

Acta Pedagogica Naturalis

Former Annual of Konstantin Preslavsky University

Journal homepage: <http://acta-pedagogica.shu.bg>

Received: 04.02.2019

Accepted: 10.06.2019

The theoretical basis of the validation orientations

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Abstract: *The validation orientations of the students are very important for the contemporary geographic education because they help to realize the aims of the said geographic education, as well as to educate the personality of the student. Together with the values and the value relationships, the validation orientations are elements of the personal value system of the students. The school subject geography and economics has a substantive potential for the formation of values and the development of the validation orientations in the students. This potential may be realized during the course of education through adequate didactic technique. The structure of geographic and economics content in the lower and upper secondary schools creates prerequisites for the formation of a set of values in the students – pediatric, moral, ecological, etc.*

Keywords: *values, value system, value orientations*

Introduction

In the long history of the human development, the human values are the basis of each community. They are an indicator for the specifications and characteristics of the social development, because the human actions, conscious or not, are led by the already set social aims. Historically, values are ever developing and transforming into different forms.

During Antiquity, mankind evolved, driven by its commercial, cultural, educational, and religious values. To some extent, the zenith of Ancient Egypt is based on the ability of the ancient Egyptians to adapt to the natural conditions in the valley of the great Nile River. In order to secure their livelihood, they had to predict the floods of the river and to control the watering of the fertile valley during drought. Through these activities they had created a great excess of production that stimulated the social development and culture. Activities that are related to the development of their own independent writing, organization of construction projects, trade and others, had been organized by culturally and religiously

elevated leaders under the control of Pharaoh, which ensured the unity of the people, guided by cultural values and religious beliefs.

Values are also the leading element during the period of the Great Geographical Discoveries, which give impact the development of all sciences, especially the geography. The reasons for their realization are complex – religious, economical, political and others. They are in the basis of acquiring new territories and discovering new ways towards the mythical islands of spices from the Western marine states. Another motive connected with the European interest towards the East, is the endeavor for spreading the Christianity, and this motive intertwines with the search for the road of the silk and valuable spices. Led by the current social values at that time, the travellers had conquered new lands at the same time suppressing their own moral values during the colonization of the newly discovered lands and turning the local population into slaves.

Values also find their projection in the educational system that is closely related to the social needs of time.

The aim of the present survey is, based on an analysis of the scientific pedagogical, psychological and methodological literature, to try to specify the basic concepts related to the theoretical foundations of the value orientations and to clarify their importance for the modern geographic education.

Materials and methods

In order to establish the conceptual apparatus of the theoretical foundations of validation orientations, an analysis of pedagogical, psychological and methodological literature is applied.

Results and discussion

In the philosophical, sociological, psychological and pedagogical literature there are different concepts, concepts, approaches and definitions of the essence of the notions of “value”, “value system”, “validation orientation”, which in particularly are dealt with by the science of axiology [10].

From a philosophical point of view, the values are specific social definitions of objects from the surrounding world that reveal the positive or negative significance for person and society and are contained in the phenomena of social life or nature. Regarding the subject (the person), “the values serve as the objects of his interests, and for his content they play the role of everyday orientations in the subject and social reality, indications of different practical relations of the person towards the surrounding objects and phenomena” [13].

From psychological point of view, the semantic of the term “value” includes concepts such as interests, needs, desires, obligations, and so on. Although different from each other, they are always associated with the achievement of some end result or with certain characteristics of the desired goal, with the presence of a standard for the desirable, preferred matters [17].

We can also consider as values the natural and social phenomena that have a certain value for the person and are not limited only to the already existing cultural and other phenomena, but include what needs to be done. The world of culture, morality, spirituality, shapes the world of values. The personality with its preferences and motivation determines what value means to itself [2].

All values that make sense to the person, through the process of education, turn into validation orientations. In order to form value relationships, it is necessary for the individual to have understood and evaluated the content and importance of the human life values, as well as the role of the value system itself.

The validation system of each individual is combination of value relationships. Nowadays, *the value system* is a structural series of ethical values of a given person, group or society that serve as a standard for directing human behavior in all situations. The personal value system is specific to each individual and can be divided in four main groups of values (Figure 1).

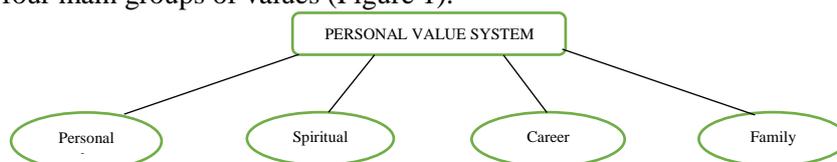


Figure 1. Structure of the personal value system

The personal value system provides the inner knowledge of the individual about what is good, useful, important, beautiful, desired, constructive, etc. This knowledge is called values and develops the personality behavior.

It is formed during three main periods:

- First period- from birth to 7 years of age;
- Second period - from 8 to 13 years of age;
- Third period - from 13 to 21 years of age.

As a rule, the values of the personality are largely conscious and reflect in consciousness in the form of value orientations [5]. The validation orientations are defined as part of the formation of value relationships.

Parents in the first place, and teachers at a later stage in the development of children are the main role models. The formation of values and the value system must be their main task.

The corresponding person, who the child imitates, can “replenish” this aspiration when he deliberately and consciously presents himself as a model for positively appreciated moral behavior in society – for example, carrying out charity activities, participating in socially useful initiatives and others. These are the matters that the great responsibility of those who serve as a role model consist of, which in itself can be interpreted as an educational opportunity [11].

From family point of view, the upbringing is seen as process that involves the raising, growing and development of the child in a family environment. If the upbringing is seen from educational point of view, then it is considered as its natural component. The educational objectives are put first in the schools, because with their help the educational results are actually realized and validation orientations are formed.

This creates certain difficulties and causes one of the delicate problems that characterizes the relationship between the educational preparation and the reality regarding the extent of adequacy and realism of the values that are being taught through the educational system [4].

At the same time, school age is a time when the child adapts to a new environment that sets new and diverse tasks and requirements. To deal with them, each student has to develop certain skills and habits. In this way, the formation of character and the formation of relationships with classmates, friends, teachers continue. There are changes in the mentality, the value system and the outlook on life of the young person. He prepares for achievements in education, arts, sports.

In the field of pedagogy, children's validation orientations are often referred to. These orientations are based on both the educational content and the diverse extra curriculum activities. In the formation of the student's personality the matter for the development of the basic behavioral validation orientations takes a special place [12].

One can say that almost every activity has a moral background, including the learning activities, which have extensive educative abilities, according to the psychologist. [3]. This is especially important for the students, because the learning activities are fundamental for them. These activities have the greatest impact on the development of the students and promotes not only the growth of the mental abilities, but also of the moral qualities of the person [1].

Of all kinds of values, the moral ones are the most important for formation during the childhood. At the same time, the moral values are one of the main tools for managing the human actions in the society, and the moral upbringing of the personality is a complicated and versatile process that includes pedagogical, as well as social phenomena. Despite the given motives, the process of moral upbringing is autonomous and its results are postponed in time [12].

In the process of developing the students' validation system, the teacher bears a great responsibility and affects the formations of the main moral concepts, beliefs and moral behaviour of the student. When this responsibility is combined with bright and comprehensible models for moral behaviour on the side of the teacher, it leads to a successful modeling of the spiritual and moral image of the adolescents [14].

At the same time, the educational institution itself affects this process through certain functions that the institution implements. The mediation function of the school comes down to school support to the whole educational process of the student with all the expert competency. This mediation function balances between the different interest in this institution – society, children, parents – with the professionalism of an independent side. In the open territory of the school one smooth transition should be realized, between the separate educational stages, aiming towards unified growth and recognition of the student's

personality, which is developing in the atmosphere of meaningful cultural values and intercultural interaction [15].

The teacher, as an important part of the educational process, has to work towards the formation and development of the validation orientations among the students, using different methods and approaches. Example of such approach is precisely the competence approach.

According to O. E. Lebedev, the competence approach has significant potential in this direction, because through this approach the students are trained to:

- Learn (to be able to define their cognitive activity, to choose the necessary sources of information, to choose the optimal means of realization of the set goals, to evaluate the obtained results).
- Explain the phenomena of reality, their nature, causes, interrelations;
- Focus on the key issues of modern life - ecological, political, etc.;
- Orientate in the world of spiritual values that reflect cultures and ideologies;
- Solve problems connected with the realization of certain social roles;
- To solve problems that are common for the different types of professions [7].

The application of the main concepts of the competence approach in geography and economics can lead to the formation of values and development of validation orientations among the students, based on their broad view of the world and their preparation for participation in the social life of the society. When adopting the geographical school content, the adolescents form and develop geographic culture as part of their general knowledge.

The contemporary meaning of the idea of “culture” is multilayered, but are generally grouped in two broad notions – conscious (spiritual values – moral, religious, aesthetic) and behaviour (material results of the human activity, customs, traditions, rituals, acts and deeds). It can be considered in broader meaning as a specific way of organization and development of the human activity, presented in the products of the material and spiritual work, in the system of social norms and establishments, in the spiritual values and symbols, in the collective relationships of the people towards the nature, towards themselves and other people as well [6].

However, it must be noted that precisely the values must set the identification of the aims and to be a “magnet”, a constant source of geographic education, where all dimensions and spheres find their own expression and balance. This, of course, has to provide the young people with the opportunity to think about their values, identity and the associations of belonging to the community of their choice and should contribute to their transformation into active actors both in the defense and in the promotion of their values [8].

From this point of view, each educational course in geography and economics may set a key objective – to find those moments from the educational content that are important for the rationalization and understanding the knowledge and skills, as well as for the formation and development of the geographic values and the validation orientations. In order to achieve this goal, it is necessary that one pays attention to the direct observations and activities in the nature, the exploration of the native land, the work with geographic map, the natural geographic, demographic and cultural – historical research, environmental protection, etc.

M. Manolova, L. Tsankova, R. Gaitandzhieva, et.all., accept the formation of the geographic culture as the main aim of the geographic education. The main components that are in the scope of the geographic culture and that represent specific stages of its mastering are the geographic literacy, competence and geospatial behaviour models. Their formation is considered as three sub – aims of the geographic education, and they include the formation of the validation orientation as well. To assimilate the geographic knowledge and culture, to form abilities, to develop cognitive skills and active validation relationship eventually benefit the achievement of the main aim of the geographic education [6].

By linking the content of geographic education with purpose, R. Gaitandzhieva defines several major categories of values:

- Absolute value, inherent only to the geography, connected with certain needs of the human activity (economical, ecological, social, etc);
- Relative value, determined by the connections between geography and other disciplines, with which mutual problems are solved... recognition of the general cultural function of the complex geography – towards its pragmatism. [9].

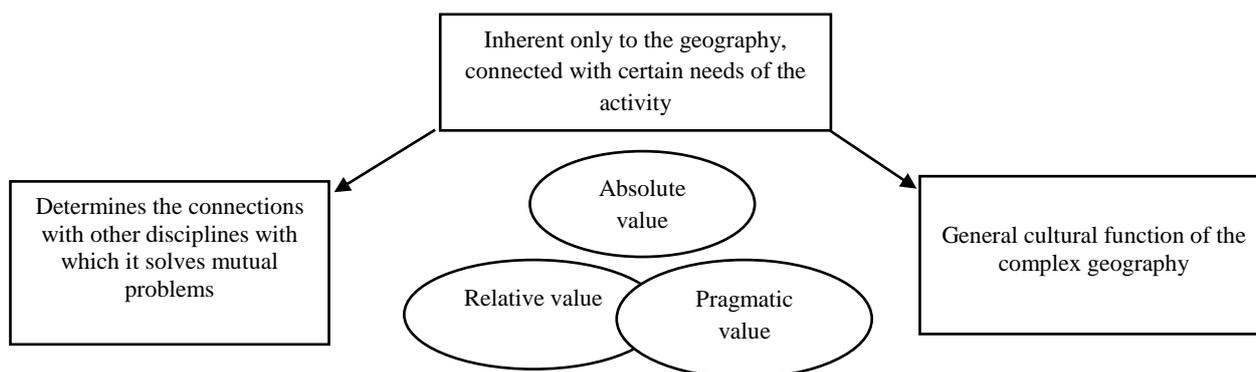


Figure 2. Values of the geographic education [9]

The structure of the geography education content in the lower and upper secondary schools creates prerequisites for the formation of *complex of values among the students* –patriotic, moral, ecological, etc. *The patriotic values* play an important role and are in the basis of the manifestation of the patriotic behavior among the students. The aims of this course for formation of the patriotic values are connected with the link between the theoretical essence of the geography and the patriotic messages that it sends, as well as emphasize on the importance of the national traditions and culture.

At the same time, the school geography has the potential for forming the *moral values*. If the geographic knowledge in the contemporary school is directed towards the understanding of the idea that the geography is a significant are in the human experience, in which socially significant moral-ethical problems are set, it could help their moral growth and enable students to get answers to different life issues related to the meaning of life, as well as to realize an individual clarification of the universal values through conscious value choices.

In the world we lived in – world of globalization and natural disasters resulting from the human activities, it is necessary to form *ecological values* among the students as well. This can be achieved through the school content in geography and economics when studying the natural resources, processes and phenomena, global problems, geographic region in the world, natural geographic areas in Bulgaria, etc. It is necessary for the student to realize that the natural resource potential of the Earth is our responsibility, and we have to be ready to ensure sustainable development and a favorable living environment for the future generations.

The educational process in geography and economics in the secondary schools that has an accent on the formation of values for manifestation of the validation, cannot realize its aims only through teaching the new skills – it is necessary for the students to be put in a learning environment close to the real one in which they freely express emotional value attitude to the studied subject and to be able to make choices regarding the educational resources. It is necessary to use interactive educational methods, to use emphasize the visual presentation of the school subject, to include the usage of contemporary technologies, to review and analyze examples from the everyday life of the children given by the teacher in order to recognize the moral and ethical element in them. The personal example is particularly important when given by the teacher in every situation when such an example needs to be followed.

In this way, it affects the emotional sphere of the students, which determines the degree of the formation in certain beliefs, evaluation judgments, a system of values and motivation for learning activities. Different kinds of emotions in the process of geography and economics manifest the intellectual, aesthetic and moral ones [16]. The link between the three analyzed types of emotions and the geographic education leads to an increase in the emotional side of learning and the formation of emotional – value attitudes towards the surrounding world, human activity and behavior through assessment based on a formed value system.

Conclusions

On the basis of the presented analysis, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- The values, value relationships and validation orientations are elements of the personal value system that is formed before the age of 21 and develops through the course of life;
- The educational period in the secondary school plays an important role during the formation of the value system;
- The school institution, the personality of the teacher, the school content and the course of education in each school subject affects the development of the personal value system through the formation of certain values and possibilities for manifestation of the validation orientations;
- The school subject geography and economics has a substantial potential for the formation of values and the development of the validation orientation among the student. This potential can be realized during the course of education through an adequate didactic technology;
- The validation orientation has a significant importance for the contemporary geographic education, because they cooperate for the realization of the aims of the said geographic education, as well as for the education of the student's personality;
- The structure of the school content in geography and economics in the lower and upper secondary schools creates prerequisites for the formation of a complex of values among the students – patriotic, moral, ecological, etc.

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