



# Values Education Processes in Turkish Elementary Schools: A Multiple Case Study

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## ABSTRACT

Due to the comprehensive nature of the values education process, multi-method investigations taking all stakeholders into account is of great importance. In this study, it is aimed to conduct an in-depth examination, on the effective values education programs being implemented in a private and a public secondary level educational institution in Turkey; and to compare and contrast the two cases, and to assess several indicators the processes in terms of output behaviors and attitudes. Characteristics and the efficiency of values education processes in the institutions were examined through teacher, student and parent interviews and self-report quantitative scales. The values of education processes offered by the educational institutions were examined in terms of students' value attitudes levels, and their self-report appraisals of the school climate. Also, the data on the values education competency of these institutions and the institutional culture based on teacher reports were collected through self-report questionnaires. Data were analyzed with respective procedures and the results were integratively discussed within the scope of the relevant literature. It has been seen that the values education in these schools with various unresolved issues and inadequacies, have the potential to reveal tangible results. Foremost contribution of the present study is envisaged to shed light on the values education processes and potential outcomes of these processes in Turkish schools.

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## 1.Introduction

Berkowitz and Bier (2005) emphasized character education to have been a practice throughout history yet to not have been addressed sufficiently in terms of science; they stated that programs that empirically show effectiveness need to be given priority while selecting effective character education programs. In this context, evaluating, monitoring, and critiquing the processes of values education using scientific standards is an inevitable necessity. The main characteristics in the process of values education are school climate and the prerequisites of school staff working as character trainers and evaluating the degree to which students clearly show good values (the 11 principle of character education, see Lickona, 1996). At the same time, providing and evaluating the validity of scientific applications is also a necessity. Examining values education studies as a holistic process that concerns all members of the school system may make significant contributions regarding values education processes.

The dissemination of phenomena in quickly transforming social life such as the shaking of the family institution, which has been accepted as the traditional morality teacher for children, the tendency toward violence that has spread through the effect of negative role models who negatively impact the character of youth, inappropriate sexual behaviors, decreased social responsibility, and self-harm have been observed in

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many societies, and this situation has adversely affected the well-being of individuals and societies psychologically and morally. Values education practices in schools have gained increasing importance for preventing these negative phenomena and at the same time for having new generations gain shared moral values such as respect, responsibility, honesty, sensitivity, and citizenship.

Literature on values education processes in Turkey is comprised of studies testing effectiveness of certain values education interventions (see Dereli-İman, 2014; Katılmış, Ekşi, & Öztürk, 2011) or those mainly relied on opinions regarding values education from teachers (see Kaymakcan & Meydan, 2011; Kurtdede-Fidan, 2009; Meydan & Bahçe, 2010; Yalar & Yanpar-Yelken, 2011). This case study intends an in-depth examination of the values education programs applied in private and state educational institutions that provide middle school-level education by way of student, teacher, and parent interviews and document analyses, it intends to examine both school types within themselves and comparatively in terms of the outcomes related to values acquisition and school climate. By doing so, the present study may present a holistic notion of processes and potential outcomes of values education procedures and address the gap in the previous literature. Studies performed using multiple methods and with broad participation for examining the effectiveness of values education programs, which have gained increasing importance in Turkey in recent years and which are held compulsory by the Ministry of National Education in institutional-level schools, and for examining values education studies performed in this context would make significant contributions to the field by illuminating the important points about the processes of values education. In addition, providing contributions to revealing the strong and clear aspects of development would be attempted by describing current values education practices and addressing the available practices holistically. This study is envisaged as being the first in Turkey with this respect.

The aim of the present study is to examine what type of values education practices are performed in schools and how administrative processes function within the context of each school type itself. Differences between schools are covered by measuring evaluations of students' levels of positive values and in relation to their school climate. As a result of the multi-dimensional investigation, hopefully, the current situation may be developed with respect to competence levels, as well as recommendations based on these. The experiences and evaluations that parents, students, teachers, and administrators possess concerning this program is examined. The most important of the basic theoretical frameworks referenced at this point is the 11 principle of character education, which was formulated by Lickona (1996). Although the "values education" is the mostly utilized framework for defining practices in Turkey, character education model has been evaluated as being suitable for understanding applications in Turkey as a holistic approach (Meydan, 2014) and providing a framework related to evaluations and taking into account academic content, extracurricular activities, and institutional culture (Ekşi, 2003). In other words, this study intends to descriptively analyze two allegedly successful schools with respect to their procedures and outcomes regarding values education with reference to the character education framework.

## **2. Method**

### **2.1. Research Model**

The values education process is a holistic process concerning all members of the school system. For this reason, receiving evaluations of the schools' teachers, students, and parents is required, as well as a multi-layered examination investigating the effect that values levels and school climate have on students. Therefore, this research aims to comparatively examine qualitative and quantitative data. Thus, the scientific research approach and design of the study can be defined as a case study. Although the research design has quantitative and qualitative patterns (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007), classifying it as a case study would be correct because it aims for an in-depth and multi-dimensional investigation of current real-life situations. Performing an analysis on a limited case also is counted among the basic qualities of case studies. The quantitative methods design in this research was resorted to as the triangulation strategy. Multiple information sources and units of analysis have been determined in this study, a multi-dimensional case study that discusses multiple cases as the units of analysis (Creswell, 2013).

The purposive sampling method has been used while determining the schools to be examined. Schools have been selected that have values education practices at the student, teacher, administrator or school level and whose values education processes have been given importance at the planning, implementation, and

administration in supervision levels. Two schools, one being private and one a public school from the Anatolian side of Istanbul were chosen based on recommendations of officials from District National Education Directorate. The officials recommended schools based on their academic achievements, low levels of disciplinary problems, their endeavors relevant to values education such as contribution to charity activities and relevant composition contests and having sufficient levels of physical facilities and sufficient number of staff and their anecdotal evidences. Schools were contacted and allowed the research to be conducted through informed consent. After necessary permissions, two studies, one with qualitative design and one with quantitative design were implemented.

## 2.2. Participants

### Study 1

The first quantitative study aimed to descriptively and comparatively analyze the students and teachers of both schools by themselves in terms of outcomes related to values education, values acquisition, and school climate. Students' descriptions of moral maturity and statements related to school climate and descriptions of teachers' statements about the school's character education and school culture are examined, as well as whether a differentiation exists between school types.

**Study group:** A total of 799 students participated in the quantitative phase. Of the students, 357 are girls (54.7%) and 437 are boys; 587 are from public schools (73.5%), and 212 are private school students. Their ages range from 10 to 14. Of the participants, 23 have been removed from the data for randomly or incompletely filling out the measuring instruments. These participants have not been included in the analyses. Of the 55 teachers, 30 work in public schools (54.5%) and 25 in private schools; 38 are women (69%). Of the teachers, two have been removed from the participant group for incompletely filling out the measurement tools. These participants have not been included in the analyses.

### 2.3. Data collection tools

**Demographic form:** This form gathered demographic data related to the students and teachers and aimed to gather information such as that related to gender, age, grade, perceived income level group, perceived level of success, perceived attitudes of parents, and parents' educational status. A briefing was aimed at informing the data collection process that addressed the participants and was directed at providing informed consent.

**School Climate Scale:** The School Climate Scale, developed by Çalık and Kurt (2010), was used for the purpose of measuring students' perceptions and attitudes related to school climate. In the Likert-type evaluation of the scale, 1 = Never, 2 = Rarely, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Frequently, and 5 = Always. The scale has reverse-scored items. The 22-item scale has three sub-dimensions: (1) Supportive teacher behaviors (8 items), (2) Focus on success (4 items), and (3) Safe learning environment and positive peer interactions (10 items).

In the scale's reliability and validity study performed by Çalık and Kurt (2010), Cronbach's alpha values for the sub-scales are .79, .77, and .85, and .81 for the whole scale. According to the results from the confirmatory factor analysis, the fit levels were acceptable ( $X^2 = 703.51$ ,  $SD = 203$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $X^2 / SD = 3.47$ ;  $GFI = .88$ ;  $RMSEA = .072$ ;  $CFI = .94$ ;  $AGFI = .85$ ).

**Moral Maturity Scale:** The scale, developed by Dilmaç (1999), was used to measure students' levels related to human values weighted for the values of justice and respect. The scale consists of 66 items and assesses using a 4-point evaluation with 1 = Never is true, 2 = Rarely true, 3 = Often true, and 4 = Always true. Negative statements on the scale are reverse scored. The Spearman-Brown coefficient and Cronbach's alpha, which have been calculated for internal consistency in examining the reliability and validity, are .66 and .73. All items in the discrimination analysis were found to significantly discriminate (at either the  $p < .01$  or  $< .05$  levels).

**Character Education Competence in Schools Scale (CECSS):** The CECSS is a 9-point Likert-type scale developed by Acat and Aslan (2011) for the purpose of examining the character education competence of schools according to the statements of teachers, students, and parents; responses are scored from 0 (Never) to 9 (Always). The item-total correlation coefficients for the scale have values between .52 and .76. The results of the  $t$ -test, performed for discrimination analysis of the items included in the scale, are significant for all test items at the level of  $p < .01$ . Factor loadings for the 33 items on the final form of the scale range from .50 to .83.

Cronbach’s alpha of internal consistency for the scale’s total score is .96 and ranges between .86 and .92 for the coefficients on the sub-scales.

**School Culture Scale:** The School Culture Scale, developed by Terzi (2005), was used for the purpose of analyzing teachers’ perceptions on school culture. The scale consists of 29 items based on a 5-point Likert evaluation (1 = Never, 2 = Rarely, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Usually, 5 = Always). The exploratory factor analysis determined the scale to have a 4-factor structure, and these factors explain 50.97% of the total variance. Cronbach’s alpha of internal consistency is .84 for the entire scale and .88, .82, .76, and .74 for the sub-dimensions of support culture, success culture, bureaucratic culture, and mission culture, respectively.

**Process:** This study used self-report scales that can be applied with pen and paper. Measuring tools containing the School Climate Scale (22 items; Çalık & Kurt, 2010) and Moral Maturity Scale (Dilmaç, 1999) forms were applied to the students and data collection tools containing the teacher form of the Character Education Competence Scale in Schools Scale (CECSS; Acat & Aslan, 2011) and the School Culture Scale (Terzi, 2005) were applied to the teachers. Average item scores have been obtained by dividing the total scores by the number of items in order to more easily understand the scales’ scores in the descriptive results.

The participants’ informed consent was received when filling the scales and voluntary participation was provided. Analysis has been provided by transferring the data obtained from the scales to an electronic environment; various descriptive statistics and comparisons have been made. Data have been analyzed using descriptive statistics and, according to the case for meeting parametric test assumptions, to the t-test, ANOVA, and Pearson correlations for parametric tests and to the Mann-Whitey U-test, Kruskal-Wallis test, and Spearman correlations for non-parametric tests.

**2.4. Data Analysis**

Although the skewness values for students’ moral maturity scores comply with the normal distribution criteria for all variables, analyses related to the variables have been done using non-parametric methods due to value for focus on success from the school climate scale exceeding the acceptable limits for kurtosis values. The analyses related to the other variables have used parametric analysis methods.

The School Climate Scale, developed by Çalık and Kurt (2010), was used for the purpose of measuring the perceptions and attitudes related to school climate of middle-school students in 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th grades. Table 1 provides the average item scores separately for the school climate score levels of public and private schools, and the results from the t-test and Mann-Whitney U-test regarding whether or not significant differences exist statistically between the schools. Significant differences have been found in favor of public schools in terms of focus on success, supportive teacher behaviors, and overall school climate scores and in favor of private schools in terms of safe learning environment.

**Table 1.** Descriptive statistics for students’ school climate and moral maturity scores and the differences between public and private schools

	$\bar{X}$	SD	Public (n = 587)		Private (n = 212)		t	U
Supportive Teacher Behaviors	3.54	.64	3.61	± 0.62	3.32	± 0.64	5.70**	-
Focus on Success	3.84	.43	3.89	± 0.39	3.74	± 0.53	-	51,456.5**
Safe Environment	2.85	.41	2.82	± 0.42	2.93	± 0.39	-3.20*	-
Overall School Climate	3.28	.27	3.54	± 0.28	3.21	± 0.48	3.84**	-
Moral Maturity	3.48	.39	3.56	± 0.29	3.23	± 0.49	9.325**	-

\* p < .01. \*\* p < .001

Teachers’ statements related to competence in the school’s character education processes and about the dimensions related to school culture have been descriptively and comparatively analyzed. Analyses have been made using parametric methods because the scores fit the criteria for normal distribution. Table 2 provides the average item scores related to public and private schools’ separate perceptions on character education competence, average item scores for their separate perceptions about school culture, and t-test results on whether any significant differences exist statistically between the schools.

**Table 2.** Descriptive statistics for teachers' CECSS and school culture scores and the differences between public and private schools

	$\bar{X}$	SD	Public (n = 30)		Private (n = 25)		t
Planning & Implementation	7.54	1.41	8.08	± 1.24	6.89	± 1.34	3.41**
Interaction	7.28	1.50	8.08	± 1.15	6.33	± 1.32	5.26***
Psychosocial Environment	8,00	1.08	8.29	± 1.00	7.66	± 1.09	2.218*
Stakeholder Participation	7.27	1.68	7.77	± 1.64	6.68	± 1.55	2.524*
Evaluation	6.99	1.81	7.34	± 1.96	6.57	± 1.53	1.602
CECSS Total	7.42	1.35	7.94	± 1.29	6.80	± 1.17	3.415**
Support Culture	3.72	0.86	3.92	± 0.94	3.47	± 0.68	1.996
Success Culture	3.84	0.62	4.09	± 0.54	3.55	± 0.59	3.573**
Bureaucratic Culture	3.46	0.89	3.65	± 1.04	3.23	± 0.62	1.789
Mission Culture	4.36	0.52	4.44	± 0.57	4.27	± 0.44	1.271

\* p < .05; \*\* p < .01. \*\*\* p < .001; Note: Higher values show higher levels for the relevant area.

According to the results in Table 2, significant differences are seen in favor of public schools in terms of Planning and Implementation, Interaction, Psychosocial Environment, Stakeholder Participation, and overall CECSS scores and Success Culture scores. No significant difference is seen in terms of Evaluation, Support Culture, Bureaucratic Culture, or Mission Culture scores.

**Study 2:** The purpose of Study 2 is to evaluate the characteristics of values education applied in school over the views of teachers, students, and parents regarding its effectiveness. This study intends to enrich and compare the findings obtained in the quantitative phase.

**Method:** The qualitative section of the research project was a case study intended to acquire in-depth information related to one or more than one individual. The research examines the experiences and views of teachers, students, and parents related to the values education processes applied in schools. In this respect, the research can be defined as a multiple case study (Güler, Halıcıoğlu, & Taşgım, 2013). In analyzing these views, priority was given to the contents related to the values education processes in particular. According to another classification made by Yin (1984; see Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2005) in this respect, the study can also be considered as a nested single-case study. According to this definition, evaluations on the values education processes applied in schools form one unit of general analysis and the views of students, parents, and teachers form sub-analysis units.

**Study group:** The sampling method can be said to carry the characteristics of maximum diversity sampling, a purposive sampling method (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2005). One parent from the private schools was excluded from the analyses upon understanding that the student had graduated, one parent from the private schools was excluded from the analyses for being a foreigner whose Turkish was insufficient, and one teacher again from the public schools was excluded from the analyses because of having to leave quickly during the interview. As such, the research has analyzed the interviews performed with 15 people from private schools, including five students, six teachers (one being an administrator), and four parents, and 16 people from public schools, including six students, six teachers (one being an administrator), and four parents. Due to the important roles of administrators in terms of the values education processes, interviews were made with one teaching administrator from each of the two schools (Ekşi & Okudan, 2011). Excerpts of the participants' attributes are presented in brackets that have their school type, participant group, gender, and age information, as in this example: [Public, Teacher, M, 28].

**Data collection tools:** We conducted semi-structured interviews with the teachers, students, and parents in the study. The interviews included structured probes, to counter misunderstood terms. Interactions sourcing from the nature of the interviews also lead to additional questions. Audio recordings have been made in the interviews by requesting permission and making the necessary explanations. Because the data were made in the form of semi-structured interviews, an interview-questions template containing the questions to be asked in the interviews and information on the probes was prepared specially for the student, teacher, and parent groups. Questions were formed based on expert feedback.

**Process:** Informed consent was obtained from the participants. Anonymity was guaranteed for the interview data. The audio recordings from the interviews were transcribed and we conducted content analysis on the transcriptions. Because examination of these nested cases was done for effectiveness and efficiency in this study, subjecting the cases to one-way analysis was the most appealing strategy (Creswell, 2013). We prepared interview guides for the students, parents, and teachers based on the 11 principles of character education. We shared the interview guides with three experts with experience with and knowledge about the topics of qualitative research and values education. We used the package program MAXQDA in organizing the analysis of the data.

### 3. Findings

**Methods used in values education.** The first question and probes concentrated on the methods utilized in values education. The methods reported as being used in class were: using visual materials ( $f = 12$ ), being a model ( $f = 8$ ), transferring values ( $f = 8$ ), correcting behaviors ( $f = 7$ ), caregiving ( $f = 4$ ), developing perspective ( $f = 3$ ), guidance ( $f = 2$ ), giving advice ( $f = 2$ ), and presentations ( $f = 1$ ).

*So, in fact, the teacher's role is important because the students look at the model of our footwear, so to speak. Hey teacher, today you're wearing different shoes, or how should I know you're even wearing a hairpin, they even notice that. Being a role model is very important in a sense, but it is not enough by itself. [Private, Teacher, Female, 45]*

*We have several communications with the students in a way that these give them perspective and on the topic of directing behaviors, shows them the ones that are actually proper. Namely, we're attempting to perform various counseling and guidance for them. [Private, Teacher, Female, 37]*

*I think that, by showing extra sacrifices, actually seeing each student as an individual, and relating to their issues, they (teachers) make serious contributions to values education. [Public, Administrator, Male, 30]*

Outside of class, assistance activities ( $f = 9$ ), field trips ( $f = 5$ ), social responsibility projects ( $f = 4$ ), cooperation with family ( $f = 2$ ), trying to read books ( $f = 2$ ), extracurricular activities ( $f = 2$ ), preparing bulletin boards ( $f = 2$ ), and religious activities ( $f = 2$ ) have been mentioned. These are the following statements from the participants on practices related to these activities:

*... They go to the nursing home. They read stories to the elderly. [Public, Student, Female, 12]*

*We try to help our disabled friends as much as possible. [Private, Student, Female, 12]*

*We have so many social projects. [Private, Parent, Female, 40]*

*...some schools' needs are met. In this school, every grade has its own project. In line with this, they are on their way. [Private, Parent, Female, 42]*

**Target values.** We analyzed target values in terms of values education by using probes to examine the answers students, teachers, and parents gave on the characteristics of good humans and well-educated students. In their descriptions of values, the high frequency with which the value of success was stated in all groups is worth considering. Aside from values having similar rankings in almost all groups, remarkable differences are also found among groups. For example, the frequency of codes was zero ( $f = 0$ ) in private schools related to values expressed as being cultured and having goodwill, generosity, optimism, self-development, openness to development, frugality, modernity and being law-abiding and sensitive to society. Whereas in public schools, the codes for adherence to religious values, justice, anger control, communication skills, and mercy were never used. Table 3 provides the code frequencies grouped according to values categories, and Table 4 gives the top five prioritized values according to the groups.

**Table 3.** Target values according to values categories

	Public Student	Public Parent	Public Teacher	Private Student	Private Parent	Private Teacher	Student	Teacher	Parent	Public	Private	Total
Personal-Moral Values	9	6	8	9	8	10	17	18	15	22	28	50
Social Values	1	0	6	7	7	9	13	16	1	13	17	30
Success	1	2	8	9	0	1	17	1	3	10	11	21
Skills	1	2	3	5	4	4	8	8	3	9	10	19
Personal Development	0	1	4	0	1	0	4	1	1	6	0	6
Total	12	11	29	30	20	24	59	44	23	60	66	126

**Table 4.** Top five values prioritized according to group

	Public Parent	Public Student	Public Teacher	Priv. Parent	Private Student	Private Teacher	Parent	Student	Teacher	Public	Private	General
1	Success	Success	Charity	Nationl Loyalty	Respect	Respect	Nationl Loyalty	Success	Respect	Success	Success	Success
2	Morality	Charity	Nationl Loyalty	Relig. Loyalty	Morality	Empathy	Success	Honesty	Emp.thy	Charity	Relig. Loyalty	Charity
3	National Loyalty	Honesty	Empathy	Success	Empathy	Morality	Morality	Charity	Nation. Loyalty	Honesty	Honesty	Honesty
4	Con-science	Being cultured	Honesty	Being moral	Adding to Society	Adding to Society	Con-science	Hard working	Being moral	Nationl Loyalty	Respect	Nationl Loyalty
5	Being cultured	Hard working	Morality	Con-science	Relig. Loyalty	Relig. Loyalty	Relig. Loyalty	Relig. Loyalty	Charity	Being cultured	Charity	Relig. Loyalty

In relation to compatibility among stakeholders regarding values, one participant stated an incompatible case could be seen.

*...of course it is not valid for everyone, because everyone unfortunately doesn't have the same level or perspective. We have even experienced this with the parents. A value that concerns you may not be their concern; it may not be important to them.* [Public, Teacher, Male, 40]

Six participants, all from private schools, also clearly expressed agreement about values. For example:

*I am satisfied with developments up to now. All in all, being together with families who have the same thoughts and views as families similar to ours is important for us. Of course, the children's upbringing, namely having their teachers be this way, is important.* [Private, Parent, Female, age unknown]

*So, like the things I've said. They expect me to be someone who conforms to religion. Again, they expect me to be someone who is complacent in the same way.* [Private, Student, Male, 12]

Regarding values education studies, students and also the themes that occur as the given examples are important in terms of analyzing how the targeted values are addressed in practice. Table 5 provides the themes associated with the practice examples.

Table 5. The themes on examples for values education practices

	Public	Private	Total		Public	Private	Total
Monotheism	0	1	1	Chastity	0	1	1
Environmental Sensitivity	4	0	4	Affection	2	1	3
Justice	0	1	1	Worship	0	3	3
Tolerance	1	0	1	Caring for the elderly	0	1	1
Tolerating kids	0	1	1	Parental respect	0	1	1
Modern life	1	0	1	Patience	0	1	1
National values	3	0	3	Anti-Capitalism (anti-materialism)	0	1	1
Important days	2	0	2	Frugality	0	1	1
Friendship	1	1	2	Religious content	0	2	2
Respect	0	1	1	Nature	0	1	1
Kemalism	1	0	1	Repentance	0	1	1
Decency	0	4	4	Responsibility	1	0	1
Cleanliness	0	1	1	Citizenship	1	0	1
Honesty	2	1	3	Internet literacy	0	2	2
Charity	1	1	2				

In relation to determining the values to be given in values education, this has been stated as often being determined centrally in public schools and often locally and situationally in private schools.

*I look at the needs, and do work towards them, either on an individual basis or working as such collectively. [Private, Teacher, Female, 35]*

*So, as I've said, we have the Values Education Commission. Consider the kitchen section of the work a commission formed of religious culture teachers. They talk about these, what can be done, at the beginning of the year. As a result, the files and presentations I mentioned earlier are being prepared. In the process here, how they are given to the classes at specific periods is happening through the mediation of the teachers. [Private, Teacher (Administrator and Assistant Manager), Male, 38]*

*... It comes from the National Education. Already there is a topic every month. For example, November was affection. Each month has different activities. Here these disciplines assist this. The technology design teachers prepared beautiful billboards with the students here. They are exhibited on the school's first floor. Actually, every month studies are performed in the context of values education as much as come from me. [Public, Teacher, Male, 28]*

*We never had the chance before (to determine values) because it came to us as a monthly work schedule. [Public, Teacher, Male, 40]*

**The linkage between academic contents and values.** The participants also had many important things to share in terms of the relationship of values education with academic content. Ten teachers stated the curriculum and other education overlap or could overlap. Two teachers complained of the decrease in attention and the time required for splitting the extreme academic workload and expectations into areas like values education. Six participants also stated the curriculum and values education had discrete processes and are difficult to address together.

*Now let's speak quite clearly. Now we have the problem of exams. I participate in more upper classes. Maybe we can do this more comfortably in the lower grades, in 5th and 6th grades, but we have exams on our agenda in the 7th and 8th grades. If I say we're doing something very planned, I'd be lying. However, we know improvisation in class, namely a social environment in class. [Private, Teacher, Female, 45]*

*How can I add to my own lesson? My class teaches language because it's an English class. I'm always trying to teach through stories. You can also use things while explaining the story. For example, by making sentences relevant with values education or related to this on the points where we think that children have a problem, you are both making sentences in a foreign language and telling them something. [Private, Teacher, Female, 35]*

*I simulate fair play in team games. I mean in sports for example, while allowing children to adjust to sports, they don't need to persecute each other but to be accepting when losing a sport and to be ambitious when you need to win; I think this is also a part of values education. Learning to lose, the ambition of winning, self-confidence. I think that physical education contributes to values education in this respect... [Public, Teacher, Male, 31]*

**Opinions related to school climate.** The participants' opinions related to school climate are generally positive. Participants both in public and in private schools are pleased with their institutions. Participants in both groups also often mentioned the warmth of the environment in the institution. Participants in both schools frequently likened it to the family and generally used more positive phrases. They expressed having few problems and when there are problems, they are easily resolved.

*everyone is like a family because of the spiritual feelings and sense of moral education we experience so very intertwined.* [Private, Parent, Female, 34]

*The environment primarily is a beautiful, warm, and sincere one.* [Private, Student, Female, 14]

*We have a beautiful relationship with our administrators. There's a warm environment.* [Private, Teacher, Female, 45]

*The teachers are very good. They communicate with the children.* [Public, Parent, Female, 40]

*I feel good, I am very happy while coming to school.* [Public, Student, Female, 11]

*My relationships with my teachers are very good, but you know, about the lessons, namely in terms of opinions, again you know we don't have a relationship that goes to friendship but other than that we have a very good relationship in class and so on.* [Public, Student, Female, 14]

*Yeah, like I said of course, the environment is safe according to him, thanks to our manager. Whether the children or the teachers, they can protect their levels. I suppose it also comes from the manager.* [Public, Parent, Female, 37]

**Participation to values education.** Many participants clearly mentioned harmony among the personnel as being part of the processes related to values education. When examining participation in values education processes and what has been done in terms of awareness, parents and students stated that their knowledge about values education is insufficient ( $f = 11$ ). While no mention was made in public schools of NGO support, private schools mentioned collaboration having been done with NGOs. In both institutions, participants mentioned having greater harmony among staff, behaving sensitively on moral and developmental issues, and participating in the values education processes. In both schools, parents mention contributing financially to the values education processes.

*Whether the management, school staff, other friends or school mates, employees, or official friends, namely all of us here are a family, and all of us clearly support one another on this. In other words, everyone carries the weight together, such that they do activities as much as possible. This also makes some happy, you see, obviously.* [Public, Teacher, Male, 28]

*In terms of values education, the administration supports us. So, when we tell them the things we need, they try to provide us with them. There are contributions in this sense. Within ourselves, when someone has need of help, one of the staff or whatever happens, the whole school is united. They do whatever can be done. In this way the school has solidarity. Teachers, staff, administrators, sometimes there's really no distinction.* [Private, Teacher, Female, 26]

*Namely, here I sometimes go with them as the parent in me. I'm helping. I'm observing. In other words, sometimes I can be called because I am the class mother, because I'm also the class mother. Seeing such things is pleasant to us. It's going beautifully.* [Private, Parent, Female, 42]

*We just have financial contributions.* [Private, Parent, Female, age unknown]

*When telling my mother and father, sometimes mom will do something here. She's given money. She's helped.* [Public, Student, Male, 14]

*We have charity events. That's when they come. My mother has come.* [Private, Student, Female, 13]

*We do all our work together here, from the PTA to the school principal. When we have to have the PTA, the school supports us until the end.* [Public, Teacher, Female, 47]

*So it's like this, for example. The one who provides organizing with the NGOs are the ones who have relationships there. We always benefit from the support of parents there in the case of contact with the Parent Teacher Association.* [Private, Teacher (Assistant Mgr.), Male, 38]

In the answers to questions about students taking initiative in the values education processes, private school students are seen given greater initiative. In terms of behaviorification, themes reveal similar frequencies. In public schools, some teachers complained that students did not cooperate enough.

*So, I joined the environmental club. Our class's backyard was pretty dirty. We cleaned it. Look here, I've helped disabled friends a few times. Like that.* [Public, Student, Female, 12]

*Once there were a few students from Tunisia who came to school. We took gifts over to them. Just before that. We ate food with them, we introduced them, and so on. We met them like that. It was really beautiful... [Private, Student, Male, 12]*

*They never run from their duties. For example, the children are enthusiastic when work has to be done related to values education. [Public, Teacher, Female, 47]*

*Sometimes they're in the middle of your personal business... The charity fair is after, it shares its proceeds or children collect if there is food aid. The children do the packaging themselves. If it's goods, clothing, or toys assistance, the children in fact organize all of these. The teacher just gives directions or guides them. [Private, Teacher (Administrator, Asst. Mgr.), Male, 38]*

*The students should clearly be more inclined to values education. [Public, Teacher (Administrator), Male, 30]*

*Generally, the students don't really want it, they in fact see something I give extra as a burden. Others like it so much. [Public, Teacher, Male, 40]*

## **Discussion and Conclusion**

The present study aimed to provide a descriptive and comparative notion of values education processes in schools that are alleged to be successful in terms of academic achievement and values education. The findings can be of interest for future research and practice in Turkey and similar contexts as they are informative of what is going on in these schools. However, there are points to be raised out of these findings.

Students, parents, and some teachers are seen to perceive values education processes in the context of protecting religious faith and worship, national identity, and traditions. However, parents are seen to trust the school staff on the topic of the nature and function of the process alongside what they contribute to values education processes in many schools on matters such as material assistance and permission. Parents' trust in school has an impact on the processes of deciding to choose the school and in values education and related processes. However, the qualitative findings indicated low parental involvement in the decision-making processes. How to increase parental participation and what can be done in order to appropriately develop parents' own attitudes towards the values education process should be discussed by considering the unique conditions of school climate.

Teachers with duties related to the administration and character education are seen to be informed about values education in general and the values being addressed; however, other teachers, especially those newer to the institution, are seen to have insufficient knowledge about values education processes outside of the values education classes that are provided together implicit in the dimension of the size and academic content. Training can be provided to personnel on these issues, and readings emphasizing the direction of the process can be recommended.

Our research is in line with course of research that has shown effectiveness of values education interventions. Izgar and Beyhan (2015) in a study with randomized controlled trial design has shown that a specific intervention program of values education improved democratic attitudes and behaviors of 8<sup>th</sup> graders. Tahiroğlu, Yıldırım and Çetin (2010) similarly, has shown effectiveness of an environmental values education intervention on fostering positive environmental attitudes. With respect to the qualitative findings, Yıldırım (2009) has found that class teachers prioritized patriotism in values education. Our findings also indicated that teachers in state schools and private schools prioritized "national loyalty" as a similar notion to patriotism as a value that is stressed in the values education process.

When comparing the effective values education practices outlined by Berkowitz (2011), strategies and methods such as helping one another, being a role model, guidance, and caregiving are seen to be used in the two schools. Although not explicitly stated, an emphasis on values education in the context of school is seen implicitly in private school. Trust and honesty were frequently emphasized. Imposing high expectations are also at the forefront in both schools. Debating moral dilemmas was not seen to have been applied. Professional development, although not explicitly addressed in this study, is seen particularly important in terms of teachers in private schools. Family and community support were observed more in private schools compared to public schools.

Although differences are seen to favor public schools in the study's quantitative findings, values education processes in private schools are seen to be carried out more in accordance with the principles of character education (Lickona, 1996). This situation can also be explained by the bias toward social desirability in the

quantitative data. This study has attempted to shed light on how to carry out values education in the two schools in Turkey, which claim to give importance to values education. Due to the inconsistency between qualitative and quantitative data and the purely descriptive nature of the study, making casual inferences or determining which applications are more effective is not possible. In addition, although both schools are prominent among similar schools in terms of the emphasis they make on academic success and values education, families obviously also have different physical conditions, personal opportunities, and socioeconomic levels. Approaching comparisons carefully is necessary in this context. Future studies made on more longitudinal, experimental, or varied qualitative patterns can be beneficial in terms of applications in Turkey.

The examination system and educational administrative system currently in Turkey prioritize academic achievement and have simply become a matter of survival. When considering institutions to be one of the private educational institutions with intense competition, academic success as the dominant criterion is also inevitable. The programs, which are filled with obligatory academic content, take up a large percentage of students' energy and attention; processes such as affective development and values acquisition are pushed to secondary positions unintentionally. This issue has also been expressed by some teachers and administrators in the interviews we performed within the scope of our study. A significant majority of the students interviewed in the study stated being successful in the future before many other values.

Increasing studies in the field on character development, alongside academic content and its emphasis related to this issue, are advisable as much as the current legislation and institutional conditions allow for this in the place of the weekly schedule. Blending academic content with values content, especially in classes such as Turkish and social studies courses, have indispensable importance in terms of values education processes. The content of values education should be discussed in groups on providing it together with academic content; opportunities where teachers can share and develop the practices, they do in this field should be formed and, if available, developed. For example, discussion and sharing groups can be formed on a voluntary basis by creating closed online forums apart from some other bodies at school in other groups and in the administration. These types of studies should take into account what they will bring to teachers, and these issues should not contribute to having teachers, whose endeavors require intense effort and labor on these types of issues, see them as a secondary or additional workload but as the fundamental task by alleviating their other workloads when necessary. These types of amendments that are reflected onto the rights of personnel carry the opportunity for teachers to do these applications professionally and keep them safe from the risk of occupational burnout.

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