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An Analysis of the Impact of the Values Education Class Over the University Students' Levels of Acquisition of Moral Maturity and Human Values

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the impact of the "Curriculum of Values Education" over the university students' levels of acquisition of moral maturity and human values. This study was planned as a quasi-experimental design, defined as the "Pretest/Post-test Control Group Design". The study group of the study consisted of 77 students, studying in the Child Development Program of the Department of Child Care and Youth Services at the Vocational School of Healthcare Services of Mus Alparslan University throughout the 2019-2020 academic year. The "Moral Maturity Scale" and "Human Values Scale" were employed as data collection tools. The curriculum was administered on the experimental group for 80-90 minutes in 1 session in the training classroom, at 15:00 on Mondays for 13 weeks. The independent samples t-Test and Two Way Anova for Repeated Measurements were utilized in order to analyze the data obtained from this study. As a result of the study, it was revealed that the "Curriculum of Values Education" increased the levels of acquisition of moral maturity and human values of the students in the study group. A literature-backed discussion was held in line with the results obtained, which was followed by several recommendations on the use of the crafted curriculum of values education by the academicians to teach the values education class.

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Keywords:

Value, values education, moral maturity, human values, university students.

1. Introduction

In today's world, the rapid developments in the fields of science, technology, economics, industrialization, and urbanization have affected human beings both positively and negatively. The developments in question have increased the financial wealth of people, while devastating them in respect of morality (Öztürk & Seyhan, 2016). This swift change in the material culture has led to certain disintegrations in the moral culture, which failed to keep up with the change as it did, as well as in the society, deeply affecting the moral principles of the society as a consequence (Kurtkan, 1974). The disintegrations taking place in the society have negatively affected the peace and serenity of the individuals living in that society. The preservation and maintenance of the existence of the moral values in that society are important for the tranquility of the society and individuals. How would moral values preserve and maintain their existence in a society? This would solely be possible by handing down the values education, moral values included, to next generations. What meaning do morality, moral values, moral maturity, value, and values education have, which are significant concepts for a society?

In general terms, morality is a set of principles and rules, set forth to regulate any and all kinds of behaviors and relations of an individual in the society (Kaya & Aydın, 2011). Morality stands for behavioral patterns that individuals abide by in interpersonal relations in a society, along with the standards of judgment and code of conducts that we name "good" or "right", "bad" or "wrong" (Aktan, 2009). Moral norms, however, are the

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norms that are introduced in order to regulate any and all kinds of behaviors, attitudes, and interpersonal relations of an individual in a society (Kaya & Aydın, 2011). Moral development is a process, through which individuals acquire the norms that would enable them to manage their own behaviors to help them assess what is right or wrong in the face of the events going on around them (Yeşilkayalı, 2014). Moral development brings along moral maturity.

Moral maturity is a state, where individuals are competent and are at high levels in their feelings, opinions, attitudes, and behaviors in respect of compliance with morality (Çekin, 2013). An individual with moral maturity is expected to be a responsible, fair, reliable, highly empathetic, self-controlling, people-sensitive, respectful, and law-abiding citizen (Lickona, 1991). Morally mature individuals are the ones who are aware of what they are (Mathieson, 2003). There is a harmony in all desires, wishes, and behaviors of such individuals. Individuals do not feel an obligation in regards to their behaviors; doing what is good and right, and avoiding what is bad and wrong, are a matter of life style for them. Hence, these are the individuals who take pleasure out of what they do, and who are capable of curbing their wishes and desires (Kardaş, 2013). These morally mature individuals have integrated moral values into their conscience and internalized it; they do not think of acting against moral values, even when they are alone. These individuals, who are capable of internalizing moral values, believe that violating morality is as dangerous as losing the human dignity (Şengün, 2008).

How can moral development and moral maturity be achieved in individuals living in a society? When analyzed in theoretical terms, different theories made different explanations for this matter. According to the psychoanalytic theory, moral development is contingent upon the state of balance between id, ego, and super ego (Kağıtçıbaşı, 1996). As per the cognitive theory, moral development takes place in phases, and this development occurs in parallel with mental development (Çileli, 1986). According to the behavioral and social learning theories, however, moral development occurs through methods of learning, such as rewarding by conditioning, punishment, consolidation, being a model, or imitation (Bakioğlu, 2013). Individuals take someone as a model or learn their moral norms and values through rewards-punishment (Bandura, 2001). Different theories associate the moral maturation in individuals with different concepts. Upon the analysis of the studies conducted, however, it can be observed that the dominant judgment is that moral maturation can be solely possible by handing down the moral values to next generations through education (Güven, 2014; Ryan & Bohlin, 1999; Yaman, 2012). The values education, which harbors the moral values in itself, is of paramount importance in order to hand down the moral values to next generations by means of education.

Value is scale that is used in order to express the behaviors of individuals, to identify and approve such behaviors, and to assess situations and incidents (Aydın, 2011). According to Schwartz (2006), however, value is defined as the guiding principles that bear different statuses of importance in the life or other social relations of an individual to reach any desired situation or objective. Human values, on the other hand, are the values that separate humans from other living beings, and that give them virtue and glorify them (Güngör, 1992). All aspects of our daily lives are affected by human values (Pakizeh et al., 2007). Human values give respect and meaning to life. Individuals with human values are the individuals that bear an abundance of good aspects, such as honesty, tolerance, kindness, and mercy (Dilmaç & Aydoğan, 2010).

Various theories have been proposed regarding the classification of values. Spranger value theory, Allport, Vernon and Lindzey value theory, Rokeach value theory and Schwartz value theory are among the most prominent value theories. The values have been classified into six different groups as theoretical, economic, aesthetic, social, political and religious values that are defended as the main force driving behaviors in the Spranger theory of value. In this theory, it is argued that the dominant value of the individual shapes his personality (Asar, 2019). The views put forward in Spranger value theory were developed and detailed in Allport, Vernon and Lindzey value theory. According to this theory, values were classified in six different groups as theoretical, economic, aesthetic, social, political and religious values that are adopted in individuals to a certain extent and the exploration of the dominant value becomes important. The dominant value in individuals deeply affects person's emotions, thoughts and behaviors and directs lives (Kulich, 2010). According to the Rokeach value theory, there is a certain amount of values (18 objective values and 18 tool values) and the amount of adoption of these values can be measured in various forms (Rokeach, 1973). Goal values are related to the targets that form the basis of life, and instrumental values are related to the behaviors that ensure the achievement of the basic goals (Bilgin, 1995). In this theory, emphasis is placed on values' place within the system of values rather than their meaning alone. The amount of adoption of this value by two

people with the same value may differ from each other. Because value systems that include elements such as the society and culture in which the individual is located may be different from each other and different meanings can be attributed to the same value. Therefore, when examining a value, the origin of value and its relationship with social and cultural ties should also be looked at (Bacanlı, 2017). According to this theory, values are culturally derived and ensure the continuity of the society by maintaining the order of the society (Rokeach, 1973). In the Schwartz value theory, there are a total of 56 values classified in 10 groups. This theory argued that values are identified with beliefs and that individuals make sense of what they believe as values (Schwartz, 1992). Individuals' beliefs develop in line with their needs and different values come to the fore in each individual to meet these needs. The higher the motivation of a value to meet the needs of the individual, the more that value is adopted (Bardi & Schwartz, 2003).

Individuals can acquire human values and moral values solely by means of a values education. Values education is a form of education that is implemented in order to ensure that individuals become aware of the values, have specific values that they are in need of, and actually implement such values by accepting them (Yaman, 2012). The societies maintaining their existence is contingent upon each and every society's ability to preserve the values they have and to hand such values down to next generations. Values education ensures the continuity of the presence of the nations, as well as the continuance of the moral development of the social community they are a part of, and the transfer of the human values from generation to generation (Güven, 2014).

According to Berkowitz (2011), values education is an initiative that applied in educational institutions to create positive ethical tendencies and skills, including creating pedagogy and supportive structures and strengthening academic skills. There are four prominent approaches in the implementation of values education in educational institutions. These are the approach of inculcating values, moral reasoning approach, value analysis approach and value disclosure approach. On the basis of the suggestion approach, educators directly instill the values, beliefs and attitudes that they want to gain (Akbaş, 2008). Methods and techniques such as narration, discussion method, modeling, positive and negative reinforcement, exercise-repetition, manipulating alternatives, asking didactic questions, playing games, telling stories, imitation, role playing can be used in the application of this approach (Aktepe, 2010; Bacanlı, 2017; Halstead & Taylor, 2000). In this approach, students are tried to be persuaded and to internalize the given values with such methods and techniques. In this approach, the active participation of the student and the realization of value education in a pleasant atmosphere are important in terms of the efficiency of the process (Senemoglu, 1997).

Moral Reasoning Approach was developed by Kohlberg based on the ideas put forward by Piaget (Bacanlı, 2015). In this approach, students are left in dilemmas to make judgments on given events, and in this way, students' moral development levels are tried to be improved. The more discussions and solutions are made about an event, the more the moral development levels of the students improve (Akbaba, 2009). In this approach, methods and techniques such as moral dilemma, case study, short story narration, small group discussions, reasoning, questioning, structured discussion can be used (Superka et al., 1976). In this approach, the role of the educator is important in helping students to look at events from different angles, to see their own problems in the face of case studies and to find solutions to these problems and to help them resolve their dilemmas (Leming, 2000).

The value analysis approach developed by many researchers is based on the students' ability to analyze the values they adopt, make proper choices and make appropriate decisions by providing them to think logically and rationally about the issues or problems they face (Seefeldt, Castle, & Falconer, 2010). In this approach, events involving social problems are examined directly or through stories. The analysis and similarities and differences in the social events are systematically analyzed through why-how questions. As a result of this analysis, values are tried to be reached by showing the evidence (Aktepe, 2010). In this way, students are convinced about why they should care about values and act accordingly by adapting scientific problem solving steps to social problems (Akbaş, 2008). In this approach, methods and techniques such as structured discussion, individual and group work, field research with the library, rational class discussions, test principles, similar case studies, differential analysis and research can be used (Keskin, 2008). In this approach, the educator actively helps students to think critically about values, to use scientific research methods, to conduct research, to analyze the value problem and to develop their own values (Huitt, 2004). For the

effectiveness of this approach in values education, it is important to develop students' analytical skills and attention competencies (Tahiroğlu, Yıldırım, & Çetin, 2010).

The value disclosure approach has also been developed by many researchers, and the values of students are based on the ability to freely choose themselves after researching alternative and possible options, not with the suggestions and direct instruction of others (Yel & Aladağ, 2014). In this approach, values are explained first and by this way students are made aware of values. Later, accordingly their thoughts, students freely choose the values which are appropriate for them and become aware of the consistency and inconsistency regarding the values they adopt (Ziebertz, 2007). In this way, students take ownership of their values more because they reflect on and construct themselves (Helstead & Pike, 2006). This approach includes classroom games, exhibitions, group discussion about values, role plays, thinking papers, open-ended questions, autobiography, interviews, quotes, student reports, factual or fictional case studies, songs, cartoons, pictures, films, stories, interviews and numerous methods and techniques such as diaries can be used (Kupchenko & Parsons, 1987). In this approach, the educator does not try to inculcate values to the students; By simply explaining the values, they help students to realize the values they have or can adopt. The educator supports the students so that they can reveal their own values, makes them think by asking questions, and listens effectively to the students (Yiğittir, 2012). In this study, the value explanation approach was used while transferring the values education curriculum to the students.

In Turkey, with National Education Basic Law No 1739, value education was first published in 1973, since then that date related training in place and given the humanitarian and moral values have been given in some courses on-site, such as Life Science and Social Sciences Studies (Hökelekli, 2010). With the education reform carried out in 2005, values education has continued to be applied in some courses based on the constructivist approach since then (Aydın & Gürler, 2014). In line with the recommendations taken at the 18th National Education Council held between 1-5 November 2010, the Ministry of National Education initiated a study with a circular issued, and the "Values Education Project" was put into practice for the acquisition of national and spiritual values in primary and secondary schools. Since this date, values education project executive committees have been established in provinces, districts and schools, and guide books have been prepared to be implemented in schools (Aydoğan, 2018). Since 2010, activities such as in-class, in-school and family-oriented activities for the students to gain the values specified in the curriculum of each course and in-school activities (preparing a board ...) for the value of the relevant month have been carried out (Aydoğan, 2018; Yiğittir & Kaymakçı, 2012). Finally, in order to put an end to the confusion of value concepts, 10 root values were determined in the 2018 National Education program, and these values were first tried to be acquired by students (Yaşaroğlu, 2018). Today, in the Turkish education system, it is seen that students are trying to gain values not within a program, but by sprinkling them into other courses such as Social Studies. When the researches were examined, it was stated that this method was not effective enough in gaining values to students and that values education should be given to students as a separate course within a program (Akan, 2020; Çakıroğlu, 2013; Elbir & Bağcı, 2013). Values education called "Values Education and Character Development" or "Values Education" has been taught as a compulsory course for teacher candidates in universities in recent years. Likewise, it is thought that it would be beneficial to provide students with values education as a separate course within a program in schools affiliated to the Ministry of National Education.

The future of a society is determined by characterful and well-educated generations, and everyone knows about the fact that having a good character is not solely contingent on individuals themselves. Thus, the fundamental purpose of all educators and educational institutions is characterized by the process of ensuring that all individuals, from the preschool period to the life in university, acquire the values needed in order for them to make healthy moral decisions and to implement such decisions by internalizing them (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999). A compulsory moral values education has been provided in England since 1906, in Germany since 1881, and in France since 1882 (Tozlu, 1992). A number of countries agree on the fact that the values should be handed down to next generations through schools, and this great responsibility is given to teachers (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999).

What methods, techniques, and strategies can be used to teach the students about the values in a better way, which are greatly emphasized to be taught in schools by teachers? In order to find an answer to this question to some extent, a curriculum of values education was developed, and an analysis was made regarding its effects over the moral maturity and human values of university students. Values education is being provided

to students in the form of compulsory courses in many programs being taught in universities. The results obtained from this study will help this class be lectured in a more effective and more efficient manner. Furthermore, this study is significant in that it is one of the rare studies, which have developed a curriculum of values education and which analyze the effects of such curriculum over moral maturity and human values.

This study aims to analyze the effects of the “Curriculum of Values Education”, which is implemented for the university students studying in the Child Development program, over the levels of moral maturity and human values that these students have. The accuracy of the following hypotheses was tested in line with this objective: (i) “The Curriculum of Values Education” affects the “Moral Maturity” levels of the students. (ii) “The Curriculum of Values Education” affects the “Human Values” levels of the students.

2. Method

2.1. Research Design

This study was planned as a quasi-experimental design, defined as the “Pretest/Post-test Control Group Design”. Table 1 shows the research design.

Table 1. *Research Design*

Groups	Neutrality	Measurement 1 (Pretest)	Experimental Implementation	Measurement 2 (Post-test)
Experimental	R	X	X	X
Control	R	X		X

As shown in Table 1, the study included an experiment that was conducted with two groups, one experimental group and one control group, assigned neutrally. The researcher subjected both groups to a pretest before the implementation, and to a post-test following the implementation. While the “Curriculum of Values Education” was implemented for the experimental group of the study, the control group did not undergo any process. The “Curriculum of Values Education” constituted the independent variable of the study, while the dependent variables included the students’ levels of moral maturity and human values.

2.2. Study Group

The study group of the study consisted of 77 students, studying in the Child Development Program of the Department of Child Care and Youth Services at the Vocational School of Healthcare Services of Mus Alparslan University throughout the 2019-2020 academic year. Of the non-random sampling methods, the purposive sampling method was used to create the experimental and control groups. The sophomores of the child development program, taking the values education class, constituted the experimental group, while the control group included the freshmen who did not take the values education class. Table 2 shows the data regarding the experimental and control groups of the study.

Table 2. *Demographic Data of the Study Group of the Study*

Variables		n	%
Gender	Female	72	93.5
	Male	5	6.5
Group	Experimental	39	50.6
	Control	38	49.4

As analyzed in Table 2, of those included in the study group, 50.6% (n=39) formed the experimental group, while 49.4% (n=38) created the control group. Of the study group, 93.5% (n=72) were female, while 6.5% (n=5) were male. The experimental group of the study included 39 students (36 female, 3 male), while the control group had 38 (36 female, 2 male) students. The mean age of the experimental group was calculated as 19.33 (Ss=1.59; age range = 18-25), while the mean age of the control group was found as 18.94 (Ss=1.31, age range = 18-23). The university students, who studied in the Child Development Program, constituted the samples of the study, and this department is mainly preferred by females. This was among the limitations that this study had.

2.3. Data Collection Tools

Moral maturity scale: This is a scale that was developed by Şengün and Kaya in 2007, which consists of 66 items and which is of the 5-point Likert type. Of the items of the scale, 52 were specified as positive, and 14 as negative. The highest possible score that one can achieve in the Moral Maturity Scale is 330, and the lowest 66. Any high points to be obtained from this scale indicate a high level of moral maturity, while any low points imply low levels of moral maturity. The Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of the scale was found to be 0.93. The high reliability coefficients obtained showed that the scale was a reliable one.

Human values scale: It was developed by Dilmaç (2007). The scale consists of 6 sub-scales (Responsibility, Friendship/Camaraderie, Peacefulness, Respect, Honesty, and Tolerance) and 42 questions. The internal consistency coefficients (Cronbach's Alpha) were found as .92 for the entire scale, and as .73, .69, .65, .67, .69 and .70 respectively for the sub-scales of the scale, as to the reliability study of the HVS. In regards to the stability-oriented reliability of the HVS, the reliability coefficients were calculated, using the test-retest method, by administering the HVS twice on a group of 150 secondary school students at an interval of 20 days. These stability coefficients were found as .87 for the entire scale, and respectively as .73, .91, .80, .88, .75, and .79 for the sub-scales of the scale. This is a 5-point Likert type scale, applicable individually or in groups. Any possible increments/decrements in the scores show that individuals have/do not have higher levels of human values.

2.4. Procedure

The curriculum was implemented with 77 students, studying in the Child Development Program of the Department of Child Care and Youth Services at the Vocational School of Healthcare Services of Mus Alparslan University throughout the 2019-2020 academic year, after an Ethical Board Resolution, and the permissions needed were obtained from the Board of Scientific Research and Publication Ethics of Mus Alparslan University. Prior to the implementation of the curriculum, all groups were subjected to a pretest, after they were briefed about the objective and importance of the study. Following the decision given regarding the experimental and control groups, preliminary interviews were held with 39 students from the experimental group, during which they were given explanatory information, such as the objective, place of implementation, time, and duration of the curriculum. The implementation of the curriculum took place between September 23, 2019 and December 23, 2019. The curriculum was administered on the experimental group for 2 course hours (80-90 minutes) in 1 session in classroom MAE 209, between 15:00 and 16:45 on Mondays for 13 weeks. The control group, however, underwent no such processes. Finally, all groups were subjected to the post-test, as soon as the practices were finished.

Curriculum of values education

This study included the use of the curriculum of values education that was developed. Principally, the literature was reviewed, which was followed by the analysis of relevant studies and different curricula, in order to craft the curriculum. Subsequently, the outlines of the curriculum adopted in this study were prepared, taking the opinions of two experts. Table 3 gives the weekly schedule of the curriculum of values education.

Table 3. *Weekly Outlines of the Curriculum of Values Education*

Week	Subjects
1	The importance of the class in our lives, and its repercussions in our lives
2	Kohlberg's theory of moral development, and the discussion of moral dilemmas over examples
3	Psychoanalytic theory of personality development, and moral conflicts (Freud, Adler, and Jung)
4	The effects of Erikson's theory of psychosocial development over moral development
5	Factors affecting the moral development in behaviorist-social learning theories
6	The effects of preposterous beliefs and cognitive mistakes over moral maturity
7	Moral maturity in humanistic and existentialist theories
8	Learning the values of Righteousness-Honesty and Faithfulness-Trust, and a discussion on such values under the light of the theoretical-semantic knowledge absorbed
9	Learning the values of Mercy-Conscience and Justice-Right, and a discussion on such values under the light of the theoretical-semantic knowledge absorbed
10	Learning the values of Kindness-Generosity, and Love, and a discussion on such values under the light of the theoretical-semantic knowledge absorbed

11	Learning the values of Freedom-Honor and Courage-Self-confidence, and a discussion on such values under the light of the theoretical-semantic knowledge absorbed
12	Learning the values of Humility-Being Yourself, and Austerity, and a discussion on such values under the light of the theoretical-semantic knowledge absorbed
13	Learning the values of Patience, Good Morals, and Unity of Family, and a discussion on such values under the light of the theoretical-semantic knowledge absorbed

As seen in Table 3, the curriculum was formed to consist of 13 weeks. As to the examples on the sessions, the first session was implemented as follows: The curriculum was explained, and specific information was given on the importance of the class and on its repercussions in our lives. Explanations were made on concepts, such as value, types of values, human values, morality, and moral maturity. A brainstorming process was held with the students in regards to the problems of today’s world. The role that the family and school have in the values education was explained. A brief information was provided as to the subject of Kohlberg’s theory of moral development that will be lectured next week. The session was summarized at the end of the session, which was finalized by assigning the students to keep notes on human-specific problems that they would come across throughout the week.

2.5. Data Analysis

Assumptions of normality were checked in order to decide on what statistical tests would be used for the analysis of the data. During this assessment, the skewness (-.680 and .267)and kurtosis (-.725 and .940) values, and the results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test were analyzed. As a consequence of this analysis, it was observed that the data of the study had a normal distribution. The independent samples t-Test and Two Way Anova for Repeated Measurements were utilized in order to analyze the data obtained from this study. The data were analyzed, using the SPSS Statistics 22.0 software package.

3. Findings

The pretest and post-test scores of the experimental and control groups of this study were calculated. Table 4 demonstrates the pretest and post-test scores of the experimental and control groups.

Table 4. *T-Test Results of the Experimental and Control Groups*

Scale	Group	Pretest			Post-test		Mean Difference (Pre-post)
		n	X	ss	X	ss	
Moral Maturity	Experimental	39	278.97	41	280.10	22.94	+1.13
	Control	38	276.28	23.73	260.84	23.01	-15.44
Human Values	Experimental	39	161.87	12.78	164.43	12.77	+2.56
	Control	38	162.94	15.24	157.81	15.78	-5.13

Upon the analysis of Table 4, it can be seen that the mean moral maturity pretest scores were calculated as 278.97 in the experimental group, and as 276.28 in the control group. No significant difference could be found between the mean moral maturity pretest scores of the experimental and control groups ($t[75]= -5.22, p= .604$). The mean human values pretest scores were calculated as 161.87 in the experimental group, and as 162.94 in the control group. No significant difference could be found between the mean human values pretest scores of the experimental and control groups ($t[75]= .336, p= .738$). The levels of the groups were equal prior to the implementation.

Upon the analysis of the data in Table 4, it is possible to observe an increase in the mean moral maturity scale scores of the experimental group ($X_{post}280.10 - X_{pre}278.97= +1.13$), as well as a decline in the mean scores of the control group ($X_{post}260.84- X_{pre}276.28= -15.44$), in between the pretest and post-test. It is possible to observe an increase in the mean human values scale scores of the experimental group ($X_{post}164.43 - X_{pre}161.87= +2.56$), as well as a decline in the mean scores of the control group ($X_{post}157.81- X_{pre}162.94= -5.13$), in between the pretest and post-test.

Whether the difference between the mean scores of the pretest and posttest is significant was tested with “Two Way Anova for Repeated Measurements” and the results of the analysis are given in Table 5.

As can be seen in Table 5, the measurement*group effect for the moral maturity scale was found to be significant ($F = 15.39$; $p < .05$) and the increase in the score in the experimental group was found to be statistically significant ($p = .000$ and $p < .05$). For the human values scale, the measurement*group effect was found to be significant ($F = 7.71$; $p < .05$) and the score increase in the experimental group was found to be statistically significant ($p = .007$ and $p < .05$).

Tablo 5. ANOVA Results of the Pretest and Posttest Scores of the Experimental and Control Groups on the from Scales

	Source of the Variance	Sum of Squares	Sd	Mean Squares	F	p
Moral Maturity Scale	Pretest/Posttest	1973.16	1	1973.16	11.49	.001
	Group (Experiment/Control)	4634.60	1	4634.60	5.34	.023
	Measurement*Group	2644.01	1	2644.01	15.39	.000
	Error	12879.87	75	171.73		
Human Values Scale	Ölçüm (Öntest- Sontest)	63.43	1	63.43	.85	.357
	Grup (Deney/ Kontrol)	295.84	1	295.84	.89	.346
	Ölçüm * Grup	569.93	1	569.93	7.71	.007
	Hata	5540.96	75	73.88		

4. Discussion and Conclusion

As per the results obtained from this study, it was observed that the “Curriculum of Values Education” was effective in terms of increasing the levels of human values of the university students in the experimental group. Several studies were conducted in Turkey and other countries regards to the effects of curricula of values education over the levels of human values of the students. As a result of the domestic study, conducted by Dilmaç (2007) on science high school students, it was revealed that the activities, which were developed within the scope of the curriculum of human values implemented, led to an increase in the levels of human values that the students had. As per the results of a study titled “The Effectiveness of the Curriculum of Human Values Education at an Elementary School Level”, conducted by İşcan (2007), it was observed that the human values-oriented behaviors of the students increased as a result of the curriculum of human values education implemented. A study, conducted by Kunduroğlu (2010), investigated the effects of a curriculum of values education, integrated into a curriculum of science and technology education, over the students’ levels of acquisition of human values, and the results of the study specified that the curriculum was effective in terms of increasing the levels of acquisition of human values that the students had. Similarly, it was observed that the human values education was effective in respect of letting the students acquire human values, as per the results of a study, conducted by Herdem (2016), in regards to the effects of a curriculum of values education, integrated with the subjects of a physical sciences class, over the development of values in the students. A study, conducted by Uzunkol (2014), investigated the effects of a curriculum of values education, implemented in the teaching of social studies, over the levels of human values that the students had, such as respect, responsibility, and empathy, and it concluded that the curriculum increased the student’s levels of empathic skills. In a study, conducted by Engin (2014), it was revealed that a curriculum of values education, merged with the Curricula of Turkish and Physical Education, was effective in terms of increasing the students’ levels of showing human values. As per the results of a study that Ipekçi (2018) conducted, it was revealed that a curriculum of values education, merged with a curriculum of mathematics education implemented, helped the students acquire human values, such as carrying responsibility, being fair, and being honest. A curriculum of values education was developed by Özyurt (2015) to test its effects over elementary school students. As per the results of the study, it was concluded that the curriculum was effective in terms of helping students acquire human values, such as being determined, being patient, and being prudent.

As is observed from the study results, curricula of values education are effective in increasing the students’ levels of acquisition of human values.

As per the results obtained from this study, it was observed that the “Curriculum of Values Education” was effective in terms of increasing the levels of moral maturity of the university students in the experimental group. Several domestic studies were conducted in regards to the effects of curricula of values education over the levels of moral maturity of the students. In a study, conducted by Keskinoglu (2008), elementary school

fifth graders were subjected to activities, which were developed by utilizing the Masnavi by Rumi within the framework of the curriculum of values education, and the results of the study found that the curriculum of values education was effective in terms of increasing the levels of moral maturity of the students. According to the results of the study titled "Providing elementary school students with human values education, and testing the education via moral maturity scale", conducted by Dilmaç (1999), it was found that the curriculum of values education increased the levels of moral maturity of the students. As per the results of an experimental study that Seçer (2003) conducted over adolescent students, it was revealed that the students, who were subjected to the curriculum of values education, had significantly higher levels of moral judgment.

As is observed from the study results, curricula of values education are effective in increasing the students' levels of moral maturity.

When the studies conducted other countries on the results of the research were examined, conducted by Germine (2001) on elementary school eighth graders, an increase was found in the levels of behavior of the participating students in the experimental group, in regards to human values, such as respect, confidence, righteousness, and honesty. In another study, conducted by Lamberta (2004) on 16 students, 8 for an experimental group and 8 for a control group, who were selected out of 52 students, aged 12 to 18, residing at a psychiatric center for children, it was revealed that the curriculum was effective in terms of helping the children acquire human values. According to the results of the "Aussie Program", which was implemented on adolescent students in Australian schools and which covered the values education, it was determined that the participating adolescents showed positive progress in their moral developments (Roberts, 2006). It was seen in the study conducted by Hawkes (2006) that values education contributed to the development of students' positive attitudes and behaviors. In a study conducted on the effectiveness of the values education program, it was found that the developed values education program was successful in gaining value to the students and increased the students' level of taking responsibility (Perry & Wilkenfeld, 2006). In a similar study conducted by Lamberta (2004), it was observed that the applied values education program improved the freedom value of children between the ages of 12-18 in the experimental group. Kropp (2006) revealed in a study that the applied moral development program was effective in increasing the level of human values such as taking responsibility for the students participating in the program. Similar results were obtained in the study conducted by Karma and Kahil (2005), and the students in the experimental group of the living values education program significantly increased their self perception in scholastic, cognitive and social areas. In studies on the effectiveness of the character education program, character education improves students' positive social attitudes (respect for society, conflict resolution, communication skills, decision-making, social cohesion and personal responsibility) (Passa, 2007) and decreases negative behaviors such as violence and truancy (Skaggs & Bodenhorn, 2006).

When the studies on values education are examined both in Turkey and other countries it is seen that the programs related to the applied values education to students are effective and similar to the results obtained from this study, students develop positive attitudes and behaviors related to moral maturity and human values. In meta-analysis studies, it was seen that most of the programs developed for values education were effective (Ateş, 2017; Berkowitz & Bier, 2005). According to the evaluation results of thirty-nine studies on value / character education programs, thirty-three of these programs were found to be effective (Berkowitz & Bier, 2005).

Consequently, the "Curriculum of Values Education" increases the students' levels of acquisition of moral maturity and human values. The following recommendations were made based on the results obtained from the study: The curriculum of values education crafted can be used by academicians that would teach the values class. This study is limited to the practices made over the students, who studied in a specific department of a specific university. The effects of the curriculum can be tested over the students that study in different departments of different universities. There is a need for more studies that would analyze the development of different curricula regarding the curriculum of values education, as well as its effectiveness on the students in Turkey. It is recommended that the academicians, who would teach this class, be provided with on-the-job programs associated with the values education, and that they analyze the values education-oriented curricula crafted, as well as the books and articles written on this matter. It is believed that this study will make significant contributions to relevant fields, particularly to the fields of psychological counseling and guidance, and child development, which deal with the character development and values education of the students.

5. References

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