

Analysis of Biography-Based Activities in Values Education

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Abstract

This study aimed to examine the activities based on biography and local elements used in values education processes in primary schools. For this purpose, the study group of the research was selected by the purposeful sampling method. The study group of the research consists of 12 teachers working in primary schools in Erzurum in the 2020-2021 academic year. The research is a hermeneutic phenomenological study, one of the qualitative research models. In the research, data were collected through interviews and analyzed with content analysis. According to the results of the research, teachers think that the necessity and importance of values education in education and training is at a very high level. However, he thinks that the existing values education activities in schools are insufficient and should be further developed and enriched. In values education in schools, techniques such as watching videos, drama, painting, writing poems or texts, and narration are generally used. In addition to these, biographies of popular and national people and heroes and local elements and personalities are also used. Localization and biography-based techniques increase effectiveness and success in values education.

Keywords: Values education, biography-based education, education localization, local elements

Introduction

Education has some functions in all societies. The economic development of the country and the training of the needed manpower are the economic functions of education. The protection of the current political structure and the integrity of the country can be considered as the political duty of education. In addition to these functions, perhaps one of the most important functions of education is to keep the culture and dynamics of the society alive by transferring the values, norms, which are accepted as correct and good by that society, to the individuals. Values and education have a very interrelated and complementary effect. Values are fed by visions. Aristotle's statement that education develops the mentality and abilities of the individual around values based on morality and virtue clearly shows this relationship (Silverstein & Trombetti, 2013). When considered in this context, education, which has the task of equipping individuals in terms of knowledge, belief, ethics and behavior. It is always intertwined with universal and social values. Values education is one of the most important parts of the education curriculum (Berkowitz, 2011; Halstead & Taylor, 1996; Katımsı, 2017).

Values have a great impact on individuals, in this respect, values can direct the individual's feelings, thoughts and behaviors and can be affected by them. Education is not only an action that emphasizes increasing the cognitive level of the student, but also a process that aims to address his feelings, thoughts and behaviors and develop them in a positive way (Tulunay Ateş, 2017).

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One of the most important periods in terms of the education of individuals forming a society is the primary school period. One of the functions of primary education is to bring the values adopted and accepted as correct by the society to the young members of the society. It is the period when primary school children are the fastest in terms of their cognitive, linguistic, social and personality development and should be supported in the best way (Gönen & Balat, 2002). Primary school children often do not yet have the mental capacity to perceive moral concepts. In this context, a number of different ways and practices should be tried in teaching the values and culture of the society to children in primary schools. A quality education can be provided with a learning and teaching process structured based on personal and social values (Lovat, 2009).

The system of values that individuals have are the factors that deeply affect the future personality, view of life, thoughts and behaviors of the person. In this context, the process of realizing some basic values, both universal and local, acquiring and adopting necessary and new values, transforming all these values into behavior by making them the basic building blocks of personality is called values education (Yaman, 2014). In this sense, focusing only on cognitive and psycho-motor skills in schools and conditioning for academic concerns is an extremely wrong way. This wrong way can lead societies to weaken, degenerate and become unhappy in the face of changing conditions. Moreover, the path of a successful person and society depends not only on cognitive success, but also on affective success and value structure (Kumbasar, 2011; Yazıcı, 2006).

Values education, which can be defined as the process of providing students with human and universal values in a comprehensive way, is a subject that is given great importance by the United Nations. In this context, a training program known as the United Nations Living Values Education Program has been prepared. This international education project mainly focuses on 12 universal values and these values are as follows (UNESCO; 2005);

- ✓ Love,
- ✓ Respect,
- ✓ Responsibility,
- ✓ Margin of error,
- ✓ Freedom,
- ✓ Peace,
- ✓ Happiness,
- ✓ Honesty,
- ✓ Cooperation,
- ✓ Humility
- ✓ Simplicity,
- ✓ Unity.

In addition to these universal values, each society has its own national and social values. According to the Ministry of National Education [MEB] (2010), education is the most important factor in gaining all individuals our moral, human, social and spiritual values that form social life, connect people, ensure development, happiness and peace, and protect them from risks and threats. Transferring these achievements to our students also constitutes values education (MEB, Circular No. 2010/53). In values education, practices and expressions suitable for the level of the child's development are extremely

important in terms of child development. Books read to children and stories told are extremely important in terms of developing social skills based on values and using ethical language (Aram & Aviram, 2009; Yurtseven & Kurt, 2013).

According to Hökelekli (2013), values must be kept alive, taught and transferred to future generations in order to maintain peace and integrity in any society and to maintain culture. In this context, education and teachers have a great responsibility to fulfill this social responsibility. Values education is a process in which abstract concepts are dominant in terms of content. For this, it is important to provide games, activities and experiences in primary schools or to use different applications that the student can understand and internalize (Memduhoğlu & Yüce, 2020). Along with methods and techniques such as using drama techniques in values education, making use of various games, role modeling of the teacher, case studies, empathy, role playing, storytelling, value clarification, projects, moral dilemmas, educational games; Applications and techniques such as watching movies and videos, theatre, drawing or painting, puzzles, poems, anecdotes, preparing posters and boards, telling stories, and organizing trips can be used (Aktepe et al., 2020; Bulut-Pedük & Erdoğan, 2011; Kocayörük, 2004; Memduhoğlu & Yüce, 2020; Ulutaş, 2011; Uzuner, 2019).

Bandura (1977) is of the opinion that the values (language, customs and traditions, some professional activities, religious practices and moral values) necessary for the continuation and survival of the society in a society are generally acquired by observing the behavior of others, imitating them and being influenced by role models. When human behaviors are examined in general terms, whether they are conscious or unconscious, it is seen that they are based on imitations and imitations of social models. These social models can be from family, relatives, neighbors, school, friends, that is, from the close social circle, as well as from the people they follow, national heroes, and other cultural structures (Çakir, 2009). Children or young people can identify with the personalities around them and the national heroes, scientists, athletes and artists they follow as role models. In this context, benefiting from these elements in values education can provide significant gains (Halstead & Taylor, 2000).

There are many studies on values education in the sample of Turkey (Aktepe et al., 2020; Aladağ, 2009; Aydın, 2003; Çengelci et al., 2013; Dilmaç, 1999; Ergün, 2013; İzgar, 2013; Keskinöğlü, 2008; Kurtulmuş et al., 2014; Neslitürk, 2013; Özdaş, 2013; Sağlam & Genç, 2015; Tutorial, 2011; Uzunkol, 2014; Yaşaroğlu, 2014). However, when these studies are examined, the effect of benefiting from both national and national role model profiles and local elements in values education has not been focused on. According to Krech and Srutchfield (1980), learning through role models and biographies of influential and famous people is a necessity and a necessity, not a choice in terms of educational goals. In this context, in this study, it is aimed to examine the biographies of national and well-known people and the use of local personalities and elements in values education in primary schools. For this purpose, answers to the following questions were sought.

- 1) What is the perspective of teachers on values education practices in primary schools?
- 2) What are the methods, techniques and practices used by teachers in values education in primary schools?
- 3) What are the teachers' views on the biographies of national and well-known people and the use of local figures and elements in values education practices in primary schools?

Method

This study, which aims to examine the practices of using biographies and local elements in values education in primary schools, is a hermeneutic phenomenology study, which is one of the qualitative research designs. The phenomenology method, which is a qualitative research method, is used when we are aware of it but do not have detailed information (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). The hermeneutic model of phenomenology, on the other hand, is a model based on interpretation of the data related to the phenomenon (Friesen et al. 2012; Gadamer, 2003).

Working group

The study group of the research was selected by purposive sampling method. Purposive sampling has emerged in the tradition of qualitative research and allows for the in-depth study of situations that are thought to have rich knowledge of the concept (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). In this context, the research sample was selected from school principals who are thought to have deep experience in school management. The study group of the research consists of 12 participants consisting of teachers working in schools in the city center of Erzurum in the 2020-2021 academic year. Participants were coded as T1, T2, T3... for data analysis.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics of Participants

Demografik Özellikler		N	%
Gender	Female	8	66
	Male	4	34
	Total	12	100
Marital Status	Married	10	84
	Single	2	17
	Total	12	100
Seniority	0- 10 years	2	17
	10- 20	4	33
	20-30	4	33
	30and above	2	17
	Total	12	100
Branch	1st Class	3	25
	2st Class	2	16.6
	3st Class	2	16.6
	4st Class	5	41.8
	Total	12	100

According to the table, 8 (66%) of the participants are female and 4 (34%) are male. Of the participants, 10 (84%) are married and 2 (17%) are single. 2 of the participants have a seniority of 10 years or less (17%), 4 of them have a seniority of 10-20 years (33%), 4 of them have a seniority of 20-30 years (33%),

2 of them 30 and above (17%). While 3 of the participants are teaching 1st grade, 2 of them are 2nd grade teachers, 2 of them are 3rd grade teachers and 5 of them are 4th grade teachers.

Data collection tool

Data from the participants were obtained through interviews and a semi-structured interview form was used for this. Interview forms were prepared by scanning the literature on the concept and taking the opinions of teachers and field experts. These field experts are from the field of educational sciences. The interviews were conducted by the researcher in the form of one-on-one interviews with the participant in September and October of the 2020-2021 academic year. The interviews lasted between 15 and 30 minutes. The questions in the interview form are as follows

Analysis of data

The data obtained from the participants were analyzed by content analysis method. A content analysis is a type of analysis based on the coding of the obtained data and the thematization of the related codes (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). In this context, the data obtained in the study were first coded. After these codes, the ones that are related to each other are grouped. Then, themes were created based on the theoretical literature and related codes were combined under the same theme.

Information on the credibility, transferability, reliability and confirmability of the research

According to Holloway and Wheeler (1996), validity and reliability in a qualitative study; credibility is ensured by the concepts of transferability and confirmability. There are many ways to do this. Some of these methods are prolonged interaction, confirmation of participants and expert review. In this context, in order to increase the credibility of this research, the findings, comments and results were shared with the participants and their confirmations were obtained. In order to ensure transferability in the study, the research sample was defined in detail. In addition, all stages of the research are explained clearly, clearly and intelligibly. At the same time, before the interview, the participants were chatted to build trust and get to know each other (Lincoln & Guba, 1986). Consent of the participants was obtained for the interviews, and all interviews were conducted on a voluntary basis. Participants were also informed that the data would only be used for scientific purposes and that their personal information would be kept confidential.

Consistency between encoders for data in qualitative research is an indicator of the reliability of the study (Creswell, 2016). In this context, in order to strengthen the reliability of the research, the codes and themes created from the data set were sent to two more experts in the field of educational sciences. A great deal of agreement was achieved with the feedback from the experts. According to all these evaluations, it can be said that the study provides a sufficient level of reliability.

Findings

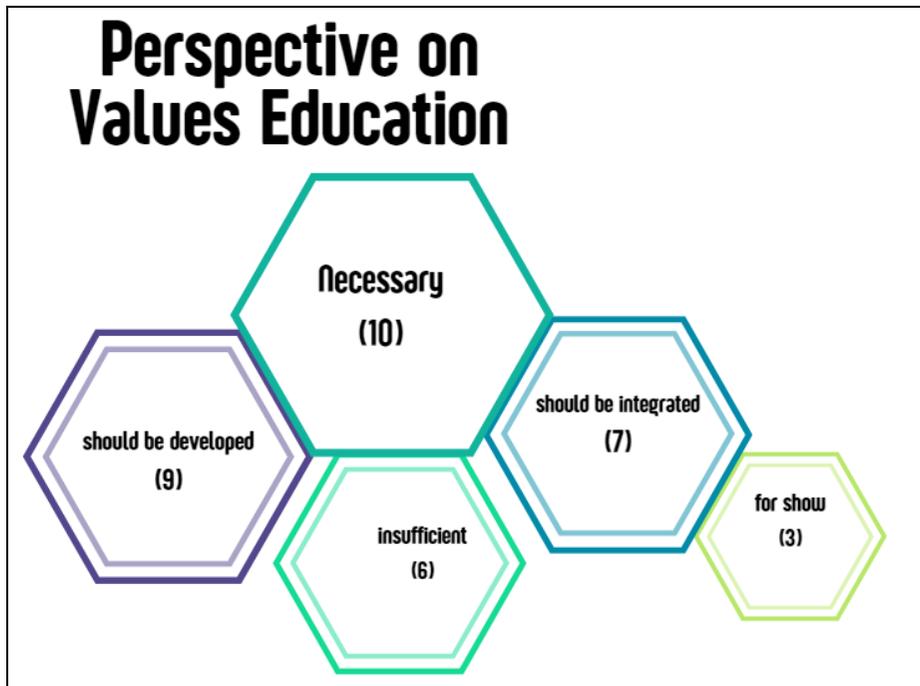
The data obtained from the participants were collected in three themes: the perspective on values education, the practices used and their well-known and loved biographies and the use of local elements. These themes and generated codes are as follows.

Findings on teachers' perspectives on values education practices in primary schools

In the research, "What is the perspective of teachers on values education practices in primary schools?" The codes for the first problem, which is arranged in the form of, are presented below.

Figure 1

Teachers' Perspectives on Values Education Practices



When the teachers' views on the values education practices in schools are examined, it is seen that the factor that comes to the forefront is necessity (10). In addition, teachers think that values education practices in schools should be developed (9) and at the same time they find it insufficient (6). According to teachers, values should be more integrated into educational activities (7). In addition to these, there are also those who think that values education in schools is done for show and superficial (3). Some of the participant's views on this theme are as follows;

"I think that values education is extremely necessary in schools. I think it is even more necessary lately, especially when technology and applications like Tik Tok are brainwashing students. Values should not only be told, they should be applied more in lessons, I think." (T5)

"To me it is insufficient. There should be different and richer practices and these practices should be applied to the child's life. Education without values is unthinkable. Children should not be employed just for success in exams. It seems that most teachers have applied values education because they are expected only from themselves without believing."(T11)

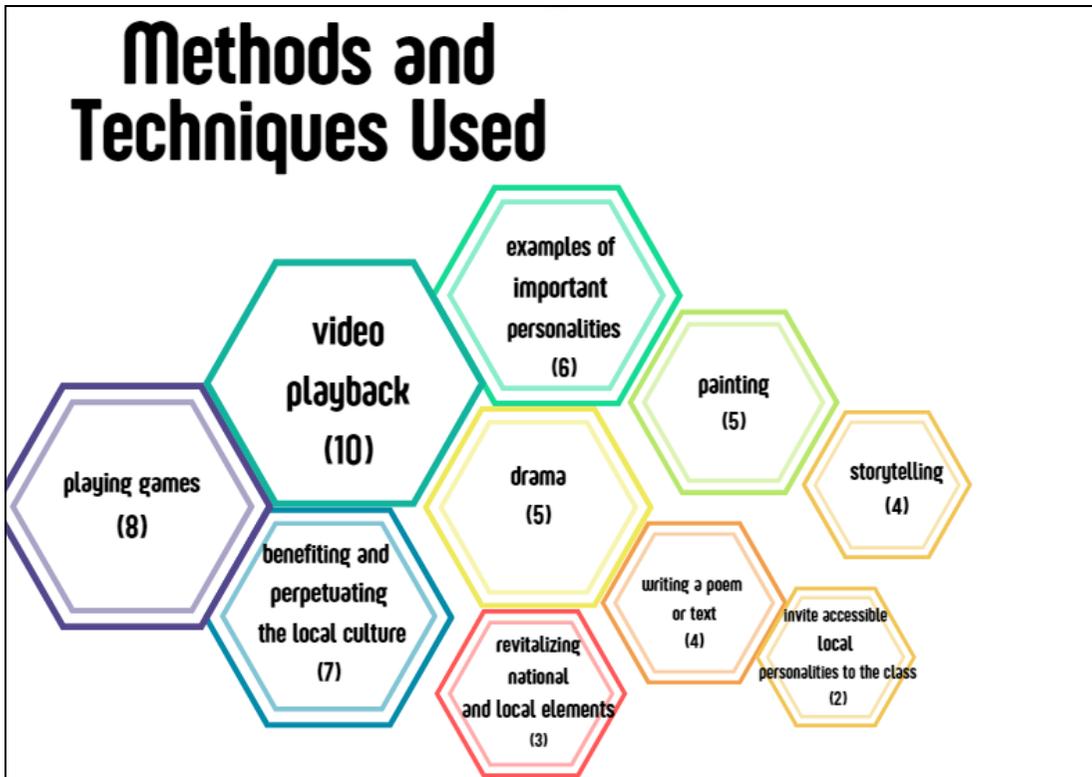
"It is indispensable for children's education. Individuals who are deficient in values and morals do not have a chance to be successful. I think more value should be given to these practices and embedded in every lesson and behavior."(T2)

Findings regarding the methods, techniques and practices used by teachers in values education in primary schools

In the research, “What are the methods, techniques and practices used by teachers in values education in primary schools?” The codes for the second sub-problem, which is arranged in the form of, are presented below.

Figure 2

Methods and Techniques Used by Teachers in Values Education



As can be seen from the figure, teachers mostly use the video watching activity (10) in primary schools. Other activities most frequently used by teachers in values education are teaching with games (8), benefiting from and maintaining the local culture (7), benefiting from well-known personalities (6), and drama activities (5). In addition, in the context of values education, activities such as painting (5), writing poems or texts, telling stories (4) and inviting local notables to the class (2) are also held at schools. Some of the participant's views on this theme are as follows;

“Usually the easiest is to watch a video. I watch videos on the internet about the value of that month. I also make pictures and write poems to display on the classroom board.” (T1)

“I believe that values education should remain in words. For this, we practice in almost every area in the classroom. We apply videos, slides, stories, poems, texts in almost every lesson. We also ask well-known people in our city to come to our class and give a speech to explain the value we have chosen. Values and morality have a very important place in the culture of our region. That’s why I’m working on values in Erzurum culture. In this regard, I sometimes get support from the public education center.” (T4)

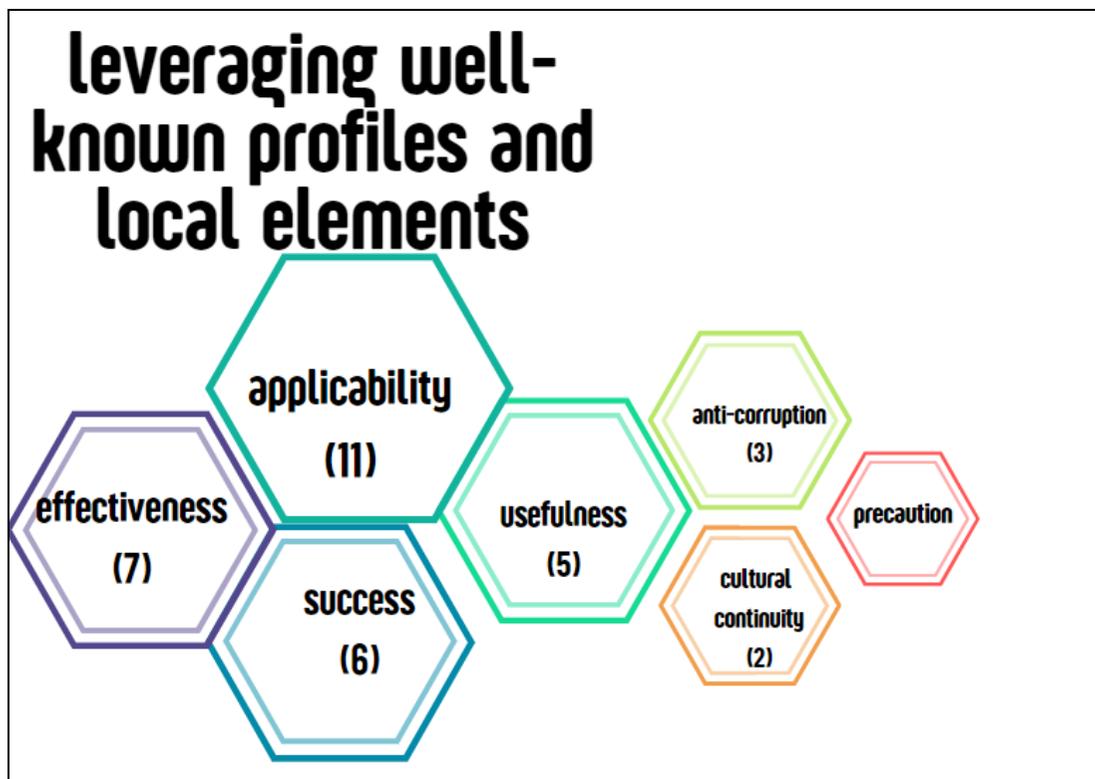
“In values education, I mostly watch videos from the smart board. These videos are generally about well-known national and famous heroes or athletes. It is more permanent for students to learn with examples from the lives of important people they know and love. I also use animations frequently. Students portray famous and national heroes in the classroom and this is effective.” (T7)

Findings concerning the use of national and well-known personality biographies of teachers and local personalities and elements in values education practices in primary schools

In the research, “What are the views of teachers on the use of national and well-known biographies and local personalities and elements in values education practices in primary schools?” The codes for the third sub-problem, arranged in the form of.

Figure 3

Opinions on the Use of National and Well-Known Biographies and Local Figures and Elements in Values Education



Teachers find it very practical to benefit from the biographies of national and famous people and local elements in values education (11). According to the table, teachers think that these practices are effective (7) and successful (6) in terms of strengthening the learning outcome. Other codes related to this theme are usefulness (5), prevention of corruption (3), cultural continuity (2) and countermeasures (1). Some of the participant's views on this theme are as follows;

“I think that local elements and national heroes can be used and it will be very successful. I think it would be better for students to learn their values from the heroes they know and the culture of the society they live

in. Turkish children should learn honesty, honesty, benevolence and tolerance from profiles such as Mevlana, Nasreddin Hodja and Atatürk, not from the virtual world or foreign elements.” (T9)

“Using well-known athletes or heroes in values education would be very effective. Students learn more easily the values they know and love. These applications can be applied from kindergarten. Because in this way, corruption and corruption in society can be prevented.” (T12)

“I think that national and local people should be used both with cartoons and face-to-face applications. These applications will enable children to both have fun and internalize values. While societies develop technologically on the one hand, they must also ensure their cultural continuity. This is achieved through effective teaching of values to children. Thanks to the local cultural elements, the child learns in the environment he knows and loves.” (T6)

Discussion

According to the research findings, teachers working in primary schools think that values education is an indispensable element of education and it is necessary. However, their perceptions and thoughts about the current practices in values education are that this issue is not given enough importance. In fact, they think that values education is insufficient in practice and is carried out with show activities. According to teachers, values education practices should be enriched and developed. Similar to the results of the study, Genç et al. (2015) emphasized the necessity of values education in education and training in their study and stated that it should be integrated with education at school. In this context, values should be taught in schools not as ordinary curriculum lessons, but as a part of life and associated with life. In fact, in a way, instead of trying to teach values, children should be made to practice and live. As can be understood from the statements of the participants, the pressure of technology and changing world conditions on societies and individuals increases and causes negativities. It is possible to minimize these negativities with the values experienced and given importance. Alimcan and Şen (2017) also mentioned the effect of media and technology on values in their study and emphasized how values can be protected from this effect. Yel and Aladağ (2015) emphasized that the importance of values education has increased more than ever. All these evaluations show that values education is an element that cannot be ignored and its effectiveness should be increased.

Another result reached in the research is that teachers generally use traditional methods such as narration, watching videos, making pictures, writing poems and texts in values education, just like in curriculum lessons. In addition to these, there are those who use alternative and effective methods such as benefiting from drama activities, benefiting from biography-based education and employing local elements and personalities. When we approach values education because it is not an achievement but a way of life, enriching and diversifying the methods and techniques used in values education is important. Taking advantage of the heroes, national personalities, good examples from the world of sports and art, local heroes and elements, in particular, will ensure that values are gained and lived, and as it can be understood from the expressions of the participants, it will be ensured that the children live the values with fun and enjoyment. Similar to the results of the research, Aktepe et al. (2020) found that the activities carried out within the scope of values education are drama, question-answer, story writing, watching movies, proverbs and idioms, educational games, and classroom activities. Akdoğan (2019),

on the other hand, drew attention to the importance of role models in values education and mentioned that students learn values with the help of models. Aydın (2019) drew attention to the importance of play in values education in his study. Similarly, Batmaz and Erdoğan (2019) and Polater (2019) stated that teachers make posters, pictures, videos, dramas, use concrete materials and values are partially put into action by students in values education, and different practices and role models are needed to be more effective and successful in values education they found that.

Another conclusion reached from the research findings is that the use of both biography-based (cartoon hero, national hero, art, athlete, etc.) and local heroes and elements in values education is quite applicable and successful in keeping the values alive. According to the results of the research, benefiting from the biographies of well-known and loved people in values education and using local and cultural elements increase cultural continuity and social benefit, as well as prevent corruption and negativities. Considering in this context, the use of local and national elements and arguments is seen as very effective and essential in acquiring universal values to students. While changing in the globalizing world, on the one hand, localization, especially in education, will allow the society and culture to live. In his study on children, Karaca (2019) found that popular cartoon characters are effective on children's value systems and values education. Similar to the results of the study, Özbek Gül (2022) emphasized that local, cultural and historical elements are extremely important in the values education of students in the village and city center in Kastamonu. In another study supporting the results of the study, Yiğittir and Er (2017) found that the use of well-known biographies in values education increased the effect and success.

As a result, values education is very important especially in primary school years when the personality development of individuals is shaped and it is a phenomenon that should be associated with every level of education. Values education should be adapted to their lives and internalized instead of being taught with the logic of ordinary curriculum lessons in schools. The way to do this is to diversify and enrich the values education practices in schools. Benefiting from the biographies of popular, national and famous personalities in values education is one of these ways and it is extremely effective in transferring values. In addition, localization in values education and making use of local elements and elements is another effective and efficient way. With the use of these activities in schools, a healthier, more effective and successful values education can be provided. This means more ethical, moral and valued individual. When considered in this context, in today's rapidly changing and transforming world, the peace, happiness and continuity of societies and nations depend on the values education practices that will be properly applied in schools. In the context of these results, it is recommended to enrich and increase the practices related to values education in schools. It is suggested that biography-based activities will be useful among these applications.

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