ÖLMEZ, H., ARSLANBUĞA, İ., AKÇA, M., KAYA, A. (2024). **"Ethical Concepts in Education"**. *International Journal of Social Science, Innovation and Educational Technologies (Online)"*, Vol: 5, Issue: 18, pp: 203-209

Ethical Concepts in Education

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Abstract

Ethical education encourages students to distinguish between right and wrong, determine their values, and act in line with ethical principles. At the same time, it establishes the professional responsibilities of teachers, their duties to students and their responsibilities to society. This ensures that the teaching process takes place in an environment that is fair, respectful, honest and encourages personal growth. Ethical reasoning is the ability of individuals to make decisions and direct their behavior in line with moral values, and it plays a critical role in being successful in business and personal relationships. This study examines the importance and effects of ethical understandings in education. As a result, education systems should adopt more comprehensive and holistic approaches to support the moral development of students, thus positively influencing the overall moral structure of society and the quality of the education system.

INTRODUCTION

Today, colleges and universities place a great emphasis on providing students with academic content knowledge and critical thinking skills. However, when the main reasons for students' failures in business life, friendship relationships and marriages are examined, it is understood that these failures are mostly not due to lack of content knowledge or academic reasoning. Moreover, the complexities of modern life demand more than just academic prowess. Success in business, interpersonal relationships, and marital harmony often hinge on qualities such as emotional intelligence,

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communication skills, and ethical judgment. While academic knowledge is undoubtedly valuable, it is often these softer skills that determine an individual's ability to navigate the complexities of the real world. Therefore, it is imperative for educational institutions to broaden their focus beyond traditional academic subjects and incorporate holistic approaches to student development.

Furthermore, the rapid pace of technological advancement and globalization has reshaped the landscape of professional and personal interactions. In today's interconnected world, individuals must not only possess technical expertise but also demonstrate adaptability, cultural competence, and ethical integrity. Failure to cultivate these attributes alongside academic knowledge can leave individuals ill-prepared to thrive in diverse and dynamic environments, contributing to setbacks in both their professional and personal lives.

In light of these considerations, it becomes evident that education should aim to foster not only intellectual growth but also moral and emotional maturity. By nurturing qualities such as empathy, integrity, and resilience, educational institutions can empower students to become well-rounded individuals capable of making positive contributions to society. Ultimately, a balanced approach to education—one that values both academic excellence and ethical development—holds the key to preparing students for success in all facets of life.

Rather, these failures are due to a lack of ethical reasoning (Sternberg, 2012). Ethical understandings in education aim to ensure that the behaviors and decisions of all stakeholders involved in educational processes (students, teachers, administrators, parents, society) are in accordance with moral and ethical principles. Ethics in education refers to the system of values that guide the determination of right and wrong. This study examines the importance and effects of ethical understandings in education.

Ethic

Ethics is a set of standards and practices that determine how people should behave in various roles (friend, parent, citizen, business person, professional, etc.) (Velasquez et al., 2021). These ethical standards serve as guiding beacons in navigating the complexities of human interactions and decision-making processes. They provide individuals with a framework for distinguishing right from wrong, guiding their actions towards morally sound outcomes. Whether in personal relationships, community engagement, or business dealings, adherence to ethical principles fosters trust, integrity, and mutual respect among individuals and institutions.

Ethics play a pivotal role in shaping societal norms and fostering a culture of accountability and responsibility. By upholding ethical standards in their daily lives, individuals contribute to the maintenance of a just and equitable society. Ethical behavior not only benefits individuals on a personal level but also has broader implications for the collective well-being of communities and

nations. Therefore, integrating ethical education into various spheres of life is essential for cultivating a culture of integrity and social cohesion.

Education develops students' ability to exercise moral reasoning and comprehend the distinction between right and wrong. This ensures that students are able to make informed decisions when evaluating various moral dilemmas. Students gain the ability to define and act in accordance with their own ethical values and beliefs in the educational process. This reinforces their character development and sense of individual responsibility. Students are encouraged to act in line with ethical principles. This enables them to understand their social responsibilities and adopt ethical behavior. Ethical education encourages students to distinguish between right and wrong, determine their values, and act in line with ethical principles. At the same time, it establishes the professional responsibilities of teachers, their duties to students and their responsibilities to society. This ensures that the teaching process takes place in an environment that is fair, respectful, honest and encourages personal growth. Ethical reasoning is the ability of individuals to make decisions and direct their behavior in line with moral values, and it plays a critical role in being successful in business and personal relationships (Paschal, 2023).

The Importance of Ethical Reasoning

Ethical reasoning is the ability of individuals to make decisions and direct their behavior in line with moral values and principles. Strong ethical reasoning plays a critical role in helping individuals succeed in various areas of their lives. Strong ethical reasoning contributes to the growth of students and educators as more conscious, responsible and ethical individuals.

Ethical considerations are critical in decision-making processes in any organization (Hyatt & Gruenglas, 2023). When organizations adhere to ethical principles, they build trust and respect for both their internal and external stakeholders. The development of reasoning skills is recognized as a central goal of ethics and philosophy courses in school education (Meyer, 2024).

Table 1. The Difference Between Reasoning and Moral Behavior

Reasoning Ability: Courses in ethics and philosophy are often aimed at providing students with the ability to analyze complex moral situations and reach logical conclusions. This enables students to make rational and consistent decisions in the face of moral dilemmas.	Moral Behavior: However, there may not always be a direct relationship between reasoning ability and moral behavior. Just because people know what's right doesn't guarantee they will always do the right thing. Emotions, habits, and social pressures can influence moral decisions.
Reasoning is the mental process that allows individuals to evaluate certain situations and	Moral behavior is the actions and behaviors that individuals actually perform in line with the

make logical and ethical decisions among various options.	ethical and moral principles they determine in the reasoning process.

Source: Table 1 was created by the authors.

In summary, reasoning determines how and why an individual makes moral decisions; Moral behavior indicates how these decisions are applied in everyday life. Both processes complement each other and ensure the ethical integrity of the individual.

The process of moral decision-making, its maturation over time, and its relationship to behavior is quite complex. To fully understand moral decision-making, moral development, and moral behavior, it is necessary to examine the following elements (Garrian et al., 2018):

(a) how real-time moral decisions are made under the influence of social and contextual factors;

(b) what are the processes that make it possible for mature moral decisions to be made;

 (c) how these processes have evolved over time, and

 (d) how moral decisions are linked to behavior.

The Importance of Moral Development in Education

The essence of moral education is the process by which educators transform their social thinking and concepts of virtue ethics into individual considerations and morality through a variety of educational tools (Solomon et al., 2001; Chen et al., 2023). The rapid advancement of postmodern technology has added a new dimension that includes the determination of moral norms in the mass media and the internet and the implementation of moral education accordingly (Wanxue and Hanwei, 2004; Li et al., 2017; Chang et al., 2018; Chen et al., 2023).

Internalization of Values: Moral education should not only teach moral rules, but also ensure that these rules are internalized. When students internalize values, they are more likely to behave according to moral principles.

Modeling and Practice: The learning of moral values should be supported by role models and practical applications. Students learn by observing and practicing ethical behaviors.

Strategies of Moral Education

The strategies of moral education include various methods to help students adopt ethical values and moral behaviors.

Moral Debates: Reflecting on moral debates and dilemmas in the classroom can improve students' moral sensitivities and reasoning abilities. Ethical issues can be integrated into the course content to engage students and raise awareness. In this way, students have the opportunity to analyze and

discuss moral issues. Drawing on real-life examples, students can be presented with ideas on how to deal with moral challenges. These analyses develop students' ethical reasoning abilities while also encouraging their practical application.

Developing Empathy: As part of moral education, empathy development studies enable students to understand the feelings and perspectives of others.

Community Projects: Community service projects and volunteering activities allow students to put moral values into practice. Community service projects emphasize to students the importance of helping others and contributing to society. These projects enable students to practice their moral values while strengthening their ability to empathize.

Schuitema et al. (2008) stated in their study that the majority of research focuses on the 'what' and 'why' questions of curriculum-oriented moral education, that is, its goals.

Moral education should not be limited to the development of reasoning skills (Chen et al., 2023). It should also cover students' emotional and social skills. It is important that moral education is sensitive to different cultural and individual perspectives. Different values and belief systems must be taken into account in moral education.

Ethical Principles in Education

All teaching is associated with four core values such as honor, integrity, justice, responsibility, and freedom. The teacher-student relationship, diversity, or its relatedness to the teacher's profession is based on ethical principles in all cases (OAJ, 2020).

Figure 1. Ethical Principles in Education

Confidentiality and Confidentiality: The confidentiality of students' personal information must be protected. This is important in order to gain students' trust and respect their privacy.

Professional Boundaries: Educators should act in accordance with ethical rules in their relationships with students while maintaining their professional boundaries.

Ethical Dilemmas and Remedies: When educators encounter ethical dilemmas, they should make use of ethical principles and professional guidance to solve them.

Result

Ethics in education provides a guiding set of principles for both students and educators. These principles ensure that the teaching process takes place in an environment that is fair, respectful, honest and encourages personal development. The adoption of ethical principles in education contributes to students and educators becoming more conscious, responsible and ethical individuals. This, in turn, positively affects the overall moral structure of society and the quality of the education system.

The development of reasoning skills is an important goal in school education. However, moral psychology research shows that it is not enough for moral education to focus only on reasoning skills. Moral sensitivity, empathy and social factors also need to be considered as part of moral education. Education systems should adopt more comprehensive and holistic approaches to support students' moral development.

Adopting ethical understandings in education ensures that both students and educators have a healthier and more efficient education process. The implementation of these understandings improves the credibility and quality of educational institutions. In addition, continuing education programs can be organized to increase teachers' knowledge about ethical education. Participation in volunteer projects can be encouraged for students to develop empathy and understand their social responsibilities. Special programs and workshops for students can be organized to teach the ethical use of the digital world. Thus, it is thought that by increasing the reliability and quality of educational institutions, the general moral structure of the society will be positively affected.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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