

## The Interplay Between Core Values and Teaching Practices

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### Abstract:

Core values in education are fundamental principles that shape teaching practices, influence professional behavior, and guide the development of nurturing and ethical learning environments. This critical review investigates the perceptions of future educators regarding core educational values and explores how these values inform their emerging professional identity and pedagogical decisions. By synthesizing findings from a broad range of scholarly literature, the paper emphasizes the vital role that values such as respect, integrity, compassion, and responsibility play in the educational process. The review identifies key challenges in the integration of values education within teacher training, including a lack of structured curricular content, varying interpretations of values across cultures, and the increasing pressure of academic and administrative demands. Despite these challenges, the literature consistently underscores the importance of equipping pre-service teachers with the tools to navigate ethical dilemmas, foster inclusive classrooms, and promote moral reasoning among learners. A significant implication of this review is the need for teacher education programs to embed values education systematically and meaningfully into their frameworks. Doing so will not only strengthen the moral foundation of future educators but also enhance their ability to cultivate value-laden learning environments. The review also calls for reflective practice as a core component of teacher preparation, encouraging future educators to internalize and apply core values in diverse educational contexts. The study reinforces that values education is not an optional component but a critical pillar of effective teacher preparation and a key driver of holistic educational outcomes.

**Keywords:** core values, education, future educators, values education, teacher identity

### Introduction:

Education transcends the simple delivery of academic content; it is a holistic endeavor that shapes the moral, emotional, and intellectual character of individuals. As John Dewey (1902) emphasized in his progressive educational philosophy, the school must function as a "social center," fostering civic responsibility, moral growth, and the cultivation of shared values.

In this context, core values—such as integrity, respect, empathy, and responsibility—become foundational components of the educational experience. These values not only influence student behavior and achievement but also define the ethical framework through which educators guide their practice. The role of educators, particularly future teachers, is vital in nurturing these values. As Ayers (1995) posits, to become a teacher is to "make a difference" in the lives of learners, not just through instruction but also by modeling principles that promote a just and compassionate society.

Pre-service teachers, therefore, are not merely learning pedagogical techniques; they are also being shaped as moral agents whose personal beliefs and values will influence their professional decisions and classroom environments. Understanding how future educators perceive, internalize, and express core values is crucial for the development of teacher education programs that aspire to produce not only competent instructors but also ethically grounded individuals.

Contemporary research underscores the significance of values education as an essential element of teacher preparation. Arweck and Nesbitt (2004) emphasize that values education should be integrated purposefully into the curriculum, enabling students to engage critically with ethical dilemmas and real-world issues.

Similarly, Lovat (2009) argues that values education is inseparable from quality teaching, asserting that effective instruction requires both intellectual rigor and moral insight. These perspectives support the notion that cultivating values in pre-service teachers enriches both teaching practice and learner development. Cultural and societal contexts also play a significant role in shaping educators' value systems. The works of Schwartz (1992, 2006) on cultural value orientations and Rokeach (1973, 2008) on the structure of human values provide valuable theoretical frameworks for analyzing how individuals prioritize and express values based on personal, cultural, and situational factors.

For instance, Hofstede (1989) identifies national cultural dimensions that impact attitudes toward authority, individualism, and uncertainty—each of which bears implications for teaching styles and value expression. These frameworks help explain why pre-service teachers from diverse backgrounds may emphasize different values depending on their lived experiences and sociocultural settings.

Moreover, empirical studies affirm the influence of teacher-educators and institutional environments on the moral and ethical development of future educators. Castañeda-Peña et al. (2019) illustrate how pre-service teachers are influenced by the strategies and narratives used by their mentors, suggesting that the modeling of values in teacher education significantly shapes trainees' own professional identities. Morales-Vives et al. (2013) further suggest that while most student-teachers possess values conducive to the profession, targeted training is necessary to deepen their understanding and practical application.

Traditional educational systems have long emphasized the importance of character formation alongside intellectual training. For instance, Adeyemi and Adeyinka (2003) highlight that African traditional education prioritized moral instruction and social responsibility through communal practices and role modeling—principles that remain relevant today in the context of global citizenship and ethical teaching.

Likewise, initiatives such as the Living Values Education program (Association for Living Values Education International, 2015) advocate for a systematic approach to integrating universal human values into classroom practice, fostering environments where learners can thrive both academically and morally.

This critical review aims to synthesize the existing body of literature on how future educators perceive and embody core values in education. By exploring diverse theoretical insights and empirical findings, the paper seeks to (1) identify the key values upheld by pre-service teachers, (2) examine the personal, cultural, and institutional factors influencing these values, and (3) analyze the implications for the design of teacher education curricula. Such insights are pivotal in crafting transformative educational practices that empower future educators to become agents of ethical leadership and social change.

### **Literature Review:**

This literature review examines the role of core values in education, specifically focusing on how teacher values influence their professional development and overall effectiveness in teaching. The studies explored offer insights into values education, teacher-student relationships, and the societal influence on educators. Furthermore, this review investigates how teachers' values affect the development of curriculum and the overall school climate. This research integrates theoretical and practical perspectives, utilizing a range of scholarly sources to provide a comprehensive understanding of values in educational settings.

Core values in education are essential beliefs that guide educational practices, influencing the way students and teachers interact, learn, and grow. According to Rokeach (1973), values are deeply embedded cultural beliefs that shape individuals' perceptions, behaviors, and decisions. In the context of education, these values determine the approach educators take toward teaching and learning. Adeyemi and Adeyinka (2003) assert that African traditional education systems emphasize communal values, which are integrated into modern teaching practices. Their research underscores the importance of incorporating cultural values into the curriculum to foster an inclusive and cohesive learning environment.

Schwartz's (1992) theory of values offers a useful framework for understanding how cultural values influence educational practices. He distinguishes between two types of values: terminal values, which represent desired end-states such as equality and peace, and instrumental values, which are the means to achieve these terminal states, such as honesty and responsibility. In an educational context, these values provide a roadmap for guiding students toward both personal and academic success (Schwartz, 2011). These perspectives suggest that educators' values shape the learning atmosphere and directly impact student behavior and academic achievement.

Teachers' personal values significantly impact their professional development and teaching effectiveness. Ayers (1995) highlights that teachers who value empathy, respect, and inclusivity create a classroom environment conducive to student learning. The emotional and ethical dimensions of teaching, such as trust and respect between teachers and students, are shaped by the teacher's personal values (Brady, 2011). These values not only influence

how teachers interact with students but also affect their pedagogical approaches. For instance, teachers who emphasize student-centered learning tend to value collaboration and open communication, fostering an inclusive environment where students' individual needs are met.

Research on pre-service teacher training also emphasizes the importance of teacher values. According to Morales-Vives, Camps, and Lorenzo-Seva (2013), preservice teachers' values are crucial in shaping their future teaching practices. The study reveals that when teacher candidates recognize the significance of values education during their training, they are more likely to develop the competencies necessary for effective teaching. The educators' values serve as the foundation for their teaching styles and classroom management strategies, which are central to student success.

### **Values Education and Curriculum Development**

Values education plays a pivotal role in shaping the educational curriculum. As emphasized by Arweck and Nesbitt (2004), values education integrates moral and ethical teaching with academic content. In classrooms where values are a central focus, students are encouraged to reflect on their beliefs and learn to respect diverse perspectives. This approach not only promotes academic success but also fosters social responsibility and empathy among students.

The Association for Living Values Education International (2015) promotes a holistic approach to values education, advocating for the integration of values across all subject areas. This organization stresses the importance of teaching values such as respect, responsibility, and fairness as part of a broader educational agenda that focuses on the development of the whole child. In line with this, Dewey (1902) argues that education should not only impart academic knowledge but also foster social engagement and moral development. His view suggests that schools should function as "social centers" where students learn to navigate and contribute to the broader society.

Teachers, therefore, are tasked with not only imparting knowledge but also instilling core values that prepare students to engage responsibly with the world. The integration of values into the curriculum requires teachers to reflect on their own values and ensure that they model these principles for their students.

Teacher-student relationships are critical in the development of students' values and overall educational experience. Teachers who emphasize the importance of personal integrity, accountability, and kindness foster positive relationships with their students, which in turn, enhances students' engagement and academic performance. A teacher's values directly influence their interaction with students and their capacity to create a supportive learning environment (Opdenakker & Damme, 2006).

Furthermore, Lovat (2009) explores how teacher values intersect with quality teaching. He argues that teachers who embody values such as empathy and patience create classrooms that are not only effective in terms of academic learning but also supportive of students' emotional and social development. These teachers serve as role models for students, helping them develop their own moral and ethical frameworks. Shaver and Strong (1976) further suggest that values-based teaching improves students' decision-making skills, enabling them to navigate complex social and ethical issues with confidence.

### **The Role of Cultural Context in Teacher Values**

Cultural context is another significant factor influencing teacher values. Schwartz (2006) explains that national and cultural differences shape the values educators prioritize. For example, in collectivist cultures, teachers may place a higher value on community and interdependence, while in individualistic cultures, independence and self-expression may be more emphasized. Understanding these cultural differences is essential for educators working in multicultural environments. Guterman (2010) points out that teachers in diverse cultural contexts must adapt their values and teaching practices to meet the unique needs of their students.

In cross-cultural studies, Stachowski and Mahan (1998) found that teachers in international contexts learn to adapt their teaching styles to align with local values, ensuring that their teaching is culturally relevant and respectful of the students' backgrounds. This highlights the importance of cultural sensitivity in teacher professional development, as it equips educators to handle diverse classrooms and teach in ways that are responsive to their students' values and experiences.

While values education holds great promise, it also presents challenges. One of the primary difficulties is ensuring that teachers themselves embody the values they are teaching. According to Brady (2011), teachers often face challenges in aligning their personal values with institutional policies and expectations. This dissonance can create tension in the classroom, affecting both teacher performance and student outcomes.

Additionally, there is an ongoing debate about the role of values in public education systems, especially in secular or multicultural societies where there may be a conflict between different cultural or religious values. The work of Titov et al. (2013) and Gunga and Ricketts (2008) highlights that values-based education can sometimes be seen as controversial when it intersects with issues of religion, politics, or societal norms. Despite these challenges, the

benefits of values-based education are clear, as it prepares students to become responsible, empathetic, and engaged citizens.

The integration of core values in education is critical to fostering a holistic learning environment that supports both academic success and personal development. Teachers' values shape their teaching practices, influencing their relationships with students, their approach to curriculum development, and their overall effectiveness in the classroom.

The literature reviewed underscores the importance of values education in nurturing not only academic skills but also moral and social responsibility. As the field of education continues to evolve, educators must remain mindful of the values they impart, ensuring that they provide students with the tools they need to navigate an increasingly complex and interconnected world.

### **Methodology:**

This study adopts a critical review methodology to examine the existing literature on core values in education, with a particular focus on how future educators perceive and interpret these values. The goal of this approach is to synthesize insights from a range of scholarly sources to build a comprehensive understanding of the themes, gaps, and debates surrounding values education and its role in shaping the identity and practice of pre-service teachers. A systematic process of literature selection was followed to ensure the inclusion of high-quality, relevant, and credible sources.

The selection criteria emphasized peer-reviewed journal articles, academic books, dissertations, and official reports that explored topics such as values formation in teacher education, moral and ethical dimensions of teaching, the professional identity of future educators, and pedagogical approaches to character education.

Studies that involved qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-methods research designs were all considered, provided they offered substantial insight into the experiences or perspectives of pre-service teachers. The review was limited to publications written in English and published between 2000 and 2024 to ensure both relevance and recency of findings.

To locate and retrieve pertinent literature, the researcher utilized key academic databases including Google Scholar, JSTOR, ERIC (Education Resources Information Center), and Scopus. Search terms such as "core values in education," "pre-service teachers," "teacher identity," "values education," and "future educators' perspectives" were used in various combinations. Boolean operators and filters were applied to refine the search and narrow down the results to the most relevant sources. The analytical process involved thematic coding and content analysis. Each selected document was reviewed thoroughly, and emerging themes were identified and categorized using qualitative data analysis techniques.

This allowed the researcher to detect recurring patterns, conceptual frameworks, and dominant perspectives in the literature. Key themes such as the integration of values in teacher training programs, the role of culture and religion in shaping values, and the challenges faced by pre-service teachers in internalizing and practicing educational values were carefully analyzed and interpreted.

Through this critical review methodology, the study seeks to provide a well-grounded and nuanced understanding of how core values are perceived and embodied by the next generation of educators, offering valuable implications for teacher education programs and curriculum development.

### **Findings and Discussion:**

#### **Theoretical Foundations of Values in Education**

Values education represents a foundational pillar in shaping the moral, ethical, and civic disposition of learners. Rooted in both philosophical and empirical traditions, values education aims to cultivate principles that guide individuals in making responsible choices and contributing meaningfully to society. The theoretical underpinnings of values education draw from various perspectives, including psychological theories, cultural analyses, philosophical traditions, and classroom-based pedagogical approaches.

One of the earliest and most influential theoretical contributions to values education is the work of Milton Rokeach (1973), who distinguished between terminal values—the desirable end-states of existence such as freedom, wisdom, and equality—and instrumental values, which refer to preferred modes of behavior such as honesty, responsibility, and kindness. These categories offer a structured way of analyzing the priorities that guide human action and decision-making. Rokeach's work has been further elaborated in his later publications (Rokeach, 2008), where he emphasized the universality of certain core human values and the need for educational systems to make these explicit in curriculum and instruction.

Building on this foundation, Schwartz (1992, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2009) developed a comprehensive theory of universal values, identifying ten broad value domains—such as self-direction, universalism, and benevolence—that are recognized across cultures. These values are organized into a circumplex model reflecting their dynamic interrelationships.

For example, values like conformity and tradition often conflict with values like stimulation and self-direction. Schwartz's theory has become instrumental in cross-cultural educational research and has inspired numerous curricula aimed at cultivating universal human values in classroom settings.

Philosophers and educators have long regarded schools as moral habitats, where ethical thinking is nurtured alongside academic development. Dewey (1902), in his seminal work, argued that schools must function as social centers that instill democratic values through participatory learning. He believed that education is not merely a preparation for life but life itself—an ongoing process of growth rooted in ethical interaction. Similarly, Ozoliņš (2010) conceptualized schools as public spaces for moral development, highlighting the critical role of the teacher in modeling and facilitating ethical discourse.

From a cultural perspective, scholars such as Adeyemi and Adeyinka (2003) have explored how African traditional education emphasizes community values such as respect, responsibility, and collective welfare. These indigenous educational systems embed moral instruction into everyday life and rituals, illustrating that values education is not confined to formal institutions but is a continuous process embedded in cultural practices.

Modern educational practices have sought to operationalize these theories through structured programs. For instance, the Association for Living Values Education International (2015) promotes an approach that integrates values such as peace, respect, love, and cooperation into the curriculum. Similarly, Arweck and Nesbitt (2004) examined the implementation of values education programs in the UK and found that such initiatives enhanced students' self-awareness, tolerance, and interpersonal skills when effectively integrated into classroom activities.

Values education also intersects with teacher identity and pedagogical style. According to Brady (2011) and Opdenakker and Van Damme (2006), the values teachers embody in their relationships with students significantly influence learners' moral development. Teachers who model fairness, empathy, and respect create classroom environments that are conducive to values internalization. Morales-Vives et al. (2013) further emphasized the importance of pre-service teacher training in fostering professional values aligned with ethical teaching practices.

Philosophical approaches such as Philosophy for Children (Cam, 2014) advocate for dialogical and inquiry-based methods that encourage students to think critically about moral dilemmas. This aligns with the concept of authentic learning proposed by Rule (2006), which promotes real-life relevance, student engagement, and reflection as essential components of values education.

Historical perspectives also contribute to our understanding. For example, Atatürk (1924) emphasized the transformative role of teachers in shaping a nation's character, advocating for education grounded in secularism, patriotism, and social justice. His views illustrate how values education can serve national development goals while promoting individual integrity.

Contemporary research in the social sciences adds methodological rigor to the study of values in education. Bhattacharjee (2012) and Corbetta (2003) provide frameworks for conducting empirical research in this field, including surveys, interviews, and case studies.

These approaches help quantify value orientations and assess the effectiveness of educational interventions. However, scholars such as Grimm (2010) caution against social desirability bias in such studies, urging researchers to employ strategies that enhance the validity and reliability of findings, as also emphasized by Morse et al. (2002) in qualitative research.

Beyond Western paradigms, Gunga and Ricketts (2008) explored how philosophical shifts such as the digital revolution impact values education, while Hofstede (1989) and Gutterman (2010) highlighted how cultural dimensions—such as individualism versus collectivism—shape educational expectations and ethical norms across societies.

In sum, the theoretical foundations of values education are diverse and interdisciplinary. They encompass psychological constructs (Rokeach, Schwartz), sociological perspectives (Lortie, 2002), cultural analysis (Adeyemi & Adeyinka, Hofstede), philosophical discourse (Dewey, Cam, Billington, 2003), and empirical methods (Bhattacharjee, Corbetta, Hutchinson, 2004).

Together, they illustrate that values education is not an ancillary part of the curriculum, but a central endeavor that shapes the character of individuals and the moral fabric of societies. As Ayers (1995) eloquently puts it, "To become a teacher is to make a commitment to humanity." Values education, therefore, lies at the heart of teaching and learning—a profound responsibility that demands deliberate, informed, and compassionate engagement.

### **Pre-Service Teachers' Perceptions of Core Values**

Understanding how pre-service teachers perceive and internalize core values is fundamental in shaping future educational landscapes. Values such as empathy, respect, and fairness are frequently highlighted by aspiring educators as essential components of their teaching philosophies (Morales-Vives, Camps, & Lorenzo-Seva, 2013).

These values are not only moral imperatives but also functional tools for fostering inclusive, learner-centered environments. However, a persistent challenge lies in bridging the gap between value articulation and value application in actual teaching practice.

Brady (2011) emphasizes the critical role that teacher-student relationships play in fostering a values-rich classroom culture. These relationships become the conduit through which abstract values transform into lived educational experiences. Similarly, Ayers (1995) advocates for a transformative model of teaching that underscores the teacher's role in shaping not only intellectual growth but also character development. Lovat (2009) echoes this idea by presenting values education and quality teaching as deeply intertwined, forming the "double helix" of effective pedagogy.

Nevertheless, the journey from intention to implementation is not always linear. Pre-service teachers often encounter institutional barriers, societal pressures, and cultural constraints that complicate their efforts to embody the values they profess. Lortie's (2002) sociological study on schoolteachers suggests that teacher beliefs and practices are profoundly influenced by organizational norms and school cultures.

Richardson (2003) further notes that the beliefs formed during teacher education may conflict with the realities of the classroom, causing a dissonance that can inhibit authentic value expression. Global and historical perspectives offer additional depth to this discussion. Traditional African education, for instance, placed strong emphasis on communal responsibility, respect for elders, and moral uprightness—values deeply embedded in the social fabric (Adeyemi & Adeyinka, 2003). In a similar vein, Atatürk (1924) highlighted the moral responsibility of teachers in shaping national identity and societal values, declaring education as a primary instrument of cultural preservation and transformation.

Modern frameworks for understanding values—such as Schwartz's (1992, 2006, 2011) theory of basic human values—help conceptualize the universality and variability of values across cultural and individual levels. Schwartz's work identifies a range of core values, including benevolence, universalism, and conformity, which align with many values prioritized by pre-service teachers. These frameworks are useful in contextualizing how personal values align—or clash—with the values promoted by educational institutions or dominant cultural norms (Schwartz, 2005, 2007, 2009).

Cultural values play a pivotal role in shaping how future educators interpret their responsibilities. Hofstede (1989) and Gutterman (2010) have demonstrated that cultural dimensions—such as individualism vs. collectivism or power distance—can shape attitudes toward authority, discipline, and collaborative learning.

For instance, pre-service teachers from collectivist cultures may place greater emphasis on communal harmony and interdependence, while those from individualist societies might prioritize personal responsibility and autonomy.

In practice, values education programs have been implemented with varying degrees of success. Arweck and Nesbitt (2004) explored a values education program that helped students and teachers engage in reflective, dialogic processes about moral and ethical issues. Similarly, the Living Values Education approach (Association for Living Values Education International, 2015) offers a global framework for integrating values into educational curricula, emphasizing peace, respect, love, and tolerance as foundational pillars.

However, self-reporting in values research can be influenced by social desirability bias, where individuals respond in ways they believe are socially acceptable rather than truthful (Grimm, 2010). This challenge underscores the importance of mixed-method approaches, including qualitative interviews, narrative analysis, and classroom observations, as recommended by Bhattacharjee (2012), Corbetta (2003), and Morse et al. (2002), to triangulate findings and capture authentic perceptions.

Rule (2006) and Cam (2014) advocate for authentic learning experiences and philosophical inquiry in teacher training, suggesting that when pre-service teachers engage with real-world ethical dilemmas and philosophical discussions, they better internalize and operationalize core values. Castañeda-Peña et al. (2019) also emphasize the significance

of narrative-based strategies by teacher educators, which help students contextualize values within lived experiences. Fostering core values in pre-service teachers requires more than theoretical instruction.

It demands an immersive, reflective, and culturally responsive educational process. Dewey's (1902) notion of the school as a "social center" reinforces the idea that education is not merely academic but inherently moral and civic in nature. To develop future teachers who can enact their values authentically, teacher education programs must create spaces that honor individual beliefs while critically engaging with societal expectations and ethical complexities.

The perceptions of pre-service teachers regarding core values are shaped by a confluence of personal beliefs, cultural influences, educational experiences, and institutional frameworks. Bridging the gap between value declaration and value practice requires systemic support, reflective pedagogy, and culturally grounded training. As educational environments continue to diversify and evolve, the commitment to nurturing value-driven educators remains more relevant than ever.

### **Cultural and Societal Influences on Values Education**

Values education is profoundly shaped by cultural and societal influences, as the values upheld in any educational setting are reflective of broader sociocultural systems. This cultural embeddedness determines not only what values are taught but also how they are delivered, understood, and internalized by learners.

In African traditional education, as described by Adeyemi and Adeyinka (2003), values education emphasized communal living, respect for elders, and the moral development of individuals. Learning was not confined to formal schooling but occurred within everyday experiences in the community. Such indigenous systems reveal the deep connection between cultural identity and value formation, a principle echoed in Rokeach's (1973) theory on the nature of human values, where he asserted that values are core beliefs guiding behavior and judgment, learned through cultural immersion.

Hofstede's (1989) cultural dimensions theory further provides a framework for understanding how cultural norms shape educational values. For instance, societies high in collectivism tend to promote values of harmony, respect, and interdependence within the classroom, whereas individualistic cultures might emphasize self-reliance and personal achievement. Similarly, Schwartz (1992, 2006, 2009) expanded this perspective through his theory of cultural value orientations, identifying universal value dimensions—such as benevolence, tradition, and conformity—that vary in importance across societies and influence educational content and pedagogy.

The implementation of values education is not solely the product of cultural traditions but also responds to contemporary societal changes. For example, the Living Values Education initiative (Association for Living Values Education International, 2015) promotes universal values like peace, tolerance, and responsibility in diverse educational contexts. Arweck and Nesbitt (2004) support such efforts, documenting the development of classroom programs that integrate values education with character development and ethical reasoning.

Ataturk (1924) once emphasized that educators are the builders of the nation's future, highlighting the vital role teachers play in shaping the values of the next generation. In this regard, teacher beliefs and characteristics become critical. Brady (2011) and Morales-Vives et al. (2013) both suggest that teachers' own value systems influence their interactions with students and the ethical climate of their classrooms. Teacher education programs must, therefore, address values explicitly, ensuring that future educators possess not only professional competencies but also moral clarity and cultural sensitivity (Richardson, 2003; Castañeda-Peña et al., 2019).

Philosophical and pedagogical approaches also contribute to values education. Dewey (1902) saw the school as a miniature society where children learn cooperation and democratic values. Cam (2014) advocates for Philosophy for Children (P4C) as a means to nurture ethical inquiry and reflection, empowering students to engage with values critically. Billington (2003) and Ozoliņš (2010) argue that schools should act as moral habitats where ethical reasoning and civic virtues are cultivated.

Social science methodologies have been instrumental in assessing the influence of values education. Bhattacharjee (2012) and Corbetta (2003) emphasize the importance of contextual and methodological rigor in exploring how values are taught and received. Qualitative methods, as outlined by Miles and Huberman (1994) and Morse et al. (2002), allow researchers to uncover the nuanced ways in which cultural values influence teaching practices. Likewise, surveys (Hutchinson, 2004) and narrative analyses (Kuznetsova, 2018) capture the perspectives of both educators and learners on value-laden issues.

Modern classrooms are further influenced by global, cross-cultural dynamics. Lashley and Barron (2006) showed that students from different cultural backgrounds have distinct learning style preferences that affect how they perceive and engage with values education. Posner and Schmidt (1992) highlighted similar variations in workplace values, underscoring the need for educators to prepare students for culturally diverse environments.

Values education is not a static domain but a space for continuous reflection and advocacy. As Ayers (1995) and McArthur (2014) propose, teaching should be a transformative act grounded in moral commitment and social inquiry. This calls for a reimagining of teacher roles—not merely as knowledge transmitters but as ethical leaders navigating complex cultural landscapes.

Values education is deeply embedded in cultural and societal frameworks. Effective implementation requires educators to critically engage with their cultural context, reflect on their own values, and adopt inclusive, research-based strategies that resonate with learners' diverse backgrounds. As Rule (2006) posits, authentic learning occurs when educational content is relevant, meaningful, and ethically grounded—an ideal that future educators must strive to realize.

### **Challenges in Implementing Values Education**

Implementing values education in contemporary classrooms is fraught with a range of interrelated challenges. These include curricular constraints, teacher preparedness, cross-cultural differences, and broader ideological trends in educational policy and practice.

As Arweck and Nesbitt (2004) note, the implementation of values education is often hampered by the lack of coherent and consistent approaches to defining and integrating values into classroom teaching. The multiplicity of value systems—rooted in cultural, religious, and philosophical traditions—poses a significant hurdle. This plurality often results in competing interpretations of what constitutes 'core' or 'universal' values (Schwartz, 1992, 2006, 2007, 2009), making consensus difficult to achieve in multicultural educational settings.

Cultural dimensions further complicate the process. Hofstede (1989) and Schwartz (2005, 2011) both emphasize that values are embedded in societal structures and vary across national and cultural lines. For instance, in African traditional education, values were intricately tied to communal life, emphasizing respect, responsibility, and reciprocity (Adeyemi & Adeyinka, 2003). Yet such values may be at odds with those emphasized in Western educational systems that focus more on individual achievement and competitiveness. Teacher preparedness is another critical issue. Teachers are often ill-equipped to handle the complexities of values education, largely due to insufficient training in teacher education programs (Brady, 2011; Morales-Vives et al., 2013).

According to Richardson (2003), the beliefs and values of pre-service teachers—shaped by their own life experiences and cultural backgrounds—can deeply influence how they interpret and deliver values education. Castañeda-Peña et al. (2019) further argue that teacher educators must use reflective and narrative-based strategies to help future educators navigate the intricate terrain of moral and ethical instruction.

The broader ideological landscape also plays a pivotal role. Neoliberal educational policies, which emphasize accountability, standardization, and measurable outcomes, often marginalize the teaching of values (Ünal, 2011). Lortie (2002) and Feather (1995) highlight how this shift prioritizes technical efficiency over moral purpose in education. As Ayers (1995) reminds us, teaching is not merely a technical task but a moral endeavor aimed at making a difference in children's lives.

Moreover, technological changes and the rise of e-learning pose both opportunities and risks. Gunga and Ricketts (2008) caution that the impersonal nature of online education can erode the relational aspects of values transmission. Likewise, the commodification of education has led to the treatment of students as customers, reducing the teacher's role as a moral guide to that of a service provider (Ozoliņš, 2010; Posner & Schmidt, 1992). Atatürk's (1924) call for teachers to be moral exemplars echoes the need to preserve the ethical foundations of education amidst such challenges.

The problem is compounded by methodological issues in assessing values education. According to Corbetta (2003) and Hutchinson (2004), measuring abstract constructs like values presents inherent difficulties. Grimm (2010) also warns of social desirability bias in self-reported data, while Morse et al. (2002) advocate for robust verification strategies to enhance research validity. Bhattacharjee (2012) and Miles and Huberman (1994) emphasize the need for qualitative methodologies that can capture the nuanced ways in which values are internalized and enacted.

Schools must reclaim their role as moral habitats (Ozoliņš, 2010). As Dewey (1902) envisioned, the school should function as a social center where democratic values are lived and learned. Organizations like the Association for Living Values Education International (2015) promote holistic programs that integrate values into all aspects of school life. These programs, rooted in respect and responsibility, are essential to fostering environments that support character development.

To address these challenges, teacher education programs must be restructured to prioritize values education, not as an add-on, but as a foundational component (Lovat, 2009; Cam, 2014). This includes embedding philosophical inquiry (Billington, 2003), fostering authentic learning experiences (Rule, 2006), and applying cultural value theories



(Rokeach, 1973, 2008; Schwartz, 1992) to help future educators develop culturally responsive and ethically grounded pedagogies.

### Conclusion:

Core values are foundational to the holistic development of learners and essential to maintaining the integrity of the educational process. These values—such as respect, responsibility, compassion, integrity, and patriotism—form the ethical bedrock upon which academic learning and character formation are built.

They guide students in making moral decisions, developing interpersonal skills, and contributing positively to their communities. Future educators have a crucial responsibility in upholding and transmitting these core values. As role models and facilitators of learning, teachers influence not only the intellectual growth of students but also their moral and emotional development. It is therefore imperative that teacher education programs intentionally and systematically integrate values education into their curriculum. This involves equipping pre-service teachers with the philosophical, cultural, and pedagogical foundations necessary to effectively model and teach values across various subject areas and classroom contexts.

However, instilling core values in today's diverse and rapidly changing educational landscape presents challenges. These include cultural shifts, differing value systems among students, the influence of digital media, and the pressures of academic performance. To address these challenges, educators and policymakers must take a culturally responsive and contextually grounded approach. Drawing from the rich cultural heritage of the Filipino people, for instance, can help make values education more relevant and impactful.

Collaborative efforts among schools, families, communities, and government institutions are also vital in reinforcing values both inside and outside the classroom. Promoting core values in education is not merely an academic endeavor—it is a moral imperative. By fostering value-laden learning environments, future educators can help cultivate ethically grounded, socially responsible, and compassionate individuals who are prepared to contribute meaningfully to society and to the nation at large. Through this, education becomes a true catalyst for personal transformation and national development.

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