

Investigating the Effectiveness of Value Analysis Approach for Acquisition of Values in the Elementary School Social Studies Course

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Abstract-This research investigated the effectiveness of value analysis approach on elementary school students' value development. Seventy 5th grade students from a public elementary school in the central district of Hatay province (Turkey) participated in a 14- week study. A pre-test, post-test, control group experimental design was implemented to conduct the study. While "value analysis approach" was applied on the experimental group, traditional activities were continued by the teachers in the control group classrooms to enable students gain pre-determined values in the Social Studies curriculum. The Value Assessment Scale developed by the researchers was used to collect data. Cronbach's alpha co-efficient of the scale was calculated as 0,83. Results revealed that the experimental group had statistically higher scores on the acquisition levels of 'Cooperation', 'Academic Honesty' and 'Fairness' values over the control group. However, no differences found on the acquisition levels of the "Respect for National Anthem and Flag".

Keywords- values, social studies, curriculum, value analysis approach

I. INTRODUCTION

Among many, two important aims of education are to teach valuable knowledge to the people and help them develop a good character through acquiring positive value mechanism and consciousness (Ulusoy 2007). Similarly, Lickona (1992) mentions that education enables societies raise both well-informed and beneficial members. Along the same lines, Turkish educational system aims raising people who hold moral values, are healthy mentally, physically, and morally, and have prudent emotions and good characters (MEB 2005).

Children start learning values at the first stages of their life by means of their families, circle of friends, game groups, media, local society, different institutions and a range of stimulators. The values children have at pre-school stage differ from the ones that they face in the school. It isn't wrong to say that the school has two main duties to eliminate the differences between students. The first one is supporting, arranging and designing the values of the children who start school. The second one is helping students use these values (Halstead and Taylor 2000). So, it should be expected that the education provided in schools improves the desire and capacity of making moral choices by the students according to principles accepted by the community (Gutman 1987). In this way, it is observed that the school plays a crucial role in developing values within students.

Teaching values that take important place in the educational process is an important issue, and attracts a lot of attention throughout the globe (Charlin 1996). Hence, the school is designed as the place where not only the courses are taught, but also it is arranged as an environment where positive characters and many values such as being a good person, being respectful to himself and the others are taught (MEB 2005 ASDE 1993).

The necessity of passing values to individuals in schools becomes important since it is not true to assume people as educated, if they cannot enhance acceptable and humane values in their relations with others (Ünal 1981). Education of values is essential in every stage of education, especially in nursery schools for children to embrace the values in society and put them in practice through out their lives (BalatUyanık 2006, 16). In Turkey, value teaching approaches have become important by giving priority to values in school curriculum. Exploring the efficiency of those approaches can help educators and policy-makers plan the value education more consciously and properly (Gültekin 2007).

There are many value teaching (Doğanay 2006) approaches such as Values Clarification, Dilemmas, and Character Education (Lickona 1992) in primary school programmes (MEB 2005). The focus of this study is the Value Analysis approach. The aim of this approach is to assist the students to use logical thinking process and scientific research to cope with the problems which they face related to the values. It is to have students make decisions by problem solving (Doğanay 2006 Huitt 2003). This approach helps students improve by investigating and criticising the values (Kim and Traiger 2003) utilizing rational and scientific thinking (Fernandes 1999). In addition, the scope of the current study includes four values placed in fourth grade Social Studies curriculum: Respect for National Anthem and Flag, Cooperation, Academic Honesty, and Fairness.

II. RESEARCH QUESTION

In this research, following 4 hypotheses were tested:

Hypothesis 1: There is no statistically significant difference between post-test mean scores of the experimental and control groups on “Respect for National Anthem and Flag” sub-scale.

Hypothesis 2: There is no statistically significant difference between post test mean scores of the experimental and control groups on “Cooperation” sub-scale.

Hypothesis 3: There is no statistically significant difference between post test mean scores of the experimental and control groups on “Academic Honesty” sub-scale.

Hypothesis 4: There is no statistically significant difference between post test mean scores of the experimental and control groups on “Fairness” sub-scale.

III. METHODOLOGY

Current study utilizes two-group pre-test, post-test true experimental design. The research was conducted on 70 students in 5th grade from two different classes of a state elementary school in the central district “Antakya” of Hatay province, Turkey. These classes were randomly appointed to experimental (N=35) and control groups (N=35). Before the post-test, the two groups were compared in terms of their Social Studies course grades, end of term grades, Socio-Economic Status (SES) (Bacanli 1997 97-106) and Attitudes Toward Social Studies (ATSS) (Gelen 2003 163-164) course as well as their scores on the Value Defining Scale (VDS). Independent groups t-test results showed no significant differences between the groups in terms of their mean scores on any of the tests above.

Instruments

We developed the *Value Defining Scale (VDS)* to measure the 5th grade students’ acquisition levels of the values in Social Studies Curriculum. Cronbach Alpha reliability of the scale was calculated as .83. To evaluate the construct validity of the Scale, explanatory factor analysis was run. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) sampling adequacy test result was .70 indicating that the data set was appropriate for factor analysis. Additionally, the instrument was reviewed by six faculty members at the College of Education in a public University to ensure the content validity. The 36 three-option Likert-type statements (Agree- Not Sure- Disagree) were included in the VDS. The instrument revealed 4 factors based on exploratory factor analysis results: “Respect for The National Anthem and Flag”, “Cooperation”, “Fairness”, and “Academic Honesty” based on faculty reviews. Furthermore, the researchers requested the participants write four compositions related to the sub-dimensions of the VDS to support quantitative data results. Themes from those compositions were extracted and compared with the results of the quantitative analyses. The four-factor structure of the instrument explained 40,8 percent of the variation in the dataset. Table 1 indicates the statistics related to the factor structure.

Table 1. Factor structure of the value defining scale (VDS)

Factors	Item Number	Factor scores	\bar{X}	Sd
Respect for National Anthem and Flag	3	,622	1,3	,64
	10	,664	1,2	,64
	11	,598	1,2	,60
	16	,664	1,1	,36
	17	,478	1,1	,41
	23	,766	1,1	,45
	24	,718	1,1	,43
	31	,518	1,1	,34
	32	,697	1,2	,46
	Cooperation	4	,522	1,5
5		,480	1,1	,45
12		,564	1,2	,58
13		,475	1,6	,85
18		,735	1,1	,42
25		,636	1,4	,60
26		,648	1,1	,49
33		,763	1,2	,51
Academic Honesty	34	,758	1,7	,84
	6	,767	1,5	,70
	7	,651	1,6	,84
	14	,419	1,5	,79
	19	,441	1,1	,47
	20	,632	1,3	,62
	27	,763	1,2	,49

	28	,523	1,3	,66
	35	,542	1,5	,75
	36	836	1,6	,77
	1	,641	1,6	,83
	2	,750	1,1	,53
	8	,683	1,3	,62
	9	,589	1,1	,49
Fairness	15	,409	1,2	,57
	21	,529	1,1	,43
	22	782	1,3	,65
	29	,450	1,2	,54
	30	,461	1,3	,63

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The independent group t-test was conducted to determine whether there was a statistically meaningful difference between the mean scores of experimental and control groups in sub-dimensions of the VDS. The results are provided in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Independent groups t-test results between the post-test scores of sub-dimensions of VDS

Scale sub-dimensions	Groups	N	\bar{X}	S	sd	t	p
The respect for “National Anthem and Flag”	Experimental	35	25,82	2,16	68	-1,85	.06
	Control	35	24,57	3,38	68		
Cooperation	Experimental	35	24,82	1,91	68	-3,40	.00
	Control	35	22,71	3,13	68		
Academic Honesty	Experimental	35	25,11	2,21	68	-4,28	.00
	Control	35	22,22	3,30	68		
Fairness	Experimental	35	25,85	1,43	68	-5,22	.00
	Control	35	22,97	2,93	68		

Even though the mean of the experimental group ($\bar{x}=25,82$; $s=2,16$) seems higher than that of the control group ($\bar{x}=24,57$; $s=3,38$) on “Respect for National Anthem and Flag” dimension as seen in Table 2, the difference is insignificant based on t-test results ($t=-1,85$). However, in all other sub-dimensions, experimental group had higher mean scores.

Furthermore, above table indicates that there is a statistically meaningful difference between experimental ($\bar{x}=24,82$; $s=1,91$) and control ($\bar{x}=22,71$; $s=3,13$) groups’ post-test scores in terms of Cooperation value ($t=-3,40$; $p<,05$). This meaningful difference is in favor of experimental group. While the number of themes (Experimental=7, Control=6) developed from compositions are close to each other when Table 3 is analyzed. In other words, even if the students attribute the same meaning to Cooperation value, it seems that experimental group created an additional theme, which can be called as “Supporting Friends”. They also use more sentences expressing value. In this research, we can conclude that the Value Analysis is an important approach in teaching values.

There is a statistically meaningful difference between experimental ($\bar{x}=25,11$; $s=2,21$) and control ($\bar{x}=22,22$; $s=3,3$) groups’ post-test scores in terms of Academic Honesty value ($t=-4,28$; $p<,05$) as shown in Table 1. When Table 3 is analysed, there is a difference between the number of themes (Experimental=6; Control=4) created from compositions. Additionally, the number of times mentioning that value in their compositions is higher in the experimental group (Experimental=50; Control=39). At the same time, besides the common themes that experimental and control group students created, the experimental group students added 2 more themes called “copying others’ sentences when writing a summary” and “pretending as if different sources were used for homework”. These results imply that the difference in the Academic Honesty post-test scores is due to Value Analysis approach.

It is found that there is a meaningful difference in the post-test scores of the groups in favor of the experimental one ($t=-5,22$; $p<,05$). The mean score of the experimental group was calculated as 25,85 ($s=1,43$) which represents about 3 point difference between the control group. While the number of themes (Experimental=4; Control=3) formed from compositions are close to each other as presented in Table 2; there is a meaningful difference between the number of times (Experimental=50; Control=37) that value was expressed in compositions.

Table 3. The frequencies and the number of themes extracted from student compositions.

The scale dimensions	Themes (Experimental Group)	Themes (Control Group)	Themes
<u>Respect for National Anthem and Flag</u>	Number of themes :7	Number of themes:6 frequency:38	Appreciate the value of national flag No speaking when the Anthem plays Love the flag and National Anthem, and have respect for them Know that it is the sign of our independence Say the Anthem with enthusiasm Look carefully at “The Flag” when singing the Anthem When singing the Anthem, pay attention
<u>Cooperation</u>	Number of the themes:7 frequency:54	Number of the themes:6 frequency:40	Helping friends with their lessons Resolve their friends’ problems Sharing course material with their friends who left their material at home Share food with their friends Take homework to their friends who are sick Show care about the problems of their friends Always support the friends
<u>Academic honesty</u>	Number of themes:6 Frequency:50	Number of themes:4 Frequency : 39	To cite the source To know that stealing an invention is not moral Feel discomfort about invention theft Cheating is not moral Copying others’ sentences when writing a summary is not moral Pretending as if different sources were used for homework is not a good thing.
<u>Fairness</u>	Number of themes:4 Frequency:50	Number of themes:3 Frequency: 37	Being fair is important Discrimination is not appropriate Absence of justice is not a good thing Helping others may increase fairness

As Table 3 reveals, the number of themes extracted from the compositions somewhat differed between the study groups. In all sub-dimensions of the VDS, students in Experimental group stated more themes than the control group. At the same time, the themes also confirm that there is no statistical difference in terms of value level on “Respect for National Anthem and Flag”. The results revealed that the value analysis approach is effective in value teaching as proposed by Gültekin (2007), Bacanlı (1999) and Huitt (2003) however, our findings contradict with these conclusions when it comes to “Respect for National Anthem and Flag” team. On the other hand, considering the effect of family and society on value teaching, this result is not surprising in Turkey (Akbaş 2004 Baydar 2009). What is more, royalty to the national values is widely accepted as a value by the Turkish people (Kağıtçıbaşı 1972, 17). Sevinç (2006) observed that society does not embrace the individuals who don’t share those common values.

V. CONCLUSION

When the results of the research are analysed, there is not a meaningful difference between the post-test mean scores of the “Respect for National Anthem and Flag” between experimental and control groups. In this situation, it can be said that the Value Analysis approach is efficient to gain the mentioned values but that particular value can be gained by the students without Value Analysis approach. However, among post-test scores of the other values are considered the current study found meaningful differences in favor of experimental group. Consequently, it is found that the Value Analysis approach is effective to gain those values.

At this point it is crucial to mention the importance of the school’s roles on teaching values. As Arweck and Nesbitt (2004) stated, the improvement of a programme in schools can be possible by including education of values. From this aspect, it is not wrong to declare two basic goals of the schools: to raise the individuals who are academically successful, and embrace basic values (Ekşi 2003). Lickona (1992) expressed that the school has the responsibility for forming the characters of the individuals while explaining the role of the schools in education. Kim and Traiger (1999, 726) expressed that the school should raise not only well-

informed individuals but also ones who are morally good. Moreover, Gooddla (1992) states the necessity to embrace the idea that school is the common heritage of society and everybody should take responsibility for it (as quoted in Sari 2007). Keeping these in mind, a word for policy makers should be stated here: The main values such as fairness, honesty, having responsibility and being respectful to others should be included in elementary school curriculum.

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