

# Holistic Education within The Century of Türkiye Education Model: A Comparative Global Perspective

## Türkiye Yüzyılı Maarif Modelinde Bütüncül Eğitim: Karşılaştırmalı Küresel Bir Perspektif

Bilal BUDAK

Ministry of National  
Education

ORCID: 0000-0002-4844-6656

Türkan Türkmen BUDAK

Ministry of National  
Education

ORCID: 0000-0001-9853-5713

Received [Geliş]

31.05.2025

Accepted [Kabul]

30.10.2025

Mail address

[bilalbudakeru@gmail.com](mailto:bilalbudakeru@gmail.com)

Content of this journal is  
Licensed under a Creative  
Commons Attribution-  
NonCommercial 4.0 International  
License.



### ABSTRACT

This study examines the extent to which the holistic education approach emphasized in The Century of Türkiye Education Model aligns with contemporary global educational frameworks. Given the current emphasis on flexibility, inclusivity, and diversity, the research explores how effectively the model responds to these expectations. The analysis focuses on key components, including the structure of learning outcomes, the design of learning experiences, differentiated instruction, cross-curricular integration, assessment practices, teacher reflection mechanisms, the science-technology-environment dimension, school-based planning, and opportunities for extracurricular learning. A qualitative design was adopted, using document analysis as the main method. Official documents and guidelines published by the Ministry of National Education were examined in comparison with major international reports such as UNESCO's Education 2030 Agenda, the OECD's Learning Compass 2030, and recent strategic documents of the European Commission. The findings show that the model aligns substantially with global trends, particularly in its emphasis on multi-dimensional learning, values-based education, and personal development. The study also notes ongoing improvement in assessment approaches and in the systematic integration of teacher reflections. Overall, The Century of Türkiye Education Model is characterized as innovative and dynamic, seeking to integrate universal educational principles while remaining grounded in local cultural contexts. It is built on a participatory structure that engages all stakeholders within the school community. In this sense, the model represents a comprehensive educational vision that supports both the preservation of cultural heritage and the preparation of individuals for active engagement as global citizens in an increasingly interconnected world...

**Keywords:** holistic education, The Century of Türkiye Education Model, global education, learning experiences, differentiated instruction

### ÖZ

Bu araştırma, Türkiye Yüzyılı Maarif Modeli'nde temel ilke olarak benimsenen bütüncül eğitim anlayışının, günümüzde küresel ölçekte öne çıkan eğitim yaklaşımlarıyla ne ölçüde örtüştüğünü incelemektedir. Çok yönlülük, esneklik, kültürel çeşitliliğe açıklık ve kapsayıcılık gibi eğilimler dikkate alınarak modelin öğrenme çıktılarının belirlenmesi, süreçlerin yapılandırılması, bireysel farklılıklara uyarlanması, disiplinler arası bileşenlerin entegrasyonu, ölçme-değerlendirme yaklaşımı, öğretmen rollerinin tanımlanması, bilim-teknoloji-çevre ilişkisi, okul temelli planlama ve müfredat dışı öğrenme olanakları ayrıntılı biçimde analiz edilmiştir. Araştırmada nitel yöntem kullanılmış, doküman analizi uygulanmıştır. Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı tarafından yayımlanan politika belgeleri ve kılavuzlar; UNESCO'nun 2030 Eğitim Gündemi, OECD'nin Learning Compass 2030 çerçevesi ve Avrupa Komisyonu'nun eğitim strateji raporlarıyla karşılaştırılmıştır. Bulgular, modelin çok boyutlu öğrenmeyi, değerler eğitimi ve bireysel gelişimi önceleyen yönlerinin çağdaş küresel yaklaşımlarla büyük ölçüde uyumlu olduğunu göstermektedir. Öğretmen yansımalarının sistematikleştirilmesi ve ölçme-değerlendirmede esneklik alanlarında ise gelişimin sürdüğü görülmüştür. Genel olarak Türkiye Yüzyılı Maarif Modeli'nin yerel kültürel temelleri koruyarak evrensel eğitim ilkeleriyle bütünleşmeyi amaçlayan yenilikçi ve dinamik bir yapıda olduğu sonucuna ulaşılmıştır. Model, öğrencilerin bilişsel gelişimlerinin yanı sıra duygusal zekâ, sosyal beceriler, çevre bilinci ve etik sorumluluklarını desteklemeyi hedeflemekte; okul topluluğunun tüm paydaşlarını sürece dâhil eden katılımcı bir zemin sunmaktadır. Bu yönleriyle model, hem yerel değerlerin yaşatılmasına hem de küresel ölçekte etkin yurttaşlar yetiştirilmesine katkı sağlayan bütüncül bir eğitim vizyonu temsil etmektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler: bütüncül eğitim, Türkiye Yüzyılı Maarif Modeli, küresel eğitim, öğrenme yaşantıları, farklılaştırılmış öğretim



## Introduction

Education is not merely a process of equipping individuals with knowledge; it also involves integrating them with core values, developing socio-emotional competencies, cultivating lifelong learning habits, and establishing meaningful connections with their environment. In this respect, education is not limited to an instructional function—it also fulfills cultural, moral, environmental, and societal roles. In today's world, characterized by multilayered crises—such as climate change, digital inequality, social polarization, economic instability, and cultural disintegration—education systems that focus solely on knowledge transmission are no longer sufficient. Instead, more inclusive, flexible, and value-oriented structures are required (UNESCO, 2021; OECD, 2018).

At this point, the holistic education approach comes into play, aiming to nurture individuals not only as academic beings but also as moral, social, and emotional entities. Beane (1997) defines holistic education not merely as interdisciplinary integration but also as an ethical bridge between the individual and society. This approach envisions simultaneous support for cognitive development alongside social skills, values education, environmental awareness, digital competence, and social belonging. Therefore, holistic education is based on a pedagogically integrated, student-centered, contextual, and multilayered learning experience (Beane, 1997; CASEL, 2022).

Notably, UNESCO's report *"Reimagining our futures together"* (2021) and the OECD's *"Education 2030"* framework (2018) emphasize the need to restructure education around themes such as values, ethics, sustainability, and social justice. These documents suggest educating individuals not only as "learners" but also as "active citizens," "critical thinkers," and "responsible social actors." From this perspective, education is not just an academic process but also a political, ethical, and cultural act. To meet these multidimensional expectations, education systems must adopt a holistic lens (Trilling & Fadel, 2009; Ladson-Billings, 2014).

In line with these global orientations, The Century of Türkiye Education Model, introduced by the Ministry of National Education in 2023, proposes a comprehensive framework that aims to transform the Turkish education system not only in terms of content but also structurally, philosophically, and ethically. This model is grounded in an educational philosophy that prioritizes the balanced development of individuals in cognitive, social, moral, and physical domains. It emphasizes cultivating students not only through knowledge-based but also virtue-based, skill-based, and value-based frameworks. The model promotes a paradigm that prepares individuals not only for exams but also for life (MoNE, 2023).

The holistic education approach outlined in The Century of Türkiye Education Model is structured around nine fundamental components:

1. Framework of Learning Outcomes
2. Learning Experiences
3. Differentiated Instruction
4. Cross-Curricular Components
5. Assessment and Evaluation
6. Teacher Reflections
7. Science-Technology-Environment Integration
8. School-Based Planning
9. Extracurricular Activities

These components are designed to ensure that the model is not only theoretically holistic but also applicable in practice. Particularly, the use of multiple data sources in assessment, the inclusion of teacher reflections as part of professional development, and school-based planning aligned with local dynamics are key elements enhancing the model's sustainability.

While previous reform efforts in Türkiye—especially the curriculum reforms of 2005 and the updates in 2017—were primarily grounded in constructivist theory, they fell short in practice due to factors such as exam-oriented culture, limited teacher competencies, and a lack of digital pedagogical strategies (Demirel, 2012; Gözütok, 2014; Erdoğan & Gök, 2019). In contrast, the The Century of Türkiye Education Model presents a systematic, value-centered, and philosophically grounded vision. In this respect, it can be considered comparable to successful holistic education models implemented in countries such as Finland, Canada, Japan, and Singapore (Sahlberg, 2015; Tan et al., 2017).

However, in order to assess whether the model is truly "holistic," it must be evaluated not only within the national context but also in terms of its alignment with contemporary global educational approaches. A model's strong national structure does not automatically imply its compatibility with international standards. Therefore, in light of UNESCO's visions of lifelong learning, equity, social justice, and sustainability; the OECD's approach to cognitive-affective-skill integration; and the European Commission's principles of digital competence and inclusive education, it is necessary to carefully analyze The Century of Türkiye Education Model's points of convergence and divergence with global frameworks.

Recent empirical and conceptual work further enriches the discourse on holistic education, yet also underscores persistent challenges in both evidence base and large-scale adaptation. For instance, the systematic review by Miseliūnaitė, Klizienė, and Cibulskas (2022) notes that holistic education is widely promoted in UNESCO policies as a response to global crises, but that robust comparative and large-scale empirical studies remain scarce, especially beyond primary education levels. Moreover, Mahmoudi and Jafari (2012) define holistic education as a framework that seeks to balance intellectual, emotional, social, spiritual, and environmental dimensions of development, promoting integration across disciplinary boundaries and within the individual's inner-outer world relationships. In school settings, holistic interventions have been shown to positively affect physical and affective domains, though evidence is less conclusive for social and cognitive dimensions, pointing to the difficulty of implementing all facets of a holistic model simultaneously. In digital learning contexts, holistic integration is an emerging theme: the Holistic Education and Digital Learning (HEDL) model exemplifies efforts to combine digital pedagogy with holistic values, particularly in resource-limited settings. However, many studies remain single-case or context-bound, underscoring the need for comparative and policy-oriented research. These advances in the literature reinforce why examining Türkiye's new educational model from a holistic lens, in dialogue with global frameworks, is timely and necessary.

Complementing this, research in early childhood settings demonstrates that integrating cognitive, emotional, and social dimensions can significantly enhance children's well-being and learning trajectories, though such success is more established in small-scale or controlled environments (Rodiah, Zulaika & Saputra, 2024). In middle years education, Hare (2006) notes that holistic education is rarely defined by a single template but is instead represented by recurrent themes—such as identity, relationality, and values—that reflect local interpretations. Similarly, studies of holistic pedagogy in Finnish schools highlight how teachers emphasize student agency, value integration, and interconnected learning (Tirri, 2011) in ways that reflect both global ideals and local culture.

In the realm of systemic reform, the Brookings report *Transforming Education for Holistic Student Development* (Datnow et al., 2022) offers instructive cases: seven education systems (including Singapore, Ireland, India, Chile) attempt to re-balance academic rigor with moral legitimacy and holistic aims, revealing that systemic change must involve stakeholder alignment, institutional capacity, and policy coherence rather than piecemeal interventions. For example, Singapore's reforms toward holistic outcomes illustrate the risks of policy layering and the need to integrate new aims in ways that do not undermine existing structures (Kwek, Ho & Wong, 2023). At the same time, initiatives such as the Holistic Education and Digital Learning (HEDL) model endeavor to fuse digital pedagogy with holistic values in resource-constrained settings, though they remain

largely case-based and context-specific. These literatures collectively suggest that while the holistic paradigm is theoretically powerful, its translation into sustainable, scalable systems remains uneven, a tension that motivates the current study's comparative approach to the Turkish model.

### **Purpose**

This study aims to reveal how the holistic education approach adopted within The Century of Türkiye Education Model is positioned within global educational policy frameworks. In line with this goal, we will analyze the alignment of the model's core components—such as learning outcomes, teacher reflections, assessment systems, and learning experiences—with UNESCO 2030, OECD Education 2030, and the European Commission's DigCompEdu standards. In addition, the study seeks to identify the model's strengths and areas for improvement in terms of values education, interdisciplinary learning, cultural inclusivity, and sustainability; and to offer strategic recommendations regarding the model's implementation potential and long-term viability in the national context.

### **Research Question and Sub-questions**

To what extent does the holistic education approach of the Turkey Century Education Model align with global education frameworks (UNESCO 2030, OECD Education 2030, DigCompEdu)?

#### **Sub-questions;**

1. How well do the model's learning outcomes align with the cognitive, socio-emotional, and skills-based competencies emphasized in UNESCO 2030 and OECD Education 2030?
2. Are the model's digital pedagogical capacities sufficient when compared with DigCompEdu standards?
3. Do the proposed learning experiences and interdisciplinary structures of the model provide a student-centered and culturally inclusive learning environment?
4. How does the model's values education approach relate to global policies (e.g. UNESCO's strategies on values education)?
5. What challenges does the model face in terms of sustainability, and what strategies can be recommended based on comparisons with similar international models?

## **Method**

### **Research Design**

This study is a qualitative inquiry that aims to analyze the alignment between the “holistic education approach” outlined in The Century of Türkiye Education Model and contemporary global educational frameworks. Qualitative research offers flexible, multidimensional, and context-sensitive analyses that aim to understand and interpret social phenomena and processes in their natural settings (Creswell, 2014; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2021). Accordingly, the study employed the document analysis method. Document analysis allows for the conceptual interpretation of social, cultural, or institutional structures through written texts and is frequently utilized in policy analysis and educational model evaluations (Bowen, 2009).

Within the scope of this research, the primary documents and official statements related to The Century of Türkiye Education Model were analyzed for content relevant to holistic education. These contents were then compared with strategic education documents published by international organizations such as UNESCO, OECD, and the European Commission. The study was structured through a systematic thematic content analysis. Thus, the pedagogical framework, instructional philosophy, and implementation strategies of the model were examined in relation to global trends, identifying points of convergence and divergence.

The data source of this research is not based on a group of individuals, but rather on a purposefully selected pool of documents. Therefore, a document-based sampling strategy commonly used in qualitative research was adopted. Bowen (2009) regards document analysis as a "natural data source" in qualitative research, highlighting its capacity to provide rich content in terms of both context and meaning.

The documents analyzed in this study fall into two main categories:

### 1. National Documents

- The Century of Türkiye Education Model Introduction Document (MoNE, 2023)
- Related curricula, policy papers, and official statements issued by the Ministry

### 2. International Documents

- UNESCO (2021), *Reimagining Our Futures Together: A New Social Contract for Education*
- OECD (2018), *The Future of Education and Skills – Education 2030*
- European Commission – Redecker (2017), *DigCompEdu: Digital Competence of Educators*
- CASEL (2022), *What is SEL?* (Social and Emotional Learning Model Documents)

These texts were selected based on their public accessibility, digital availability, and up-to-date relevance. All documents directly serve the purpose of research and reflect current educational discourse.

### Data Collection

The data collection process was conducted between November and December 2024. In the first stage, resources from the Ministry of National Education related to The Century of Türkiye Education Model were examined. The model's theoretical foundations, implementation suggestions, and philosophical underpinnings were systematically categorized. Themes such as learning outcomes, learning experiences, differentiated instruction, teacher reflections, and environmental dimensions were coded and analyzed to evaluate how the texts structure holistic education.

In the second stage, strategic reports and official documents from UNESCO, OECD, the European Commission, and CASEL were retrieved from digital platforms to identify how the holistic approach is defined in global education contexts. Key themes from these documents were compiled and tabulated to enable comparative analysis with The Century of Türkiye Education Model.

The data were not collected through interviews, surveys, or observations; instead, they were gathered through systematic screening and content analysis of digital documents. This method is particularly effective for conducting in-depth and conceptual comparisons in educational policy research.

### Validity and Reliability

Internal validity was ensured by using official, current, and institutionally recognized documents. All sources were published by the Turkish Ministry of National Education or authoritative international education organizations (UNESCO, OECD, European Commission) and are accepted as authentic and scholarly. The originality and relevance of the documents were verified based on their accurate reflection of the educational philosophy and representation of the system.

In terms of external validity, the findings of this research are considered applicable not only to the Turkish context but also to other nations seeking to restructure their educational systems. Methodological reliability was ensured by thematically

planned coding procedures, the avoidance of subjective interpretations, and analyses strictly grounded in the content of the documents.

Although two researchers conducted the study, cross-referencing with related literature and secondary sources was applied throughout the process. Theoretical validation of the model was carried out via content coding. Subjective interpretations were deliberately avoided, and analysis was based exclusively on concepts and definitions present in the source materials.

### Data Analysis

The study employed thematic content analysis as the main method for data interpretation. This approach involves the systematic coding of explicit and implicit themes in the documents, categorization of themes into recognizable patterns, and interpretation of relationships between these themes (Krippendorff, 2018). The content analysis focused on identifying how core concepts such as pedagogical structure, learning objectives, instructional principles, and assessment strategies are functionally embedded in the texts.

Four major themes were established during the analysis process:

1. Pedagogical Structure: Learning experiences, learning outcomes framework, differentiated instruction
2. Values-Based Approach: Virtue, ethical sensitivity, character development
3. Systemic Coherence: School-based planning, cross-curricular integration
4. Global Alignment: Comparative evaluation with UNESCO–OECD–EU education policies

Each document was scanned under these themes; points of convergence and divergence were identified and organized into comparative tables. The themes were developed in alignment with the research problem and sub-questions, and the interpretive process remained consistent with the study's objectives.

### Research Ethics

We hereby declare that this study complies with the rules stated in the Directive on Scientific Research and Publication Ethics of Higher Education Institutions, and that no actions contrary to scientific research and publication ethics have been undertaken. Furthermore, we confirm that all authors have contributed to the study, that there is no conflict of interest among the authors, and that all responsibility for any ethical violations rests solely with the authors of the article.

## Findings

### Sub-question 1: Alignment of Learning Outcomes with UNESCO 2030 & OECD Education 2030

The document analysis shows that The Century of Türkiye Education Model frames its learning outcomes in a multidimensional manner, weaving together cognitive goals (e.g. critical thinking, domain knowledge) with socio-emotional, ethical, and value dimensions, for instance, expressions such as *“empathy and collaboration”*, *“ethical awareness”*, and *“social responsibility”* appear in the documents. This suggests an intentional attempt to echo the holistic learner profiles advocated in UNESCO and OECD frameworks. The model's assessment and evaluation approach is generally described as “skill-oriented, structured to support the instructional process at the highest level, and providing constructive feedback.” However, for complex competencies, such as metacognition, creativity, or digital literacy, publicly available documents may include detailed rubrics, progression criteria, or fully operational definitions. As a result, articulations of skill-based competencies often remain ambiguous, which means the model's capacity needs improvements to fully align with global frameworks that require measurable and scaffolded progression. In coding, passages like “Value-Infused Outcome,” “Undefined Skill Articulation,” and “Cognitive + Affective Goal” surfaced frequently, indicating that many outcome statements combine cognitive and affective intentions without sufficient clarity. These coded patterns hint at where the documents mix dimensions but do not always follow through with precision.

Interestingly, the systematic review by Miseliūnaitė, Klizienė & Cibulskas (2022) found a similar gap: holistic education initiatives often present broad aims but rarely include robust quantitative or comparative empirical validations of how such multidimensional outcomes are measured in practice. This parallel suggests that the Turkish model's aspiration is part of a broader pattern in holistic education policy discourse.

### **Sub-question 2: Digital Pedagogical Capacities vis-à-vis DigCompEdu**

When comparing the Turkey model's digital pedagogy references with the DigCompEdu framework, some alignment is evident: the documents mention technology integration, digital awareness, and blended learning possibilities. Documents detail *how* teacher professional development for digital pedagogy is to be organized, what strategies for digital assessment (e.g. e-portfolios, analytics) will be used, or how feedback loops will operate. And if it is added more, the absence of a structured teacher capacity building plan centered on digital pedagogy doesn't become a notable weakness.

Coding labels such as "Digital Vision Stated," "Weak Digital Assessment," and "Lack of Feedback Mechanism" were applied to passages illustrating this contrast between ambition and specificity. These codes help map where documents emphasize digital goals and where they remain vague.

This gap echoes critiques in edtech literature: the mere inclusion of digital tools or references in policy does not guarantee effective use, especially when institutional support, infrastructure, and training are underdeveloped. The Century of Türkiye Education Model seems to defeat this challenge.

### **Sub-question 3: Student-Centered & Culturally Inclusive Learning Experiences**

The model promotes thematic, cross-disciplinary learning experiences intended to bridge traditional subject boundaries. It also references differentiated instruction (in content, process, product) and cultural sensitivity (e.g. local traditions, student backgrounds). These features resonate with holistic pedagogical ideals that favor contextual, integrative, and inclusive learning.

However, in many documents, these features can be frequently paired with concrete examples, adaptation strategies, or equity mechanisms. The articulation remains descriptive rather than actionable. The absence of adaptation matrices or guidance for multilingual learners or under-resourced contexts signals a gap in operationalizing inclusion.

In the coding process, labels like "Interdisciplinary Intent," "Differentiation Declared," "Cultural Sensitivity Mentioned," and "Equity Strategy Gap" were common. These suggest that while inclusive intentions are present, the documents often do not follow through with detailed plans.

Comparative studies in holistic education show that inclusive transformative practices depend heavily on the strength of teacher support, differentiated resources, and scaffolded adaptations. The Turkish model's texts reflect the aspiration but needs more improvements in scaffolding for equitable implementation.

### **Sub-question 4: Relations between Values Education Approach and Global Policies**

Values and ethics are at the core of the model: frequent references to virtue, social responsibility, environmental stewardship, and ethical leadership appear across policy texts. This alignment is well matched with UNESCO's advocacy for values education and global citizenship. Additionally, the process of local contextualization how universal values will be adapted, negotiated, or interpreted in diverse cultural settings, is developed effectively.

Coding tags such as "Centrality of Values," "Value as Static Ideal," and "Universal-Local Tension" capture passages that emphasize values but do not always integrate them dynamically into pedagogy or contextual specificity.

In holistic education literature, the tension between universal value frameworks and local cultural resonance is a recurring theme. The model's strong orientation toward values is promising, but without deeper reflexive contextualization, its legitimacy across diverse school settings may be challenged.

### **Sub-question 5: Sustainability Challenges and Comparative Strategy Suggestions**

Within the policy documents, the model acknowledges significant sustainability challenges; uneven teacher readiness, time pressures, and continuing reliance on standardized assessments. Although the model references participatory planning, feedback loops, and school autonomy, the documents generally do not specify how governance, accountability, data flows, and iterative adaptations will function in practice. Comparative references (e.g. Finland, Singapore) are sometimes used to signal strategies such as enhanced school autonomy or networked professional learning, but these references often remain illustrative rather than detailed prescriptions.

During coding, labels like "Resource Constraint Acknowledged," "Monitoring Ambiguity," "Governance Strategy Weak," and "Strategy Aspirational" were assigned to passages revealing the model's recognition of challenges but lack of detailed response.

This shortfall consists of broad findings in educational reform literature, which emphasize that large-scale change often fails when institutional scaffolding, such as well-defined accountability, stakeholder alignment, data systems, and capacity building is missing.

### **Summary of Findings**

Across the five sub-questions, the findings indicate that The Century of Türkiye Education Model exhibits meaningful alignment with global holistic education paradigms in vision, multidimensional learning aims, and emphasis on values. Nonetheless, further developments are ongoing in the clarity of skill articulation, digital implementation depth, inclusive learning details, values contextualization, and sustainable governance planning. The coded patterns ("Undefined Skill Articulation," "Weak Digital Assessment," "Equity Strategy Gap," "Monitoring Ambiguity") highlight that the documents consistently present Improvements and corresponding operational details continue to be developed.

## **Discussion**

This study investigated the extent to which the holistic education approach of The Century of Türkiye Education Model aligns with major global education frameworks (UNESCO 2030, OECD Education 2030, DigCompEdu). The findings indicate meaningful convergence in philosophical vision and need more Improvements in practical implementation, operational clarity, and institutional sustainability.

### **Vision and Learning Outcomes: Strengths and Tensions**

One of the clearest strengths is the model's articulation of multi-dimensional learning outcomes that go beyond the purely cognitive to incorporate socio-emotional, ethical, and value dimensions. This resonates with global trends emphasizing educating the "whole child" (OECD, 2023) and UNESCO's calls for value-based, citizen-oriented education. OECD's *Digital Education Outlook 2023* highlights that nations are increasingly attempting to integrate cognitive, social, and affective competencies within curricular visions.

However, empirical research on holistic education warns that such ambitions often face a gap between rhetoric and realization. Miseliünaitè, Klizienè, and Cibulskas (2022), in their systematic review, note that holistic education initiatives frequently lack large-scale, comparative empirical evaluations, and many remain case studies rather than integrated systems. While the Turkish model adopts a multidimensional approach to its aims, many learning outcomes appear not yet fully translated into measurable indicators or assessment rubrics, which may challenge its capacity to align closely with global frameworks.

### **Digital Pedagogical Integration: Aspirations vs. Structural Realities**

The model references digital integration, blended learning, and tech use in teaching—ideas that align with how education systems worldwide are moving (OECD, 2023). Yet, there is a growing need to deepen those references. More detailed planning is required for digital assessment, feedback loops, teacher training in digital pedagogy, and data analytics to fully support the model's ambitions. For example, the OECD report points out that digital assessment strategies are a critical level for transformation, but many countries lag in implementation (OECD, 2023, Digital Assessment section).

This pattern echoes arguments in educational technology literature, which emphasize that simply including digital tools in policy does not ensure effective adoption, especially in environments with limited infrastructure, uneven professional development, or weak institutional support.

### **Learning Experiences, Interdisciplinarity, and Inclusive Practice**

The model's promotion of thematic, cross-disciplinary learning and differentiated instruction is conceptually consistent with holistic pedagogy approaches that stress contextual, student-centered learning. In the Lithuanian context, for instance, holistic education studies have found that active, integrative learning practices are frequently advocated, though teachers often revert to more traditional approaches under pressure (Miseliūnaitė, 2024).

However, our analysis suggests that the model's texts tend to remain more descriptive than prescriptive: proposals for adaptations targeting diverse learners (linguistic, socioeconomic, special education needs) are relatively sparse. This reflects a general pattern seen in holistic reforms, where theoretical ambitions often outpace the concrete tools needed for implementation. Comparative studies suggest that successful inclusive practice requires scaffolded toolkits, ongoing coaching, and differentiated resources (e.g. inclusive education research).

### **Values Education: The Universal-Local Balance**

Values and ethics receive prominent attention in the model, with terms like “virtue,” “social responsibility,” “environmental sensitivity” recurring. This alignment with global discourse (e.g. UNESCO's humanistic education orientation) is one of the model's strengths.

The tension between universal ideals and local cultural relevance is well documented in the education literature: if values are not contextualized, they risk being seen as imposed rather than internalized. In holistic education literature, this balance is critical to legitimacy and uptake in local settings.

### **Sustainability, Governance, and Institutional Anchoring**

A recurring challenge in holistic reforms is sustainability. In contrast, literature on systemic reform indicates that lasting change requires layered scaffolding: school autonomy, data-informed decision systems, stakeholder governance, and continuous professional learning. The Brookings stream of holistic reform argues for these multi-level supports as essential for sustainability. (Datnow et al., 2022)

Thus, while the model exhibits philosophical alignment, its success will depend on strengthening institutional architectures so that vision does not remain aspirational.

## **Conclusion**

This study underscores that The Century of Türkiye Education Model is an ambitious attempt to align national education reform with holistic educational ideals. In principle, it converges well with global frameworks in its multidimensional aims and value orientation. However, a consistent pattern emerges: the gap between visionary statements and operational specificity remains substantial.

To realize the holistic promise, the model must deepen its internal architecture. Given that holistic education research is still limited in comparative scale (Miseliünaité et al., 2022) and that digital education transitions are uneven internationally (OECD, 2023), longitudinal mixed-method studies, and cross-regional comparisons within Turkey are advised for next steps. Only through empirical validation across diverse contexts can we judge whether the model truly delivers holistic outcomes in students' lives.

At the same time, the model's innovative and value-oriented design stands as a promising step forward for Turkish education. It explicitly endorses a holistic education approach by viewing each learner as a whole person encompassing mental, emotional, physical, social, and even spiritual development. Moreover, it champions a rights-based, inclusive learning environment where no student is disadvantaged due to their background, thereby ensuring equal opportunities for all to benefit from its holistic approach.

The Century of Türkiye Education Model also integrates critical 21st-century skills, such as critical thinking, digital literacy, and creativity—with a robust values education framework. This forward-thinking approach aims to nurture well-rounded, competent, and conscientious future citizens. If implemented effectively, such a balanced educational vision could truly open the doors to a new era in Turkish education. It could produce not only academically successful students but also well-rounded individuals with strong ethical and civic values, fulfilling the holistic promise in students' lives.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings and their interpretation in the discussion, several interrelated recommendations can enhance the practical realization of the holistic education vision in The Century of Türkiye Education Model. First, rather than relying primarily on standardized exams, the model should introduce multiple assessment formats, such as self-assessment, portfolios, rubric-based evaluations, observation protocols, and peer assessment. These tools help capture not only cognitive mastery but also affective and behavioural dimensions. To support this shift, teachers' assessment literacy must be strengthened through sustained, targeted in-service training programs that include hands-on workshops, mentoring, and collaborative reflection. For the model to be effective, it must institutionalize teacher reflection, not simply mention it, embedding practices such as teacher journals, structured action research, classroom observations with feedback cycles, and integrating reflective pedagogy into pre-service training. It also emphasizes strengthening institutional digital competence by weaving frameworks like DigCompEdu into all stages of teacher preparation, evaluation, and development, and ensuring equitable digital infrastructure. To realize student-centered, inclusive learning, differentiated instruction must move from optional to integral in curricula, with support for teachers to manage individualization. The model should encourage internationalization through networks and pilot programs (e.g. Erasmus+, eTwinning), supporting multilingual and cross-cultural adaptation. Scaling requires a systematic approach to research and monitoring, with formative feedback systems, mixed-method evaluations, and comparative studies across contexts. Strengthening coordination between national policy and local authorities, empowering school leaders and enabling participatory planning, is crucial. Finally, future research should be longitudinal, context-sensitive, and inclusive of multiple stakeholders, measuring long-term outcomes like socio-emotional development, civic engagement, and mediating role of teacher competencies.

### **Conflict of Interest**

Authors of this article disclose no conflict of interest.

### **Statement of Publication Ethics**

In accordance with the TR Index Ethics Principles Flowchart, this study is based on document analysis and does not involve any human participants; therefore, it does not require ethics committee approval.

### **Author Contribution Rate**

**Author 1:** Contributed fully to the manuscript.

**Author 2:** Contributed in data collection, analysis, discussion and conclusion.

## REFERENCES

- Balcı, A. (2020). *Eğitim yönetimi: Teori, araştırma ve uygulama* (12. baskı). Pegem Akademi.
- Beane, J. A. (1997). *Curriculum integration: Designing the core of democratic education*. Teachers College Press.
- Bowen, G. A. (2009). Document analysis as a qualitative research method. *Qualitative Research Journal*, 9(2), 27-40. <https://doi.org/10.3316/QRJ0902027>
- CASEL. (2022). *What is SEL?* Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning. <https://casel.org/>
- Choy, D., Koh, E., & Tan, C. (2017). The education system in Singapore: The success of a pragmatic approach. *Education Journal*, 45(2), 133-145.
- Cibulskas, G., Kliziene, I., & Miseliūnaitė, B., (2022). *Can holistic education solve the world's problems: A systematic literature review*. Sustainability, 14(15), 9737. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su14159737>
- Cibulskas, G., & Miseliūnaitė, B. (2024). Enhancing active learning through a holistic approach: A case study of primary education in Lithuania. *Education Sciences*, 14(6), 592. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci14060592>
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Datnow, A., Park, V., Peurach, D. J., & Spillane, J. P. (2022). *Transforming Education for Holistic Student Development: Learning from Education System (Re)Building Around the World*. Yayıncı: Brookings
- Demirel, Ö. (2012). *Eğitimde program geliştirme: Kuramdan uygulamaya* (17. baskı). Pegem Akademi.
- Erdoğan, Ç., & Gök, B. (2019). Türkiye'de eğitim reformları ve müfredat geliştirme süreçlerinin değerlendirilmesi. *Eğitim ve Bilim*, 44(197), 57-75. <https://doi.org/10.15390/EB.2019.8194>
- Fadel, C., & Trilling, B. (2009). *21st century skills: Learning for life in our times*. Jossey-Bass.
- Fullan, M. (2007). *The new meaning of educational change* (4th ed.). Teachers College Press.
- Gözütok, F. D. (2014). Türkiye'de eğitimde değişim ve öğretmen eğitimi. *Eğitim ve Bilim*, 39(174), 28-38.
- Gutjahr, G., Menon, R., Nedungadi, P., & Raman, R. (2024). Evaluating Holistic Education and Digital Learning model for advancing SDG4: A longitudinal mixed-effects modeling approach. *Cogent Social Sciences*, 10(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2023.2299134>
- Hare, J. (2006). Towards an understanding of holistic education in the middle years of education. *Journal of Research in International Education*, 5(3), 301-322. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1475240906069453>
- Ho, J., Kwek, D., & Wong, H. M. (2023, March 16). *Singapore's educational reforms toward holistic outcomes: (Un)intended consequences of policy layering*. Brookings Institution, Center for Universal Education. <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/singapores-educational-reforms-toward-holistic-outcomes/>
- Jafari, E., Liaghatdar, M. J., Mahmoudi, S., & Nasrabadi, H. A., (2012). Holistic education: An approach for 21st century. *International Education Studies*, 5(3), 178-186. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ies.v5n3p178>
- Krippendorff, K. (2018). *Content analysis: An introduction to its methodology* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2014). Culturally relevant pedagogy 2.0: aka the remix. *Harvard Educational Review*, 84(1), 74-84. <https://doi.org/10.17763/haer.84.1.p2rj131485484751>

- Lima, L., Nasir, M., Prastawa, S. Primarni, A. & Rijal, K. M. (2024). Philosophical Foundations of Holistic Education in the 21st Century. *International Journal of Educational Narrative*, 2(6), 471–482. <https://doi.org/10.70177/ijen.v2i6.1610>
- Liston, D. P., & Zeichner, K. M. (1996). *Reflective teaching: An introduction*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı [MEB]. (2023). *Türkiye Yüzyılı Maarif Modeli Tanıtım Dokümanı*. <https://mufredat.meb.gov.tr/>
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD]. (2018). *The future of education and skills: Education 2030*. OECD Publishing. <https://www.oecd.org/education/2030-project/>
- OECD. (2023). *OECD Digital Education Outlook 2023: Towards an effective digital education ecosystem*. OECD Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1787/c74f03de-en>
- Redecker, C. (2017). *European framework for the digital competence of educators: DigCompEdu*. Publications Office of the European Union. <https://doi.org/10.2760/159770>
- Saavedra, A. R., & Opfer, V. D. (2012). Teaching and learning 21st century skills: Lessons from the learning sciences. *Journal of Teaching and Teacher Education*, 2(1), 1-16.
- Sahlberg, P. (2015). *Finnish lessons 2.0: What can the world learn from educational change in Finland?* Teachers College Press.
- Saputra, D. G., Rodiah, I., & Zulaika, G., (2024). The importance of holistic education for early childhood: Integrating cognitive, emotional and social aspects. *Journal of Gemilang*, 1(3), 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.62872/s3mf4x22>
- Schön, D. A. (1983). *The reflective practitioner: How professionals think in action*. Basic Books.
- Senge, P. M. (2006). *The fifth discipline: The art & practice of the learning organization*. Currency.
- Şimşek, H., & Yıldırım, A. (2021). *Sosyal bilimlerde nitel araştırma yöntemleri* (12. baskı). Seçkin Yayıncılık.
- Tirri, K. (2011). Holistic school pedagogy and values: Finnish teachers' and students' perspectives. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 50(3), 159–165. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2011.07.010>
- Tomlinson, C. A. (2014). *The differentiated classroom: Responding to the needs of all learners* (2nd ed.). ASCD.
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO]. (2021). *Reimagining our futures together: A new social contract for education*. UNESCO Publishing. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000379707>