

## Legal Basis of Values Education in Schools in Turkey and the US, Ohio State\*

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### Abstract

The study was conducted to reveal and compare the legal basis of values education in Turkey and the United States of America, Ohio State. For this, firstly, both countries were handled separately, and then, in light of the collected data, a comparison was made using the document analysis method. While emphasizing the concept of values education, detailed statements on the subject in the Turkish education system, especially in the curriculum; in America, general expressions are included in the texts and there are fewer words as values education. Since the Turkish education system is centrally administered, the legal text is unchanged and the same across the country and for all children. However, America is made up of states. For this reason, the education system of each state is different from each other's. There may be some changes in the legal texts. In addition, there are general legal texts that concern all states in America. In both countries, there are various expressions for raising good citizens and good people. In addition, it has been determined that Atatürk's principles and reforms are also mentioned in the legal texts in Turkey. This can be expressed as placing it in legal texts so that an important value is not forgotten.

**Keywords:** Value, values education, legal text, school, comparison,

### Article Type

Research article

### Recommended Citation:

Kıral, B. (2022). Legal basis of values education in schools in Turkey and the US (Ohio State). *International Journal of New Trends and Impacts in Education (IJONTE)*13 (2), 58-65.

### Introduction

Education is one of the main ways of raising people. It is carried out through two channels such as family and country. Both families and countries expect their citizens to be good citizens. For this purpose, the national, spiritual, and cultural values of the society, and universal values are tried to be transferred to children. At this point, the importance of values and values education emerges. The word "value" is defined as the measure that helps to determine the importance of something, the value that something is worth (Turkish Language Society, 2022). When people think about what is important in their lives, values and value judgments are the first to come to mind. There are a lot of values (such as compassion, benevolence, love, respect, and conscience) of varying importance for all individuals living in society (Halstead & Taylor, 2000).

Six basic characteristics of values are mentioned. These are: (1) Values are beliefs. (2) Values express the goals that motivate people in their actions. (3) Values are superior to certain activities and situations. (4) Values are used as standards or benchmarks. (5) Values are ranked in order of importance relative to each other. (6) Multiple values move people (Bilsky & Schwartz, 1994; Schwartz, 2012; Schwartz & Bilsky, 1987). Values are beliefs, standards, and principles that guide behavior. It shows that the activities to be done are good or desirable. Love, equality, being free,

\*\*This study was composed of a part of the project supported within the scope of TUBITAK 2219-International Postdoctoral Research Fellowship program.

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being happy, peace, fairness, and truth can be given as examples of values accepted by people. In addition, values education is moral and citizenship education (Aydin, 2010; Halstead, 1996; Halstead & Taylor, 2000; Thomas, 1977). Studies on values education are carried out in schools. Studies aimed at the positive, ethical, and social development of children in schools and strengthening their success constitute values education (Berkowitz, 2011; Halstead & Taylor, 2000). It is aimed to create a healthy, consistent, and balanced personality in students with values education. As important as it is to teach mathematics and other courses to students, it is just as important to teach values. One of the most important elements that complete the education given in schools is values education (Aydin, 2010).

Aydin (2010) states that values are a phenomenon that can be taught and learned. Akbaba-Altun (2003) states that there cannot be an understanding of education that is free of values and does not include values. For this, states do deliberate enculturation through schools in order to bring various values to their citizens and to keep the existing culture continue (Kıral, 2017). According to Gültekin (2007), values education is a process that should be given in formal education and that helps the development and socialization of the personalities of future generations. The institutions that best place values education are schools; administrators and teachers play the most important role in this (Veugeliers, 2000; Veugeliers ve Vedder, 2003).

Studies on values education take place in the education systems of states and are mentioned in legal texts. One of these countries is Turkey and the other is the United States of America (US). The reason why Turkey and the US state of Ohio were chosen within the scope of the research is that when the crime rates on official websites are compared, the juvenile crime rates in the US are lower than in Turkey. In addition, when the official statistics of both countries are examined: There are several incidents (injured, theft, selling or buying drugs, and some addictions, threats, and other crimes) about children who came or were brought to the police department in 2020 is 114,038 in Turkey (the Turkish Statistical Institute-TUIK, 2021). In the US the ratio is 696,620 (US Department of Justice, Law Enforcement and Juvenile Crime, 2020). It is thought that this issue is closely related to the values that children gain from their families, society, and school, value judgments, and values education given by the state. In this regard, it is curious what is written in the legal texts about values education.

It is worthwhile to examine and compare the legal texts of a large cosmopolitan country like America, where people from different ethnicities, religions, languages, and races live, and a smaller, less ethnic, and diverse country like Turkey. For these reasons, it is aimed to investigate how the legal basis of values education is and to compare these two countries.

## Method

The study was designed as qualitative research, the data was collected from the official websites of the countries, and the document analysis method was used. In the document analysis method, first of all, data is found, selected, interpreted, evaluated, and synthesized (Kıral, 2020). For the study, the official websites containing the legal texts of both Turkey and the US were found, examined, evaluated, and analyzed.

## Data Collection and Analysis

For the documents used in the study, the official websites of the Ministry of National Education of Turkey and Ohio Department of Education, the US Department of Education were examined. In Turkey, The Basic Law of National Education (1973), the Constitution (1982), the 18th, 19th, and 20th National Education Councils, the "Circular on the First Lesson" numbered 2010/53, the 2023 Education Vision Document, the 2019-2023 strategic plan of the Ministry of National Education curriculum programs are analyzed.

In the US, both the official documents of Ohio and the general legal texts for all states were examined. These are Ohio's K-12 Social and Emotional Learning Standards (2019), the Ohio 2019-2024 strategic plan, Ohio Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), the Supporting

Alternatives for Fair Education (SAFE) Act, House Bill 318, Ohio Revised Code 3319.46, Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA, 2015) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Values in these documents and the parts related to values education were selected and included in the research. First, the sections in the legal texts related to the values of both countries are specified. Then, by comparing the collected data, the legal texts of the two countries were analyzed in terms of values education, and necessary comparisons and comments were made.

### **The Role of the Researcher**

While researching the values in the education system of both Turkey and Ohio state, the researcher meticulously complied with the scientific and ethical elements. It has checked the legal texts on the websites many times, and has provided confirmation by showing what has been done to an expert in the English language in order not to fall into semantic mistakes. This is important for the validity and reliability of the research. In addition, the researcher completed the research in accordance with the principles of honesty and impartiality.

### **Findings**

In this part of the study, the legal texts of values education in the education system of Turkey and Ohio state were first discussed separately, then the comparison of the two countries was made using the document analysis method in the light of the collected data.

#### **Turkey**

One of the general aims (2<sup>nd</sup> article) in "*the Basic Law of National Education in Turkey (1973)*" is Depending on Atatürk's reforms and principles and on Atatürk's nationalism as expressed in "*the Constitution (1982)*"; adopting, protecting and developing the national, moral, humanitarian, spiritual, and cultural values of the Turkish Nation; to raise citizens who love their family, homeland and nation, who always try to glorify them, who know their duties and responsibilities towards the Republic of Turkey, which is a democratic, secular and social state of law based on human rights and the basic principles at the beginning of the Constitution (1982), and who have made them behave.

It is seen that decisions about values education are taken in *the National Education Councils*, which have an important place in the Turkish education system. It is seen that recommendations were taken at "*the 18<sup>th</sup> National Education Council*", such as the "Values Education Project" being prepared and put into practice, and studies to raise awareness by considering national and universal values together in curricula (Decisions of the 18<sup>th</sup> National Education Council). In addition, it is recommended to continue the studies on values education in "*the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> National Education Councils*"; even in the 20<sup>th</sup> National Education Council, it was recommended that values education should be included with religion and morality.

The Ministry of National Education published "*the Circular on the First Lesson numbered 2010/53*", and accordingly, it stated that activities related to "Values Education" in pre-school, primary, and secondary education will be carried out in order to increase the competencies of the students in and out of the lesson and to ensure that they are reflected in their behaviors. In "*the 2023 Education Vision Document*", the school as a living space is expressed as the places where life skills are internalized together with universal, national, and spiritual virtues that add value and happiness to each of the children (2023 Vision Document, 2018). In "*the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan of the Ministry of National Education*", it is stated that it aims to gain values starting from preschool.

With the changes made in the curricula in 2004, the planned and legal placement of values education in the courses (such as Life Studies, and Social Studies) has been put into practice since 2005 (Turan & Ulusoy, 2016). When "*the curriculum programs*" of all grades of the courses prepared by the Board of Education and Discipline and available on the website are examined, ethics, fidelity, patience, mercy, love, compassion, moral values, benevolence, decency, modesty, conscientiousness, modesty, altruism, trust, modesty, frugality, respect, sensitivity to health, hard work, honesty, trust, sensitivity to differences, self-respect, courage, perseverance, self-control, awareness, moderation, versatility, rationality, responsibility, justice, friendship, helpfulness, sensitivity, cooperation, sharing, friendship, solidarity, peace, kindness, good manners, family ties, social benefit, sensitivity to cultural heritage,

patriotism, sensitivity to historical heritage, sensitivity to culture, national unity and solidarity, national values, independence, love of nation, love of flag, freedom, equality, values such as respect for rights, modernity, aesthetics, love of nature, environmental awareness, sensitivity to nature, avoidance of waste, and resilience (Curriculum Programs, 2018) appears to have taken.

### **The US, Ohio State**

When "*Ohio's K-12 Social and Emotional Learning Standards (2019)*" are examined "Social-emotional learning is the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes and skills to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships and make responsible decisions" (Ohio's K-12 Social and Emotional Learning Standards, 2019). The standards are based on five pillars. These are self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. Each of these five titles can actually be expressed as a part of values education. Below are direct quotes from them.

*Self-Awareness:* Self-awareness is the ability to accurately assess one's strengths and limitations with a sense of integrity, confidence and optimism. *Self-Management:* The ability to navigate one's emotions, thoughts and behaviors across different situations while managing stress, controlling impulses and motivating oneself, and ability to set and work toward personal and academic goals. *Social Awareness:* The ability to consider diverse perspectives of and empathize with others. It also reflects the ability to understand social and ethical norms for behavior across settings and to be able to identify and use family, school and community resources and supports. *Relationship Skills:* The ability to establish and maintain healthy relationships with diverse individuals and groups. Developing relationship skills promotes the ability to communicate clearly, listen well, cooperate with others, resist social and peer pressure, negotiate conflict and seek help or offer it to others. *Responsible Decision-Making:* The ability to make constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions within the context of ethical standards, safety concerns and social norms, and consideration of the well-being of self and others.

The vision, goals and strategies in "*the Ohio 2019-2024 Strategic Plan*" for education are discussed under three headings. These are equity, partnership, and quality in schools. What is emphasized with these is to raise individuals with character and value judgments that are both successful and beneficial to themselves and their environment. Strategy 2 of the strategic plan is about school administrators. "Successful school leaders create the conditions necessary for teachers to excel and students to succeed. They provide clear direction, analyze data, visit classrooms, transform building culture, review school and system goals and cultivate an environment of continuous learning that engages teachers in their professional learning at every step of the way." 7th strategy: "Ideally, each child's basic needs (for example, safety, social belonging, self-esteem, and self-actualization) must be met to enable deeper learning. Unless the whole child is considered and supported, the conditions for learning are less than optima."

"*Ohio Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)*" has identified an appropriate program. Ohio already developed school climate guidelines and anti-harassment and bullying guidelines, including the implementation of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports. For Ohio PBS "Principal promotes and implements a school-wide system for behavioral support and intervention." Its statement passes. Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports is a framework that guides districts and schools in developing policies and practices that proactively define, teach and support appropriate behavior. PBIS suggests a shift in thinking about behavior and discipline. Rather than telling students what not to do, emphasis is placed on teaching students what to do. Schools implementing PBIS actively teach behavioral expectations across all environments, promote positive behavior through encouragement and reinforcement, and provide correction of inappropriate behavior through prompting, re-teaching and opportunities to correct behavior. PBIS creates consistent, predictable learning environments that increase positive behavior and academic outcomes for each student "*(the Supporting Alternatives for Fair Education (SAFE) Act, House Bill 318)*". And also "*Ohio Revised Code 3319.46*" is about PBIS' policy and rules.

"Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA, 2015)" also Sec. 4108. Activities to Support Safe and Healthy Students "(2) foster safe, healthy, supportive, and drug-free environments that support student academic achievement; (G) implementation of school wide positive behavioral interventions and supports, including through coordination with similar activities carried out under "the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act", in order to improve academic outcomes and school conditions for student learning. TITLE VIII—General Provisions Sec. 8001. General Provisions, (xii) are designed to give teachers of children with disabilities or children with developmental delays, and other teachers and instructional staff, the knowledge and skills to provide instruction and academic support services, to those children, including positive behavioral interventions and supports, multi-tier system of supports, and use of accommodations.

Since the Turkish education system is managed centrally, the things to be done starting from the constitution are clearly stated. In addition, everything is given in detail in the curriculum. In particular, the subject of values education is emphasized more, and the values and value expressions that should be taught in schools are mentioned in detail. However, the education system in the US varies according to the states. Each state's own education department decides what to do, and there may be changes in the legal texts in the states for this reason. In addition, there are basic legal texts valid for all states. Value statements are more limited in legal texts in the US. It is seen that an expression such as values education is less common when compared to the Turkish education system. Table 1 shows the comparison of Turkey and Ohio.

**Table 1**

*Comparison of Turkey and the US, Ohio State*

Comp.	Turkey	Ohio
Legal text.	the Basic Law of National Education in Turkey (1973) the Constitution (1982) the National Education Councils the 18th/19th/20th National Education Council the "Circular on the First Lesson" numbered 2010/53 the 2023 Education Vision Document the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan of the Ministry of National Education the curriculum programs	Ohio's K-12 Social and Emotional Learning Standards (2019) the Ohio 2019-2024 Strategic Plan Ohio Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) the Supporting Alternatives for Fair Education (SAFE) Act, House Bill 318 Ohio Revised Code 3319.46 Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA, 2015) the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
Important issues in legal text	Atatürk's principles and reforms Adopting, protecting and developing the national, moral, humanitarian, spiritual, and cultural values Citizen, family, homeland, and national, spiritual, Turkey republic, universal values, duties, and responsibilities	Social-emotional learning Manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships and make responsible decisions Understand social and ethical norms for behavior family, school, and community resources and supports. Healthy relationships with diverse individuals and groups. Developing relationship skills promotes the ability to communicate clearly, listen well, cooperate with others, resist social and peer pressure, negotiate conflict and seek help or offer it to others Ethical standards, safety concerns and social norms, and consideration of the well-being of self and others. Equity, partnership, and quality schools. Foster safe, healthy, supportive, and drug-free environments that support student academic achievement; implementation of school wide positive behavioral interventions and supports

<b>Value words/expressions</b>	Ethics, fidelity, patience, mercy, love, compassion, moral values, benevolence, decency, modesty, conscientiousness, modesty, altruism, trust, modesty, frugality, respect, sensitivity to health, hard work, honesty, trust, sensitivity to differences, self-respect, courage, perseverance, self-control, awareness, moderation, versatility, rationality, responsibility, justice, friendship, helpfulness, sensitivity, cooperation, sharing, friendship, solidarity, peace, kindness, good manners, family ties, social benefit, sensitivity to cultural heritage, patriotism, sensitivity to historical heritage, sensitivity to culture, national unity and solidarity, national values, independence, love of nation, love of flag, freedom, equality, values such as respect for rights, modernity, aesthetics, love of nature, environmental awareness, sensitivity to nature, avoidance of waste, and resilience	Self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. integrity, confidence and optimism managing stress, controlling impulses and motivating oneself, and ability to set and work toward personal and academic goals. Empathize Safety, social belonging, self-esteem, and self-actualization
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As seen in Table 1, both countries give importance to values and values education. Along with these, a striking element is an adherence to Atatürk's principles and reforms in legal texts in Turkey. Because Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the Turkish republic, and the way he showed are also valuable. There are a number of elements that hold societies together. Among these are the love of homeland and flag, customs, traditions and customs, in short, loyalty to the culture, living and keeping the culture alive. Apart from this, although ethical elements are included in legal texts in Turkey, it is seen that more emphasis is placed on ethical provisions in Ohio.

### Conclusion and Discussion

When the legal texts in Turkey and the US, Ohio State are compared, it is seen that both countries have taken decisions to develop their children both academically and behaviorally. The aim is to protect and develop both children. For this reason, there are expressions for these in every legal text. While emphasizing the concept of values education, detailed statements on the subject in the Turkish education system, especially in the curriculum. In America, on the other hand, general expressions are included in the texts and there is no expression such as values education. Since the Turkish education system is centrally administered, the legal text is unchanged and the same across the country and for all children. However, the US is made up of 50 states. For this reason, the education system of each state is different from each other. There may be some changes in the legal texts. In addition, there are general legal texts that concern all states in America. In both countries, there are various expressions for raising good citizens and good people. The aim is to raise healthy generations. And the prepared legal texts have been prepared in the best interests of the child. When legal texts (Children's Rights Convention, etc.) or institutions (UNICEFF, WHO, United Nations, etc.) prepared for all children of the world are considered, it is aimed at the best interests of the child.

There are certain values that enable a society to survive. Concepts such as honesty, tolerance, love, respect, responsibility, kindness and cooperation are as important as academic success (Kiral & Dinçer, 2018). Today, many researchers and educators think that academic success alone is not enough; They think that the student's fullness of knowledge is not enough to make him successful in life. For this reason, they sought to add value to children (Aydın, 2010). Teaching values to children at schools is extremely important in terms of creating a healthy society (Turan & Ulusoy, 2016). It can be said that teaching values is as important as teaching mathematics and other courses. In addition, it has been determined that Atatürk's principles and reforms are also mentioned in the legal texts in Turkey. This, of course, can be expressed as placing it in legal texts so that an important value is not forgotten.

In schools, the individual is considered as a whole, and efforts are made to develop both academically and the characteristics that make people human (Halstead, 1996; Halstead & Taylor, 2000). Raising individuals who are equipped with certain values and who can apply these values in every unit of their life is not only among the responsibilities of the family but also of the school (Tulunay-Ateş, 2017).

The most important purpose of education is to provide the individual with knowledge and skills in this process, as well as to surround him with certain values (Ateş, 2013). In particular, it is very important to bring certain values to students and to prepare them consciously for the future starting from primary education (Aladağ, 2009). The aims of education express the characteristics that are desired to be achieved in all schools and all courses (Kıral, 2019). Accordingly, teaching values is the common goal of all courses or all school staff (Meydan, 2012). Which behaviors are right and which behaviors are wrong for a newborn person, and which basic values a person should lead his life to, have been consciously and deliberately placed in educational legal texts and school programs by the states. In this framework, it can be said that teaching values is among the most important aims of education all over the world.

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