5th World Conference on Educational Sciences - WCES 2013

AN EXAMINATION OF THE VALUES WHICH THE PARENTS OF PRE-SCHOOL STUDENTS WANT THEIR CHILDREN TO ACQUIRE
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Abstract

The main purpose of this study is to examine the values which the parents of pre-school students want their children to acquire. The study group consists of 218 parents (109 mothers - 109 fathers) of the children receiving pre-school education in Kastamonu province in Turkey in the 2012–2013 academic year. Data have been collected by means of the “Value Ranking Form” prepared by researchers based on the content of the pre-school curriculum implemented in Turkey. This form consists of 20 values that are directly or indirectly included in the pre-school curriculum. Parents have been asked to rank these values in terms of the acquisition of their children by the order of priority. Based on this ranking, honesty comes first, respect comes second, and self-confidence comes third. Aesthetics brings up the rear.

Keywords: Pre-School Education, Value Education, Parents’ Views

1. Introduction

In today’s changing world, societies go through transformations in many respects. Various variables including technology, migrations, etc. directly affect people’s habits, life styles, and outlooks on life. As a result, societies either change their centuries-old habits or transform their values depending on new circumstances and experiences. However, some universal and human values are still the priority of many parents in rearing their children as they were centuries ago. Thus, they have coverage in the curricula of countries.

In general, values are the trusted and desired phenomena that are used as a scale for behaviors. Introduced to social sciences firstly by Znaniecki, the concept of value was derived from the root of "valere", which means "be of value" or "be strong" in Latin. From a sociological perspective, value can be shortly defined as “the desirable and admirable thing that is beneficial for person and group” (Aydın, 2003).

Values are the criteria of social lives. Values play an important role in preferring a behavior pattern to another. From another perspective, values are not only the sources, but also the criteria of behaviors. The value effective in forming a particular behavior also decides how it is. Values are the standards, beliefs, or moral principles accepted by a person or a social group (Sarı, 2005). Values are the building blocks of the attitudes of individuals. In addition, they are defined as stable motives that force an individual to prefer a particular target out of several alternatives. An individual who encounters a particular situation overcomes conflicts and makes a decision by using his/her value system. Thanks to his/her values, an individual makes a preference and adopts an attitude in social events (Baydar, 2009).

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Selection and peer review under responsibility of Prof. Dr. Servet Bayram
Keywords: Pre-School Education, Value Education, Parents’ Views
Moral development starts in very early ages through the initial relations of child with people around him/her, and strengthens by use of language especially as of the age of three. According to many psychologists, moral development is part of personality development. For Freud, parents are the first and most important moral authority source in the development of children. Social learning theorists suggest that the factors such as the formation of basic trust, the identification process, learning the behaviors suitable for one's gender, and the development of sense of competence, which are all effective in moral development, have a considerable impact on the development of self of a child (Sarçam, 2012). Making important inferences about moral development, Kohlberg is the creator of moral reasoning approach in value education. In the moral reasoning approach, the role of teacher is to help students solve their own dilemmas by giving them short stories which contain moral dilemmas (Çiftçi, 2003).

Pre-school education is the educational process which covers childhood years from birth to the beginning of primary education, provides the children of this age group with rich stimulating environmental facilities that are suitable for their individual characteristics and developmental levels, and directs their developments in the best way in accordance with the cultural values and characteristics of society (Topbaş, 2006). In this educational process, children find an opportunity to learn ethical (moral) rules by experiencing these rules in a group (Tatar, 2009).

The main purpose of this study is to examine the values which the parents of pre-school students want their children to acquire.

2. Method

2.1. Research Model

This is a survey design research aimed at determining the views of the parents of pre-school students about the values which they want their children to acquire.

2.2. Study Group

The study group consists of 218 parents (109 mothers - 109 fathers) of the children receiving pre-school education in Kastamonu province in Turkey in the 2012–2013 academic year.

2.3. Data Collection Tool & Data Analysis

Data have been collected by means of the “Value Ranking Form” prepared by researchers based on the content of the pre-school curriculum implemented in Turkey. This form consists of 20 values that are directly or indirectly included in the pre-school curriculum. Parents have been asked to rank these values in terms of the acquisition of their children by the order of priority. Then, ranking scores have been reversed and ranked based on their arithmetic means. Furthermore, an independent groups t-test has been employed for determining whether there is any difference by the answers given by parents and by the genders of children.

3. Findings

This section presents the findings obtained through data analysis. The table 1 shows the ranking of the values which parents want their pre-school children to acquire.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Order</th>
<th>List of Values</th>
<th>$\bar{X}$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Honesty</td>
<td>15.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Respect</td>
<td>15.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Self-Confidence</td>
<td>14.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Love</td>
<td>14.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>13.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Justice</td>
<td>13.27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As is seen in the table 1, honesty comes first (\( \bar{X} = 15.05 \)), respect comes second (\( \bar{X} = 15 \)), and self-confidence comes third (\( \bar{X} = 14.02 \)) in the ranking of the values which parents want their children to acquire. Aesthetics brings up the rear in this ranking (\( \bar{X} = 2.15 \)).

The table 2 gives the independent groups t-test results pertaining to the views of parents about the values which they want their children receiving pre-school education to acquire.

| Table 2: T-Test Results pertaining to the Views of Parents about the Values Which They Want Their Children Receiving Pre-School Education to Acquire |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| N               | \( \bar{X} \)   | S   | sd  | t   | p   |
| Tolerance       | Mother          | 109 | 10.42 | 5.00 | 216 | 2.17 | .031 |
|                 | Father          | 109 | 11.94 | 5.02 |

As is seen in the table 2, there is a significant difference between the answers of mothers and fathers in regard to the value of tolerance (t(216) =2.17 p<.05). The scores of fathers concerning wanting their children to acquire tolerance during pre-school education (\( \bar{X} =11.94 \)) are higher than those of mothers (\( \bar{X} =10.42 \)). In other words, fathers want their pre-school children to acquire the value of tolerance more than mothers do. There is no significant difference between the answers of mothers and fathers in regard to other values.

The table 3 gives the independent groups t-test results pertaining to the views of parents about the values which they want their children receiving pre-school education to acquire by the genders of children.

| Table 3: The Independent Groups T-Test Results pertaining to the Views of Parents about the Values Which They Want Their Children Receiving Pre-School Education to Acquire by the Genders of Children |
As is seen in the table 3, there is a significant difference between the answers of parents both in trust ($t_{216} =2.20 \ p<.05$) and in patience ($t_{216} =2 \ p<.05$) among the values which parents want their pre-school children to acquire during their pre-school education by the genders of children. The scores of the parents having daughters concerning wanting their children to acquire trust during pre-school education ($\bar{X} =12.63$), are higher than those of the parents having sons ($\bar{X} =11.21$). In other words, the parents having daughters want their children to acquire trust during pre-school education more than the parents having sons do.

The scores of the parents having daughters concerning wanting their children to acquire patience during pre-school education ($\bar{X} =8.03$), are lower than those of the parents having sons ($\bar{X} =9.35$). In other words, the parents having sons want their children to acquire patience during pre-school education more than the parents having daughters do.

Conclusion and recommendations

Conducted for determining the views of the parents of the children receiving pre-school education about the values which they want their children to acquire, this study has the following conclusion:

- Honesty comes first, respect comes second, and self-confidence comes third in the ranking of the values which parents want their children to acquire. Aesthetics brings up the rear in this ranking.
- There is a significant difference between the answers of mothers and fathers in regard to the value of tolerance. The scores of fathers concerning wanting their children to acquire tolerance during pre-school education are higher than those of mothers. In other words, fathers want their pre-school children to acquire the value of tolerance more than mothers do. There is no significant difference between the answers of mothers and fathers in regard to other values.
- There is a significant difference between the answers of parents both in trust and in patience among the values which parents want their pre-school children to acquire during their pre-school education by the genders of children. The scores of the parents having daughters concerning wanting their children to acquire trust during pre-school education are higher than those of the parents having sons. In other words, the parents having daughters want their children to acquire trust during pre-school education more than the parents having sons do. In addition, the scores of the parents having daughters concerning wanting their children to acquire patience during pre-school education are lower than those of the parents having sons. In other words, the parents having sons want their children to acquire patience during pre-school education more than the parents having daughters do.

In consideration of this conclusion, the following recommendations may be put forward:

Pre-school period is the period where children encounter values and start to internalize social norms. The values starting to be earned in that period will have a direct impact on the entire life of children. The gradual spread of the violence culture in all societies in recent years has featured the issue of values more throughout the entire world. Thus, universal values should be emphasized more in pre-school curricula, as in all curricula. Even a value-based education model should be adopted. This is because; although many academic skills can be learnt very well in the subsequent periods of life, some behavior patterns and values need to start to be acquired in the pre-school period.
References:


