



Attitudes of teacher candidates towards values teaching via distance education

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Abstract

It is possible to reach millions of people regardless of time and place through distance education; this brings up the issue of values education being carried out by distance education. This research aims to investigate the attitudes of teacher candidates towards value education via distance education. The research was designed in accordance with the descriptive survey model. Gazi University Faculty of Education constitutes the universe of the research with the departments of foreign languages education, Turkish and social sciences education, mathematics and science education, and primary education. Research data were collected by using one of the non-probability sampling methods convenience sampling. Within this scope, data analysis was realized with 698 students and in the meantime, the "Attitude Scale towards Distance Education" developed by Demir and Çetin (2022) was applied in the research. During the data analysis, descriptive statistics, Mann-Whitney U test, and Kruskal-Wallis test were implemented. It has been revealed that teacher candidates have positive attitudes about value teaching via distance education and they consider it to be a necessary, useful, and feasible result of the research. Female prospective teachers' attitudes towards the feasibility of value education via distance education are more positive than males. Students studying in the primary education department have more positive attitudes towards teaching values via distance education since they find it necessary and useful compared to the students studying in the fields of mathematics and science. The results obtained as a result of the research indicate that prospective teachers who already possess an affective readiness need to be supported in terms of developing themselves in the field of teaching values via distance education so that they can contribute to values education at a higher level.

Keywords: *Online learning, open and distance education, values education, attitude*

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1. Introduction

1.1. Introduce the problem

There has been a continuous rise with regard to the interest in the necessity of values education. It has been among the essential topics that are frequently addressed in the education policies of countries. Living Values Education Program supported by UNESCO is implemented in more than 60 countries in Europe, Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and America (Dönmez & Uyanık, 2022) and this indicates the emphasis given to values education all over the world. The aforementioned interest and importance given to values education form the source of academic studies on values education in many countries. Values education is carried out partially or mostly unconsciously in daily school life, mostly in an unplanned manner (Thornberg, 2008). Several countries have included values education in formal education programs apart from the hidden curriculum recently (Başyigit, 2021). This situation leads to the application of values education in a planned and programmed way.

It has been revealed that the issue of values education is handled from various angles when academic studies are examined. These studies could be classified as the studies revealing the views of teachers, students, and administrators (Akbaba, Kılcan & Çepni, 2013; Özdemir, Boydak-Özan & Akgün, 2017; Author, Özekinci & Lala, 2017; Yıldırım, Zenginli & Demirel, 2017; Balcı & Yanpar Yelken, 2013; Can, 2008, Husu & Tirri, 2007), studies analyzing the resources like curricula, textbooks, magazines, etc. with regard to values (Aral & Kadan, 2018; Indriani, 2017; Pehlivan, Aydın & İnnalı, 2017; Şahin & Başgül, 2018; Baydar, 2009; Keskin, 2008; Kuş, 2009; Tekin Bahrilli & Göloğlu Demir, 2021), studies examining the influence of values education on students (Bakan & Şahin, 2018; Tulunay-Ateş, 2017), and studies dealing with approaches and methods applied in values education (Akbaş, 2009; Fahyuni & Bandonno, 2017; Çelik, 2016; Yiğittir & Kaymakçı, 2012).

Individuals acquire values by learning because they are not innate, (Bigge, 1971). During the formation procedure of values, social support and reinforcement are crucial (Köylü, 2016). For this reason, the teaching process of the values that are acquired through learning to the next generations requires a well-planned and goal-directed education (Erbaş & Başkurt, 2020; Iyer, 2013). Thanks to this need, various approaches and classifications have emerged on how students learn values in a systematic way (Kupchenko & Parsons, 1987; Superka, Ahrens, Hedstrom, Ford & Johnson, 1976). It is of great significance to train pre-service teachers for values teaching in the pre-service period since teachers need to know which approaches they will implement when teaching values to children. They also need to be aware of the fact that they should design teaching activities based on these approaches and organize learning environments. On

the other hand, face-to-face education is the current focus through which values education approaches and practices are implemented.

Distance education has been experienced by millions of teachers and students in different countries during the Covid-19 pandemic. Perceiving distance education as a tool in which only academic courses such as mathematics and science are taught would be an inadequate viewpoint at the present time. Taplin (2002) looked for a response to the question of whether values education can be integrated into adult distance education and whether it is necessary for line with the opinions of stakeholders at the Open University of Hong Kong. Stakeholders that include course coordinators, teachers, and students stated that values education should be carried out directly or indirectly. As a matter of fact, Deveci (2015) argues that values education could be conducted within distance education systems, and in this scope; websites, TV, and online education environments can be designed for teaching values via distance education. Toker Gökçe (2008) mentioned that a country can provide its citizens who live in different countries with national values by applying distance education systems. The fact that online tools are being used during value teaching draws attention recently (Afandi & Juanda, 2020; Çoskunserçe, 2020). Living Values Education Program presents distance education by providing various materials (<https://www.livingvalues.net/distance/>) as well. Gabatbat and Santander (2021) claim in their research on the worth of values education in virtual classrooms that values education via distance education is significant with regard to character development, helping socialization within the framework of online communication rules and norms, and spiritual development. In the research carried out by Deveci (2015), pre-service teachers argued that it is possible to integrate values education into distance education procedure. Contrary to these views, some prospective teachers consider that even with face-to-face education, they cannot succeed in teaching values, therefore it will never be possible with distance education. Körükçü (2021) mentioned that in the social studies course that was conducted on online platforms, values education was not effective at all. Researches present negative consequences for values education via distance education, and in the meantime, they do not put forward an adequate amount of reasons for this case.

The attitudes that teachers possess are among the essential factors in the way they perform their professions. When the relevant literature was scanned, no studies on attitudes towards teaching values via distance education were detected. However; there have been several various studies on attitudes towards distance education and values of education. A certain number of studies on attitudes towards distance education have found that teachers have positive attitudes (Ağır 2007; Kocayığit & Uşun, 2020), while some of them reached the fact that they have negative attitudes towards distance education (Moçoşoğlu & Kaya, 2020). As for the research on attitudes towards values education, they have stated that teachers' attitudes towards values education are positive (Kozikoğlu, 2018; Fırat Durdukoca, 2018; Yaşaroğlu 2014). Likewise; Çetin (2013)

concluded that prospective teachers have considerably positive attitudes in terms of teaching national values.

When the relevant literature is analyzed, it has been found that there are no academic studies regarding the teacher candidates' values of teaching via distance education. From this perspective; this research has the purpose of determining the attitudes of teacher candidates, who are also distance education students, towards value education via distance education during the pandemic process. It is considered that the consequences obtained through this research will contribute to teacher training institutions in the process of developing policies on value education with distance education.

1.2 Purpose of Researcher

This research targets to determine the attitudes of teacher candidates towards value education via distance education. In order to achieve this purpose, answers to the following questions were sought:

What are the attitudes of teacher candidates towards value education via distance education?

Do the attitudes of teacher candidates towards value education via distance education show a significant difference according to gender, grade level, department, and the place of residence with their families?

2. Method

In this research; in order to determine the attitudes of teacher candidates towards value education via distance education, a descriptive survey model was implemented. According to Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyu (2012), descriptive studies present an existing situation exactly and carefully. A descriptive survey is a type of survey implemented by addressing questions in the forms of a questionnaire, forms, etc. to a large number of people online, in person, or by mail. This research was conducted with the approval of Bandırma Onyedi Eylül University, Social and Human Sciences Ethics Committee.

2.1. Universe and Sample

Gazi University Education Faculty constitutes the universe of the research with the foreign languages education department, Turkish and social sciences education department, mathematics and science education department, and basic education department. Research data were collected by applying convenience sampling which is one of the non-probability sampling methods. The researcher begins to create his sample starting from the most accessible respondents in the convenient sampling method (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2018). Data analysis was carried out with 698 students

within this context. The demographic characteristics of the participants are indicated in Table 1.

Table 1. Participant Characteristics

| Variable | | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------------------|---|-----------|------------|
| Gender | Female | 548 | 78,5 |
| | Male | 150 | 21,5 |
| Grade | 1 st Grade | 177 | 25,4 |
| | 2 nd Grade | 117 | 16,8 |
| | 3 rd Grade | 205 | 29,4 |
| | 4 th Grade | 199 | 28,5 |
| Department | Dept. of Foreign Languages Edu. | 150 | 21,5 |
| | Dept. of Turkish and Social Sciences Edu. | 170 | 24,4 |
| | Dept. of Mathematics and Science Edu. | 205 | 29,4 |
| | Dept. of Primary Edu. | 173 | 24,8 |
| Place of residence with family | Province | 460 | 65,9 |
| | Town | 180 | 25,8 |
| | Village | 58 | 8,3 |

When Table 1 is analyzed, it is determined that the majority of teacher candidates (78.5%) are women. There has been a balanced distribution in terms of grade levels and departments. More than half of the teacher candidates (65.9%) reside in the provincial centers with their families. Approximately one-fourth of them (25.8%) live in the town center with their families. Only 8% of them live in the village.

2.2. Data Collection Tool

"Attitude Scale towards Value Teaching via Distance Education" was used in this study. The scale was developed by Demir and Çetin (2022). In order to achieve the content validity of the scale that was developed with 341 teacher candidates, expert opinions were asked for. Construct validity was ensured by exploratory factor analysis. With the use of the parallel analysis method based on Monte Carlo simulation, the number of factors was determined. As a consequence of the analyses, the scale of attitude towards value teaching via distance education, consisting of a total of 36 items, 15 of which are negative and 21 of which are positive, was obtained. The scale explains 63.28% of the total variance. The factors of the scale, which has a two-factor structure, were named "Necessity and Usefulness" and "Feasibility", respectively. Because the results of Tukey's Test for Non-additivity indicate that the scale is not additive, it is not possible to gain a total score from the whole scale. While the Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of the "Necessity and Usefulness" factor of the attitude scale towards distance education value education was .97, it was determined as .96 for the "Feasibility" factor. It is a Likert-type scale of "I do not agree" and "I do not agree at all". In the attitude scale

towards value teaching via distance education, a minimum of 21 points and a maximum of 105 points can be obtained in the 21-item "Necessity and Usefulness" factor, and a minimum of 15 points and a maximum of 75 points can be obtained from the "Feasibility" factor consisting of 15 items. In conclusion, it indicates that the attitude scale towards value education via distance education composed by Demir and Çetin (2022) presents reliable measurements. Within the scope of this study, the Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficients of the factors were re-examined. It was found as .96 and .96, respectively.

2.3 Data Analysis

The data were examined using the SPSS 22 statistical package program. Attitude levels of prospective teachers towards value teaching via distance education are presented with descriptive statistics as mean, median, standard deviation, and frequency distributions. Before determining whether the attitudes differ according to the variables of gender, class, department, family, and place of residence, it was determined that the scores obtained according to the attitude scale factors and each independent variable group did not show a normal distribution as a result of the normal distribution test. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test Results of Scales

| Variables | Necessity and Usefulness | | | Feasibility | | |
|---|--------------------------|-----|------|-------------|-----|------|
| | Statistic | SD | p | Statistic | SD | p |
| Gender | | | | | | |
| Female | ,051 | 548 | ,002 | ,129 | 548 | ,000 |
| Male | ,067 | 150 | ,099 | ,098 | 150 | ,001 |
| Grade | | | | | | |
| 1 st Grade | ,056 | 177 | ,200 | ,128 | 177 | ,000 |
| 2 nd Grade | ,096 | 117 | ,010 | ,138 | 117 | ,000 |
| 3 rd Grade | ,056 | 205 | ,200 | ,126 | 205 | ,000 |
| 4 th Grade | ,067 | 199 | ,032 | ,107 | 199 | ,000 |
| Department | | | | | | |
| Dept. of Foreign Languages Edu. | ,078 | 150 | ,027 | ,147 | 150 | ,000 |
| Dept. of Turkish and Social Sciences Edu. | ,076 | 170 | ,017 | ,106 | 170 | ,000 |
| Dept. of Mathematics and Science Edu. | ,067 | 205 | ,027 | ,119 | 205 | ,000 |
| Dept. of Primary Edu. | ,062 | 173 | ,200 | ,143 | 173 | ,000 |
| Place of residence with family | | | | | | |
| Province | ,054 | 460 | ,002 | ,121 | 460 | ,000 |
| Town | ,060 | 180 | ,200 | ,115 | 180 | ,000 |
| Village | ,126 | 58 | ,023 | ,934 | 58 | ,004 |

In the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, it was mentioned that if the significance level is greater than .05, the distribution is normal, and if it is less than .05, the distribution is not normal (Büyükoztürk, 2017). The data analyzed within the scope of this research do

not show a normal distribution for the groups belonging to each independent variable. Non-parametric tests were used in the analysis for this reason. In descriptive statistics, the comments were asserted by considering the total score. Evaluation of significant differences in Kruskal Wallis H test was made with Mann-Whitney-U pairwise comparisons and Bonferroni correction was used (Field, p. 565). Since pairwise comparisons for Mann-Whitney U test and Kruskal-Wallis test were made with Mann-Whitney U test, the effect size was calculated using the $r=z/\sqrt{N}$ formula using z value (standardized test statistic) and sample size (Pallant, 2015; Rosenthal, 1991) as cited in Field, 2009). The r value found was interpreted by considering the cohen criteria (.1=small, .3=medium, .5=large) (Pallant, 2015; Field, 2009).

3. Results

This section presents the findings that are gained from the research in order within the framework of sub-problems. What are the attitudes of teacher candidates towards value education via distance education? The findings obtained for the first sub-problem are given in Table 3.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of Teacher Candidates' Attitude Scale Scores towards Value Teaching via Distance Education

| | N | M | Median | SD | Min | Max |
|--------------------------|-----|-------|--------|-------|-------|--------|
| Necessity and Usefulness | 698 | 71,43 | 73,00 | 16,89 | 21,00 | 105,00 |
| Feasibility | 698 | 51,40 | 55,00 | 13,71 | 15,00 | 75,00 |

When Table 3 is analyzed, it is observed that the attitudes of the prospective teachers towards finding value in teaching via distance education necessary, useful and feasible are positive.

Findings related to the second sub-problem “Does the attitudes of teacher candidates towards value education via distance education show a significant difference according to gender, grade level, department, and place of residence with family?” are given below, respectively.

3.1. According to Gender;

Table 4. Mann-Whitney U-Test Results of Teacher Candidates' Attitude Scale Scores towards Values Teaching via Distance Education by Gender

| | | N | Mean Rank | Sum of Ranks | U | p | z | Effect Size (r) |
|--------------------------|--------|-----|-----------|--------------|----------|------|--------|-----------------|
| Necessity and Usefulness | Female | 548 | 353,45 | 193688,00 | 38938,00 | ,323 | -,988 | - |
| | Male | 150 | 335,09 | 50263,00 | | | | |
| Feasibility | Female | 548 | 358,13 | 196256,00 | 36370,00 | .031 | -2,163 | 0.08 |
| | Male | 150 | 317,97 | 47695,00 | | | | |

p<.01

According to the results of Mann Whitney-U test, no significant difference was found in the dimension of being necessary and useful ($U=38938.00$ $p>.05$) according to the gender of the teacher candidates. A significant difference was found between the scores of being feasible ($U=36370.00$ $p>.05$). For this reason, it could be mentioned that the attitudes of female teacher candidates towards the feasibility of value education via distance education are more positive than that of males. However, when the effect size is examined, it can be said that the effect is quite small.

3.2. According to the department variable;

Table 5. Kruskal-Wallis Test Results of Teacher Candidates' Attitude Scale Scores towards Value Teaching Via Distance Education According to Department

| | | N | Mean Rank | χ^2 | sd | p | Effect Size(r) | Difference |
|--------------------------|---|-----|-----------|----------|----|------|----------------|------------|
| Necessity and Usefulness | Dept. of Foreign Languages Edu. | 150 | 346,19 | 8,330 | 3 | ,04 | .15 | 3-4 |
| | Dept. of Turkish and Social Sciences Edu. | 170 | 354,25 | | | | | |
| | Dept. of Mathematics and Science Edu. | 205 | 321,42 | | | | | |
| | Dept. of Primary Edu. | 173 | 380,98 | | | | | |
| Feasibility | Dept. of Foreign Languages Edu. | 150 | 363,54 | 3,638 | 3 | .303 | - | - |
| | Dept. of Turkish and Social Sciences Edu. | 170 | 329,90 | | | | | |
| | Dept. of Mathematics and Science Edu. | 205 | 342,29 | | | | | |
| | Dept. of Primary Edu. | 173 | 365,13 | | | | | |

When Table 5 is analyzed, a significant difference was found between the attitude scores of teacher candidates with regard to finding distance education and values teaching necessary and useful ($\chi^2=8.330$, $p=.04$, $p<.05$ for Group 3-4 $r=.15$) according to their departments. Students studying in the basic education department have more positive attitudes towards finding value education via distance education necessary and useful than students studying in the fields of mathematics and science. The effect size is small. When the attitude scores towards being feasible ($\chi^2=3.638$, $p=.303$, $p>.05$) were examined, no significant difference was found.

3.3. According to the grade variable;

Table 6. Kruskal-Wallis Test Results of Teacher Candidates' Attitude Scale Scores towards Value Teaching via Distance Education According to Class Variable

| | | N | Mean Rank | X^2 | sd | p |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----|-----------|-------|----|------|
| Necessity and Usefulness | 1 st Grade | 177 | 338,42 | 4,775 | 3 | ,189 |
| | 2 nd Grade | 117 | 322,04 | | | |
| | 3 rd Grade | 205 | 355,77 | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|-------------|-----------------------|-----|--------|-------|---|------|
| | 4 th Grade | 199 | 369,05 | | | |
| Feasibility | 1 st Grade | 177 | 344,80 | 3,146 | 3 | .370 |
| | 2 nd Grade | 117 | 326,00 | | | |
| | 3 rd Grade | 205 | 366,49 | | | |
| | 4 th Grade | 199 | 350,00 | | | |

When Table 6 is analyzed, no significant difference was found between the attitude scores of teacher candidates regarding finding distance education and values teaching necessary and useful ($\chi^2=8.330$, $p=.18$, $p>.05$) according to their grade levels. Likewise, no significant difference was found between the scores of attitude towards being feasible ($\chi^2=3.638$, $p=.37$, $p>.05$).

3.4. According to the place of residence with family variable;

Table 7. Kruskal-Wallis Test Results According to the Variable of the Attitude Scale Scores of the Teacher Candidates towards Values Teaching via Distance Education

| | | N | Mean Rank | X^2 | sd | p |
|--------------------------|----------|-----|-----------|-------|----|------|
| Necessity and Usefulness | Province | 460 | 347,09 | 5,280 | 2 | ,071 |
| | Town | 180 | 337,42 | | | |
| | Village | 58 | 406,08 | | | |
| Feasibility | Province | 460 | 349,45 | ,112 | 2 | .946 |
| | Town | 180 | 347,11 | | | |
| | Village | 58 | 357,29 | | | |

When Table 7 is analyzed, no significant difference was found between the attitudes of prospective teachers regarding finding distance education and values teaching necessary and useful ($\chi^2=5.280$, $p=.07$, $p>.05$) according to the variable of a place of residence with family. Similarly, no significant difference was found between the attitude scores towards being feasible ($\chi^2=.112$, $p=.94$, $p>.05$).

4. Discussion

From the point of transferring values to several people regardless of time and place, the concept of values teaching via distance education is crucial. Chaturvedi and Chauhan (2019) claim that by means of distance education, it is possible to guide learners widely about values education, and values education can become widespread in different layers of society. As a matter of fact, the Living Values Education Program presents distance education by providing various materials (<https://www.livingvalues.net/distance/>). Since the significance of the concept of distance education is increasing, value education via distance education has started to take its place among the research topics. The attitudes of teacher candidates towards value education via distance education were investigated in this research,

In this study, in which the attitudes of teacher candidates towards value teaching via distance education were investigated, teacher candidates had positive attitudes towards finding value teaching via distance education necessary and useful. Similarly, it has been

found that they have positive attitudes about considering value education via distance education feasible. It has been revealed that attitudes towards distance education (Ağır 2007; Kocayiğit & Uşun, 2020) and attitudes towards values education (Kozikoğlu, 2018; Fırat Durdukoca, 2018; Yaşaroğlu 2014) are determined to be positive. Moçoşoğlu and Kaya (2020) concluded that teachers' attitudes toward distance education are negative. Positive attitudes of teacher candidates towards value education via distance education means that values will be transferred to a much wider audience through distance education by teachers in the future. If this situation is handled in the context of gaining national value, countries can use distance education as a tool to gain values for their citizens in different countries. At the point of obtaining universal values, reaching young and adults who have been away from formal education through distance education will enable them to gain these values as well.

In the study, it was determined that female teacher candidates' attitudes towards the feasibility of values education via distance education were more positive than males. In the study by Ağır (2007), in which the attitudes of primary school teachers working in private and public schools towards distance education were determined, it was concluded that the attitudes did not differ according to gender. Likewise; it was determined by Kocayiğit and Uşun (2020) that there is no gender difference between teachers' attitudes towards distance education. Yaşaroğlu (2014) concluded that the attitudes of classroom teachers towards values education do not differ according to gender. Fırat Durdukoca (2018) determined that there was no significant difference in the attitudes of social studies teachers towards values education according to gender. Contrary to the result obtained in this study, Yenilmez, Turgut, and Balbağ (2017) claimed that the attitudes of teacher candidates towards distance education differed in favor of men. Çetin (2013) also found that male students have more positive attitudes towards teaching national values. Demir, Budak, and Çetin (2021) found that female teacher candidates have higher value perceptions than males. Looking at the gender ratios of teachers in OECD countries, the proportion of female teachers in pre-primary, primary, and secondary education tends to be higher than male teachers. In Turkey, 94% of preschool teachers, 64% of primary school teachers, 58% of secondary school teachers, 51% of high school teachers, and 45% of higher education teachers are women (TEDMEM, 2021). Therefore, more women perform in the teaching profession. As a result of the fact that female teacher candidates have more positive attitudes in the research, it can be interpreted that there will be more teachers who believe that value education can be realized with distance education in the future. As a matter of fact, the results of the research conducted by Demir, Budak, and Çetin (2021) also show that female teacher candidates have higher value perceptions than males.

According to the grade levels of the teacher candidates, there was no significant difference in their attitudes towards finding teaching values with distance education necessary and useful and their attitudes towards being feasible. The results of the

research conducted by Demir, Budak, and Çetin (2021) also show that teacher candidates' perceptions of value according to grade level and their perceptions towards gaining values in education faculty do not differ. According to the variable of the place of residence with their families, there was no significant difference between the attitudes of the teacher candidates regarding the values teaching with distance education as necessary and useful, and their attitudes towards being feasible. Çetin (2013) concluded that the attitude scores of the students towards the teaching of national values do not differ according to the place where the teacher candidates live with their families.

Students studying in the primary education department have more positive attitudes towards finding value in education via distance education necessary and beneficial than students studying in the fields of mathematics and science. It was concluded by Ağır (2007) that teachers' attitudes towards distance education do not differ according to the department. Similarly, Kocayığit and Uşun (2020) determined that there was no differentiation between the attitudes of teachers towards distance education according to the department. Contrary to the result of this research, Yenilmez, Turgut, and Balbağ (2017) found that the attitudes of prospective science teachers towards distance education are more positive than those of primary school teacher candidates. The results of the research may have been arisen by different reasons. First of all, teacher candidates who study in the fields of mathematics and science will perform the teaching profession at secondary and high school levels, and teacher candidates who study in the fields of primary education will perform the teaching profession in pre-school and primary schools. Therefore, the age groups they are going to train may have influenced the views of teacher candidates. Another issue is that branch teachers can be considered to focus on the academic development of their students rather than their values education.

5. Conclusions

Teacher candidates possess positive attitudes towards value education via distance education. This reveals the fact that they have an affective readiness for training on how to teach values via distance education. Attitudes of students in mathematics and science towards values education via distance education are lower than that in primary education. This fact indicates that there has been a need for further studies in these areas.

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