

Development of Teacher Candidates' Perceptions of Scientific Value Through Character Education Program: An Action Research

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Extended Summary

Introduction: Values are our standards and principles for judging worth. They are the criteria by which we judge 'things'(people,objects, ideas, actions and situations) to be good, worthwhile and desirable; or on the other hand, bad, worthless, despicable (Halstead, 1996). Values exist as a result of the interaction between individuals and society. What society expects from education is to provide individuals with knowledge and skills as well as to become moral individuals that can adapt rapidly to changing world. Providing each individual who is at the age of education with values and skills, which would help these individuals to display appropriate ethical judgements and behaviours, is inevitably among the main objectives of the schools (Ekşi, 2003; Keskin & Öğretici, 2013). Recent research shows that teacher-training institutions are supporting teachers to prepare for character education. For this reason character and value education seem important (Ada, Baysal & Korucu, 2005). However, there is no common understanding of the methods and practices required for character education at university level. The purpose of this study is to determinate the effect of the character education program on scientific value. To find the answer to this problem, the following questions have been asked;

- Does the character training program affect the science-value perceptions of teacher candidates?
- How the character education program is to determinate the effect teacher candidates ' scientific value perceptions?

Method: This study is figured by action research which is often used in qualitative researches. The action research method, which allows researchers to use theory and practice together, was implemented in order to improve pre-determined characteristics. Action research is an orientation to knowledge creation that arises in a context of practice and requires researchers to work with practitioners. The research is conducted with 21 participants who were students in Dumlupınar University, Social Studies Teacher Education Program in 2015-2016 school year. However, 6 boys and 5 girls who met the specified criteria were selected as the focus and only the focus students were evaluated. Criterion sampling of purposeful sampling methods was used or determining focus participants. The data gathered from video recordings, semi-structured interviews, researcher and participant journals, students' outputs and "Being Scientific Scale". In an action research, analysis is carried out during the data collection process, and it sheds light on the type and quality of the additional data which needs to be collected. SPSS 20.0 was used for analyzing the quantitative data and NVivo 9.0 was used for analyzing qualitative data. Qualitative data's, obtained at the end of the research, are analyzed according to descriptive analysis.

Findings, Discussion and Recommendations: The results from quantitative data show that the students scores increased in scale. Findings from qualitative data support quantitative findings. The data which was acquired after the activities shows that the activities of value education have had a positive effect on students' scientific values level. Moreover, the results show that the character education program is effective for character development of students. The findings of the study show that the activities related to value education improves the scientific value perception level of the students. This result was supported with the results of studies which were done by Katılmış (2010), Balcı (2008), Baysal, Kaya & Üçüncü (2013).