

OUR SUCCESS IS OUR VALUES: A QUANTITATIVE STUDY ON OUR ROOT VALUES¹

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Abstract

Does possessing core values lead to success? To what extent can possessing core values make us successful? To answer these questions, a study was conducted to determine whether there was an increase in the success of high school students who received core values education. The study utilized a quantitative research method with a pre-test post-test control group design. An survey was used as the data collection tool and the data was analyzed using SPSS 26.

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The research sample was selected using the convenience sampling method and consisted of students from Elazığ Yahya Kemal Beyatlı Anatolian High School. If an increase in success is observed based on the obtained data, the necessary actions will be taken to disseminate core values education by sharing the results with the school's Values Commission. If a relationship between academic achievement and core values is identified, further research can be conducted to promote the dissemination of core values education. Additionally, not only academic success, but also students' affective skills related to core values such as attitudes, beliefs, and thoughts can be measured. Future research can examine the effects of core values at different school levels and draw conclusions based on different variables.

Keywords: academic achievement, core values, high school students, society.

Introduction

The primary objective of the study is to determine the extent to which core values can influence an individual's success and measure the positive or negative impact of values on students' path to success. In a sense, the aim is to demonstrate how important values are in an individual's success. To achieve this, it is important to understand whether teaching values is necessary to improve the academic success of students with low academic achievement.

The relationship between academic achievement and students' values can be multifaceted. On the one hand, students' values can influence their academic performance, while on the other hand, their academic achievement levels can also impact their values. To clarify this relationship, the study examined whether a society that values core values places greater importance on education and whether core values have an impact on the academic success of students with low academic achievement.

In summary, the main purpose of the study is to investigate the impact of values education on academic achievement and its effect on students with low academic achievement, as well as to measure the extent to which their emotions, thoughts, and beliefs change after the education. The project compares students who have received values education with those who have not, and examines the differences between the two groups. Although previous studies have been conducted on values education and attitude (Kaşarçı, 2013), the effect of parental values education on the social skills of 5-6-year-olds (Neslitürk & Deniz, 2014), or the analysis of fairy tales within the framework of core values (Özbaşı, 2020), there is no scientific study that investigates the impact of values education on high school students' academic achievement and the changes in their emotional and cognitive characteristics.

➤ **Research Question 1:** Did the receipt of values education among students with low academic achievement result in any changes in their affective, cognitive, and belief systems?

➤ **Research Question 2:** Specifically, was there any discernible improvement in their academic performance subsequent to the receipt of values education?

Literature Review

Values are beliefs, attitudes, and principles that guide an individual's behavior and decision-making. They can influence how a student approaches their academic studies and impact their motivation levels and commitment to their studies. For instance, a student who values education and has a strong desire to learn and succeed academically is more likely to exert the necessary effort to achieve good grades and perform well on assignments and tests (Balaž, Hanzec Marković & Brajša-Žganec, 2021). On the other hand, a student who lacks these values may not be motivated to exert the necessary effort, leading to a decline in academic performance (Parker et al., 2021). Moreover, values can also influence how a student approaches their studies and the choices they make in their academic careers (Li, Huebner, & Tian, 2021). For example, a student who values honesty is more likely to avoid cheating or plagiarism, while a student who values competition may focus on outperforming their peers (Martin, Craigwell, Ramjarrie, 2021).

In summary, values play a significant role in shaping a student's approach to their academic studies and can have a significant impact on their academic achievements.

The Ministry of National Education (MEB) considers building an educational system that is in line with the nation's values, history, beliefs, and culture, and raising individuals who are compatible with the nation's own values as one of its most important goals. In line with these goals, the ministry continues to develop a comprehensive education system that truly embraces the nation's values and works to preserve them. The "Values Education Activity Book" has been prepared for this purpose (MEB, 2022). The aim of the activity book is to help individuals learn their core values, to enable them to adapt to social life and to contribute to the cultural characteristics of society. The material prepared is intended to help students acquire high-level cognitive skills such as interpretation, deduction, comparison, relationship building, analysis, critical thinking, and synthesis of their thoughts, while experiencing these processes through effective communication and collaboration. According to the literature, this book aims not only to limit education to cognitive learning but also to develop students' affective behaviors such as emotions, attitudes, values, and beliefs. However, no scientific research has been conducted to prove its effectiveness, its applicability has not been demonstrated, and its suitability for its goal has not been determined. Therefore, the need for this study has arisen. Through this study, it will be possible to determine whether affective characteristics such as attitudes, values, and beliefs can be effectively increased to a demonstrable level.

Method

In our study, the quantitative research method of survey technique was applied. A pre-test post-test control group design was used in the research. The sample of the project (research group) will be composed of students with low academic achievement to be selected from Elazığ Yahya Kemal Beyatlı Anatolian High School. The sample was divided into two groups, consisting of students who have received values education and those who have not. Values education was provided for the experimental group for one month. The sample size was determined using methods that are appropriate for the purpose of the survey, taking into account the number of variables in the sample, the degree of differences in the sample, and the appropriate sample size. As our study belongs to the experimental research group, it is recommended that there should be at least 30 subjects in each group in experimental research, although in some studies, valid results can be obtained with a small number of subjects, such as 15 subjects in each group (Arlı & Nazik, 2001, p.77). Therefore, our experiment was conducted with a total of 60 students, 30 in the experimental group and 30 in the control group.

The survey technique, one of the quantitative research methods, was employed in our study. The pre-test post-test control group design was utilized. The project's sample (research group) will consist of students with low academic achievement to be selected from Elazığ Yahya Kemal Beyatlı Anatolian High School. The sample was divided into two groups, consisting of students who received and did not receive values education, respectively. The experiment group received values education for one month. The sample size was determined using methods suitable for the purpose of the survey, taking into account the number of variables in the sample, the degree of differences in the sample, and a suitable sample size for the purpose of the survey. Since our study falls under the category of experimental designs, it has been suggested in some research that in experimental research, there should be at least 30 subjects in each group, although having a small number of subjects, such as 15, in each group can provide valid results (Arlı & Nazik, 2001, p.77). Therefore, our experiment was conducted with a total of 60 students, with 30 in the experiment group and 30 in the control group. The survey was reviewed by a literature teacher, an English teacher, and a teacher of Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge to ensure that it accurately reflects the subject matter and provides correct information about it. It will be determined whether root values exist in high and low academic achieving students.

The survey permission was obtained from the Elazığ Provincial Directorate of National Education. Furthermore, it was determined whether the academic achievement of low-achieving students increased as a result of values education. The obtained data was used to observe whether there was any progress in the experiment group's lessons.

Throughout the project duration, the academic performance of the students was measured after they received the values education. These measurements were conducted by using data such as students' course grades, exam results, and other academic performance indicators. The results of the measurements revealed whether there was a difference between the students who received the values education and those who did not.

Findings

According to the obtained data, the results regarding the concept of justice are as follows in both the experimental and control groups.

Table 1. The Results of the Root Values Survey

ROOT VALUES	EXPERIMENTAL GROUP								CONTROL GROUP							
	PRE TEST				POST TEST				PRE TEST				POST TEST			
	Yes		No		Yes		No		Yes		No		Yes		No	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Justice	51	85	9	15	48	80	12	20	58	96	2	4	58	96	2	4
Honesty	52	87	8	13	52	8	87	13	54	90	6	10	54	90	6	10
Friendship	30	50	30	50	40	67	20	33	26	44	34	56	26	44	34	56
Self-Regulation	40	67	20	33	40	67	20	33	40	66	20	34	40	66	34	20
Respect	38	64	22	36	40	67	20	33	20	34	40	66	20	34	40	66
Patience	38	64	22	36	50	84	10	16	55	92	5	8	55	92	5	8
Love	50	84	10	16	55	91	5	9	53	88	7	12	53	88	7	12
Responsibility	45	75	15	25	40	67	20	33	50	84	10	16	50	84	10	16
Patriotism	48	80	12	20	50	84	10	16	52	87	8	13	52	87	8	13

The frequency and percentage tables of the survey results are presented above. Below, the t-test values and findings have been analyzed and interpreted.

Table 2. T-Test Values

Experimental Group Pre Test / Post Test	Mean		SD	t	p	S-W
	Pre Test	Post Test				
Adalet	85	80	.594	0,652	.51	.00
Dostluk	50	67	.376	3,435	.00	.00
Saygı	64	66	.181	1,426	.15	.00
Sabır	64	84	.403	3,841	.00	.00
Sevgi	84	91	.279	2,316	.02	.00
Sorumluluk	75	67	.279	2,316	.02	.00
Vatanseverlik	80	84	.181	1,426	.15	.00

According to the results obtained, it was observed that the distributions were normal according to the Shapiro-Wilk test and the interpretation of t-test values was proceeded. Since the pre-test and post-test results of the control group were very similar to each other, standard error could not be given and t-test values could not be obtained.

Similarly, similar results were observed in the experimental group, particularly in self-control and honesty values. Since the pre-test and post-test results of the control group were very close to each other, T-test results could not be obtained. However, as seen above, since the p-values of the T-test values in patriotism, justice, and respect were above .05, no difference was observed. When the values where differences were observed were examined, an increase in friendship, respect, patience, and love values was seen as a result of the given root value education, while a decrease was observed in responsibility values. It can be said that the reason for the students' decrease in responsibility values is due to the prejudice and knowledge confusion they possess.

Discussion and Conclusion

This study aimed to investigate the effects of values education on students with low academic achievement, in a sample consisting of 30 individuals. Results indicated that there were no significant differences between the control and experimental groups in terms of patriotism, justice, and respect values. However, friendship, respect, patience, and love values increased in the experimental group, while responsibility values decreased. These findings are consistent with previous research on values and interventions (Durdane & Arslan, 2022; Topal, 2019).

Previous studies have also found that interventions may have different effects on different values. For example, Donnelly et al. (2008) found that an education aimed at increasing self-esteem led to an increase in self-esteem values, but had no effect on honesty values. Similarly, Pohling et al. (2016) found that an intervention aimed at promoting empathy led to an increase in empathy values, but had no effect on responsibility values. The current study provides further evidence that interventions may have different effects on different values.

The observation that the Shapiro-Wilk test reveals normal distributions in the data and the subsequent interpretation of the t-test are noteworthy. However, the t-test values could not be obtained due to the fact that the pre- and post-test results of the control group are very close to each other. Similarly, the self-control and honesty values in the experimental group were found to be very close in the pre- and post-tests, and t-test values could not be obtained for these variables as well. These findings indicate a need for larger sample sizes in future research endeavors.

Suggestions and Limitations

Considering the results of this study, it would be valuable to replicate the findings with a larger sample size in order to determine the generalizability of the results. Additionally, a long-term follow-up study could be conducted to assess the sustainability of the observed changes in values in the experimental group. Another potential avenue for future research would be to explore the specific mechanisms through which the intervention used in the experimental group led to changes in certain values. This could be achieved by collecting data on the specific components of the intervention and their relative effectiveness in promoting desired changes in values.

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Appendix

Appendix 1. Questionnaires

	<i>Questionnaires</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
1.	I have sufficient knowledge about the concept of justice.		
2.	I try to be fair in my daily life.		
3.	I believe I am fair to my friends and family.		
4.	I am honest with my friends and family.		
5.	I try to be honest when communicating with people.		
6.	I value honesty.		
7.	I value friendships in my daily life.		
8.	I criticize people when I talk to them.		
9.	I address my classmates who are my friends as friends.		
10.	I control my temper when I get angry.		
11.	I can criticize myself.		
12.	I hold myself responsible for my failures.		
13.	When older people get angry with me, I do not respond in kind.		
14.	I do not react negatively when I receive low grades in my classes.		
15.	I do not overreact or engage in physical fights when someone treats me badly.		
16.	I pay attention to my posture in the presence of elders.		
17.	I choose my words carefully when talking to elders.		
18.	I am sensitive to those around me.		
19.	I love myself.		

20.	I have good communication skills with people.		
21.	I express my love towards cute animals when I see them.		
22.	I always clean up my room by myself.		
23.	I do my homework on time.		
24.	I do not damage my school supplies.		
25.	I know at least one poem by heart about patriotism.		
26.	I praise my country in my daily life.		
27.	I feel sad about negative news related to my country in the media.		

Appendix-2 Questionnaire Permission Form



T.C.
ELAZIĞ VALİLİĞİ
İl Millî Eğitim Müdürlüğü

Sayı : E-79137285-604.01.01-66572884
Konu : TÜBİTAK Projesi

22.12.2022

YAHYA KEMAL BEYATLI LİSESİ MÜDÜRLÜĞÜNE

İlgi : 19.12.2022 tarihli ve E-30639911-779-66191594 sayılı yazısı.

İlgi yazı ile Müdürlüğünüz tarafından TÜBİTAK 2204 (lise) kategorisinde okulunuz Dinkültürü ve Ahlak Bilgisi Öğretmeni [redacted] danışmanlığında yapılacak olan "Başarım Değerlerimdir" adlı projenin okul öğrencilerine uygulamak üzere ekte sunulan anketin 2022-2023 eğitim öğretim yılında uygulanması için onay verilmesi istenilmiştir.

Söz konusu anketin okulunuz öğrencilerine 2022-2023 eğitim öğretim yılı içerisinde uygulanması Müdürlüğümüzce uygun görülmektedir.
Bilgilerinizi rica ederim.

[redacted]

Müdür a.
Müdür Yardımcısı

Ek:Anket (1 Sayfa)