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THE ROLE OF MEDIA LITERACY IN VALUE ACQUISITION BASED ON PRE-SERVICE SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHERS' VIEWS

Research article

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Abstract

The present study aimed to determine the role of media literacy education in value acquisition based on the views of pre-service social studies teachers. The study was designed with the phenomenology method, a qualitative research design. The study group was assigned with criterion sampling, a purposive sampling method. Study data were collected with the interview method. The data were analyzed with the descriptive analysis technique. According to pre-service social studies teachers, the significant roles of media literacy education in sustaining the values included raising consciousness, raising awareness, and improving unity, and the participants also mentioned collaboration, guidance, prevention of immorality and socio-cultural degeneration, production of ideas, improvement of interpersonal relations, prevention of the loss of values, active transfer of the values to future generations, comprehension of the values, recognition of the importance of the values, comprehension of the effect of values on individuals, providing information, serving as the main auxiliary resource in value acquisition, contribution to mastering and comprehension of the topic, and contribution to permanent learning. On the positive contributions of media literacy education to value acquisition, most pre-service teachers included raising consciousness, cooperation, development of a critical perspective, revelation of the lost values, and raising awareness.

Keywords: Media literacy, values, pre-service social studies teachers

1. Introduction

Values are among the most important factors that ensure the continuity of the society and unite the individuals. Values are principles that are considered important for all societies. In addition to universal values, societies may also have unique values and principles. According to Halstead (2006), values are basic beliefs and principles that guide the individual about acceptable behavior in a society. Zecha (2007) wrote that values are everything that supports individual life or human health without harming others or the society as a whole. According to Schwartz (2015), values are motivational structures that reflect what is important for the people. Individuals consider various acts, objects, individuals and events as more or less important based on their values. Individual's values are central to the identity and ego of the individual. Values are not independent assets according to Aspin (2007). They are a part of human actions and the relationship between the human and the society. This process entails the development of the individual as an independent individual in a society. It is a process that remains constant throughout an individual's life. According to Kafadar (2019a), individuals could acquire values in the family, at school, or in the society.

Several factors could affect value acquisition. Media is among these factors. Media institutions could have positive or negative effects on the individuals during the acquisition of values. The most important method to ensure positive effects is to raise the awareness media users. Media literacy education is significant in raising the awareness of media users. According to Arslan (2004), media has significant effects on the knowledge, views, attitudes,

emotions and behavior of individuals. Not only individuals but also social groups, organizations, social institutions, in short, the whole society and culture are affected by the media. According to Kahraman (2016), we are surrounded by information and communication technologies and the access of individuals who are exposed to several undesired messages to the desired information and protection from undesired messages could be possible through media literacy skills acquired in education. Media literacy, according to Keller & Share (2005), allows individuals to use media wisely, distinguish and analyze the media content, critically examine media forms, explore the effects and uses of the media, and develop alternative media sources. According to Cappello, Felini & Hobbs (2011), children and adolescents could use computers or smart phones; however, they often require adult assistance to develop second-level media skills; an individual's habits and preferences about media and technology use, critical understanding of the form and content of a message, respectful and responsible interaction with other individuals, employment of various symbol systems to express their views, etc. Thus, the acquisition of media literacy skills is quite important for the individual. Therefore, media literacy could have a significant effect on the acquisition of values. The views of social studies teachers, who instruct one of the important courses for the acquisition of values, especially those of the pre-service social studies teachers in teacher training, on the role of media literacy are significant for value acquisition.

Literature review revealed several studies on values and education of values. These included studies on value priorities of individuals (Schwartz, 1992), value trends among teachers (Kuşdil & Kağıtçıbaşı, 2000), values education at schools (Huitt, 2004; Halstead, 1996; Paterson, 2010; Lovat, Toomey & Clement 2010), views of pre-service social studies teachers about values (Tay, 2013), scale development and adaptation (Çalışkan & Sağlam, 2012), curriculum development (Katılmış, 2010), the investigation of social studies curricula in various countries based on values education (Kafadar, Öztürk & Katılmış, 2018). The review of the literature on media literacy demonstrated that previous studies were teacher perceptions on media literacy education and problems associated with social studies curricula (Stein & Prewett, 2009), media literacy in a changing world (Thoman & Jolls, 2004), the state of media literacy in higher education (Mihailidis, 2008) and the challenges in the analysis of media literacy education (Schilder, Lockee & Saxon, 2016). However, there were no studies on the views of pre-service social studies teachers about the role of media literacy education in the acquisition of values. Thus, the present study is expected to fill an important gap in the literature.

1.1. The Aim of the Study

The present study aimed to determine the role of media literacy education in the acquisition of values based on the views of pre-service social studies teachers. Thus, the following research questions were determined.

- What are the important values based on the views of the pre-service social studies teachers?
- What are the lost values in the 21st century based on the views of the pre-service social studies teachers?
- What is the role of media literacy education in the sustenance of the values based on the views of the pre-service social studies teachers?
- What are the contributions of media literacy education in the acquisition of the values based on the views of the pre-service social studies teachers?

2. Method

2.1. The Research Design

The study was designed with phenomenology, a qualitative research method. The phenomenology design was preferred to investigate the role of media literacy education in value acquisition of pre-service social studies teachers with prior media literacy education in the study.

2.2. The Study Group

The study group was assigned with criterion sampling, a purposive sampling method. Purposive sampling method, according to Patton (1987), “allows in-depth research on cases where rich information was considered available” (cited in Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011, p. 107). In the study, 42 senior pre-service social studies teachers attending the social studies teaching undergraduate program and previously took media literacy course were included the study group.

Descriptive statistics about the participants is presented below:

Class	Male	Female
Senior	17	25

2.3. Data Collection and Analysis

The study data were collected with the interview method. The interviews were conducted with a semi-structured interview form that included open-ended questions. The interview method was preferred to determine the in-depth views of the participants. While collecting the research data, first permissions were obtained for the interview process, and then detailed information was given to the study group for the research. Afterwards, data were collected from the study group through an open-ended interview form.

The study data were analyzed with the descriptive analysis technique. In the analysis, codes were determined based on the collected data on research questions, and these codes were grouped under categories. The frequencies are employed to reflect the data in the categories. Direct participant quotes are presented to support the codes determined in the study, and the findings presented in tables were supported by direct quotes.

2.4. Validity and Reliability

The author developed the interview questions, and expert opinion was obtained on the draft interview form to determine content validity. The interview form questions were submitted to 2 social studies, an evaluation and measurement, and a values education specialist. Based on the views of the experts, the semi-structured interview form was finalized. The reliability of the form was determined with the reliability coefficient proposed by Miles & Huberman (1994): $Agreement = (agreement + disagreement) / (4 + 1) = 0,80$. The coefficient demonstrated that the interview questions were reliable.

The accuracy of the coding and categorization of the study data were determined by expert opinion during the data analysis. Based on the expert opinion, the reliability of the analysis was calculated as 0.88 based on the Miles & Huberman (1994) reliability coefficient.

3. Findings

The views of the pre-service social studies teachers on the values they deemed important are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Important values based on the views of pre-service social studies teachers

<i>Value</i>	<i>f</i>
Respect	20
Love	17
Patriotism	16
Honesty	14
Family harmony	14
Cooperation	13
Tolerance	8
Industry	6
Empathy	5
Justice	5
Equality	5
Peace	5
Freedom	4
Sensitivity	4
Responsibility	4
Morality	4
Independence	3
Solidarity	3
Nationalism	2
Religion	1
Tolerance of differences	1
Conscience	1
Prudence	1
Cleanliness	1
Dignity	1
Friendship	1
Success	1
Royalty	1
Traditions	2
Hospitality	1
Liberty	1
National culture	1
National awareness	1
Spirituality	1
National conscience	1
Love of the flag	1
Austerity	1

As seen Table 1, most pre-service social studies teachers deemed the values of respect (f20), love (f17), patriotism (f16), honesty (f14), family harmony (f14), solidarity (f13), tolerance (f8), industry (f6), empathy (f5), justice (f5), equality (f5), peace (f5), freedom (f4), sensitivity (f4), responsibility (f4), morality (f4), independence (f3), solidarity (f3), nationalism (f2) important, and fewer participants considered religion (f1), tolerance of differences (f1), conscience (f1), prudence (f1), cleanliness (f1), dignity (f1), friendship (f1),

success (f1), loyalty (f1), traditions (f1), hospitality (f1), liberty (f1), national culture (f1), national awareness (f1), spirituality (f1), national consciousness (f1), love of the flag (f1) and austerity (f1) as important.

Examples of direct quotations from the interviews conducted with pre-service social studies teachers are presented below.

4-F-2: *"Love, respect, tolerance, patriotism, family harmony."*

4-M-3: *"Family, morality, conscience, empathy, prudent behavior, industry, honesty, justice. I think if the above values exist in a society, is closer to good days when compared to the others."*

4-M-12: *"Respect, love, patriotism, family harmony, honesty, industry."*

The views of the pre-service social studies teachers on the values lost in 21st century are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. The values lost in 21st century based on the views of pre-service social studies teachers

<i>Value</i>	<i>f</i>
Respect	16
Family harmony	9
Honesty	7
Love	5
Tolerance	5
Cooperation	5
Industry	4
Empathy	4
Morality	3
Sensitivity	3
Responsibility	3
Lack of communication	2
Justice	2
Compassion	2
Neighborliness	2
Friendship	2
Religion	2
Trust	2
Sacrifice	1
Sensibility	1
Peace	1
Equality	1
Respect for elders	1
Culture	1
Turkishness awareness	1
Hospitality	1
Austerity	1
Kinship	1
National unity	1
Solidarity	1

As seen in Table 2, based on the views of the most pre-service social studies teachers, the values lost in the current century included *respect (f16)*, *family harmony (f9)*, *honesty (f7)*, *love (f5)*, *tolerance (f5)*, *cooperation (f5)*, *industry (f4)*, *empathy (f4)*, *morality (f3)*, *sensitivity (f3)*, *responsibility (f3)*, *lack of communication (f2)*, *justice (f2)*, *compassion (f2)*, *neighborliness (f2)*, *friendship (f2)*, *religion (f2)*, *trust (f2)*, *self-sacrifice (f1)*, *sensibility (f1)*, *peace (f1)*, *equality (f1)*, *respect for elders (f1)*, *culture (f1)*, *Turkishness awareness (f1)*, *hospitality (f1)*, *austerity (f1)*, *kinship (f1)*, *national unity (f1)* and *solidarity (f1)*, in the respective order.

Examples of direct quotations from the interviews conducted with pre-service social studies teachers are presented below.

4-F-5: *“People's tolerance for each other disappeared. We cannot tolerate anything and anyone. We clash in the slightest dispute. We do not respect our elders. More precisely, we do not respect anyone. Unfortunately, where there is no respect, there is no love.”*

4-F-4: *“I think empathy, sensibility, honesty are among the most important lost values. Because when we stop understanding others, then our hearts become bad, they work only for their benefit. Social awareness is lost. Everyone only cares about saving themselves. Honesty is the greatest value lost. People can tell countless lies without thinking, which drives the society into total chaos.”*

4-M-10: *“Respect is one of the values that was present and lost in our society recently. Significance of family ties is one of our lost values, especially in the new generation.”*

The views of the pre-service social studies teachers on the role of media literacy education in sustaining the values are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. The role of media literacy education in sustaining the values based on the views of pre-service social studies teachers

<i>The role of media literacy education</i>	<i>f</i>
Raising consciousness	16
Raising awareness	6
Improvement of unity	4
Distinguishing right from wrong information	3
Facilitation of value transfer	2
Improving benevolence	2
Adoption of the values	2
Critical thinking	2
Sharing	1
Guidance	1
Prevention of immorality and socio cultural degeneration	1
Production of ideas	1
Tolerance for different ideas	1
Improvement of interpersonal relations	1
Prevention of the loss of values	1
Active transfer of values to future generations	1
Comprehension of values	1
Comprehension of the significance of the values	1
Realization of the impact of values on people	1
Providing information	1
Improvement of sensitivity	1

The most important auxiliary resource for acquisition of the values	1
Contribution to mastering the topic and comprehension	1
Contribution to permanent learning	1

As seen in Table 3, according to most pre-service social studies teachers candidates, the role of media literacy education in sustaining the values pertained to raising consciousness (f16), raising awareness (f6), improvement of unity (f4), distinguishing right from wrong information (f3), facilitation of value transfer (f2), improving benevolence (f2), adoption of the values (f2), critical thinking (f2), and fewer number of participants associated it with sharing (f1), guidance (f1), preventing immoral and socio-cultural degeneration (f1), production of ideas (f1), respecting different views (f1), improving interpersonal relations (f1), preventing the loss of values (f1), active transfer to future generations (f1), comprehension of the values (f1), comprehension of the significance of the values (f1), comprehension of the impact of values on individuals (f1), providing information (f1), improvement of sensitivity (f1), serving as an auxiliary source for value acquisition (f1), contribution to mastering the topic and comprehension (f1) and Contribution to permanent learning (f1).

Examples of direct quotations from the interviews conducted with pre-service social studies teachers are presented below.

4-F-1: *"Media literacy has a very important value and meaning in keeping the values alive and raising the awareness of individuals especially in the current age of technology."*

4-M-15: *"Media literacy is effective on the realization and identification of the values. Education raises awareness about the values. So, we learn how to effectively use a method and which stages to go through during the transfer of values. Media literacy acts as a guide."*

4-F-8: *"Media literacy allows us to transfer our values to future generations and those who do not know more effectively. As long as the values exist, the relationships between people are better, so we can transfer our values through mass media to pass from one society to another. Media literacy education is very important to understand these accurately."*

The contributions of media literacy education to the process of value acquisition based on the views of the pre-service social studies teachers are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. The contributions of media literacy education to value acquisition based on the views of pre-service social studies teachers

<i>Contribution</i>	<i>f</i>
Raises consciousness	14
Supports cooperation	6
Supports critical perspective	6
Contributes to the discovery of lost values	5
Raises awareness	5
Facilitates dissemination of the values	4
Plays a role in active instruction of the values	4
Protects the values	3
Provides guidance	2
Facilitates values education	2
Contributes to unity	1
Prevents degeneration of the values	1
Allows us to recognize the importance of social values	1
Supports self-realization	1
Improves interpersonal communication	1
Improves self-esteem	1
Trains individuals with analytical thinking skills	1

As seen in Table 4, most pre-service social studies teachers stated the following positive contributions of media literacy education to the acquisition of values: raising consciousness (f14), cooperation (f6), development of a critical perspective (f6), contribution to the discovery of lost values (f5), raising awareness (f5), facilitation of the dissemination of values (f4), a role in active instruction of the values (f4), protection of values (f3), providing guidance (f2), facilitation of values education (f2), and fewer participants mentioned the following: contribution to unity (f1), prevention of the degeneration of values (f1), making us understand the importance of social values (f1), self-realization (f1), improvement of interpersonal communication (f1), self-esteem (f1), and instruction of analytical thinking skills (f1).

Examples of direct quotations from the interviews conducted with pre-service social studies teachers are presented below.

4-M-11: *"In this digital age, the easiest way to reach people is through the media. Thanks to media literacy education, people become more conscious. The lost values can be rediscovered by the people. The most effective weapon for this is this education."*

4-M-9: *"Today, several values are conveyed by the media. Media affect people the most. Therefore, media literacy helps in conveying the desired values to the people. A value desired to be conveyed to the society could be easily transferred. While acquiring these values, the education acts as a guide."*

4-M-16: *"In the process of acquiring media literacy values, people become more aware as they are informed and act more consciously as they become aware, they can act selectively instead of directly buying everything that they encounter, and their values also contribute positively to the positive changes or values."*

4. Conclusion, Discussion and Recommendations

The findings of the study conducted to determine the role of media literacy education in value acquisition were as follows based on the views of the pre-service social studies teachers:

Most pre-service social studies teachers deemed the values of *respect, love, patriotism, honesty, family harmony, solidarity, tolerance, industry, empathy, justice, equality, peace, freedom, sensitivity, responsibility, morality, independence, solidarity, nationalism important, and fewer participants considered religion, tolerance of differences, conscience, prudence, cleanliness, dignity, friendship, success, loyalty, traditions, hospitality, liberty, national culture, national awareness, spirituality, national consciousness, love of the flag, and austerity* as important. The analysis of the values that pre-service social studies teachers considered important revealed that these were universal values, in other words, those that are considered important in all societies.

Based on the views of the most pre-service social studies teachers, the values lost in the current century included *respect, family harmony, honesty, love, tolerance, cooperation, industry, empathy, morality, sensitivity, responsibility, lack of communication, justice, compassion, neighborliness, friendship, religion, trust, and fewer participants mentioned self-sacrifice, sensibility, peace, equality, respect for elders, culture, Turkishness awareness, hospitality, austerity, kinship, national unity, and solidarity*. The analysis of these findings demonstrated that several values have been lost according to the pre-service social studies teachers. Several factors could lead to the loss of values. It could be suggested that one of these factors is inability to use the media correctly. According to Ceylan (2012), objective and impartial media organizations could contribute to social development; however they often go beyond the ethical principles and rules, harming both themselves and social development. According to Hobbs and Jensen (2009), media literacy education is necessary to train students who can use social media consciously. Thus, it could be suggested that media, an important factor in the digital age, and media literacy skills are a required and important skill in values education to sustain social values.

According to most pre-service social studies teachers candidates, the role of media literacy education in sustaining the values pertained to *raising consciousness, raising awareness, improvement of unity, distinguishing right from wrong information, facilitation of value transfer, improving benevolence, adoption of the values, critical thinking, and fewer number of participants associated it with sharing, guidance, prevention of immoral and socio-cultural degeneration, production of ideas, respecting different views, improving interpersonal relations, preventing the loss of values, active transfer to future generations, comprehension of the values, comprehension of the significance of the values, comprehension of the impact of values on individuals, providing information, improvement of sensitivity, serving as an auxiliary source for value acquisition, contribution to mastering the topic and comprehension, and contribution to permanent learning*. Today, media has a great influence on values education. Young individuals consider wrong concepts as values due to false media coverage. In this process, educators have a great responsibility to guide young individuals (Sanchez, 1998). Byrne and Lee (2011) warned the public about the negative effects of mass media on children and adolescents. Thus, media awareness among teachers and pre-service teachers is quite important for the sustenance of the values and the acquisition of media literacy by the children during education. Karaduman, Çengelci Köse & Eryılmaz (2017) reported that the domain of values exhibited by the individuals on virtual media is significantly larger. Thus, it is very important for individuals to be aware of the values they reflect on the virtual media and to use social media consciously for the contribution of social media to social life. Gündüz Kalan (2010) argued that the individual who is media literate could critically analyze the media messages; assess the reliability of the message source, and

know about its effects. Thus, it could be suggested that the media literacy skill shave significant contributions to raising awareness.

Media plays a significant role in today's societies in the acquisition of gender roles, knowledge and values (Kellner & Share, 2007). In the present study, most pre-service social studies teachers stated the following positive contributions of media literacy education to the acquisition of values: *raising consciousness, cooperation, development of a critical perspective, contribution to the discovery of lost values , raising awareness, facilitation of the dissemination of values, a role in active instruction of the values, protection of values, providing guidance, facilitation of values education, and fewer participants mentioned the following: contribution to unity, prevention of the degeneration of values, making us understand the importance of social values, self-realization, improvement of interpersonal communications, self-esteem, and instruction of analytical thinking skills.* In a study where Kafadar (2019b) analyzed the impact of media on value acquisition based on the open viewsions of social studies teachers, it was reported that the media could have positive effects on the acquisition of sharing, cooperation, solidarity, tolerance for differences, and sensitivity values. Values could be acquired in various places and times. School is one of the most important places to acquire values. One of the skills that should be acquired in current times in education is the media literacy skills. According to Arslan (2014), media literacy is the ability to access, analyze, evaluate and convey various audiovisual and multimedia messages. Media literacy, which allows individuals to read the media consciously, is also important in raising awareness about free self-expression and active participation in social life. Furthermore, Solmaz & Yılmaz (2012) reported that media literacy is not only important in democratic participation, but also constitutes one of the requirements of social justice and critical citizenship. In this context, if the media is used consciously, it can make positive contributions to gain many values.

A general analysis of the study findings demonstrated that positive and negative factors could be effective on the acquisition of values. For media, which is one of these factors, to have a positive effect on values education, the acquisition of media literacy skills is important. Thus, media literacy skill has a positive effect on the acquisition of values and prioritization of the education of this skill could contribute to the effective acquisition of values.

The following could be recommended based on the study findings:

The study findings revealed that several values are lost in the current century according to pre-service social studies teachers. Values are the most important components for the survival of a society. Thus, values education should be prioritized to prevent losing values and keep them alive. Further studies on the reasons for losing vales could be conducted to ensure the survival and continuity of the values.

It was concluded that media literacy education has a significant contribution to value acquisition. Thus, media literacy education could be prioritized for the acquisition of media literacy skills.

The present study aimed to determine the views of pre-service social studies teachers about the role of media literacy in the acquisition of values. Future studies could investigate the views of teachers and students about this topic.

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