

OPPORTUNITIES OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF VALUES IN THE INTEREST-RELATED EDUCATION OF ADOLESCENTS

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Abstract. *Many schools and different educational institutions offer a wide range of out-of-class activities that promote the development of adolescents for a world in which people need to collaborate, to trust each other, to respect other people, different views and traditions. These activities deepen the knowledge acquired in the class in different school subjects, music, art, the use of modern technologies and in other fields. Interest-related education (out-of-class) activities support school teachers and parents in the process of the development of skills, abilities and personal traits, values for life. The task of any teacher in schools and out-of-school activities is to integrate the development of values in their daily activities. The teachers become the managers of the process of the development of values. A small-scale research was carried out with the aim to learn the priority values of teachers working in interest related education and the opportunities of interest-related education in the development of values of adolescents. The questionnaires were used to reach the aim of the research.*

Keywords: *development of values, interest-related education, values.*

Introduction

All over the world, the tendencies inherent to global time of change are reflected: population movement, economy crises, disparity between overpopulated and less populated regions, disproportion in distribution of wealth, technologies, knowledge. This time is characterised by searching for new standards of living, verifying values, seeking for the new understanding of centuries old phenomena: knowledge, teaching and education, virtues, work and profession, values orientation. (Kūle, 2016) The future of this world will be created by nowadays children and junior-youth, especially junior-youth. Intellectual curiosity, expanding boundaries, implementation of innovations that often contradict the existing models, which are convenient for their parents, teachers and other adults, are characteristic to their age. Junior-youth and youth usually support changes, however their values orientation is inconsistent and is influenced by the environment (Круглов, 1989), nevertheless in this context, for grasping what kind of the world we might see in the middle of the 21st century, it is important to investigate what is happening in the minds of modern junior-youth.

The aim of the article is to reveal the opportunities of the development of values in interest – related education and priority values of teachers working in interest related education. The questionnaires were used to reach the aim.

Theoretical Framework

Values and value orientation is under discussion for centuries. Many researchers (Spranger, 1928; Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz, 1992, 1994; Karpova, 1994; Milts, 1999; Šteinberga & Tunne, 1999; Aspin, 2000; Allport et al., 1951; Lasmane, 2004) have viewed value and value orientation from the different points of you. Values and value orientation are understood as a complex phenomenon.

Formation of the values orientation is related to psychological processes; its content and hierarchy are studied in sociology and philosophy (Круглов, 1989). Within the framework of this study the values orientation of junior-youth is being recognized, analysed and linked to attitudes, decisions and, in particular cases, actions of principals of institutions, teachers of interest-related education and adolescents, with the aim of understanding the education management factors that can influence values orientation development.

Substantial aspect of values orientation (what are adolescent's goals in life, what they want to achieve or obtain, whether they place a priority on personal or social interests, etc.) helps understand whether the adolescent's values match the interests of the society. Each person may have their own values structure and in this structure all values are arranged in definite hierarchic relations (Круглов, 1989).

Value orientation by Oxford dictionary is explained as “the direction given to a person's attitudes and thinking by his or her beliefs or standards; an instance of this”. The explanatory dictionary of Pedagogy terms interrelates the attitude, behaviour and values orientation (Pedagoģijas., 2000): “The nature of person's attitude is determined by their (subjective) values orientation from which they derive their behaviour norms. Individuals values orientation and experience mutually determine one another.”

Values orientation reveals person's conscious and concerned attitude towards social reality. It plays a central role in creating motivation, behaviour and it influences all spheres of life. Values orientation is a foundation and necessary condition for “child” at the beginning of junior-youth years to grow into “youth” at their end. Substantial aspect of values orientation (what are adolescent's goals in life, what they want to achieve or obtain, whether they place a priority on personal or social interests, etc.) helps to understand whether the adolescent's values match the interests of the society.

Values orientation is

- path, focus, goal of values;
- impact of humans behaviour.

René Clarijs emphasizes that interest-related education helps to develop competences and skills. He mentions various competences, for example, personal, educational, health, physical, social, professional, artistic, and civil. Among the skills the following are listed: leadership, communication, language proficiency, active listening, planning, teamwork, empathy, conflict solving, critical thinking, self-awareness, discipline, responsibility, emotional development, sensibility. These skills are reflected in definite behaviours and attitudes, for example, respect, tolerance, community spirit, responsibility, independence, confidence, self-esteem, nonviolent behaviour, sense of belonging, open-mindedness. (Clarijs, 2008)

In the author's opinion, values orientation is a foundation and a necessary condition for "child" at the beginning of junior-youth years to grow into "youth" at their end. Values orientation reveals person's conscious and concerned attitude towards social reality. It plays a central role in creating motivation, behaviour and it influences all spheres of life.

However, a society has the notion of which values and which attitudes the adolescent should have, therefore there is social demand for it. In Latvia since 2016 such social demand has been embodied in writing and formalized in legislation by means of Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers (Ministru..., 2016); in the process of development non-governmental organisations, education establishments, experts in philosophy and pedagogy were involved. In the new educational reform, which concerns with the content and form of education, special attention is paid to creating of attitudes.

This research considers junior-youth in the age group from 11 to 16. This is the age, when limitations of childhood begin to have less influence over young people, and slowly emerges feeling of freedom essential for youth. At the adolescence the independence, feeling of justice, desire to understand the essence of things, tendency for active performance, realizing their talents and abilities through definite action are the most pronounced. Behaviour of junior-youth, compared to children, is less influenced by position of adults (parents and teachers), but more by the treatment and attitude of peers and youth.

At the final stage of adolescence, about the age of 15-16, they become youth, whose personality traits, attitudes, behaviour and values will determine their further lives. Changing, correcting them at later stages of life will require much more personal effort and willpower. Therefore, the adolescence is particularly important time for developing individuality. At the same time, it is one of the most complicated stages in human life, because during this time the abilities of mind, self-confidence, self-esteem and independence are developing, the circle of

contacts expands, with whom adolescents have to communicate and coordinate their behaviour, as well as the body of adolescents undergoes substantial physiological changes. It is characteristic of adolescents to form groups of friends of the similar age, with one a little bit more experienced youth, that inspire and guide them. Junior-youth individually and collectively solve issues about their growth, inner and outer changes of their body, rights of being independent from adults, interrelation problems, future plans, various events, interests, leisure time activities and educational achievements. They become interested in existential questions: what the purpose of life is, how to find one's place in the society, how to choose trade and profession, why there are contradictions between moral standards and conduct of adults. (Ruhi Institute, 2017)

This general description of the group proves that there are common qualities of the age group, however the age bracket is defined and each individual expresses them differently. Individual personality traits are bound to psychological and physiological features, character, general level of development; they influence experiences in family, school, other social group, including the interest-related education in the institutions.

Interest-related education is a part of non-formal education of Latvia and is defined in the Education Law (Saeima, 1998). It ensures realisation of individual educational needs and wishes regardless of age. Traditionally, interest-related education is meant for the age group ranging from 2 up to 25 years. Interest-related education is optional

Interest-related education does not require previous education or special skills and abilities. However, some clubs are so popular that competitions for applicants are held.

Interest-related education institutions play an important role in the educational system of Latvia. They ensure not only interest-related education, but also services for purposeful leisure activities. During these activities students learn to act together, to live together, to respect each other and to use the time in common interests.

As opposed to general education schools, the interest-related education programmes are held continuously from September to August. Club activities are usually held once or twice a week after school hours and at weekends, as well as during school holidays (Kalniņa et al., 2012). It means that there is again an opportunity to be in contacts with friends to learn to communicate, to help each other, to support each other.

Programs of interest-related education are implemented in 5 fields (Kalniņa et al., 2012):

- Cultural Education (e.g., dancing, music, visual and plastic arts, theatre, folklore);

- Sports Education (e.g., chess, checkers, orienteering, sport dance, rhythmic gymnastics, badminton);
- Technical Creativity (e.g., car modelling, rocket modelling, electronics, programming, photo, and video);
- Environmental Education (e.g. Environmental Research, Ecology, Botany, Zoology);
- other educational programmes (e.g. youth work, journalism, creative writing, local history).

Every field has its specific content that promotes the development of attitudes, behaviour and beliefs, interests that are the components of value orientation.

Coordinators of the club assess the work performed and train participants of the club to assess and be responsible for their own performance. The results analysis stage overlaps with implementation stage because it is necessary to analyse collectively obtained results, to assess all achievements and setbacks. The quality of the subsequent work depends on the previously made analysis. (Kalniņa et al., 2012)

Atmosphere in the group is generally relaxed and friendly. This condition encourages the students learn to listen and cooperate. By doing this they strengthen one another's self-esteem, decrease inattention and help avoid inferiority complex.

Work of the clubs is organized on the basis of the initiative of their participants. Children with similar interests come to clubs. They are not afraid of sharing their ideas and opinions because they are accepted without criticism and mockery. Work in the clubs provides an opportunity for close cooperation and communication between students of different ages, who meet in favourable emotional atmosphere grounded in common interests and needs. (Kalniņa et al., 2012)

Interest-related education is offered in several forms: activities in clubs, teams and bands, individual work, interest-related clubs, camps, events, competitions, contests, as well as participation in different projects, etc.

A teacher is a very important actor in interest related education. The teacher has to act as a real professional with different age groups, the offered programme has to be attractive and value developing for adolescents. The teacher has to know how to cooperate with parents and society. The teacher becomes the facilitator, coordinator, collaborator and leader in his/her field. If teacher himself/herself has high values, expectations then he/she will be able to support the development of values in the students.

It allows to do the conclusion that all these above mentioned forms, the content of different fields, the collaborative work of teachers, parents and

neighbouring society, teacher's personal traits, values and skills give the input in the development of value orientation in interest related education.

Research Results

The research work was carried out with the aim to learn the priority values of teachers working in interest related education and the opportunities of interest-related education in the development of values of adolescents. The questionnaires were used to reach the aim of the research.

For the research the survey on the internet was used, which enabled access to information on the interest related education institutions all over Latvia. The author realises that administration and teachers who are not confident enough in their technological proficiency could refuse to participate in the research. The questions in the questionnaire divided into several groups that covered general questions about the respondent and institution, statistical information and resources of the institution and teachers, about aims, strategy and management, about interest-related education programmes, about students and cooperation with their parents, about values education in the institution. Questions for this research were adjusted for institutions of the interest-related education from the questionnaires in the field of education (International., 2015a; International., 2015b; OECD., 2011) and values (Baltic., 2001; Valsts., 2011), as well as some questions from the author were added. Reliability analysis was verified using Cronbach's Alpha, which for teachers' questionnaires was 0.643 (acceptable), and for principals' questionnaires 0.794 (good).

Within the framework of the research, information was received from 178 principals and 310 teachers. They represent a cross-section of all regions of Latvia. In both groups nearly 90 % of respondents are from state and municipal institutions, and the rest – from private institutions; gender-wise – nearly 85 % of respondents are female. The latter static reflects gender imbalance in educational institutions of Latvia.

One of questions for principals of institutions was about availability of institutions of similar kind in the neighbourhood. 71.3 % of respondents answered that there is at least one institution of similar kind in the neighbourhood. In the big cities, competition among institutions is very high; two or more institutions are available in 71.4 % of cases. But in rural areas this number is only 37.8 %.

Principals of institutions answered which interest-related education programmes are available in their institutions. Cultural Education is the most represented (156 institutions or 87.6 %), it is followed by Sports (127; 71.3 %), Environmental Education (78; 43.8 %) and Technical Creativity (72; 40.4 %). Principals of 64 institutions (36.0 %) noted that they have other interest-related education programs.

Principals were asked how many programmes of interest-related education are realized in their institution. Number of programmes in the institution can be divided into three major groups:

- Small number of programmes (5 and less programmes) – 31.5 % of institutions;
- Medium number of programmes (6 to 11 programmes) – 33.1 %;
- Large number of programmes (12 and more programmes) – 35.4 %.

Most principals in the category of Cultural Education and Sports indicated that they do not lack or slightly lack qualified teachers. Three fields of interest-related education where the lack of teachers influences work are Technical Creativity (49.4 %), Other Educational Programmes (33.7 %) and Environmental Education (21.4 %). It was earlier established that less programs are being implemented in these fields and, possibly, the reason for this is lack of experienced teachers. It allows to make the conclusion that the offer is big and the students and their parents can choose the adequate field for child s interest.

Separate group of questions was related to number of participating students. The first question was about the total number of students in the institution, the second about the number of students in the interest-related education programmes, and the third, about the number of 11-16-year-old participants in the interest-related education programmes. Total number of students in institution varies very much from 4 to 3,583 students.

According to information gathered, 178 institutions of different profile represent 56,664 students of various age (51.3 % girls), of which 42,808 students (55.5 % girls) take part in the interest-related education programmes in the same institution, of which 20,382 are 11-16-year-old adolescents (56.4 % girls). The number of participants in interest related education demonstrates the interest in it and use the offered opportunities.

Only qualified teachers can support the development of values by working out an attractive programme and implementing it. Because of that the author analysed the composition of staff in interest related education. A person who has Higher Teacher Education or has completed a professional development education program in teaching, can work as a teacher of interest-related education. (Ministru., 2014) More than 60 % of teachers with Teacher Education work in institutions of interest-related education. However, at least one third of them are teachers with education in other fields. This is because interest-related education require specific competencies, for example, artistic or athletic skills. Interest-related education is typically implemented by professionals, for example, professional artists, dancers, actors, scientists, motocross riders, etc.

Teachers were asked to comment on four forms of educational activities:

- Entire group together;

- Students are divided in smaller groups;
- Individually;
- Students work independently according to given plan or goal.

In terms of frequency, teachers use the following forms of educational work: “Entire group together” (72.1 %), “Individually” (62.6 %), “Students work independently according to given plan or goal” (43.9 %), “Students are divided in smaller groups” (32.3 %). So teachers in interest-related education not so often use methods that facilitate student cooperation and develop their ability to solve problems.

However, collaboration of educational institution and parents, and the general public, is necessary for successful support in interest related education. Index “Parents' involvement into the life of institution” is based on the answers of principals about parents' involvement in educational and social activities in the institution. High level of parent involvement is observed in primary school and elementary school; at that first stage of education parents pay special attention to children, following both their studies and participation in the interest-related education clubs. At the later stages, beginning with junior-youth years, parents shift responsibility from adolescents' studies and free time activities onto their younger children. According to place of residence, parents in rural area are more involved in life and events of institution. In author's opinion, it can be explained by the fact that in the countryside the only places for purposeful leisure activities for adults are educational institutions, libraries or clubs.

Another index about parent involvement is based on the ways how the institution organises collaboration with parents. This index assessed activities held by the institution for building collaboration with parents or for encouraging parents to take part in events. High level of collaboration of the institution with students' parents is especially usual in general education schools, private institutions, as well as in institutions with medium number of education programmes in small towns or in countryside.

Principals of institutions were asked about collaboration with society as a whole. Low level of collaboration with society is common for non-educational institutions that work in neighbourhoods with several similar institutions. The same applies to private institutions, in cities, and for institutions with small number of interest-related programmes. High level of collaboration with the society is more often met in interest-related education institutions for children and youth, secondary schools and grammar schools, state institutions, in small towns, in institutions with medium and high number of interest-related programmes.

As opposed to general education, interest-related education programmes are not standardised, they are easy to adjust and to change according to student's wishes and needs. When learning in an informal environment both children, and

youth, have an opportunity to understand, what do they want, what do they like, what will they continue doing and what activities are not suitable for them. Index of students' behaviour is based on the questions about respect and behaviour of students. Generally, teachers of the interest-related education give a high rating to students' behaviour. Teachers from interest-related education institutions for children and youth in 90 % of cases consider that students' behaviour is at a high level, they respect each other.

Index "Teachers' focus on education of students" is based on the replies of principals about teachers' attitude towards moral, social and emotional development. Teachers with high focus on education of students are especially common in private institutions and in Riga region.

One question in the segment of values education was about personality traits to which the institution pays special attention for helping students with their development. Both principals and teachers were asked this question. For both respondent groups highest and lowest values coincide. (Table 1) Differences are seen only in the median range of rating. Top 5 qualities are as follows: sense of responsibility, tolerance, honesty, diligence and good behaviour.

Table 1 **Personality traits to which the institution pays special attention**

	<i>Personality traits to which the institution pays special attention (institution)</i>			<i>Personality traits to which the institution pays special attention (teachers)</i>		
	<i>Responses</i>		<i>Percent of Cases</i>	<i>Responses</i>		<i>Percent of Cases</i>
	<i>N</i>	<i>Percent</i>		<i>N</i>	<i>Percent</i>	
<i>Sense of responsibility</i>	138	14.7%	79.3%	254	16.4%	81.9%
<i>Tolerance</i>	119	12.7%	68.4%	197	12.7%	63.5%
<i>Honesty</i>	110	11.7%	63.2%	179	11.5%	57.7%
<i>Diligence</i>	90	9.6%	51.7%	165	10.6%	53.2%
<i>Good behaviour</i>	86	9.1%	49.4%	139	9.0%	44.8%
<i>Truthfulness</i>	64	6.8%	36.8%	98	6.3%	31.6%
<i>Courage</i>	57	6.1%	32.8%	71	4.6%	22.9%
<i>Solidarity</i>	38	4.0%	21.8%	52	3.4%	16.8%
<i>Imagination</i>	36	3.8%	20.7%	62	4.0%	20.0%
<i>Cleverness</i>	36	3.8%	20.7%	61	3.9%	19.7%
<i>Independence</i>	35	3.7%	20.1%	63	4.1%	20.3%
<i>Compassion</i>	35	3.7%	20.1%	44	2.8%	14.2%
<i>Composure</i>	29	3.1%	16.7%	34	2.2%	11.0%
<i>Determination</i>	26	2.8%	14.9%	62	4.0%	20.0%
<i>Thrift</i>	15	1.6%	8.6%	30	1.9%	9.7%
<i>Moderation</i>	10	1.1%	5.7%	7	0.5%	2.3%
<i>Obedience</i>	9	1.0%	5.2%	19	1.2%	6.1%
<i>Religious belief</i>	5	0.5%	2.9%	4	0.3%	1.3%
<i>Selflessness</i>	2	0.2%	1.1%	9	0.6%	2.9%
<i>Total</i>	940	100.0%	540.2%	1550	100.0%	500.0%

Teachers were asked how important in their life are ten qualities based on a scale from one to four. Comparing the results average values, for teachers the most important values are: family (3.87), work (3.58) belonging to Latvia (3.48), in the median range are work (3.37), culture (3.25), free time (2.98) and friends and acquaintances (2.94). Considered less important by teachers are religion and philosophy of life (2.51), sports (2.50) and politics (2.05). The first three values and “friends” none of the teachers marked “Not important”. It means that these qualities are important to every teacher, but degree of importance varies.

Conclusions

This research considers adolescents in the age group from 11 to 16. This is the age when limitations of childhood begin to have less influence over young people, and when feeling of freedom-essential to youth-slowly emerges. During junior-youth years independence, feeling of justice, desire to understand the essence of things, tendency for active performance, realizing their talents and abilities through definite action are the most pronounced. Behaviour of adolescents, compared to children is less influenced by position of adults (parents and teachers), but more by the treatment and attitude of peers and youth. It is characteristic of adolescents to form groups of friends of the similar age.

Interest-related education plays an important role in awakening children and youth’s cognitive interest-related inclination and motivating them. Children and youth spend several hours a week at the interest-related education activities. It gives opportunity for creating situations of success for each child and youth. Leisure and educational work overlap in interest-related education. Children and youth activities in different interest-related education fields stimulate self-realisation and creativity. Social adjustment of children and youth is enhanced by interest-related education. This social adjustment leads to development of orientation towards system of humanistic values. The task of any teacher in school and out-of-school activities is to integrate the development of values in their daily activities. The teachers become the facilitators of the process of the development of values.

During the period of preparation to adulthood, it is very important to develop skills and abilities of collaboration and problem solving. In case adolescents lack these skills, they run the risk of inefficient development. (Karpova, 1994) The research shows that, despite this fact, teachers in interest related education prefer using frontal teaching instead of methods that encourage collaboration and problem solving.

The research results demonstrate that there is a big offer for students to be involved in different fields of interest related education. The diverse content, use of different forms, improving the professionalism of teachers, cooperation with

parents and society could give an impact on the development of values of adolescents in the interest related education.

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