important issue concerning morality by CEIT students and they stressed the importance of learning cyber ethics. Moreover they were reluctant to focus on issues of morality within the classroom atmosphere, for most of them had different career plans other than teaching such as being a computer programmer. They added that moral education can be dealt with the means of instructional technology. While the subject of cyber ethics was stressed by CEIT students, ethics of teaching profession was stressed by ELE students (n=10). The importance of avoiding plagiarism was stressed by three FLE students (n=3).

Almost one fourth of the respondents (n=12 23.8%) focused on the importance of learning environment. They stressed two courses in the undergraduate program: Classroom Management and Development and Learning since encouraging moral development was specified as one of the five essential competencies to manage a classroom well (LePage, Darling-Hammond, & Akar, 2005). The participants also emphasized that point and they expressed their appreciation for the instructors' efforts to be role models (n=5). In a broad perspective, the faculties of education included classroom management theories into the curriculum to show prospective teachers how to communicate with badly-behaved students and solve some troubles in class during their professional life (n=9). They believed that they were encouraged to create a democratic learning environment (n=4) and respectful learning environment (n=2), especially, in classroom management courses (Table 5).

Information on how we can create permanent changes in the behaviors of disrupting adolescent students must be provided for prospective teachers." (CEIT, 23 year old male).

Democratic and respectful learning environment is essential for the acquisition of feeling of respect for different opinions" (FLE, 23 year old female).

Table 5.

Theme: Covered Topics regarding Learning Environment (n=20)

Codes	f
Solving problems created by badly-behaving students	9
Being a good role-model	5
Importance of creating a democratic learning environment	4
Importance of respectful learning environment	2
	20

Their satisfaction about the course contents in dealing with moral education was also asked. Student teachers stated that moral education was generally ignored during their formal education (n=26). Indeed, they thought that they did not get sufficient information regarding moral education (n=15) since they did not have any course covering how to teach or learn moral values.

We don't know how teachers deal with moral development of children and how we can encourage them to act in morally acceptable ways." (FLE, 22 year old female).

I think the moral education content of the program was insufficient because I don't know how I can encourage students to construct their own moral values (CEIT, 23 year old female).

Less than half of the participants (n=35 41.6%) indicated that classes were sufficient during the pre-service education to touch upon moral education. They put emphasis on "just touch upon" statement and clarified the statement: if the aim is just to talk about morality implicitly, the pre-service education was sufficient, whereas, if the aim is to deal with moral education professionally, the courses require more comprehensive content related to morality (Table 6).

Table 6.

Theme: Satisfaction with Moral Education in Pre-service Education (n=76)

Codes	f
Sufficient just for touching upon	35
Any subject related to moral education	26
Insufficient information	15
	76

Findings with respect to what teacher candidates would like to learn revealed that they are in need of getting more information about how they can care for students' troubles during their adolescence period (n=4). Two of the CEIT students, who believed they would have difficulty in connecting CEIT classes with moral education, wanted to obtain more information about morality and ethics. Regarding moral decision making processes, they felt they needed to learn the criteria of assessment of students' success in detail (n=2).

One of the important characteristics of a teacher is being fair. Especially when teacher evaluates students' success s/he must be careful. I would like to learn more about this issue (ELE, 23 year old female).

What Shapes One's Moral Perception

Student teachers were asked about what affects one's perception of morality and moral performance, they pointed out more than one factor. The results (Table 7) showed that family (n=33) had the major power in raising a moral person. Teacher candidates' responses indicated strong agreement on the effect of friends (n=26). Teacher candidates explained their mission as supporting family background (n=16). This thought was distinctly expressed by most of the participants (39.2%). One of them wrote:

The main responsibility of raising morally educated person belongs to families. Teachers have a supportive role (FLE, 22 year old female).

The pressure or expectation of the society was considered as an important factor (n=11). Possible negative influences of media (n=5) were discussed. Although family and teachers struggled to strengthen a child's moral characteristics, media can destroy moral efforts of parents, teachers, and educators by reflecting immoral behaviors or examples. Furthermore, according to participants, the society tolerates some people's unacceptable dishonesty:

Some people who have got away with corruption can stand high in society's favor because they are rich and powerful. I can't eliminate this kind of cases' effects even if I make my best effort (FLE, 22 year old female student teacher).

When we watch television, we see some famous people who earn money in illegal ways. The people support him and say Turkey is proud of you. How can the teachers or parents explain this situation (CEIT, 23 year old male student teacher).

These kinds of positive attitudes towards immoral but rich people or celebrities might affect a young person and her/his friends might also have influence on young person's morality. In such a case, the society and the media can decrease the effect of teachers' or families' endeavors. Similarly, culture (n=5) and socioeconomic status (n=4) affected people's preferences, priorities and decision making process. Religion (n=2) was stated as a concept which affects moral perception. They explained that if people comply with religious rules they will probably be moral people. (Table 7).

Religion was defined as a complementary factor for moral education by two of the participants. Additionally, the importance of relationship between nationalism and morality (n=2) was stressed through mentioning of many patriotic values. As another definition, evaluations of what is right or wrong, good or bad were common responses given by five of the CEIT students (n=5).

A moral person is one who obeys the rules of religion. Not to think badly of other people and not to gossip about them are among the essentials of religion. Morality and obeying religious rules goes hand in hand (CEIT, 23 year old male).

A moral person loves his nation and he should be willing-to protect his nation from threats (CEIT, 25 year old male).

Table 7.
Theme: Factors That Affect Moral Perception (n=109)

Codes	f
Family	33
Friends	26
Teachers	19
Society	11
Media	5
Culture	5
Socio-economic Status	4
Religion	2
Personal qualities	2
Patriotism	2
	109

Planning for Moral Education

In order to deal with moral education, it is mostly highlighted that (35.7%) teacher candidates (n=30) were planning to be effective role models. Participants pointed out their observation in field experiences. One of them related dilemmas in what teachers said and did (Table 8).

For example when the teachers talked about the possible damages of smoking, the students recognized the cigarettes in teachers' coat and they knew the teacher was addicted to smoking (ELE, 23 year old female).

Table 8.
Theme: Plans for Practice (n= 58)

Codes	f
Being effective role-models	30
Role playing	8
Seeking for opportunities to help students develop own values	6
Discussion	5
Being patient	4
Providing learning experiences for developing tolerance to different views	3
Extra-curricular activities	2
	58

Creating cases with moral dilemmas that people may encounter in their daily life, and asking what actions may be morally acceptable and discussion on the possible effects of the actions (n=5) were stated as the effective ways of dealing with moral education. After giving case stories, students could take roles and they could have discussions on what is-right or not and why, the consequences of actions, and the significances of moral actions (n=8).

They also expressed they would avoid dictating what is right or wrong (n=5) and would encourage students to develop their own values (n=6). The participants expressed they would make use of any chance of argument to examine values and encourage students to construct

their own value system without creating a serious conflict between prospective adults and society. The positive aspects of living with people with different opinions (n=3) were emphasized for a democratic and respectful learning environment. Moreover ,the mission of educational institutions to educate moral people for a peaceful and powerful society was stressed. So as to realize this aim, participants emphasized their willingness to deal with moral education in and out of class. Two of the ELE students thought up preparing different extra-curricular activities (n=2).

Respondents also discussed teachers' attitudes and behaviors they encountered during field experience. The participants observed impatient attitudes towards students' mistakes (n=4) and one female 23 year old FLE students criticized this situation by the following statement:

If I were a teacher, I would not stress students' mistakes; actually, I would put strong emphasis on their positive characteristics and encourage them to correct their disturbing behaviors.

Discussion and Conclusions

The findings of this study showed that training of teacher candidates about how to deal with moral education in their prospective classrooms should go beyond teaching instructional theories and technical knowledge. Moral education practices and key points of effective moral education could be stressed in pre-service education to make moral education in the classroom a comprehensive endeavor and develop students' full potential as moral people. This finding is also stressed by Fitzmaurice (2008).

Another common result is seen in the definition of morality. According to Dewey, morality is a broad term like actions which social because they performed in the society and the source of morality is individual's oneself. Morality is in experience. Durkheim's origin is not the individual, but the society itself. The source of morality was society itself, in other words society is the moral authority (Dill, 2007). The findings of this study showed that society and social rules are important factors that form moral values and the person who obey the social rules and can be defined as moral person. In this study, the participants focused on Durkheim and Dewey's society approaches while explaining morality. Both philosophers underlined experience and society itself. The participants highlighted social values and rules frequently. While they pointed out acting in socially acceptable ways and keeping peace and harmony in the society, encouraging students to construct their own moral values was also mentioned. The main difference between their views was the point of origin. Specifically, the findings of the study showed common aspects of both of the views of Durkheim and Dewey. Additionally, the findings of the study showed that teacher candidates emphasized the importance of independent moral rules which are in a harmony with universal values such as equity and objectiveness. It can be interpreted that the participants underlines the characteristics of Deontological Ethics. Besides Deontological Ethics, some participants pointed out the rules of religion. In other words, if some things are advised by God, it is accepted as moral for these participants. This view shows Divine Command Theory characteristics.

Addition to the social point of view, respect was attached special importance to. Although respectfulness is a universal value, the participant associated respectfulness with society as well, and explained its significance beyond social rules and universal values.

The finding of the study also revealed a contradiction. Teacher candidates underline the importance of encouragement of students to develop their own moral values on the one hand. On the other hand, social values and acting in socially acceptable ways was described as properties of a moral person. If majority determines the concepts of goodness or truth, how people can prevent personal values from eliminating in the majorities' judgments. While the participant intended to create a new generation whom can produce their own values, they emphasize the social rules and values in order to keep social peaceful in a society.

The participants stressed universal values while defining morality. In this study, morality was described as a combination of different universal concepts. These terms or concepts like trust, tolerance, respect, responsibility and care, were associated with creating positive learning environment for moral education like Fitzmaurice (2008) emphasized. The findings showed that being an effective role model and creating an appropriate learning environment in schools were considered as important responsibilities of teachers. Likewise, teacher candidates believed that being a good role-model was the most effective way to pay attention to moral education. Additionally, teacher candidates held teachers responsible for reducing negative effects of the media, possible negative effects of students' peers who are popular among them but do not show morally acceptable behaviors. In those respect, the results of the study show similarities in Sockett's (1992) and Schwart's studies (2008). Sockett (1992) focused on virtues such as honesty, courage, fairness like the participants highlighted as moral concepts and Schwart (2008) identified specific responsibilities of teachers as showing moral behaviors.

The findings of this study also showed a great agreement on family's effect. The participants of this study highlighted the effect of family in moral education like various studies or chapters in the books such as Spinrad et al. (1999), Hayes and Hagedorn (2000) and Hardy (2008). The participants described their roles as a complementary factor that could increase family effect. The fundamental factor was family and teachers could contribute to moral development progress. The findings also revealed that teacher candidates believed that friends were one of the most important factors that affect students' moral identity. Especially, students in their adolescence period, tend to imitate their peers' behaviors. Horn, Daddis and Killen (2008) stressed the same concern with the result of the study and suggested that critical thinking skills be taught to students in order to make them aware of the good and the bad in different circumstances.

In this study, teacher candidates thought that moral education was an important component in their profession; nevertheless, they did not feel well-equipped to handle this component in their prospective classrooms. Teacher candidates had concerns related to how to address moral development in their classes. Participants emphasized that "instructors just touched upon moral education and covered moral aspects of the subjects implicitly". It was suggested that teacher education should include moral education content and implication for elementary schools especially rather than offering information on theories of moral development. Furthermore, participants stressed the important mission of Classroom Management and also Instructional Planning or Methods courses regarding moral education. These courses could be used as means to address moral issues through cases, and urge teacher candidates to discuss these issues in a democratic learning environment.

This study also showed that the field the teacher candidates were majoring could have an indication of what type of moral values they would stress more. For instance, teacher candidates in CEIT (Computer Education and Instructional Technology) emphasized largely cyber ethics. Thus, findings proposed that some critical clues could be taught to teacher candidates to get their students' attention on some values relevant to their major. Student teachers covered some subjects like stages of moral development and ethics of teaching profession; but they hesitated whether it would be effective or not when they tried to stress moral issues during in class activities. To meet their needs, some elective courses in connection with moral education could be added to in-service teacher education programs. Consequently, it is recommended that needs assessment studies be beneficial to clarify teacher candidates' needs on moral education.

The sample of the current study was limited with one case, a prestigious public university in Turkey. Further in-depth studies are suggested to delve more into the issue of how to develop teacher candidates' ability in dealing with the moral development of their prospective students, and shed light on the development of teacher education curriculum policy on moral education.

References

Aksu, M., Engin-Demir, C., Daloglu, A., Yıldırım, S., & Kiraz, E. (2010). Who are the future teachers in Turkey? Characteristics of entering students teachers. *International Journal of Educational Devleopment, 30*, 91-101.

Althof, W., & Berkowitz, M.W. (2006). Moral education and character education: Their relationship and roles in citizenship education. *Journal of Moral Education, 35*(4), 495-518.

Barone, T.N. (2004). Moral dimensions of teacher-student interactions in Malasian secondary schools. *Journal of Moral Education, 33*(2), 179-196.

Carter, R.E. (1984). *Dimensions of moral education*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Chazan, B. (1985). *Contemporary approaches to moral education*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Cummings, R., Harlow, S., & Maddux, C.D. (2007). Moral Reasoning of in-service and pre-service teachers: A review of the research. *Journal of Moral Education, 16*(1), 67-78.

Dewey, J. (1994). *The moral writings of John Dewey*. New York: Prometheus Books.

Dill, J.S. (2007). Durkheim and Dewey and the challenge of contemporary moral education, *Journal of Moral Education, 36*(2), 221-237.

Driver, J. (2012). *Consequentialism*. New York: Routledge.

Durkheim, E. (2002). *Moral education*. New York: Dover Publications.

Erkan, S. (1997). İlköğretim Öğrencilerinin Rehberlik İhtiyaçlarının Belirlenmesi Üzerine Bir Araştırma. [A study on determining the guidance needs of primary school students]. *Education Management from Theory to Practice, 3*, 333-406.

Fitzmaurice, M. (2008). Voices from within: teaching in higher education as a moral practice. *Teaching in Higher Education 13*(3), 341-352.

Georgiev, D. (1994). Values and public life. In Prodanov & Davidov (Eds.), *Morality and public life in a time of change* (p. 43-61). Washington, DC: Paideia press & the council for research in values and philosophy.

Hardy, S.A. (2008). Moral Identity. In Power, F.C., Nuzzi, J.R., Naevaez, D., Lapsley, D.K., & Hunt, T.C. (Eds). *Moral education a handbook volume two: M-Z* (P.289-291). Praeger Publishers: London.

Haydon, G. (2007). *Values for educational leadership*. Thousands Oaks, Sage Publication: CA.

Haydon, G. (2004). Values education: Sustaining the ethical environment, *Journal of Moral Education 33*(2), 115-129.

Hayes, B. G., & Hagedorn, W. B. (2000). A case for character education. *Journal of Humanistic Counseling Education and Development, 1*, 2-4.

Hooft, Stan van (2006). *Understanding virtue ethics*. Chesham, U.K.: Acumen.

Horn, S.S., Daddis, C., & Killen, M. (2008). *Peer relationships and social groups: Implications for social and moral education*, In Nucci, L.P. & Narvaez, D. (Eds). Handbook of moral and character education. New York: Routledge.

Joseph, P.B. ,& Efron, S. (2005). Seven worlds of moral education. *Phi Delta Kappan*, March, 525-533.

Kabapınar, Y. (2002). İlköğretim Hayat Bilgisi ve Sosyal Bilgiler Öğretiminde Kullanılan Ders Kitapları ve Öğretim Materyalleri Açısından Türkiye ve İngiltere Örnekleri. *Kuram ve Uygulamada Eğitim Bilimleri, 2*(1), 247-270.

Kant, I. (1987). *Critique of judgment. USA: Werser S. Pluhar*

Kasen, M. (2006). Respect, with attitudes. *Journal of Research in Character Education, 4*(1&2), 67-72.

LePage, P., Darling–Hammond, L., & Akar, H. (2005). Classroom management. In Darling-Hammond & Bransford (Eds.), *Preparing teachers for a changing world* (p.327-357). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Lickona, T. (1997). The teacher's role in character education. *Journal of Education, 179*(2), 63-80.

Lickona, T. (1991). *Educating for character: How our schools can teach respect and responsibility*. New York: Bantam Books

Maxwell, J.A. (1996). *Qualitative research design: An Interactive Approach*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Miles, B.M. & Huberman, A.M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook* (2nd Ed.) Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Mizzoni, J. (2010). *Ethics: The basis*. Malden, M.A.: Wiley-Blackwell.

Noddings, N. (2006). A morally defensible mission for schools in the 21st century. In Provenzo, E. F., Jr. (Ed). *Critical issues in education* (p. 39 – 48). Thousands Oaks, California: Sage Publication.

Pajaras, M.F. (1992). Teachers' beliefs and educational research: Cleaning up a messy construct. *Review of Educational Research, 62*(3), 307-332.

Power, F.C. & Kohlberg, L. (1986). Moral Development: Transforming the hidden curriculum. *Curriculum Review*, 26, 14-17.

Raulo, M. (2000). Introduction: All education is moral education. *Journal of Moral Philosophy, 31*(4), 507-518.

Ruiz, P.O. (2004). Moral education as pedagogy of alterity. *Journal of Moral Education, 33*(3), 271-289.

Sichel, B.A. (1998). *Moral education: character, community and ideals*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Sockett, H. (2008, March). *Dispositions as virtues: The complexity of the construct*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Education Research Association, New York, NY.

Sockett, H. (1992). The moral aspects of the curriculum. In Jackson, P.W. (Ed). *Handbook of research on curriculum* (p.543-569). New York: Macmillan Publishing Company.

Spinrad, T.L., Losoya, S.H., Eisenberg, N., Fabes, R.A., Shepard, S.A., Cumburland, A., Guthrie, I.K., & Murphy, B.C. (1999). The relations of parental affect and encouragement to Children's moral emotions and behavior. *Journal of Moral Education, 28*(3), 323-337.

Straughan, R. (1988). *Can we teach children to be good* (2nd ed). Philadelphia: Open University Press.

Şen, D. & Akar, H. (2008). Attitudes of prospective teachers towards the role in students' moral development. In Demirel & Sunbul (Eds.), *Further education in the balkan countries* (p.1153-1161).Eğitim Kitabevi Yayınları: Konya.

Wainwright, W. J. (2005). *Religion and morality*. England: Aldershot

Wardekker, W. (2004). Moral education and construction of meaning. *Educational Review, 56*(2), 183-192.

Wierenga, E. (1983). A defensible divine command theory. *Nous, 17*(3), 387-407.

Wilson, J. (1990). *A new introduction to moral education*. London: Cassel.

Yayla, A. (2006). Bir Ahlak Eğitimcisi Olarak Sokrates: Erdemin Öğretilip Öğretilemeyeceği Sorunsalı. *Felsefe Dünyası, 43*, 97-108.

Yayla, A. (2005). Kant's view on moral education, Ankara University, *Journal of Faculty of Educational Science, 38*(1), 73-86.

Yıldırım, A., & Şimşek, H. (2005). *Sosyal Bilimlerde Nitel Araştırma Yöntemleri*. Ankara: Seçkin Publication.

Yüksel, S. (2005). Kohlberg and hidden curriculum in moral education: An opportunity for students' acquisition of moral values in the new Turkish primary education curriculum. *Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice, 5*(2), 329-338.