

Running head: VALUES EDUCATION IN AN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL IN CENTRAL ASIA

**Elementary Teachers' Perspectives and Approaches within a Values Education Program in  
an International School in Central Asia**

Lyutsiya Adilzhanova

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Science

in

Educational Leadership

Nazarbayev University Graduate School of Education

June, 2018

Word Count: 20,677

### AUTHOR AGREEMENT

By signing and submitting this license, I Lyutsjva Adilzhanova (the author or copyright owner) grant to Nazarbayev University (NU) the non-exclusive right to reproduce, convert (as defined below), and/or distribute my submission (including the abstract) worldwide in print and electronic format and in any medium, including but not limited to audio or video.

I agree that NU may, without changing the content, convert the submission to any medium or format for the purpose of preservation.

I also agree that NU may keep more than one copy of this submission for purposes of security, back-up and preservation.

I confirm that the submission is my original work, and that I have the right to grant the rights contained in this license. I also confirm that my submission does not, to the best of my knowledge, infringe upon anyone's copyright.

If the submission contains material for which I do not hold copyright, I confirm that I have obtained the unrestricted permission of the copyright owner to grant NU the rights required by this license, and that such third-party owned material is clearly identified and acknowledged within the text or content of the submission.

IF THE SUBMISSION IS BASED UPON WORK THAT HAS BEEN SPONSORED OR SUPPORTED BY AN AGENCY OR ORGANIZATION OTHER THAN NU, I CONFIRM THAT I HAVE FULFILLED ANY RIGHT OF REVIEW OR OTHER OBLIGATIONS REQUIRED BY SUCH CONTRACT OR AGREEMENT.

NU will clearly identify my name(s) as the author(s) or owner(s) of the submission, and will not make any alteration, other than as allowed by this license, to your submission.

I hereby accept the terms of the above Author Agreement.



Author's signature:

Date: June 27, 2018

### **Declaration of Authorship**

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and to the best of my knowledge it contains no materials previously published or written by another person, or substantial proportions of material which have been submitted for the award of any other course or degree at NU or any other educational institution, except where due acknowledgement is made in the thesis. This thesis is the result of my own independent work, except where otherwise stated, and the views expressed here are my own.

Signed:

Date: June 27, 2018

## NUGSE RESEARCH COMMITTEE APPROVAL

ethics approval

Q

13 of 34

<
>
⚙️

COMPOSE

**Inbox (3,820)**

Starred

Sent Mail

**Drafts (17)**

Opportunities

More ▾

---

Lyutsiya ▾ +

**Ethics Decision** Inbox x
11/13/17 ★ ↶

**GSE Research committee** <gse\_researchcommittee@nu.edu.kz>  
to me, Anna ▾

Dear Lyutsiya,

The NUGSE Research Committee reviewed your study proposal and decided:

To grant **approval** for this study subject to minor changes, to be discussed with supervisor

Please, see the comments suggested by the Reviewers in the attached forms to revise your proposal. Before starting your data collection, you need to discuss these changes with your supervisor, revise your proposal accordingly, and then ask your supervisor to check the revised proposal.

Sincerely,  
NUGSE Research Committee

---

**2 Attachments**

**Reviewer 1.pdf**  
113 KB

↓
📄

**Reviewer 2.pdf**

No recent chats  
[Start a new one](#)

**CITI training certificate**



Completion Date 16-Aug-2017  
Expiration Date 15-Aug-2020  
Record ID 23573094

This is to certify that:

**Lyutsiya Adilzhanova**

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

**Social & Behavioral Research - Basic/Refresher** (Curriculum Group)  
**Social & Behavioral Research - Basic/Refresher** (Course Learner Group)  
**1 - Basic Course** (Stage)

Under requirements set by:

**Nazarbayev University**



Verify at [www.citiprogram.org/verify/?wc1c73a20-6ec2-433c-b15f-09573c26ecae-23573094](http://www.citiprogram.org/verify/?wc1c73a20-6ec2-433c-b15f-09573c26ecae-23573094)

## Acknowledgement

I would like to thank my thesis supervisor, Dr. Anna CohenMiller, who truly inspired me to believe in myself as an aspiring researcher. Her dedication and love for the profession and teaching guided me in this path full of enlightenment, joy, hard work and perseverance.

I would also like to acknowledge the professors who taught our courses and really pushed us to open up our horizons: Dr. Duishonkul Shamatov, Dr. Kairat Kurakbayev, and again Dr. Anna CohenMiller.

People who provided continuous support were my groupmates and especially fellow supervisees: Ulyana, Zhadyra, Yelena, Zhamilya and Aidos. It felt like we became a family headed by our ‘research mom’, Dr. Anna CohenMiller.

I would like to thank my friends, colleagues and family members who were supportive of me. I am truly blessed to be surrounded by wonderful people in my life.

And last but not least, I would like to thank myself. Without me this research would not be possible and I appreciate my desire to learn and change which has been essential in this path. This truly has been a beautiful road to take.

## **Abstract**

Kazakhstan is in the process of launching a national values education program *Mangilik El*, yet it is too early to draw conclusions on its implementation. However, by looking beyond the public schools to private schools, it is possible to understand values education and how it is implemented in Kazakhstan. In this thesis study, I drew evidence from an international private school in Kazakhstan, which implements a values education program.

The purpose of this study was to understand elementary homeroom teachers' perspectives and approaches within a values education program in an international school in Central Asia. Two research questions guided the study: (1) What are the perspectives of elementary teachers towards a values education program? and (2) How are elementary teachers' approaches implemented within a values education program? Using a qualitative case study research design, I collected data from individual semi-structured interviews, lesson observations and analysis of documents used within the classroom.

The relevant literature from the history of values education, complexity of values and benefits of values education programs were reviewed to create the framework of the study. The findings of the study revealed that teachers consider values education as an important aspect of education. Additionally, the concepts which teachers used in defining values education are consistent with the ones used in contemporary educational research. Furthermore, teachers implement different approaches in values education and benefit from collaboration within grade level teams. There were unexpected findings which revealed some controversial issues in the landscape of values education at the research site. Recommendations are provided for public schools in light of launching a national values education program, as well as for the teachers and administration of the school where the study was conducted. Further research is suggested to examine values education beyond the international private schools in order to provide additional



insights in the field of values education in Kazakhstan. Moreover, the advantages of collaborative work which was highlighted in this case study should be studied such as the possible opportunities for more collaboration between staff and other stakeholders.

*Keywords:* Values, values education, international school

Қазақстандағы білім беру жүйесінде «Мәңгілік Ел» ұлттық құндылықтарға бағыттылған білім беру идеясын жүзеге асыру көзделген, алайда қаншалықты жүзеге асырылып жатқандығы туралы қорытынды жасау әлі тым ерте. Дегенмен, жекеменшік мектептерді қарастыра отырып та, құндылықты дәріптеуге бағытталған білім берудің жүзеге асырылуын түсінуге болады. Бұл зерттеуде мен өз құндылықтарын тәрбиелеу бағдарламасы бар Қазақстандағы халықаралық жекеменшік мектеп тәжірибесін көрсетемін.

Осы зерттеудің мақсаты Орта Азиядағы бір халықаралық мектептегі бастауыш сынып мұғалімдерінің құндылық тәрбиелеу аясындағы көзқарастарын анықтау. Зерттеуде қолайлы сапалық Кейс-стади (Yin, 2014) әдісін қолдана отырып, деректер жекелеген жартылай құрылымдалған сұхбат, сабақтарды бақылау мен құжаттарды талдау арқылы жиналды.

Осы зерттеуге қатысты зерттеу саласын анықтау үшін түрлі әдебиеттерге шолу жасалды. Зерттеу нәтижесі мұғалімдер құндылық тәрбие бағдарламасын білім беру аспектісіне маңызы зор деп санайды. Сонымен қатар, мұғалімдердің құндылық тәрбиесіне қатысты түсініктері қазіргі замандағы білім берудегі пайдаланылатын зерттеулерге сәйкес екендігін көрсетті. Нәтижесінде мұғалімдердің құндылықтарды дәріптеу үшін түрлі әдістерді қолданатындығы және өзара әрекеттесу тиімді екені анықталды.

Зерттеу нәтижесінде құндылық тәрбиесінің аясында кейбір қарама-қайшылықтардың анықталғаны күтпеген нәтиже болып табылды. Зерттеу нәтижесіндегі қалыптасқан ұсыныстар жалпы білім беру мектептеріне және зерттеу жүргізілген мектептің мұғалімдері мен әкімшілігіне арналады. Сонымен қатар, еліміздің өзге де мектептерінде де құндылық арқылы білім беру туралы зерттеу жүргізуге болады. Осы

кейс-стадиде ынтымақтастықта жұмыс істеудің артықшылықтары көрсетілгендіктен, өзге де мектеп қызметкерлері мен қатысты тұлғалар арасындағы ынтымақтастықтың артуы үшін зерттеулер жүргізген жөн.

*Түйін сөздер:* құндылық, құндылық тәрбие мектебі, халықаралық мектептер

### Абстракт

Учитывая, что Казахстан находится на начальном этапе внедрения общенациональной патриотической идеи «Мәңгілік Ел» в воспитательные программы организаций образования, еще слишком рано делать выводы о ее реализации. Однако, для того, чтобы понять ценностное воспитание и то, как оно реализуется в Казахстане, необходимо взглянуть за пределы общеобразовательных школ. В этом исследовании я привожу опыт частной школы в Казахстане, которая реализует свою программу ценностного воспитания.

Целью этого исследования является изучение опыта и методов работы учителей начальных классов в рамках программы ценностного воспитания. Основные вопросы исследования сфокусированы на том, чтобы определить отношение и взгляды учителей на данную программу, а также изучить как методы работы учителей реализуются в рамках данной программы ценностного воспитания. Кейс-стади (Yin, 2014) был выбран как подходящий метод качественного исследования. Триангуляция данных применялась для решения проблем валидности и надежности. Данные были собраны из трех разных источников: отдельные полуструктурированные интервью, наблюдения за уроками и анализ документов.

Относящаяся к данному исследованию литература была рассмотрена для определения области исследования. Основные результаты исследования показали, что учителя считают программу ценностного воспитания важным аспектом образования. Концепции, которые учителя используют для определения ценностного воспитания, соответствуют тем, которые используются в современных исследованиях в области образования. Выводы в отношении подходов, реализованных в рамках этой программы

ценностного воспитания, были разделены на уровни класса и школы. Были получены неожиданные результаты, которые выявили некоторые противоречия в области ценностного воспитания в данной школе. В будущих исследованиях рекомендуется изучить преимущества культуры сотрудничества среди учителей в области ценностного воспитания, а также возможности для более тесного сотрудничества между педагогами, административным персоналом и другими заинтересованными сторонами в рамках данной программы.

*Ключевые слова:* ценности, ценностное воспитание, международные школы.

## Table of Contents

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Chapter 1: Introduction .....  | 17 |
| Purpose of the Study .....   | 19 |
| Research Questions .....   | 20 |
| Significance.....  | 20 |
| Definition of Terms.....   | 21 |
| Conclusion .....   | 22 |
| Chapter 2: Literature Review.....  | 24 |
| Key Terminology .....  | 24 |
| Values. ....   | 24 |
| Values education.....  | 25 |
| International schools. ....  | 25 |
| History of Values Education.....   | 26 |
| Complexity of Values .....   | 29 |
| Values Education and Holistic Education.....   | 30 |
| Benefits of Values Education.....  | 33 |
| Conclusion .....   | 40 |
| Chapter 3: Methodology .....   | 42 |
| Research Design.....   | 42 |
| Research Site.....   | 43 |
| Sample.....  | 44 |
| Data Collection Tools and Procedures.....  | 46 |
| Interviews.....  | 46 |
| Observation Procedures. ....   | 47 |
| Document analysis. ....  | 48 |
| Data Analysis .....  | 49 |
| Ethical Issues .....   | 50 |
| Limitations .....  | 52 |
| Conclusion .....   | 52 |
| Chapter 4: Analysis and Findings .....   | 54 |
| Analysis Steps.....  | 54 |
| Findings.....  | 57 |
| RQ 1: What are Elementary Teachers’ Perspectives towards a Values Education Program?..                   | 57 |
| RQ1, Finding 1: Diverse experience with values education.....  | 58 |
| RQ1, Finding 2: There is no common understanding of values education.....                                | 59 |
| RQ1, Finding 3: The values taught encompass all areas of life.....                                       | 60 |
| RQ1, Finding 4: Importance of community and school-wide involvement supported by<br>administration. .... | 61 |
| RQ 2: How are elementary teachers’ approaches implemented within a values education<br>program? .....    | 63 |
| RQ2, Finding 1: Teachers use different approaches of values education.....                               | 64 |
| RQ2, Finding 2: Teachers established a culture of collaboration to support values education.<br>.....    | 68 |
| RQ2, Finding 3: Benefits and Challenges of the Values Education Program. ....                            | 69 |

|  |    |
|--|----|
| RQ2, Finding 4: “Good in theory, but ...” .....                          | 75 |
| Conclusion .....   | 76 |
| Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion .....                               | 78 |
| Discussion Related to Research Question 1: Teachers’ Perspectives.....   | 78 |
| Discussion Related to the Research Question 2: Teachers’ Approaches..... | 83 |
| Conclusion .....   | 84 |
| Recommendations.....   | 86 |
| Overview of the Study .....  | 87 |
| Implications for Future Research.....                                    | 89 |
| References.....  | 90 |

**List of Tables**

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Table 1. <i>Lesson observations</i> .....  | 48 |
| Table 2. <i>Approaches implemented by teachers within this school's values education program</i> . | 68 |
| Table 3. <i>Benefits of this values education program</i> .....                                    | 71 |



**List of Figures**

|  |    |
|--|----|
| <i>Figure 1.</i> Coding of Interview in MAXQDA .....   | 54 |
| <i>Figure 2.</i> Sample of codes divided among the category of ‘approaches’ and sub-category of ‘values’ ..... | 55 |
| <i>Figure 3.</i> Analytical table with codes and a preview of coded segments .....                             | 56 |
| <i>Figure 4.</i> Importance of community and school-wide involvement supported by administration               | 63 |
| <i>Figure 5.</i> "Good in theory, but..." lacking in practice .....  | 76 |
| <i>Figure 6.</i> Findings related to perspectives and approaches of values education (VE) .....                | 77 |

## Chapter 1: Introduction

*Children are constantly bombarded with negative messages that adversely affect their mental, emotional and spiritual development. They live in a society that continues to condition them to believe two particular myths: the first is that if they work hard they will get a good job, which will pay them a lot of money and then they will live happily ever after! The second is that happiness is found in the world outside of themselves. If they feel unhappy, then the answer is to watch the television, go to a disco or buy something! (Hawkes & Heppenstall, 2002, p.1).*

We live in the time of rising awareness of the fundamental challenges faced by a new generation. Educators, parents and society as a whole grow in concern for the crisis of values prevalent in the society. Children are left to create their identities from the contradicting messages they receive from mass media. Some become victims of consumerism through adverse effects of advertising on television, some are caught in the images of distorted reality through social networking sites, some buy into an oversimplified concept of happiness which is portrayed as a race for pleasure, some are left alone to make sense of the laissez-faire environment, dangers and violence of internet content and video games. Consequences do not wait to manifest themselves in our children's anxiety level, depressions, addictions, and even suicides (Vickroy, 2017). One potential solution to this alarming situation is values education of our children as it will support them in becoming more aware of themselves and others in order to be able to build a "connection with the world" (Sutrop, 2015, p.190).

All aspects of school life - from school ethos to curriculum, from teacher-student communication to extracurricular activities - become the grounds where students develop identities and formulate their values (Froumin, 2011). When students acquire such values as friendship and service, responsibility and trustworthiness, they will be better prepared to tackle

the challenges presented in the society, as well as for taking up the role of happy and productive citizens of the country (Sutrop, 2015).

In recent decades, public discourse in regard to education attributed high interest to values education (Veugelers, 2011; Hawkes & Heppenstall, 2002). Values education has become to be understood as the highest of pedagogical goals already in the twentieth century such as seen in the works of such as of John Dewey, Lawrence Kohlberg and Richard S. Peters (Lovat, 2011). It sets to empower students to become active citizens of their respective countries and the global society (Goren & Yemini, 2016) and stimulates students in the search for life meaning as they are challenged to ponder on their own values, norms and moral maturing (Veugelers, 2011).

Kazakhstan followed the lead of countries—some of them being the leading nations in education such as the UK and Australia (Maharajh, 2014)—and has adopted a values education program *Mangilik El* (Nazarbayev, 2012) as one of the primary goals for the reformed State Program for Development of Education and Science in the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2016-2019 (National Academy of Education, 2016). The basis for the program became the Kazakhstan 2050 Strategy (Nazarbayev, 2012), which set the direction for the development of Kazakhstan in the near future. Developing Kazakhstani patriotic values was affirmed to be the necessary step to sustain and strengthen societal consent in the conditions of Kazakhstan's multiethnic society (Nazarbayev, 2012). In Kazakhstan, there are approximately 130 number of ethnicities, and a variety of religions practiced (e.g., Muslim, Christian, Buddhist, Jewish, etc.). Schools were challenged to support students from varied backgrounds in developing values and value-laden competences like education, physical health, spiritual maturity, leadership potential, independent decision making, cooperation, responsibility, patriotism, critical thinking, ethics, self-confidence, respect for differences, voluntary service by the means of creating positive learning environment,

incorporating values in teaching, extracurricular activities, field trips and school events (National Academy of Education, 2016).

While values education is being launched in Kazakhstan (National Academy of Education, 2016), it is too early to draw conclusions on its implementation. However, we can draw evidence from other values education programs such as in private schools already in place in Kazakhstan and in the Central Asian region. A number of schools in the region operate utilizing unique values education programs such as Kazakh Turkish Lyceums (Kazakhstan); Haileybury private schools in Almaty and Astana (Kazakhstan); Quality Schools International (QSI) with private schools in Almaty, Astana, and Atyrau (Kazakhstan), Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan), Tashkent (Uzbekistan), Dushanbe (Tajikistan) and Ashgabat (Turkmenistan). Whereas International Baccalaureate schools implement values education as a component of their International Baccalaureate program, such as Miras International Schools in Almaty and Astana (Kazakhstan), the European School of Central Asia in Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan), Kazakhstan International School in Almaty (Kazakhstan), International School of Astana (Kazakhstan), International School in Almaty (Kazakhstan), and Tashkent International School (Uzbekistan).

As Kazakhstan is only in the process of launching a national values education program *Mangilik El*, it is too early to draw conclusions on its implementation. However, it is worthwhile to look beyond the public schools to understand values education and how it is implemented in Kazakhstan. In this research, I will draw evidence from a private school in Kazakhstan which implements its values education program.

### **Purpose of the Study**

Teachers impact students in the process of acquiring and developing values through the curriculum in practice (Veugelers, 2000) by becoming “values educators” (Sutrop, 2015, p.191).

Understanding teachers' perspectives can bring additional understanding of their experiences and practices, as well as strengthen their teaching practices and preparation (Pajares, 1996). In this qualitative research study, I studied values education program at one international school in Kazakhstan. In particular, I focused on elementary homeroom teachers' perspectives and approaches toward values education. Thus, the purpose of this study is to understand elementary homeroom teachers' perspectives and approaches within a values education program in an international school in Central Asia.

### **Research Questions**

The following questions guided this study:

- (1) What are the perspectives of elementary teachers towards a values education program?
- (2) How are elementary teachers' approaches implemented within a values education program?

### **Significance**

While there is an increasing global trend in popularity of international schools with both expatriate and local population (Clark, 2014), there remains a big gap in research of experiences of such schools in Central Asian region. The directory on the website of the Council of International Schools lists 25 international schools in Kazakhstan, with Central Asia accounting for many more. These schools provide English-language instruction and gear their graduates toward entering American or European higher institutions. Moreover, a number of schools in Central Asia offer the International Baccalaureate program which is also a part of international education. A large component of international education is values education, which such schools have been implementing in their work. Therefore, their experiences of values education

programs can be useful for policy makers and public schools in the process of launching a national values education program, such as in Kazakhstan.

More and more, schools are now concerned with how curriculum addresses the holistic development of their students (Hawkes & Heppenstall, 2002). As educators in such schools will look at refining their values education programs or starting a new one, they can benefit from this research which aims at providing information about the successes and challenges, views and approaches of teachers, as well as potential pitfalls in implementing a values education program in schools. Moreover, teachers and administrators of the international school which became the setting for this study will benefit from familiarizing with the results and discussions of this research.

This study will shed light on the perspectives and approaches of elementary teachers within a values education program in one of the international schools in Central Asia. While its contribution is mainly attributed to values education in international schools in Central Asia, it can also bring insights to the landscape of values education in the region, as well as inform the potential benefits and/or pitfalls of implementing a values education program.

### **Definition of Terms**

The following operational definitions are used in this research: values, values education, international schools.

- **Values** – the definition relates to certain beliefs about the world which affect one's decision making and how one makes sense of his or her life. This definition draws from Veugelers' definition of moral values (2011).

- **Values education** – the definition is based on Maharajh’s definition (2014), as all activities in the context of school which prompt students to develop and to change their values.
- **International school** – one with predominant foreign student population, international curriculum, mainly foreign teaching staff/administration, and graduates entering European and American universities around the world, which draws from the various criteria for a school to be considered international (Langford, 2001; Hayden and Thompson, 1995).

## **Conclusion**

This first chapter described the importance of values education in the context of the world and in Kazakhstan in particular. The problem of the study was stated as insufficient amount of research available in the field of values education in Central Asia. The purpose of the study was stated as understanding elementary homeroom teachers’ perspectives and approaches within a values education program in an international school in Central Asia. The research questions guiding this study were asked and its significance was indicated and justified. In the end of this chapter, the selection of operational definitions was explained.

The remaining part of the thesis contains four additional chapters. Chapter 2 includes the literature review on values education with a discussion of the following topics: (1) key terminology; (2) values education in other terms; (3) concept of values; (4) values education and holistic education, and (5) benefits of values education. In Chapter 3, I discuss the research design used, including description of the research site, sampling procedures, data collection tools and procedures, data analysis, ethical issues and finally, the limitations of the study. In Chapter 4, I present the major findings about elementary teachers’ perspectives and approaches within a

values education program examined in this study. In Chapter 5, I synthesize and discuss the results of the study in light of the study's research questions, literature review and conceptual framework, and end with a conclusion of the whole research.



## Chapter 2: Literature Review

The purpose of this study is to understand elementary teachers' perspectives and approaches within a values education program in an international school in Central Asia. To begin, it is necessary to report the existing knowledge relevant to values and values education. This chapter includes a discussion on the following topics: (1) key terminology; (2) history of values education; (3) complexity of values; (4) values education and holistic education; (5) benefits of values education.

### Key Terminology

**Values.** Values are defined in previous research as “things which are considered ‘good’ in themselves (such as beauty, truth, live, honesty and loyalty)” (Halstead & Taylor, 1996, p.5). Saldana (2013) proposes that the word 'value' consists of value, attitude and belief. Value is characterized by how much importance one ascribes to other people, objects, concepts or oneself. Attitude stands for the views one holds of other people, objects, concepts or oneself. Belief is a way one upholds values, attitudes, as well as personal knowledge, background experiences, prejudices, moral truths, and other subjective perceptions of society.

A prominent Dutch researcher in the field of values education Wiel Veugelers defined moral values as perceptions of what is good or bad which create a person's idea of the 'good life' (2011, p.9). They are not individual decisions people make according to their preferences, but more “explicit and fully developed ideas about how a person relates to his or her life and social and natural environment” (Veugelers, 2011, p.9). He reports on a substantial body of research which understands moral values as emotion-driven awareness which influences one's actions (Berkowitz, 1995; Oser, 1997; Veugelers & Vedder as cited in Veugelers, 2011).

**Values education.** Lickona (1991) defines values education as a way of transmitting values by means of curriculum and school environment. Iscan (2015) describes values education as an open educational undertaking which strives to empower students in development and acquisition of values. National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools (NFVEAS) (Jones, 2009) defines values education as activities within school which aim to develop understanding and awareness of values. Researcher of values education, Maharajh (2014) characterized values education as all ways of transmitting and instilling values at school. He also reported another definition proposed by Kirschenbaum (1977), Robb (1994) and Aspin (2002) who defined values education as a number of methodologies on moral education which aim at developing with students valuing skills and processes. Modern research has looked at particular aspects of values education as moral (Froumin, 2011; Lisievici & Andronie, 2016; Sanderse, 2015; Veugelers, 2011), character (Walker, Roberts and Kristjansson, 2015; Lickona, 1996; Froumin, 2011), civic (Veugelers, 2011; Froumin, 2011) or global citizenship (Goren & Yemini, 2016) education. In this paper “values education” will be used as an umbrella term which accounts for all aspects of values in education (Froumin, 2011; Pereira, 2016; Veugelers, 2011; Hawkes & Heppenstall, 2002; Lovat & Hawkes, 2013; Sutrop, 2015; Shobha & Kala, 2015; Iscan, 2015).

**International schools.** There are several concepts used to define the phenomenon of “international schools”. However, there is no common understanding of this phenomenon (Cambridge and Thompson as cited in Keller, 2005). Schools which are considered international are not necessarily called “international” and can be different according to a number of factors: student population (their number, special learning needs, focus on particular groups of parents) and curriculum (its content and language) (Hayden and Thompson, 1995). Terwilliger (as cited

in Hayden and Thompson, 1995) proposes four criteria for categorizing schools as international: student population represented mostly by students of ethnicities other than one of the host country, administration represented by both expatriate and local staff members, foreign teachers and curriculum different from that provided by the host country system, while easy to be adjusted to if a student changes schools between countries (p.333). Mary Langford (2001) comes up with similar criteria by looking at the population of such schools to be composed of different ethnicities, mobile within schools and universities, being subject to the influence of cultures other than students' own. Other research (Gellar as cited in Hayden and Thompson, 1995) has established a broader understanding of the concept of an "international school" by one which is aware of distinct learning goals of its multi-ethnic student body and which provides curriculum adaptable to meet these unique needs. In this study, I will sample one international school which suits all the above-mentioned criteria for being categorized as international: predominant foreign student population, international curriculum, most teaching staff and administration being native English speakers, graduates entering English-speaking universities around the world.

### **History of Values Education**

In this section I will explore the development of various concepts which prompt students to acquire and develop values in the context of school as referring to the main phenomenon of values education.

Walker, Roberts and Kristjansson (2015) use "character education" as an umbrella term to include all ways which are aimed at developing 'moral' set of qualities with a student. They provide interesting historic retrospective on the development of this concept in education. The current discourse on character education is explored beginning from ancient and medieval educational programs which aimed at the development of moral character (Walker, Roberts, &

Kristjansson, 2015). The retrospective also elaborated on enlightenment philosophers such as David Hume who considered moral judgments as a way to express personal preferences, which then are deprived of any objective truth value (Walker et al., 2015). The eighteenth century educational philosophers were extensively under the influence of a doctrine of original sin (Walker et al., 2015). Therefore, development of “good character” was the goal of education within the concept of Christian religion (Sanderse as cited in Walker et al., 2015, p.82). The nineteenth century brought a more class-based view of character education (Walker et al., 2015). Early twentieth century educators made schools responsible for creating a moral environment where students could learn from being immersed into meaningful value-laden activities and could develop positive habits (Walker et al., 2015, p.83). The late twentieth century research focused on a “cognitively developing” student (Walker et al., 2015, p.83). The school’s role was perceived as a guiding agent for students to develop the mental advances, which are necessary to become “morally good” and to understand what it means (Walker et al., 2015). The most recent trend, which took place in the twenty-first century evolved from considering a student “emotionally vulnerable” to a concept of a “flourishing” student (Walker et al., 2015, p.84). In the early 2000s, the ultimate goal of education was formulated in Europe and USA as providing opportunities for “human flourishing” (Walker at al., 2015; Sutrop, 2015). Curren (2010) explains that the concept of “human flourishing” was revived in the discussion about education. A pupil within this concept is looked at as a worthy being provided with opportunities to thrive. Walker et al. (2015) explain that a pupil does not need exclusively academic skills, but should also be provided with guidance on how to build a satisfying and prosperous life (p.86). Thus, the goal of the “human flourishing” approach is the institutional change rather than simply individual change (Walker et al., 2015). Walker at al. (2015) add that despite being a trending

phenomenon in education at this time, there is still much to be done in order to accomplish “human flourishing” at the institutional level of schools.

Sutrop (2015) examined the approach which supports teachers as civic educators. Civic education is defined as preparing students for living in the society in communication with other people (Brighouse as cited in Sutrop, 2015). As we live in a world of different and sometimes opposing views, an individual should acquire the competences to reflect and resolve a potential conflict of values. While a teacher then acquires the role of ‘values educator’ who in order to be able to guide students in this process needs to be prepared for this role. A study what was conducted in Estonia by the Centre for Ethics of the university of Tartu. A working group of the Centre for Ethics have been using teachers’ values games since 2012 in teacher education and for professional development of teachers in schools. The game included a dialogue-based challenges where teams of 5-6 participants had to solve a problem which included values conflicts at school, as encountered by teachers in Estonia in their teaching practices. Through discussions, teachers had to come up with the best possible solution which reflected their values. Although a reliable scientific evidence on effectiveness of this approach is missing, there is some data present from the evaluation forms where participants gave feedback on the effectiveness of this approach. Teachers viewed the Values Games as an effective tool which facilitates preparation of teachers as future and current teachers as ‘values educators’ who will prospectively guide students in the process of developing and acquiring values (Sutrop, 2015). Some of the positive results of having discussions were reported as promotion of critical thinking within different worldviews existing in the society, as well as peaceful conflict resolution. The teachers’ Values Games provided opportunities for teachers to reflect on their hierarchy of values, use critical thinking skills to resolve values conflicts and apply language in the context of values clarification (Sutrop,

2015). As a result, research conducted by Sutrop (2015) on the effectiveness of the Values Games provides some evidence that this approach is effective in preparing teachers as ‘values educators’ who will guide students in the process of acquiring values and resolving potential conflicts of values.

This section explored the historical overview of the phenomenon ‘values education’ through development of different concepts. In the next section I will review the concepts of ‘values’ and ‘values selection.’

### **Complexity of Values**

The concept of values and values selection within values education is complex and controversial. Walker et al. (2015, p.81) refer to “myths” in the world of research and mass media which disregard the concepts of character, virtues and character education as outdated and irrelevant. Nevertheless, it is argued (Sutrop, 2015; Walker et al., 2015) that value-free education is utopia. Everything which takes place in the context of education and school from making decisions on which subjects to teach and how to talk to students to creating a school environment is “value-laden” (Sutrop, 2015, p.192). Thus, it is up to schools and policy makers to create an appropriate environment which will communicate the target values in a cohesive and coherent way (Walker et al., 2015).

It is also argued that values communicated within values education are not universal (Iskan, 2015). They are dependent on the context and setting of each school. Iskan (2015) references Brynildssen (2002), Vess and Halbur (2003) to explain that each particular school community has to decide itself which values should be taught and that can be done by bringing the voices of all stakeholders. Teachers, students, parents, and parent organizations should come together to reach a consensus on which values should be taught within a respectable values

education program. Even curriculum has to be formed by understanding local social traditions and discussions with the community (Sinclair, 2004). Thus, values are not transmitted to students in a straightforward way. Instead, students strive to make sense of values themselves and develop their own set of values with the guidance and support from their teachers (Veugelers, 2000).

Sutrop (2015) adds on complexity of values by explaining the difference in their interpretation. According to her, values are perceived as absolute (relevant in all conditions), relative and pluralist (can change according to different conditions) (Sutrop, 2015). As an attempt to make sense of this difference in values modality, the author brings to light the OECD's Definition and Selection of Competencies (DeSeCo) Project (OECD, 2005). It is a joined effort of the various experts and stakeholders from OECD countries to define the 'key competencies' of school education (OECD, 2005). As the document states, this can only be possible by arriving to common values such as democracy and sustainable development, prosperity of an individual and society as a whole. The DeSeCo Project's conceptual framework (OECD, 2005) lists key competencies under three broad categories: interactive use of tools, independent act and group interaction; as well as provides an extensive analysis of those key competencies.

In this section I examined the complexity of values and their choice within values education at schools. The next section will explore how the concepts of 'values education' and 'holistic education' are viewed in the context of educational research.

### **Values Education and Holistic Education**

Modern educational theory more often than not looks at values education as an efficient method of holistic education. In this section, I will the explore values education as a

complementary means to holistic education (Lovat, 2011) which addresses a person as a whole with his or her mind, emotions, spirit and social awareness.

Research performed by Sutrop (2015), Badjanova and Ilisko (2015), and Shobha and Kala (2015) all focused on making sense of holistic approach in education which has become relevant in the present discourse in educational philosophy. Sutrop (2015) provides an argument that the goal of education is not only to transmit academic knowledge, but also to develop a student as a holistic individual, i.e. one who possesses cultural values and is able to collaborate with other people in the society. In this sense, the terms ‘values education’ and ‘holistic education’ will be used interchangeably in my study as they both refer to transmitting values and educating a holistic individual. According to Sutrop (2015), schools and curricula in Europe have been neglecting students’ needs to develop their capabilities, desires, ethics, feelings, self-perception. While holistic approach offers focusing on a student as a whole individual and on creating educational environment for an individual to prosper (Sutrop, 2015).

Holistic education approach looks at the world as a system where everything exists in interrelation with everything else (Miller as cited in Badjanova & Ilisko, 2015). For an individual to become successful in such a world, it is important to acquire such values as integrity and ability to relate and connect with the world (Miller as cited in Badjanova & Ilisko, 2015). A person who possesses honesty and moral soundness will be able to relate to other people in mutually beneficial cooperation. Another important value is a person’s capability for spiritual wellbeing (Badjanova & Ilisko, 2015). A spiritually sound person is able to make sense of the life and its complex events. Finally, a person’s dedication to being complete and consistent (Schreiner, 2005) can lead to a truly productive life. A person educated holistically will not be stopped by minor or even major mishaps, but instead will be guided by his or her inner vision



and perseverance. These abovementioned qualities have been identified as the main components of holistic education (Badjanova & Ilisko, 2015).

The empirical study, which was conducted, by Badjanova and Ilisko (2015) focused on the views of primary school teachers towards the holistic approach. It provided justification to the use of holistic approach in selection of the contents of primary education and demonstrated teachers' readiness to adapt their teaching to a more holistic approach (Badjanova & Ilisko, 2015). A 22-question survey was applied as an instrument in order to collect quantitative data. The participants had to identify a most suitable education approach within the context of primary schools (formal or holistic). The analysis of a written survey of 676 primary grade teachers from Latvia was performed by cluster and factor analysis. The findings revealed a differing scale of teachers' views ranging from teachers who are more adherent to using holistic approach in classrooms to teachers who are adverse to the approach or not ready to use it (Badjanova & Ilisko, 2015). This research brings light to understanding teachers' perspectives towards values education in primary school. However, due to its quantitative nature, there could be additional qualitative research about individual teachers' perceptions and approaches being used in their classrooms.

Similarly, Shobha and Kala (2015) join the discourse on holistic approach to education by describing the challenges faced by schools to become more holistic. Schools have to maintain their existence in a rapidly changing and highly competitive environment by becoming more interdependent and holistic (Shobha & Kala, 2015). In turn, holistic education approach provides favorable conditions for the education of an individual's body, mind, emotions, spirit and other dimensions (Shobha & Kala, 2015).

Previous research explains that one of the educational goals is to develop a student as a holistic individual who will have a fulfilling life in the society. Schools and teachers have the duty to provide the most favorable conditions for such education. However, not all teachers are willing to engage in this task, as was shown by the study about the perceptions of Latvian primary teachers towards holistic education (Badjanova & Ilisko, 2015). Literature is missing on the holistic or values education implemented in Central Asian region. Therefore, I can argue that my study will bring new insights into this understanding by examining perspectives of teachers from an international school in Central Asia, as well as by applying qualitative methods to obtain descriptive data of teachers' perspectives and approaches within a values education program.

This section explored the phenomenon 'values education' as a complementary means to holistic education which has become relevant in the present discourse in educational philosophy. The next section will shed light on what is already known about the benefits of values education at schools.

### **Benefits of Values Education**

Modern educational theory provides a substantial amount of research on the benefits of values education at schools. Lovat and Hawkes (2013) report on an increasing empirical evidence from values education research of the positive effects of values-rich learning environments and value-related discussions on improved student academic achievement.

Benninga, Berkowitz, Kuehn and Smith (2006) conducted values education research using the Academic Performance Index (API) available for all Californian schools. It enabled them to monitor a significant influence of specific education programs on enhancing academic achievement of students. They started out by defining six criteria for specific character education programs at schools: (1) they are aimed at developing core ethical values; (2) parents and the

whole community are engaged in the educational process; (3) character education is interwoven in all aspects of school life; (4) every member of the staff shares responsibility for promoting character education; (5) the overall positive learning environment is created; (6) most students have an opportunity to practice moral action in a meaningful way within the school.

Furthermore, the researchers presented evidence that students who are enrolled in schools with character education programs befitting the above-mentioned criteria had significant improvement in their academic achievement. Academic Performance Index (API), as well as SAT results, from schools with specific character education programs were higher comparing to other schools during the four-year period from 1999 to 2002. The presented evidence made case for the authors' argument for schools to support a student's development and growth in all aspects rather than just academic achievement.

Davidson, Lickona and Khmelkov (2008, 2010) provided extensive reports on the project implemented by Lickona and Davidson in 2005, which was named "Smart and Good High Schools". The project included a 2-year study of high schools across the United States and employed grounded theory research methodology. The evidence demonstrated that character education is highly advantageous to high school students and that it entails two aspects - 'performance character' and 'moral character', both of which being critically important for the development of a student's personality (Davidson et al., 2008). In their concurrent elaboration of the project, the authors came up with the framework for character education at schools "8 Strengths of Character", 8 goals of character development at schools such as critical thinking, diligence, emotional intelligence, ethics, moral responsibility, self-discipline, democracy, spirituality (Davidson et al., 2010). In their later research, Davidson, Khmelkov and Lickona provided evidence of the positive influence of character education on high school students'

achievement based on two case studies (Davidson et al., 2010). The first case study examined the practices of an experienced American educator who implemented project based learning in his teaching, which was aimed at developing both ‘high performance character’ and ‘moral character’. They referred to the evidence that “students’ learning and test scores significantly improve when they do “good work”, i.e. work which meets three criteria: it is appealing, high-quality and makes a meaningful contribution (Davidson et al., 2010, p.435). The second case study sampled the work of the chairman of the math department and a math teacher in middle school, Mark Schumacher (Davidson et al., 2010). It focused on the specific steps the teacher took in order to integrate character education into teaching math and to obtain reportedly positive results in students’ achievement in the taught subject (Davidson et al., 2010).

Another project in values education, named ‘Values School’, was conducted in West Kidlington School (UK) and was assessed by the UK Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted, 2007). It confirmed the positive results which the values program had brought on some aspects of education, including improved academic performance (Ofsted, 2007). The report provided evidence of the success of the program: students’ respectful behavior, positive learning environment created at school, students’ positive feedback on the program, teachers and the school. Teaching within the program was viewed by the inspectors as “underpinning all aspects of school life” (Ofsted, 2007, p.5): through involvement of students in the community, building partnerships with parents and outside organizations, students’ taking part in the school council and maintaining safety at school. Moreover, Neil Hawkes (2009), the former head teacher of West Kidlington School, where the previously reported experiment was conducted under his guidance, provided a discussion from his perspective of the head teacher from 1993 to 1999. In a book chapter titled *Values and Quality Teaching at West Kidlington Primary School*, he

discussed the process and rationale for establishing a values education program at West Kidlington, while also elaborating on the benefits reported by Ofsted, as well as drawing evidence from current students of the school. The school accounting for 480 pupils (from 5 to 11 years old) in addition to 52 pupils of the attached nursery (from 3 to 5 years old) from “challenging” areas (Hawkes, 2009, p.105) has become a model of a successful values education program for educators around the world. In his narrative, the former head teacher explained that he stressed the importance of values by incorporating them in the core of school curriculum in order to “give pupils an opportunity to be the very best human being they could be” (Hawkes, 2009, p.107). The school developed a mission statement and started its elaboration by means of providing initial values training to new students, practicing positive reinforcement, carrying out school assemblies, training teachers in teaching values, holding staff discussions, providing quiet time for meditations and worship both for staff and students, establishing the climate of mutual respect, equality and inclusiveness at the school (Hawkes, 2009). The former head teacher compared the level of performance in his school and nationally in English, Math and Science in 1998, with West Kidlington students displaying from 4 to 22% higher levels of academic achievement than average of other schools in UK (Hawkes, 2009). Hawkes elaborated on the benefits reported by Ofsted such as intensified engagement with school work, enhancement of positive learning environment, and consequently, increased student responsibility and school enjoyment (Hawkes, 2009). Hawkes (2009) illustrated them with evidence provided by the students and parents of West Kidlington: a thank-you note from a father of a student with special educational needs who was dropped out from a previous school and was successfully integrated in West Kidlington. Students comments about the values education program in their school explained that they learned how to “be better behaved, good-mannered, anti-racist and to have a

good attitude.... to be humble and to be a good loser.... think and act with thought.... to be law-abiding adults” (Hawkes, 2009, p. 116). Students developed their reflection and critical thinking skills, “...we can think about what we do in different circumstances” (Hawkes, 2009, p.117), “it has helped me to concentrate and look at the deep meaning of things” (p.118); as well as empathy for others, “people are a lot more patient, a lot more caring...” (p.119), “you become a kinder pupil” (p.117).

Finally, Australia, a country which started its national Values Education Program in 2003, provides us with extensive information on the results of implementing a national values education program in Australia (DEST, 2005; DEEWR, 2008; DEEWR, 2010). First, the government carried out a qualitative investigation on values education comprising of three components: literature review of the research on values education, action research to establish and promote practices of values education, as well as the study of the views of different stakeholders towards the values to be developed (DEEWR, 2008). The result of the investigation was adopting the National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools by the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST, 2005). It provided the context, vision, guiding principles, key elements and approaches which could support the implementation of national values education program in Australia. Following up this national initiative, the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR, 2008) carried out a two-stage project called the Values Education Good Practice Schools Project (VEGPSP) in order to inform schools of the successful values education undertakings in the selected schools. The project included two stages: stage 1 which lasted from 2005 to 2006 and included 26 school clusters and their 166 schools, and stage 2 which lasted from 2006 to 2008 and included 25 school clusters and their 143 schools (DEEWR, 2008). Stage

2 of the project applied a meta-evaluation methodology in order to examine good practices and their results. The findings from this project demonstrated positive effects of values education on a variety of educational aspects: enhanced learning environment, strengthened student attention to academic work, improved teacher-student relationships, classroom environment, student attitudes and behavior, student knowledge and understanding (DEEWR, 2008).

Moreover, VEGPSP was supplemented with a subsequent report which incorporated qualitative methodology and applied the Most Significant Change (MSC) technique (Davies & Dart as cited in DEEWR, 2010). It is a tool used in qualitative research in order to examine the experiences and perceptions of the participants and assess the results of values education activities. Through dialogue, storytelling and discussions with the teachers, students and parents, the researchers were able to grasp an in-depth understanding of the impacts of values education projects in the participating school clusters. Based on the data provided through the MSC technique, as well as quantitative analysis of secondary project data including teacher surveys, VEGPSP demonstrated the positive impacts in five value-related areas: values awareness, wellbeing, self-management, connectedness and change (DEEWR, 2010).

Another set of educational researchers reported on the effects of values education on students' or teachers' wellbeing (Farrer as cited in Lovat & Hawkes, 2013; Shobha & Kala, 2015; Dasoo as cited in Lovat, 2011; Hawkes & Heppenstall, 2002). Hawkes & Heppenstall (2002) draw from the evidence based on an experiment on values education at West Kidlington, UK, mentioned above. Neil Hawkes, former head-teacher at West Kidlington, and Linda Heppenstall, who served as the curriculum manager for Values Education at the same school provided their guidelines on how the school used core values as a basis for its work and reflected on the results of the values education program. The authors reported on a variety of realms which

incorporated values education at West Kidlington, and subsequent benefits they brought for students' wellbeing, such as calm and reflective behavior, improved concentration, increased self-awareness, self-acceptance, self-confidence, self-knowledge and self-esteem, consideration for others, responsibility, reinforced listening skills. Values education at the school was integrated in the school's curriculum, the school's purpose, the core values of the program, school ethos and activities which develop reflective skills of students.

In support of these findings, Farrer (as cited in Lovat & Hawkes, 2013), who served as a reviewer and external evaluator of the experimental work at West Kidlington, noted emotional stability as the major good brought by values education at this school, while commenting on the increased students' awareness of the outside world and of the implications of their actions on the community.

While Shobha and Kala (2015) argued that it is the duty of schools and universities to encourage students in character development by working with a prescribed values and competencies. A descriptive research was carried out by them to understand the impact of a values education program on promoting the self-actualization of undergraduate students. It has been carried out by collecting data from Bachelor students of the Maharani Lakshmi Ammanni College for Women (MLACW), Bangalore, India who were attendants of the value education programs titled *Know Yourself, Know Your Country, Know Your Culture*. The data was drawn from a random sample of the final year students (226 responses from 250 students were collected). The survey instrument included 25 statements describing how respondents felt after attending the program. The findings of this study were described through improvements in participants' state of mind, spirit, health, wellbeing and ethical view of life. It was through



holistic approach to the development of a student, which ensured such large success in all dimensions of students' lives.

But students are not the sole beneficiaries of values education programs. Dasoo (as cited in Lovat, 2011) in his report of a values education program in South Africa, was able to demonstrate how a values education program caused improvement of students' performance, and subsequent positive effects on teachers' self-esteem and wellbeing.

This section provides evidence of the positive effects of values education on all dimensions of students' life, as well as some benefits for teachers' wellbeing. However, the evidence was collected from countries such as the USA, Great Britain, Australia, some developing countries as South Africa and India, revealing the gap in research on the benefits of values education programs in the Central Asian region.

## **Conclusion**

In order to answer the research questions in this study, "What are the perspectives of elementary teachers towards values education in an international school in Central Asia?" and "How are elementary teachers' approaches implemented within a values education program?", this chapter provided a definition of the key terminology: values, values education, international schools. In order to bring a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of values education, I examined the literature in other terms and concepts in their historical retrospective, such as character education, civic education, the concept of 'human flourishing'. Furthermore, I reported on the complexity of values and their choice.

The section on values and holistic education explored values education as a complementary means to holistic education. I found that literature is missing on the holistic or values education in Central Asian region.

While students' results in values education are important, this study will focus on teachers' perspectives and approaches implemented by them within a values education program in an international school in Kazakhstan. This research will bring new insights into the understanding of values education in Central Asia and in Kazakhstan in particular.

The following chapter lays out a description of the methods which were used in this study. It will explain the overall research design, the site selection, sampling and data collection methods. In the end, data analysis, limitations and ethical considerations will be presented.

### **Chapter 3: Methodology**

This chapter provide a description of the methods which were used in this study on elementary teachers' perspectives and approaches within a values education program at an international school in Central Asia. The purpose of this chapter is to explain the overall research design, including describing the site selection, sampling procedures, as well as to identify data collection methods. In addition, I discuss data analysis methods and limitations, as well as ethical considerations.

#### **Research Design**

In this research, I examined a values education program through the perspectives and approaches of elementary teachers through the framework of a constructivist (Mills, Bonner & Francis, 2006) approach. Constructivism can imply that the phenomenon of values education can be explored through individual perceptions of teachers who are engaged in its implementation. As they make use of a values education program, teachers “create their own understandings based upon the interaction of what they already know and believe” (Richardson, 2005, p. 3). In other words, my study was guided by “people’s subjective understandings and multiple meanings” (Leavy, 2017, p. 129), instead of an objective understanding of values education.

Strauss and Corbin (1998) explain that qualitative methods might reveal “the intricate details about phenomena such as feelings, thought processes, and emotions that are difficult to extract or learn through more conventional methods” (p.11). As a researcher, I was interested to hear the voices of people, their thoughts and feelings about a values education program, which prompted me to choose qualitative methods. The proposed study attempted to interpret a phenomenon in terms of the meanings people bring to them, data was collected from a small

number of participants and in words, and finally data analysis took place by interpretation and description for themes (Creswell, 2014, p.30).

The central phenomenon, 'values education,' was explored through examination of teachers' perspectives. According to Leavy (2017) the constructive paradigm guides the study and is explained by "how people engage in processes of constructing and reconstructing meanings through daily interactions" (p. 129). The research investigated the central phenomenon "in depth and within its real-world context" in a single case of an international school in Central Asia. Following Yin's (2014) research, I selected a qualitative case study as the suitable research design for this study. This research describes the perspectives of teachers towards a values education program, as well as approaches being implemented within a program in one particular school, which is a typical international school implementing a values education program. These reasons prompted me to select a single-case descriptive case study design.

### **Research Site**

The study investigated values education within the case of one international school in Kazakhstan. The selected school complies with the criteria to be identified as international described in the introduction (Hayden & Thompson, 1995; Langford, 2001; Terwiliger as cited in Hayden & Thompson, 1995; Gellar as cited in Hayden & Thompson, 1995). The school is known for its values education program, while it also provided ease of access as I am a member of the teaching staff.

The approval of the GSE Ethical Review Committee was granted in November, 2007. The following week I contacted the director of the school in person in order to receive a permission to conduct the study. I explained the topic and the purpose of this research while the director asked a few questions to clarify how my research will be beneficial for this school and

other schools in Kazakhstan. In the end of the meeting, the permission to conduct the study was granted from the gatekeeper of the site, a director of this international school.

### **Sample**

The study population from which I drew my sample consists of all homeroom elementary teachers at this school. Homeroom elementary teachers spend most of the day with their students and teach the core subjects: literacy, math, science and cultural studies. They are responsible for teaching the values within the school's values education program and for evaluating students for the values they successfully acquire or fail to demonstrate. Purposeful convenience sampling (Leavy, 2017) accessed "information-rich cases" (Patton as cited in Leavy, 2017, p. 264) for my study, which enabled me to better address the research purpose and questions.

I applied the following criteria in order to select such "information-rich cases: 1) a teacher serves as a homeroom elementary teacher; (2) a teacher is familiar with the concept of "values education"; (3) has at least 3 years of experience working with this values education program; (4) is willing to participate in my study. The participant criteria ensured that people who showed their interest are the ones who are familiar with what values education is, as well as the ones who believe they integrate values education in their teaching. Creswell (2007) explained that a qualitative case study should incorporate about 4-5 participants. Based upon this recommendation, I included 5 participants in my case study. The same teachers who were individually interviewed participated in lesson observations. In order to ensure triangulation of data (Leavy, 2017), I selected document analysis as another source of data collection.

The next step was recruiting the participants of the research. I contacted them by email informing of my research and inviting for participation. As I am an employee of this school, I had the contact emails of all elementary homeroom teachers and I used my corporate email

account to send the invitation email. I explained that participation in my research is voluntary and would not affect their job whether they chose to participate or not. Out of 14 potential participants, five teachers expressed their interest in participation. Three participants which clearly met all criteria for my research expressed their interest in taking part in my study. They were each from a different grade level: teaching 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade. However, one participant, a homeroom teacher of a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, who was actively involved in values education in her grade level, was recommended as a potential participant by other participants, but she did not have sufficient three years of working with this values education program. Despite of this, that teacher had a substantial experience of working within other values education programs and two years of experience with this program. I made a decision to recruit her as a participant in my study.

I was still looking for the fifth participant when I received an email from one of my colleagues who was employed at our school. He explained to me that even though he is not working in elementary classroom currently, nevertheless he has an experience of elementary homeroom teaching 5<sup>th</sup> grade in the previous years of his career at this school. In addition, that teacher was befitting to become my participant as he met all other criteria: he was willing to participate in my study, understood and was familiar with the concept of 'values education' and had at least 3 years of experience working with this values education program. After I consulted my thesis supervisor, I decided that he could become my fifth participant as he did meet the criteria of my research even if it was an unexpected addition to have someone who was not currently employed as an elementary homeroom teacher.

My next step was sending out individual emails to all participants in order to schedule a time and place of one-on-one interviews and lesson observations which were suitable to both them and me.

### **Data Collection Tools and Procedures**

Qualitative data collection was implemented using the qualitative case study research design. Data triangulation was applied as evidence was collected from three different sources (Yin, 2014): individual semi-structured interviews, lesson observations and document analysis.

The data collection procedures started in January 2018 and ended in April 2018. The process was conducted in three steps: individual interviews (January 11 - February 13), lesson observations (February 5 - February 28), and document analysis (April).

**Interviews.** After the participants were recruited for this research, I provided them with the electronic version of the consent form prior to the interview. The consent form contained the information about the purpose of the research study, risks and benefits for the participants, and informing participants of the opportunity to withdraw from research at any time. In personal correspondence, we chose the time and location for the interview meeting that was convenient for the participant and researcher. Four participants were interviewed at the school, while one participant was interviewed at his home on the school campus.

The follow standard procedure was used in all interviews: after greeting a participant, I provided him or her with a hard copy of the consent form, which was then signed and returned to me. During the first interview, I noticed that it began very formally and I had a feeling that participant 1 was feeling tense. I realized that being audio recorded and having to answer questions might cause some kind of anxiety. Therefore, in later cases prior to beginning audio recording, I started with an ice-breaker – small talk about weather, school events, families of the participants which provided me with an opportunity for an informal joke and in some cases a short laugh. It was obvious that participants then felt more relaxed and confident of a positive attitude of a researcher.

Next I reminded my participants of the audio recording which would be taking place and then proceeded to begin it. Four interviews took place in teachers' classrooms, while one interview took place at a teacher's personal lodging which is located on the school campus. At all times the seating was arranged in a way so that to avoid intimidating my participants – we were sitting across students' desks and across a kitchen table in one case so that to allow space between us. Having a table allowed me to jot down notes during interviews.

Closed-ended and open-ended questions were asked during one-on-one semi-structured interviews with teachers in order to examine perspectives of teachers towards a values education program and to understand how their approaches are implemented within the program. Questions were organized in a 'funnel' way: from broader to more specific questions (Roller & Lavrakas as cited in Leavy, 2017). In order to obtain specific examples and detailed descriptions, probing questions were asked, "Can you provide an example of this?", "Can you describe what exactly happened?", "Give me more details about it." (Creswell, 2012). The researcher was guided by themes intended to cover: a values education program, values, effective approaches and how they are implemented, successes and challenges. All interviews were audio recorded on my personal password protected smartphone. Audio files were later transferred to my personal password-protected computer and deleted from the smartphone.

**Observation Procedures.** During the month of February, 2018, I conducted observations as a non-participant observer. The date and schedule of the lesson observation were discussed in advance in personal email correspondence. Since lesson observation is a common practice at this school, it was conducted without drawing any extra attention to the participants. The goal of observations was to gather data related to how teachers implement a values education program in their classroom. Multiple non-participatory observations (one for each participant during class



time of about 45 minutes) of a classroom setting, teacher's instruction, interactions between a teacher and students, among students, as well as the values-related language in use allowed me to collect data and make connections between teachers' perceptions of their approaches and the actual approaches implemented within a classroom. In order to mitigate teachers' anxiety about being observed, I reminded them of the purpose of my study and mentioned that I was only looking for specific values-related activities, language or setting, avoiding evaluation of their teaching or actions, as usually observations are intended for teachers' evaluation. One participant could not be observed as he was not currently serving as a homeroom teacher at this school. After consulting my thesis supervisor, I made a decision to complete four observations in total. Table 1 provides a list of participants with relevant information about the lessons observed.

Table 1. *Lesson observations*

| Participant    | Subject                    | Number of Students |
|----------------|----------------------------|--------------------|
| Participant #1 | Math                       | 9 students         |
| Participant #3 | Math                       | 10 students        |
| Participant #4 | Lesson dedicated to values | 33 students        |
| Participant #5 | Math                       | 8 students         |

A protocol (adapted from Creswell, 2014, p. 136-137) was used to make descriptive and reflective field notes about participant's classroom, activities, instructions and language related to values education. In addition, observation notes were kept as the researcher's personal notes in order to allow questions, interpretations and connecting the ideas (Creswell, 2014, p.217).

**Document analysis.** First I coded the data to see what additional questions needed to be asked in a focus group interview which was initially planned as the third data source. However, as I faced the time constraint of the study and my work schedule, I decided to leave off a focus

group interview and instead use document analysis of all posters hung up in the rooms where I observed. This source of information allowed me to connect what the participants said to what they displayed on the walls, as at this school it is the choice of a teacher what should be put up on the classroom walls. All data sources demonstrated common themes across all participants which were used to answer the research questions.

### **Data Analysis**

Data was analyzed in an inductive way – the focus was first on the detailed collected data and later shifted to the general codes and themes (Creswell, 2012). The recorded data was manually transcribed. The interviews and observation notes were in English language, as well as the writings on the posters displayed in the observed classrooms. First, I read all transcripts, observation and reflective notes in order to define the general sense of the data (Creswell, 2012). This led to the next stage, coding the data using the words of the participants, also called *in vivo codes* (Creswell, 2012, p. 244), as well as generating open coding (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). I applied the method of “constant comparison” (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012, p.137). Segments of texts were systematically compared between each other, while similarities and differences between them were distinguished (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). The emerging codes were examined in order to identify themes and descriptions (Creswell, 2012, p.245). Emerging patterns were identified across the data. Subsequent description and development of these themes led to answering the research questions: (1) What are elementary teachers' perspectives towards a values education program? (2) How are elementary teachers' approaches implemented within a values education program?

The descriptive and reflective field notes from lesson observations taken with the help of observational protocol, as well as the writings on the posters in the observed classrooms were

analyzed in order to answer the research question (2) How are elementary teachers' approaches implemented within a values education program? Data pertaining to the teachers' approaches was compared with the relevant data received from one-on-one interviews.

During the process of data analysis, I acknowledged my own assumptions about the study. My assumptions were based on the observations made in the literature review, in particular the research conducted in UK by Walker et al. (2015). They emphasized the importance of institutional rather than individual action taking. This gave basis for my first assumption that teachers' perspectives of a values education program would incorporate all integral school components: curriculum, classroom ethos, school leadership, learning environment, communication practices, extracurricular activities and relationships between students, teachers and parents.

Furthermore, various positive improvements in students' academic achievement (Benninga et al., 2006; Davidson et al., 2008, 2010; Lovat, 2011; Hawkes, 2009; Farrer as cited in Lovat & Hawkes, 2013), as well as teachers' and students' wellbeing (Farrer as cited in Lovat & Hawkes, 2013; Shobha & Kala, 2015; Dasoo as cited in Lovat, 2011; Hawkes & Heppenstall, 2002) have been reported as a result of values education by prior research. This led to my second assumption of expecting positive views in perspectives of teachers to a values education program at this school.

### **Ethical Issues**

In order to address potential risks to the research site and the participants of the study, I took steps to minimize the potential harm, all approved by the Nazarbayev University. Ethical issues in the proposed research included non-discretion of the name of an international school under investigation, as well as maintaining confidentiality of the participants' names. The

proposed study was seeking to understand the teachers' perspectives towards and approaches within a values education program, therefore it might include some negative aspects and critique. The good standing of this school's name and practices should not become subject to criticism within both local and international communities. Therefore, confidentiality of the school was attempted in order to minimize any possible harm to school's image. This was implemented by not naming specifically the values education program and the values communicated within this program.

The names of the teachers involved in the study remained confidential as well. Each participant was labeled with a number from 1 to 5, the corresponding table was saved in a separate document. This and other electronic documents with collected data were stored in my personal password protected computer. The collected consent forms signed by the participants were stored in the locked secure place in my classroom and later at my home. The data collected was not used beyond the data analysis process for this research. Only the researcher and the thesis supervisor had access to the electronic and hard documents pertaining to this study. Whereas, when data analysis was completed, all the data was deleted.

I specifically did not mention the real names of my participants, their age or students' names and instead kept those specifics with the supervisor for analysis purposes. I also interviewed and observed their classes in such a way that would not draw attention. Above-mentioned steps addressed the confidentiality of my participants and minimized the possibility of any repercussions at the school.

Possible risks for participants during the interview included the feeling of discomfort at some questions. I allowed participants to skip the questions if they experienced such feelings or were unwilling to share their answer, however none of them asked for it.

Potential risks to the participants during lesson observations might have been disruptions caused by an observer during lesson observations (Creswell, 2014). However, I sought to reduce this by explaining clearly the purpose of this study (Creswell, 2014) and reminding participations of my non-evaluator nature. Document analysis of the posters displayed on the walls did not cause any disruption to the class, as I briefly took photos during breaks. In order to ensure confidentiality of the participants, the photos of the posters were kept privately and were not included in the Findings chapter.

### **Limitations**

The research which was conducted contains several limitations. Initially I was planning to conduct a focus group interview with homeroom teachers but because of the time constraint of the study and my work schedule I was not able to do it. This obstacle prevented me from asking clarifying questions and getting more detailed information. Another limitation of this research was the inability to observe one participant as he was not currently employed as an elementary homeroom teacher.

### **Conclusion**

In this chapter I described the methods which were used in this study on elementary homeroom teachers' perspectives and approaches within a values education program at an international school in Central Asia. The overall research design, the site selection, sampling procedures, as well as data collection methods were specified. In addition, data analysis methods, limitations and ethical considerations were indicated. This thesis study interpreted a phenomenon in terms of the meanings people bring to them, data was collected from a small number of participants and in words, and finally data analysis took place by interpretation and description for themes (Creswell, 2014, p.30).

The central phenomenon, ‘values education,’ was explored through examination of teachers’ perspectives. According to Leavy (2017) the constructive paradigm guides the study and is explained by “how people engage in processes of constructing and reconstructing meanings through daily interactions” (p. 129). The research investigated the central phenomenon “in depth and within its real-world context” in a single case of an international school in Central Asia. Following Yin’s (2014) research, I selected a qualitative case study as the suitable research design for this study.

The goal of the research was achieved as the central phenomenon ‘values education’ was investigated “in depth and within its real-world context” (Leavy, 2017, p.129) through the perspectives of teachers who are involved in values education at the research site. It was not the aim of qualitative case study to generalize, instead it can be argued that this case study can become one of a multiple set of studies of the ‘values education’ phenomenon in Central Asia.

In the next chapter I will explain the detailed steps of data analysis process and will present the main findings of the study.

## Chapter 4: Analysis and Findings

The previous chapter provided a description of the research design, data collection, and ethical considerations used in this study. In this chapter, I explain and justify the process of data analysis and present the main findings of the study.

### Analysis Steps

During the process of analyzing the data, I used the software MAXQDA which was a useful tool in coding the interviews. Text segments were easily dragged and labeled with colored codes, whereas a list of codes was comfortably located on the side of the text. I could easily access the appropriate text segment for each code by clicking on it. In total, 104 codes were identified from 224 coded segments. As suggested by the literature, I used a cyclical process of data analysis (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012) and it allowed me to condense the data and to make sense of it. Both *in-vivo* and *open coding* were applied in coding the segments (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012) manually in MAXQDA (See Figure 1).

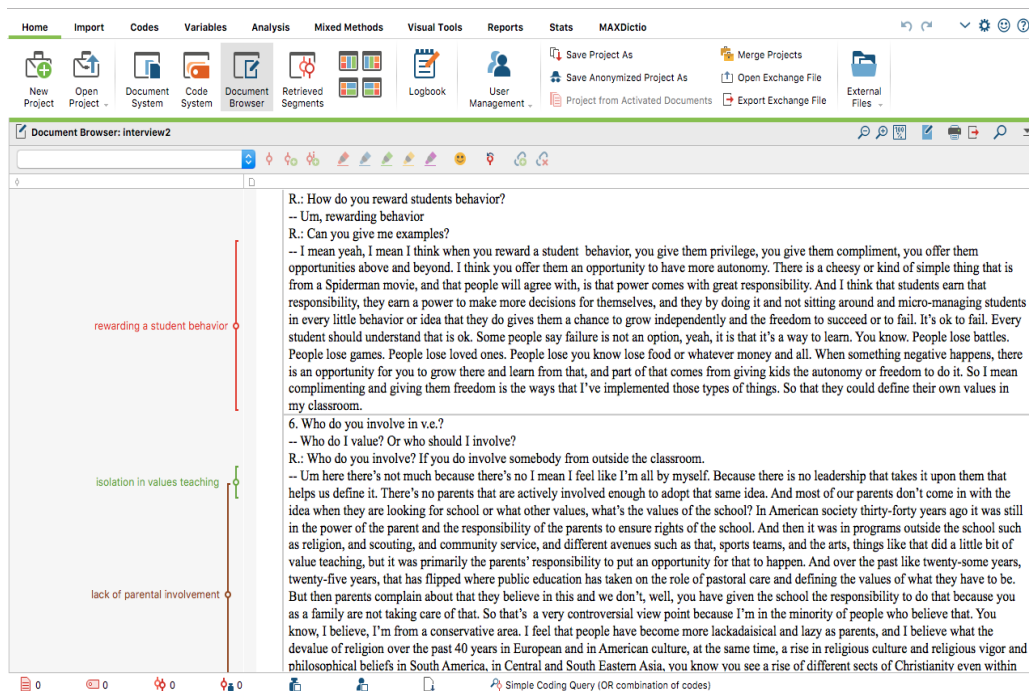


Figure 1. Coding of Interview in MAXQDA

Bloomberg and Volpe define *open coding* as a process of labeling text segments with the descriptors emanating from the data, while specifically *in-vivo* coding is the same process which utilizes the exact words of the participants for code labels (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012).

Next, I exported the document with all the codes to Excel spreadsheet, printed all the codes and cut them out in order to categorize them among sub-categories and categories (See Figure 2).

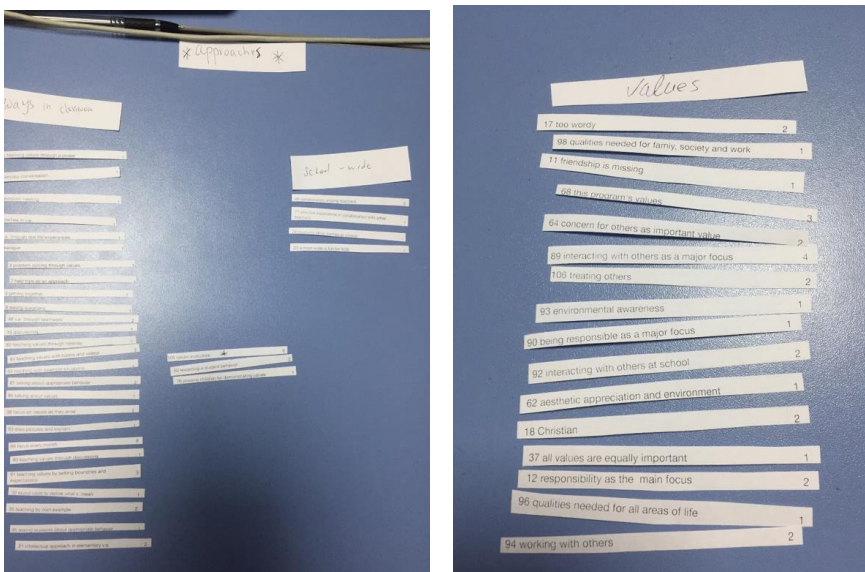


Figure 2. Sample of codes divided among the category of ‘approaches’ and sub-category of ‘values’

Coding and categorizing of the data was done applying the method of “constant comparison” (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012, p.137). Segments of texts were systematically compared between each other, while similarities and differences between them were distinguished (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). I began to see common themes emerging from the data.

All the identified sub-categories fell into two categories which came out of my research questions: perspectives and approaches. The category of perspectives contained the four sub-



categories: ‘teachers’ own experience’, ‘understanding of values education’, ‘understanding of values taught at this school’, ‘their views of the school’s values education program’. Five sub-categories formed the category of approaches: ‘approaches implemented by teachers in their classrooms’, ‘what is done in values education on a school-wide level’, ‘results of values education observed by teachers in their classrooms’, ‘challenges in values education’ and ‘suggestions offered by the teachers in regard to values education’ in elementary classrooms.

| Comment | Document gro... | Document name | Code                | Begin | End | Weight score | Preview                | Author             | Creation date   | Area | Coverage |
|---------|-----------------|---------------|---------------------|-------|-----|--------------|------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|------|----------|
|         |                 | interview1    | charachter edu...   | 6     | 6   | 0            | o me the value ...     | Lyutsiya Adilzh... | 4/10/18 5:58 PM | 58   | 0.3      |
|         |                 | interview1    | treating others     | 6     | 6   | 0            | how they treat ...     | Lyutsiya Adilzh... | 4/10/18 5:58 PM | 25   | 0.1      |
|         |                 | interview1    | values evaluation   | 6     | 6   | 0            | And every time ...     | Lyutsiya Adilzh... | 4/10/18 6:00 PM | 138  | 0.8      |
|         |                 | interview1    | own experience      | 6     | 6   | 0            | Well, I think ev...    | Lyutsiya Adilzh... | 4/10/18 6:01 PM | 160  | 0.9      |
|         |                 | interview1    | values evaluation   | 6     | 6   | 0            | letting the pare...    | Lyutsiya Adilzh... | 4/10/18 6:01 PM | 111  | 0.6      |
|         |                 | interview1    | own experience      | 6     | 6   | 0            | So I went to a ...     | Lyutsiya Adilzh... | 4/10/18 6:02 PM | 100  | 0.5      |
|         |                 | interview1    | behavior at sch...  | 6     | 6   | 0            | Yeah, and so a...      | Lyutsiya Adilzh... | 4/10/18 7:02 PM | 160  | 0.9      |
|         |                 | interview1    | important part ...  | 6     | 6   | 0            | And huh, since ...     | Lyutsiya Adilzh... | 4/10/18 7:04 PM | 81   | 0.4      |
|         |                 | interview1    | growing up/me...    | 6     | 6   | 0            | o I kind of reme...    | Lyutsiya Adilzh... | 4/10/18 7:05 PM | 145  | 0.8      |
|         |                 | interview1    | important part ...  | 6     | 6   | 0            | R.: I feel like it'... | Lyutsiya Adilzh... | 4/10/18 7:06 PM | 36   | 0.2      |
|         |                 | interview1    | treating others     | 6     | 6   | 0            | The children ne...     | Lyutsiya Adilzh... | 4/10/18 7:06 PM | 56   | 0.3      |
|         |                 | interview1    | becoming adults     | 6     | 6   | 0            | This will benefi...    | Lyutsiya Adilzh... | 4/10/18 7:07 PM | 44   | 0.2      |
|         |                 | interview1    | becoming adults     | 6     | 6   | 0            | And of course t...     | Lyutsiya Adilzh... | 4/10/18 7:07 PM | 73   | 0.4      |
|         |                 | interview1    | focus every mo...   | 6     | 6   | 0            | And I try to incl...   | Lyutsiya Adilzh... | 4/10/18 7:08 PM | 159  | 0.9      |
|         |                 | interview1    | important part ...  | 6     | 6   | 0            | I think there's q...   | Lyutsiya Adilzh... | 4/10/18 7:09 PM | 60   | 0.3      |
|         |                 | interview1    | qualities neede...  | 6     | 6   | 0            | Like responsibil...    | Lyutsiya Adilzh... | 4/10/18 7:10 PM | 252  | 1.4      |
|         |                 | interview1    | function succe...   | 6     | 6   | 0            | - to be able to f...   | Lyutsiya Adilzh... | 4/10/18 7:11 PM | 53   | 0.3      |
|         |                 | interview1    | qualities neede...  | 6     | 6   | 0            | And even just i...     | Lyutsiya Adilzh... | 4/10/18 7:15 PM | 97   | 0.5      |
|         |                 | interview1    | empathy             | 6     | 6   | 0            | Just being able...     | Lyutsiya Adilzh... | 4/10/18 7:16 PM | 53   | 0.3      |
|         |                 | interview1    | empathy             | 6     | 6   | 0            | And knowing h...       | Lyutsiya Adilzh... | 4/10/18 7:16 PM | 46   | 0.2      |
|         |                 | interview1    | working with ot...  | 6     | 6   | 0            | Or work togeth...      | Lyutsiya Adilzh... | 4/10/18 7:17 PM | 32   | 0.1      |
|         |                 | interview1    | environmental ...   | 6     | 6   | 0            | Earth and keepi...     | Lyutsiya Adilzh... | 4/10/18 7:18 PM | 117  | 0.6      |
|         |                 | interview1    | interacting with... | 6     | 6   | 0            | I think like the i...  | Lyutsiya Adilzh... | 4/10/18 7:20 PM | 547  | 3.1      |
|         |                 | interview1    | the program en...   | 6     | 6   | 0            | R.: Anything fro...    | Lyutsiya Adilzh... | 4/10/18 7:21 PM | 239  | 1.3      |

Figure 3. Analytical table with codes and a preview of coded segments

The software provided me with a useful table which listed all coded segments with their codes (See Figure 3). First, I put all codes in alphabetical order in order to simplify my search for the necessary codes. Second, I printed the whole excel table in 27 pages in order to use coded segments when describing the consolidated themes and sub-themes and finding the quotable quotations as my goal was to provide a “thick description” as suggested by Denzin (2001).

## **Findings**

To describe the findings, I organized the section based upon the research questions: (1) What are elementary teachers' perspectives towards a values education program? (2) How are elementary teachers' approaches implemented within a values education program? I found eight findings: (1) Teachers have diverse experience with values education; (2) there is no common understanding of values education; (3) values taught within this program encompass all areas of life and are similarly important; (4) importance of community and school-wide involvement; (5) teachers use different approaches in values education; (6) teachers established a culture of collaboration to support values education on a grade level; (7) benefits and challenges of a values education program; (8) "good in theory, but ...": having a values education program is not enough. The following sections describe each finding in detail.

### **RQ 1: What are Elementary Teachers' Perspectives towards a Values Education Program?**

This section describes participants' perspectives towards a values education program taught at this school based upon the data from one-on-one interviews. I used different definitions of 'perspectives' to think about and compare what was referring to perspectives of values education and what was referring to approaches within this values education program when I was analyzing the interviews.

Cambridge dictionary online provides several definitions of 'perspectives,' two of which I used in order to make a decision which sub-categories belonged to the category of perspectives. The dictionary defines a perspective as a noun which means "a particular way of viewing things that depends on one's experience and personality" ("perspective," n.d.). Guided by this definition, I placed the sub-categories of 'teachers' own experience with values education', 'their

understanding of values education’ and ‘values taught at this school’, ‘their views of the school’s values education program’ into the category of perspectives.

**RQ1, Finding 1: Diverse experience with values education.** All of the five participants have diverse experience with values education. Three of the five participants mentioned that they went to religious schools as children and experienced values education within a faith-based model, while only one teacher mentioned values education at a non-religious school where teachers would give comments to her parents about the values which she was demonstrating like “kindness” and “responsibility.”

Whereas, in their teaching career all teachers were involved in values education at other schools. The experience, however, is very diverse. One participant told about his early career years in Waldorf school, an international school movement based on the educational philosopher of Rudolph Steiner which is characterized by holistic pedagogy and explicit and implicit values teaching. Other teachers elaborated on their experience in religious schools where values teaching was conducted, as well as in other schools which in some cases implemented a particular curriculum in values education or in other cases only formally subscribed to a character education program. Participant 4 summarized her experience with values education, “

Some might call it so and so, others call them ... core skills or character education, but they all more or less cover the same things and the point is to ... emphasize the importance of these particular qualities in becoming a good contributing member of society.

This quote demonstrates that the participant is aware of multiple names for values education and considers it important in preparing students for living in the society.

This section explained the first theme which emerged during data analysis. The first finding I discovered during the data analysis was that teachers participating in this research have

diverse experience with values education. The next section will explain the second theme which relates to how teachers understand the concept of ‘values education.’

**RQ1, Finding 2: There is no common understanding of values education.** In order to determine the perspectives of teachers towards a values education program, I asked the participants to define values education in their own words. All the participants provided me with an extensive explanation of what values education is based on their understanding. The answers were given promptly and participants did not seem to struggle with providing a definition.

All participants described values education as an important part of school education. For example, Participant 4 explained,

In terms of my own experience, I'd rather have a kid who grows up to be a good citizen than a kid who gets all the As ... it would just make a world a much better place. ... the things that you take with you are what it means to be a good person and how you should interact with others.

This quote demonstrates that this participant prioritizes values education over academic achievement of her students. Others also mentioned similar perspectives on values education as an important component of education.

While all participants thought that values education was important, all had different focuses when defining values education. The most consistent understanding which appeared throughout all interviews is the term of ‘character education’ as participants used this in their definitions. Teachers interpret values education as fostering “the character of students” (Participant 1), focusing on “the character development and social interpersonal values of students rather than just academic” (Participant 5). The last two quotes demonstrate the explanation of values education as relating to the ‘character education.’

Another common definition of values education is related to becoming a “good citizen” (Participant 4), “growing up and learning to be a valuable member of society” (Participant 1),

educating “civic-minded students who will become good citizens” (Participant 4), becoming adults and in turn teaching “their own children this sort of values” (Participant 1). These quotes demonstrate the understanding which is aligned with the definition of “civic education” as it was viewed and defined in the literature review.

Furthermore, Participants 3 and 4 elaborated on values education in terms of “holistic education”, in particular as “teaching students to be good human beings and (...) realize their full potential in life” (Participant 3) and as “an important component of educating the whole child” (Participant 4). This finding that some teachers connect values education to holistic education goes in line with what was reported in the literature review where it was explained that the modern educational theory often looks at values education as an effective method of holistic education.

Overall, it can be concluded in this section that while all participants are convinced that values education is an important component of school education, there is no common understanding of values education among the participants. Teachers vary in defining values education as “development of character,” “civic education” and “holistic education,” however these differences confirm what was presented in the literature review as modern educational research utilizing various concepts of values education.

**RQ1, Finding 3: The values taught encompass all areas of life.** The values which are taught within this values education program are viewed by teachers as encompassing all areas of life. For instance, Participant 3 explained, “Those values can encompass most qualities that a human being, important qualities for a human being to have, (in order) to function well ...”.

Furthermore, Participant 4 added, “They (values) are named different things in different places,

but they more or less kind of cover everything. I don't see any gaping holes." These quotes confirm that participants view all values as sufficient for a successful functioning in the society.

In seeking to understand if some values were more important than others, I asked teachers to complete an interview exercise where they had to prioritize the values in the order of importance and explain their choice. Most teachers indicated that all values which are taught within this values education program are equally important, as Participant 4 explains it,

I can see them more as puzzle pieces and that you can't make a puzzle without all of the pieces. ... I (kind of) think that we need to teach them all. We need to do activities related to all of them and give them all equal importance.

In addition, all values were perceived as necessary "puzzle pieces" which could not exist without each other, as Participant 2 explains, "You can't really isolate any of them without not affecting the other." Furthermore, Participant 5 noted,

A responsible person is concerned about other people... A responsible person takes care of the environment. A responsible person is trustworthy, so from there it's hard to rank them... And then how can you be all that and not know how to work in a group. So they're all so intertwined...

This quote emphasizes how all values are interrelated with each other and are equally important. Thus, the finding in this section revealed that teachers perceive values taught within this values education program as encompassing all areas of life and equally important.

**RQ1, Finding 4: Importance of community and school-wide involvement supported by administration.** According to the interviews, all participants suggested that the whole community should be involved in values education, whereas it should be integrated on the scale of the whole school and supported by school administration.

Based on the responses of the participants, one of the most powerful tools in implementing values education is involvement of the whole community. For example, Participant 2 commented, "I think values education has to be defined by the members or the

people within the community and it has to be spearheaded by its leaders and volunteers that have service to the school.” This quote demonstrates that a teacher suggests a wider involvement of the community in defining values and their communication in practice.

When different stakeholders of the community are involved in values education, it sends to children the message of the importance of values, of their universality. Participant 3 explains it like this,

So the kids sense that they're not just hollow ideas and expectations that we just give our lip service to, but you know somehow everyone supports it. I think anytime, I mean, for me actually the most important part is that anytime any community comes together around something that gives students a sense of meaning and significance. And that it's something bigger than them and bigger than individuals and unites people.

This quote illustrates that when the whole community is involved in values education, children are more likely to learn from it and to grasp the significance of values for them and for other community members.

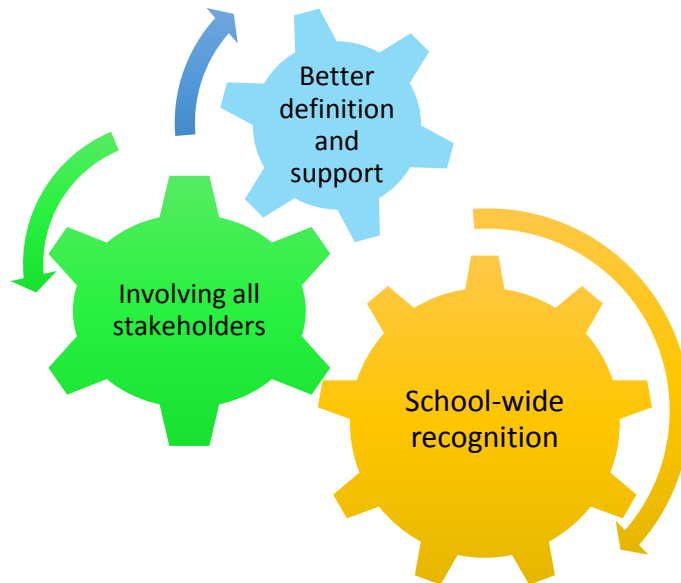
Another suggestion that teachers made is that that they would like to see more support from administration in implementing values education on a school-wide level.

It's very top-down. It's very top-down leadership so our administration has to value it (values education program) and has to feel that it's important enough that we can devote a serious amount of time to that. And I don't feel that they do that at this point. So it's all done at the grass-roots or teacher-level. You know whether it's a teachable moment in class or some type of situation comes up. Or if a group of teachers get together and say, 'We are going to focus on that particular part.' It's done there but school-wide or community-wide, it's not our priority.

This quote demonstrates that teachers struggle in finding enough time to dedicate to values education and would like to see more support and leadership from administration in defining the values and implementing them on a school-wide level.

In overview, one of the most important findings in this section is that teachers suggest that when the whole community is involved in values education, students, then, realize the

importance of values and can have more fun in learning it in a meaningful way. In addition, teachers would like to see more leadership and support in values education from administration.



*Figure 4.* Importance of community and school-wide involvement supported by administration

**RQ 2: How are elementary teachers' approaches implemented within a values education program?**

In order to answer this research question, I used qualitative interview data from the same participants, as well as the data from their lesson observations and document analysis. Four non-participatory lesson observations were performed following the individual interviews with the same participants, with the exclusion of one participant who is currently not serving as a homeroom teacher. Document analysis of all posters and images displayed in the rooms where observations took place was carried out subsequently after lesson observations. Interview questions which were used in order to explore the approaches within a values education program put into action at this school were focused on what teachers use in their classrooms and what is done on a school-wide level.



There are four main findings in this section. First, teachers use different approaches of values education. Second, teachers at this school established a culture of collaboration at a grade level to support values education within this program. Third, teachers identified the benefits and challenges of the values education program. Forth, all teachers explained that having a values education program at school is a positive asset, however just having a program is not enough. In the next sections I will describe these aspects in detail and provide examples.

**RQ2, Finding 1: Teachers use different approaches of values education.** Overall, participants implement different approaches in values education within this school's program. The most common values education approaches implemented by them 1) setting boundaries and expectations; 2) having discussions about values; 3) rewarding and praising children for the behavior demonstrating values; 4) teaching values with books and videos.

The most commonly mentioned, as well as observed during lessons, approach which is used by all participants in teaching values is setting boundaries and expectations. Participant 2 gives an example from his teaching experience:

For me it starts at the level of expectation of what we consider important. So the students know the boundary of what's acceptable and unacceptable and if they don't have a boundary or it's unclearly defined, then there is no way for them to succeed to demonstrate or treat that value with respect and understanding and implementing it. And that's the hard part. So I mean you have to have expectations for everything. So I think I try to do as fairly as possible in my classroom by setting a tone of expectation and understanding and then defining it when we need to define it if somebody has come too far or if somebody has demonstrated it appositively.

This quote demonstrates that a teacher's expectations send the message to a student about what is important for the teacher, whereas clearly defined boundaries provide conditions for a student to succeed. Document analysis of posters revealed that all classrooms observed had displays of classroom rules and expectations which included values-related behaviors in regard to their responsibility, treating others and environmental awareness.

Next, Participant 5 explained that when students understand and follow the classroom expectations of values education, the classroom becomes easy to manage:

But in class in the boundaries of my room the management of them is fairly easy because they know what the expectation is. And they typically just follow it. So the expectation is on being a good person, not on you'll do this because Ms. (teacher's name) told you to. And so I think that makes it easier in the long run, even though it's harder to teach it that way. It's easier to get them involved and invested and monitoring themselves and each other.

This quote emphasizes that when students understand what values are appreciated in the classroom, then they are more likely to manifest a behavior displaying such values.

Furthermore, the teacher continued by explaining that when students do not follow the expectations, the appropriate reaction of a teacher is really important.

You know even when students do something that is typical of a 10-year-old, I try to frame it back to, 'How should have we been?' or 'What should have we done?' instead of being like, 'You idiot, why did you do this?' Because it wasn't actually the last stupid thing to do. But that doesn't help them grow from it. ... I don't know if that makes sense but that's what works for me than in 180 days being like I told you so! You know because then what? Then a year later, they're like, 'Well, Ms. (name of a teacher) told me so. That doesn't help any rational thinking or decision making skills.'

According to this teacher, when students are respectfully being asked about the motives of their actions, then a teacher and a student might have a discussion about what is right or wrong, then a student will be likely to learn from the situation and use the newly acquired skills of rational reasoning in future, rather than just being told what he or she needs to do. Lesson observation of this participant confirmed that this teacher uses a respectful tone when talking to her students, whereas when students were not following expectations, instead of blaming them or telling them what to do, the teacher respectfully described their actions and asked if they were appropriate. Students did not respond, but they were on task right away. In my observation, a teacher's comment served as a reminder for them and children chose to return back on task.

Another approach which was observed during lessons, as well as mentioned by four participants in interviews, is having discussions about values. One out of four lessons observed was dedicated to teaching a particular set of values and several group activities involved discussions of values. In the first activity students were discussing what is an act of kindness, some examples of kind actions and shared their own ideas on what they could do as an act of kindness. The other activity was done as a game when students had to identify an appropriate polite reply in a provided situation, followed by explanation of their choice. Students were discussing what reply is more appropriate and why, while the teacher did not provide one correct answer and encouraged different opinions among students.

Next, three participants shared that they reward and praise students for the behavior which demonstrates values. Participant 1 explained how she does it in her class, “And I will tell them at times, ‘Ok, I see somebody is showing good team skills,’ so I keep bringing it up again and they can think about it throughout the whole year.” Participant 2 mentioned different ways he rewards students in his class for demonstrating values, “When you reward a student behavior, you give them a privilege, you give them a compliment, you offer them opportunities above and beyond. I think you offer them an opportunity to have more autonomy.” While Participant 4 implemented her own system of rewarding students for demonstrating certain values,

We set up a system where students are rewarded for being responsible and turning in their homework. They get a penny, they earn class money and they can use it for different things, so we’re rewarding those positive behaviors. With this class we decided that there should be a positive reinforcement system rather than punishment system.

These quotes explain how different teachers reward students’ behavior demonstrating the target values.

Classroom observations also confirmed that teachers implement different ways of rewarding students' behavior in demonstrating certain values. I took notice of a poster in one of classrooms where lesson observations were performed with certain actions demonstrating particular values and appropriate rewards for students. Elementary hallway displayed a tree with multiple leaves, whereas each leaf had a name of a student who was nominated for demonstrating certain values. In addition, during classroom observations teachers abundantly praised students for demonstrating responsibility, team skills, being kind and considerate of others in class. Teaching values education with books and videos is another approach which was mentioned by participants and observed during lessons. Participant 1 explained, "We would just read the story and talk about the characters, how they are, I guess like following a certain value. That sort of thing. Or watch a video and do the same." Whereas during observations, a group of students watched several videos selected by their teacher about kindness and later were discussing each example. That provided them with real-life models who demonstrated certain values and whom students would be able to follow.

The Table 2 below demonstrates a finding which refers to different approaches implemented by teachers within this values education program in regard to the most commonly used approaches in the following order: 1) setting boundaries and expectations; 2) having discussions about values; 3) rewarding and praising children for the behavior demonstrating values; 4) teaching values with books and videos.

Table 2. *Approaches implemented by teachers within this school's values education program*

| VE Approaches                         | Participant 1 | Participant 2 | Participant 3 | Participant 4 | Participant 5 |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Setting boundaries and expectations   | x             | x             | x             | x             | x             |
| Having discussions about values       | x             |               | x             | x             | x             |
| Rewarding and praising students       | x             | x             |               | x             |               |
| Teaching values with books and videos | x             |               | x             | x             |               |

**RQ2, Finding 2: Teachers established a culture of collaboration to support values education.** After analyzing data from one-on-one interviews and lesson observations, another important finding emerged, which refers to a school-wide level culture of collaboration in values education. Four out of five participants told about their experience in collaboration with other grade level teachers. It was explained by the participants that it was encouraged and supported by the school's administration and collaboration took place in planning of values education, joined teaching of values and values evaluation. To summarize the successful collaboration experience, we can use a quote from Participant 1,

I thought that this (collaboration with grade level teachers) was very helpful because one thing you could share ideas with the other teachers and other students. But it also just made it fun for the kids because they can all get together with the other children of their age group and many of them have been together in classes before and so they really enjoy just doing something together..

Participant 4 also shared about her positive experience of working with other teachers in values education, “We take turns planning for a particular value, we share with each other and give each other ideas and feedback.” These quotes describe grade level teachers joining their efforts in values education together and how students are more likely to enjoy it as it is more fun and they are able to interact with children from their grade level

Lesson observation of the lesson taught by the grade team of Participant 4 confirmed that the experience of collaboration was successful. As students intermingled between groups and went to different teachers who each was teaching a workshop focusing on a particular topic. Overall, this finding emphasizes the positive effects that collaboration among grade level teachers has on values education within this school’s program.

**RQ2, Finding 3: Benefits and Challenges of the Values Education Program.** When the participants of this research were asked to describe what results of this values education program they notice in their classrooms and with their students, teachers mentioned a number of positive results, as well as the challenges they face in working within this values education program.

*Benefits of the values education program.* The most common benefits mentioned by the participants are: 1) students learn how to empathize with others; 2) it boosts learning which happens in a classroom; 3) consistency in value-related language.

Three participants mentioned that the main benefit of having a values education program is that their students are able to have empathy for each other, to help others in need, value their own feelings and the feelings of others. For example, Participant 2 commented,

I think my students are ... they are a little bit more sensitive to each other, I think they are a little bit more stronger colleagues, in a sense that if one of them needs help, they can help each other more. Even if they don’t know them by name, they may know them by face and that’s enough that they know that that person is in my class and they might be

able to help them. Um. I think my students are really, they might not admit it or even realize it, but I feel that at times they tend to value people and their own emotions and the emotions of others around them more.

This participant notices that students in his class become more aware of others as they are taught within this values education program. Teachers notice that the sense of collegiality in a class improves as students are “just being able to understand other people’s feelings. And know how to make them feel comfortable” (Participant 1).

Two participants described the positive effects the values education program has on learning which takes place in a classroom: increased sense of responsibility when students complete their homework, being able to work in a group. For example, Participant 4 explains,

And it ... actually helps a classroom because if you don’t take the time to teach these things, it’s really hard to get in their homework if they don’t understand the importance of responsibility. It’s hard to get kids to work in groups, if they don’t understand how to be a good member of a group... So in the end it makes our life easier. It seems in the beginning like an extra thing to do, but it kind of makes everything run more smoothly within the classroom.

Furthermore, Participant 5 adds, “...it benefits all of the rest of the learning that goes on in the class, if they are working on some common values.” These quotes demonstrate that teachers view this values education program as beneficial for the educational processes taking place in a classroom.

Another common benefit of having a values education program that was discussed by two participants is consistency in value-related language. When students have a common vocabulary to discuss values, they are able to use it in their daily interactions or in solving problems. For instance, Participant 3 explains, “I guess in some way it’s, I mean doing it the way we do it here, I guess it creates a common vocabulary for the children to use around it, so ... you know we have (name of a values education program) and then you know from that, from discussions with that. I guess we wouldn’t have vocabulary to use when things weren’t about

values, how they interact with others, it kind of gives them that language.” This quote emphasizes that a values education program provides teachers and students consistent value-related language needed for both daily communication and in resolving occasional conflicts.

This section described what results of this values education program teachers observe in their classrooms. The most common positive effects which were mentioned by the participants are: increased empathy for others, improved academic learning and consistent language (see Table 3).

Table 3. *Benefits of this values education program*

| Participant | Increased empathy for others | Boosts academic learning | Language is consistent |
|-------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 1           | x                            |                          |                        |
| 2           | x                            |                          |                        |
| 3           | x                            |                          | x                      |
| 4           |                              | x                        | x                      |
| 5           |                              | x                        |                        |

***Challenges teachers face in teaching within this values education program.*** When the participants were asked to identify the challenges, which they face in working within this values education program, a number of findings emerged. First, teachers noted that values education is often overlooked and does not receive the proper recognition. Second, participants elaborated on the academic pressure which might prevent them from values education. Third, participants noted the time constraint and work involved in values education. Forth, there is a lack of parental



involvement in values education. Fifth, some teachers mentioned a desire for a change in how values are communicated in description and in their use in practice.

Teachers feel that due to different factors, values education at this school is often overlooked and does not receive the proper recognition. Some participants noted that the reason why teachers might leave out on values education is due to academic pressure. Participant 4 commented about it, “So...It definitely doesn’t get the emphasis that it deserves, and I think that you can simply sometimes overlook the importance ... you know based on the pressure sometimes that we have to produce academic results.” Participant 5 commented on the demands of academics for which teachers are held accountable,

Every year every administrator talks about, ‘Oh, we really need to do this, we really need to focus on (name of a values education program) every month’, and then they’re like, ‘Oh, you have these narratives to write, and you have these conferences, and you make sure you have all those units on time, and we’re sending grade cards out every two weeks’ and all of that is you’re held accountable for, and rather than filling out one spreadsheet during the year on what we plan on doing, there is no accountability for us to actually do anything with the (name of a values education program).

This quote reveals the reasons why teachers might be pressured and left with not sufficient amount of time to dedicate to values education.

Four out of five participants mentioned that some teachers working within this values education program might not render enough attention to teaching values due to time constraints, “It’s a challenge trying to fit everything into a certain time frame,” said participant 1. Participant 5 mentioned that a possible reason for not finding enough time is a teacher’s failure to prioritize:

And so some do a phenomenal job like really planning all lessons and getting all the kids together focusing on stuff (author: values) and you know other teams start the year, and they’re like ‘yeah, we’ll do it all together, we have this class period, let’s put it in our schedule every week!’ and then on the third week of school they’re like ‘I just don’t have time for that’ and then it’s like ‘hey, we’re supposed to do all of that’. ‘I still don’t have time, Oh my Gosh! Maybe after this, maybe...’ And people do not prioritize it. And so, by that it becomes very inconsistent in how it’s taught.

This quote demonstrates that when facing the challenge of a time constraint, some teachers are able to manage time and implement values education, while other teachers might struggle with that due to their failure to set the priorities.

Another challenge which was broadly discussed by three participants is when parents do not support the values taught at school. For example, Participant 5 noted,

The biggest challenge I find is when there is no support from home, when you say, 'your child is struggling to be responsible' and they're like, 'oh well they're just not very organized and that's just how they are'. Rather than working together to find solutions. When there is a lack of support from home, there is a problem.

This quote illustrates that teachers are not always supported by parents in teaching values.

It appears that parents might not be supportive of school in values education as they have a different set of values themselves. Participant 1 explains here:

I guess some challenge would be if a parent would be teaching something different at home... I feel like sometimes maybe in communicating with others (a value is renamed), if someone has bumped into another student, they get very upset, they want to push back or do something more aggressive. And my approach is to find out with words or something, how and why they did that. Or tell them not to. Most of the time it's an accident, they just bumped in by mistake. And I found that some parents might want their child to stand up for themselves. And they don't quite understand the situation. And when it's appropriate to stand up for yourself or when you should just find out what has happened first or when to talk to a teacher. So I think that might be the most challenging when the parents have different values or have worked on things differently than you do.

In this case, a teacher faces a challenge of explaining to a student what needs to be done in order to resolve a conflict in light of a different parents' perspective.

Teachers explain that some of the reasons why parents might not support the school in values education is due to cultural differences. The school intentionally brings together different cultures only allowing 30% local culture kids, thus the other 70% represented by the rest of the world. Participant 2 explained:

But you know I mean in international school it's kind of hard to implement the whole set of values that everyone in the school believes in because it's so, it's international, it's pluralistic, it's divisional you know. So it's segregated in a sense by country, and then you have so many different religions, so I mean we have 40 different nationalities.

This quote emphasizes that the reason why parents might not support the values taught within this values education program is because of their cultural differences.

Another reason why parents appear to not support a values education program was suggested as a lack of means for parents to be involved in values education due to all decision-making occurring on an administrative level. Participant 2 described the situation in the following way:

I don't see our community at the moment having an avenue to define those particular values. It is at the administrative level within the school. It is not highly valued, nor it is articulated, and there is no avenue for parents or teachers to come together, to help define that particular part of the school values.

It can be deduced from this quote that there is a lack of parental involvement in values education, as can be supported by another quote from the same participant, "Well, I think there is also a lack of community engagement as well. Within our particular community in comparison to most schools". The participant went on to emphasize a low level of parental involvement in values education.

Thus, there is a desire for a change in how the values are communicated in description and in their use in practice. For example, Participant 5 explained, "I think they're too wordy. The kids know the script but they don't always embrace it at the elementary age (be)cause it's hard to really incorporate seven different goals, when being responsible really would sum up four of them. So... brevity would be nice for elementary version of it." This quote expressed the teacher's desire for a change in how the values are communicated.

This section describes the challenges perceived by teachers in values education. The following findings were identified. Teachers consider that values education is often overlooked and does not receive the proper attention. The reasons for that might be pressing academic demands, time constraint, a lack of means for parents to be involved in defining the school's values. As a result, participants expressed a desire for a change in how values are communicated in description and in their use in practice.

**RQ2, Finding 4: “Good in theory, but ...”** One of the most significant findings in this study is that while all teachers agree that having a values education program at school is a positive asset, however just having a program is not enough. Participant 3 explained,

I think it's good that (name of school) has their (name of a values education program) (be)cause actually they're probably more important than the other stuff we teach at school. Ultimately they're going to lead someone to a better direction as a person.

This quote demonstrates how the values education program plays an integral part in a student's education.

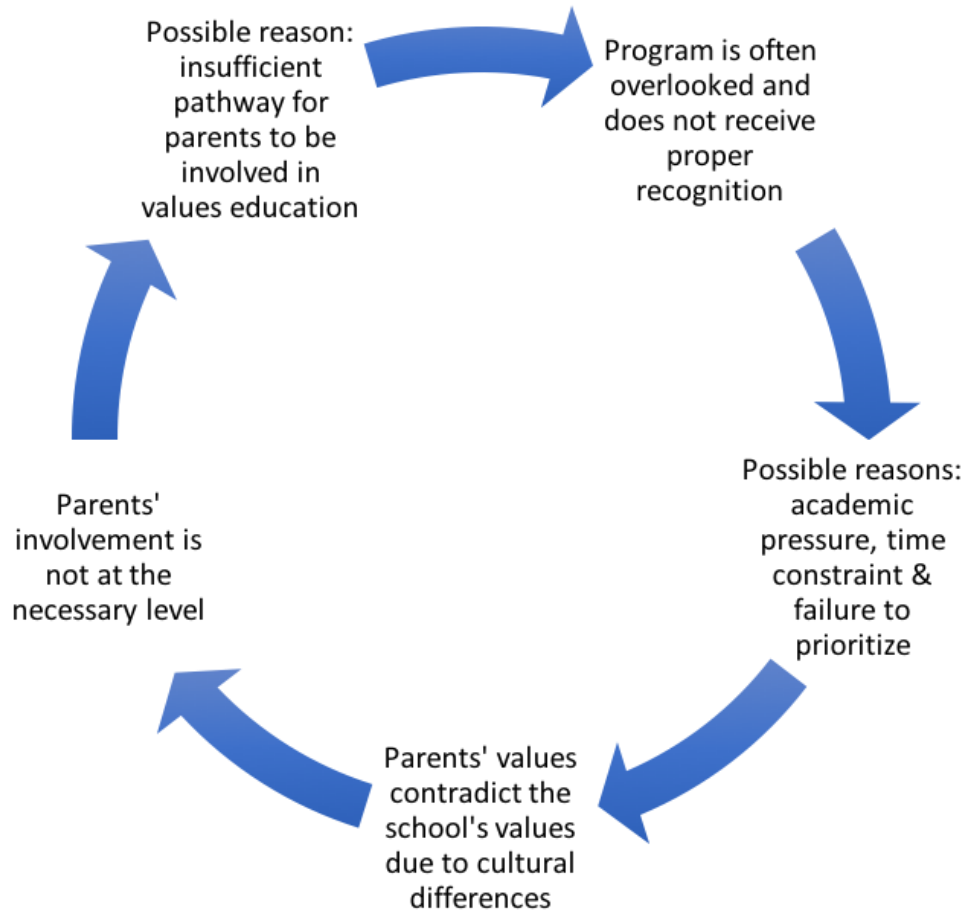
According to the participants, a values education program needs to be addressed in a way which should manifest the significance of the values taught, otherwise it is not meeting its main goal. To demonstrate this, Participant 4 explained,

... I guess what I'm trying to say is having (name of a values education program) isn't enough. You have to have instruction of them or activities related to them so the kids understand that it's an important thing and something that we value. So... having them is the right step but I can't speak to how well they're implemented or this kind of education is implemented within the school.

This quote emphasizes that a participant is not confident that values education is implemented successfully at this school.

One of the most significant findings in this study is that while all teachers agree that having a values education program at school is a positive asset, just having a program is not

enough. It needs to be targeted in a way which should communicate the significance of the values taught, otherwise it is useless.

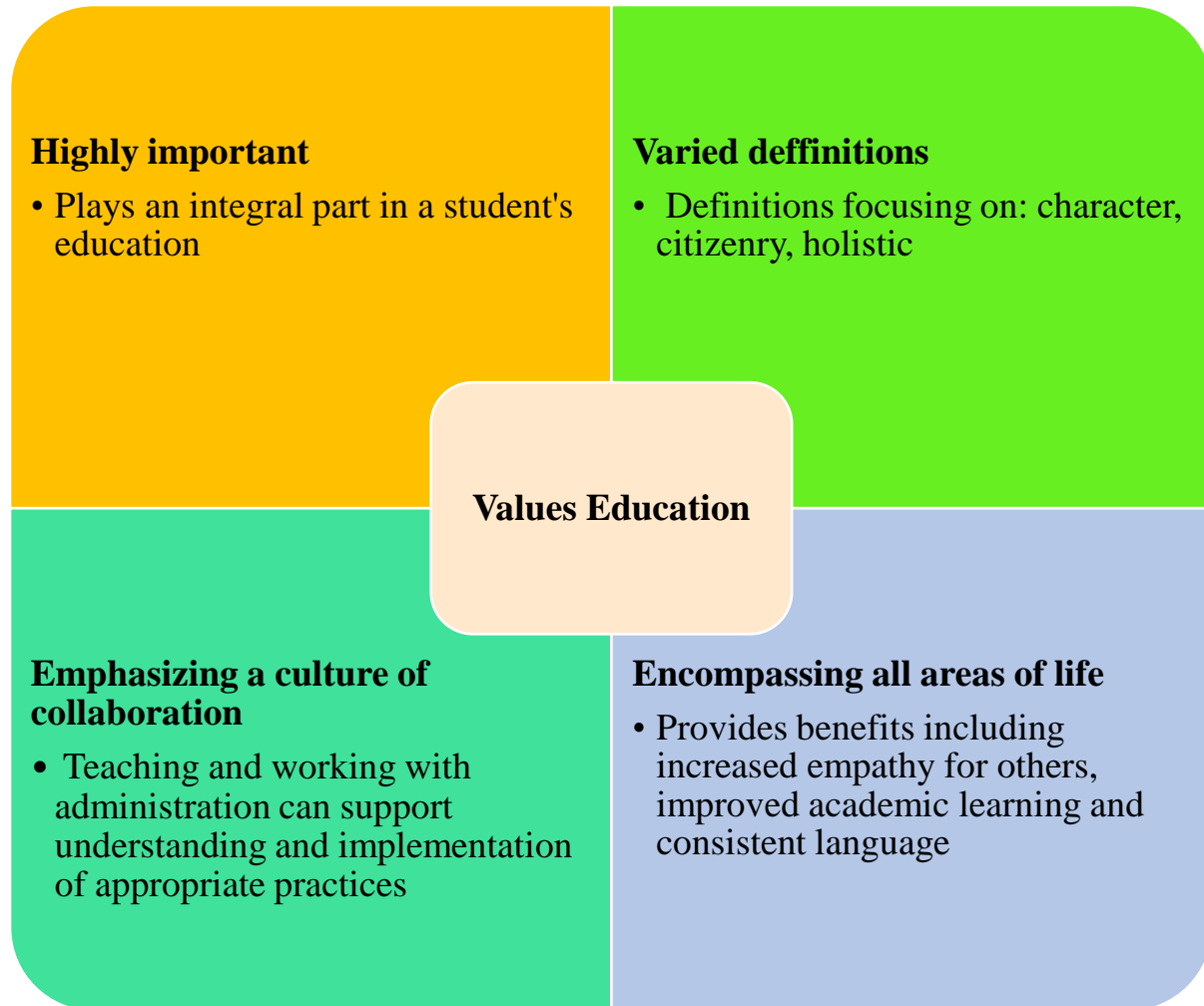


*Figure 5.* "Good in theory, but..." lacking in practice

### **Conclusion**

This chapter presented the main findings of the study. The findings were divided according to the research questions into perspectives and approaches and were reported in particular sections supported by the data from the interviews, lesson observations and document analysis. Overall, while all participants view values education as an important component of education, there is no common understanding of it. Values taught within this program are viewed as encompassing all areas of life and similarly important, while providing such benefits for

students as increased empathy for others, improved academic learning and consistent language. Teachers implement different approaches in values education and benefit from collaboration within grade level teams. All participants agree that having a program is not enough, it needs to be actively implemented on a school-wide level and supported by the whole community and administration.



*Figure 6.* Findings related to perspectives and approaches of values education (VE)

The next chapter, Discussions and Conclusions, will examine the findings of this research and how they are related to what was reported in the literature review. Additionally, it will lay out an overview of the whole research and will provide recommendations for future studies.

## **Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion**

In the previous chapter, I presented the major findings about elementary teachers' perspectives and approaches within a values education program in an international school in Central Asia. I completed a thorough analysis of the data, which I collected during interviews, non-participant lesson observations and document analysis. The findings were presented according to the research sub-questions and divided into the emerged themes. In this chapter, I synthesize and discuss the results of the study in light of the study's research questions, literature review and conceptual framework, and end with a conclusion of the research study.

### **Discussion Related to Research Question 1: Teachers' Perspectives**

The first two findings of the study suggest that teachers have diverse experience with values education and there is no common understanding of values education among them. The most common ways teachers defined values education referred to "character education," "civic education" and "holistic education." These differences go in line with the modern educational research which utilizes various concepts in describing how students acquire and develop values in the context of school (Lovat & Hawkes, 2013).

Like some teachers who defined values education as fostering "the character of students", Walker, Roberts and Kristjansson (2015) similarly employed the term "character education" as an umbrella term to include all ways which are aimed at developing 'moral' set of qualities with a student. Second, another definition mentioned by the participants referred to becoming a "good citizen" and "learning to be a valuable member of society." The latter is analogous to the concept of "civic education" as utilized by Sutrop (2015) in order to distinguish means of preparing students for living in the society in communication with others. And the last definition which was provided by the participants of the study elaborated on "teaching students to be good human

beings” and “educating the whole child”. It can be compared to the point of view of Lovat (2011) who suggested to view values education as a complementary means to holistic education which addresses a person as a whole with his or her mind, emotions, spirit and social awareness.

Moreover, if taken together, these three concepts would create an interesting definition of values education based upon character, citizenry and holistic education. Nevertheless, despite the differences in defining values education, all teachers agreed that values education is an important component of school education. This finding is supported by the research conducted by Walker, Roberts & Kristjansson (2015) who reported on the teachers’ awareness of teaching morals. They found that majority in the teaching profession support character education and consider it significant to the academic achievement of students. It means that the perspectives of teachers at this international school are aligned with the majority in the teaching profession worldwide in that they consider values education as an important component of education.

Modern educational theory provides a substantial amount of research on the benefits of values education at schools. As reported in the literature review, Lovat and Hawkes (2013), Benninga et al. (2006) described the positive effects of values education on the academic achievement of students. Neil Hawkes (2009) elaborated on the research evidence from his experience as the former head teacher of West Kidlington School, and presented such positive results of a values education program implemented at that school as: intensified engagement with school work, enhancement of positive learning environment, and consequently, increased student responsibility and school enjoyment. Moreover, students’ accounts included their acquirement of good manners, social justice, good behavior, citizenship, reflection and empathy for others. An extensive body of educational research in Australia provided evidence for the positive results of a national values education program, such as enhanced learning environment, strengthened



student attention to academic work, improved teacher-student relationships, classroom environment, student attitudes and behavior, student knowledge and understanding (DEEWR, 2008). It is worth to note that students profited not only from the improved academic achievement in result of values education, but also from improvement in their state of mind, spirit, health, wellbeing and ethical view of life (Shobha and Kala, 2015). Besides wellbeing, Hawkes & Heppenstall (2002) reported on increased students' self-awareness, self-acceptance, self-confidence, self-knowledge, self-esteem, consideration for others, responsibility, reinforced listening skills.

In addition, participants of this study highlighted the benefits of having a values education program, among which the most widely commented were: increased empathy of students for others, improved academic learning in classroom and consistency in value language. The first two were mentioned in the previously reported research, while consistency in value language was not specifically described as one of the benefits. This finding is consistent with what was found in the literature review: another set of educational researchers reported on the effects of values education also on teachers. Dasoo (as cited in Lovat, 2011) in his report of a values education program in South Africa was able to demonstrate how a values education program caused improvement of students' performance, and subsequent positive effects on teachers' self-esteem and wellbeing. Since participants of this study did not mention the connection between teachers' wellbeing and a values education program, it can be suggested for further study to research the positive effects of values education programs on teachers at this school.

Furthermore, one of the most important findings in the study is that while all participants agree that a values education program is an asset, they are not confident it is being implemented

in a way, which manifests the significance of the values taught. Therefore, my research is consistent with the literature in general. For example, Berkowitz and Bier (2007) analyzed a vast number of values education programs and literature reviews of those programs and found the condition for effectiveness of such programs: only if they are “effectively designed, led and implemented and adequately integrated into the relevant school culture” (Berkowitz & Bier as cited in Walker et al., 2015, p.87). As a proof of this statement, participants of this research explained why the program might be “good in theory,” but lacking in practice at this school. The following challenges were identified: the program is often overlooked and does not receive proper recognition at school due to academic pressure, time constraint and failure to prioritize. Another challenge commonly noted by the participants is when parents’ values contradict the school’s values due to cultural differences, as well as the lack of parents’ involvement in values education as there is no clear pathway for their engagement. As demonstrated by the previous research reported in the literature review, one of the characteristics of character education programs which are able to yield positive academic results with students is involvement of parents in the educational process, including values education. Thus, the finding supports what is already known in the field of values education in that parents need to take active part in values education in order for the whole program to be successful (Benninga et al., 2006). Moreover, this finding is consistent with the research conducted in Turkey on the views of teachers and teacher candidates on values education. Iscan (2015), the author of the research, reported that both teachers and teacher candidates considered cooperation between families and teachers important in values education. After identifying the issues in the implementation of the values education program, participants of this research mentioned a desire for a change in how values are communicated within this program and in their use in practice.

The interview I conducted about the desired change in the implementation of the values education program at this school showed that teachers suggest that values education should be implemented with the involvement of the whole community and support from administration on a school-wide level. This finding is in line with the literature, which claims the significance of the whole community in implementation of values education and the need for an institutional change. According to Iscan (2015), each particular school community has to decide itself which values should be taught and that can be done by bringing the voices of all stakeholders. Sinclair (2004) argued that teachers, students, parents and parent organizations should come together to reach a consensus on which values should be taught. While, Walker et al. (2015) stated that the goal of “human flourishing”, one of approaches in values education is the institutional change rather than simply individual change.

My findings connect to show something different from this literature – the values education program implemented at this school does not have a necessary path for bringing the voices of all stakeholders in defining the values of the community. Considering the corporate organization of the school it might not be possible to redefine the values for this particular school, however, it would still be possible to involve different stakeholders in planning, problem solving and implementing within this values education program and that would be beneficial to transforming values education from an isolated classroom to a school-wide level. Therefore, my research in Kazakhstan, my findings in the areas of values education, how they are defined and viewed, benefits of values education and conditions for effectiveness are consistent with research in Australia, UK, USA, India, Turkey and Estonia, but show something different than previous research conducted in Turkey, South Africa and UK. In particular, the theme that varied included

involvement of parents in values education as there was discovered the lack of an adequate path for bringing the voices of all stakeholders in defining the values of the community.

### **Discussion Related to the Research Question 2: Teachers' Approaches**

During data analysis of one-on-one interviews, lesson observations and document analysis in regard to approaches teachers use within this values education program, the following findings emerged. The first finding revealed that teachers implement different approaches of values education. This question also brought up some unexpected findings which will be discussed further.

First of all, it is worthwhile to mention that there is limited research on implementation approaches which comprise values education programs (Berkowitz & Bier, 2007). Nevertheless, some evidence is present about the most prevailing teaching strategies implemented within values education program from the research conducted by Berkowitz and Bier (2007), some of them include student-centered teaching and explicit teaching of values. Based on my observations, teachers working within this values education program implemented these approaches as they were teaching student-centered explicit lessons on values with the use of videos and books. Moreover, a substantial amount of research is available from Great Britain where a national values education program is implemented. Neil Hawkes (2009), for example, reported on the approaches which were used in West Kidlington Primary School, where he served as head teacher from 1993 to 1999. The school implemented a number of values education approaches among which were positive reinforcement and establishing the climate of mutual respect, equality and inclusiveness (Hawkes, 2009). Similarly, as demonstrated from interview data and lesson observations, a values education approach which is widely implemented by the teachers at the school where research was conducted is rewarding and

praising students for the behavior which demonstrates mastery of the program's values.

Moreover, the overall environment in classrooms was observed as student-friendly and positive, whereas teachers maintained a respectful mode of conversations with their students.

Furthermore, Lovat and Hawkes (2013), as well as Sutrop (2015) mentioned the use of discussions about values as a useful approach in values education. In comparison, having discussions about values was the second most common approach implemented by the teachers within this values education program. Thus, teachers implement the approaches within the values education program examined in this study such as setting boundaries and expectations, having discussions about values, rewarding and praising students for the behavior, teaching values with books and videos. These approaches have been previously reported in the literature review and are known among the most common ones in the modern educational research.

Another unexpected finding of this research was relevant to what is done in values education on a school-wide level. I found that teachers at this school established a culture of collaboration in values education on a grade level. This process includes joined planning; co-teaching; exchange of ideas, resources and feedback; grade level student group activities. This finding is similar to one of the principles of *Eleven Principles of Effective Character Education* (Lickona, 1996) in that the school staff need to act as a community and share responsibility for character education in order for character education to be effective. When teachers work collaboratively together, they are more likely to achieve the success in such a complex undertaking as values education (Lickona, 1996), a practice I saw in the interviews and lesson observations with the participants.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter presented the discussion of the major findings, which can shed light on the questions set in the beginning of the study. Most of the findings which emerged in this research were consistent with previous literature including Hawkes (2009), Hawkes & Heppenstall (2002), Berkowitz & Bier (2007), Lickona (2006), Lovat (2011), Lovat & Hawkes (2013), Walker et al. (2015), Sutrop (2015), Benninga et al. (2006), Shobha & Kala (2015), Iscan (2015). The last finding was unexpected and suggests the need for further research: advantages of collaborative culture among teachers in values education.

The key points of the findings can be described in that the teachers view the values education program implemented at the school as “good in theory”, but lacking in practice. The following challenges were identified: the program is often overlooked and does not receive proper recognition at school due to academic pressure, time constraint and failure to prioritize. Teachers face difficulties when parents’ values contradict the school’s values due to cultural differences. Moreover, teachers commented on the lack of an appropriate pathway for parental involvement in values education. Therefore, participants expressed their desire for changes in how the program is implemented in practice. The following suggestions were recommended: school-wide recognition of values education, involving all stakeholders, as well as better definition and support of values education by administration. These suggestions are aligned with what the literature in educational research suggests in regard to values education: effective integration of values education in the school culture (Berkowitz & Bier, 2007), involvement of parents in values education for the program to be successful (Benninga et al., 2006), significance of the whole community in implementing values education and the need for an institutional change (Iscan, 2015; Sinclair, 2004; Walker et al., 2015).

## **Recommendations**

Regarding the findings of the study, some recommendations were designed for mainstream schools in light of launching a national values education program ‘Mangilik El.’ First of all, the teachers and administration in such schools need to realize that everything which takes place in the context of the school is “value-laden”. Values are communicated in every decision teachers and administrators make, in how teachers talk to their students and to each other. It is up to schools to create an appropriate environment which will communicate the target values in a cohesive and coherent way. This will only be possible if administration supports teachers in values education and chooses it as a priority for the whole school. Moreover, parents’ involvement is another key to successful values education. Students’ families can be involved in defining the key values for the school, school mission, planning and decision making related to values education. This will send the message to students that the school community supports the values taught within the program and will demonstrate the significance of the values education.

As for recommendations aimed for the school where the research was conducted, they were based on the issues identified in the study and solutions offered by the participants. The key point of success was identified as the culture of collaboration among grade level teachers in values education. However, teachers expressed their desire to see more leadership and support from administration in values education. Working with administration can support understanding and implementation of appropriate practices, as well as make a difference on the level of the whole school. In addition, participants employed at the research site would like to see more values education on the level of the whole school. This definitely requires planning and scheduling which is conducted by administration. And finally, more collaboration with parents in

values education could eliminate the issues of differences in values and lack of parental involvement.

### **Overview of the Study**

Across the thesis, I have examined the perspectives of homeroom teachers towards a values education program, as well as the approaches implemented by them within this program in an international school in Kazakhstan. The following questions were answered in this study:

(1) What are elementary teachers' perspectives towards a values education program? (2) How are elementary teachers' approaches implemented within a values education program?

The study utilized a case study design to answer the research questions. The participants of the study were 5 teachers who served as elementary homeroom teachers at the research site. The data collection methods included one-on-one interviews with the participants, lesson observations and document analysis. Data analysis was completed with the help of the trial version of the software MAXQDA. Manual coding was carried out by identifying *in-vivo and open coding*. Coding and categorizing of the data was done applying the method of "constant comparison" (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012, p.137).

The main findings were presented in the chapter 4 of this study. The findings were divided according to the research questions into perspectives and approaches and provided answers to the research questions set in the beginning of the study. The study achieved the purpose which was chosen for this research. It was identified that the participants of the study have diverse experience with values education and while they all consider values education as an important aspect of education, there is no common understanding of values education among them. The concepts which teachers used in defining values education have been consistent with



the ones used in modern educational research, such as “character”, “civic” and “holistic” education.

Furthermore, teachers at the research site view this values education program as encompassing all areas of life and providing benefits for students such as increased empathy for others, improved academic learning and consistent language. The approaches which are implemented by teachers are setting boundaries and expectations, having discussions about values, rewarding and praising children for the behavior demonstrating values, teaching values with books and videos. In addition, on a school-wide level teachers established a culture of collaboration to support values education. This unexpected finding emphasizes the positive effects that collaboration among grade level teachers has on values education within the school’s program and suggests the need for further research: advantages of collaborative culture among teachers in values education.

However, one of the most important findings in the study is that while all participants agree that a values education program is an asset, they are not confident that it is being implemented in a way which manifests the significance of the values taught. Thus, the program is perceived as “good in theory,” but lacking in practice. The following challenges were identified by the participants: the program is often overlooked and does not receive proper recognition at school due to academic pressure, time constraint and failure to prioritize. Teachers also commented on the difficulty they face when parents’ values contradict the school’s values due to cultural differences. Moreover, another finding related to parental involvement in values education revealed that it is not conducted at the necessary level, while the reason for it might be insufficient pathway for parents to be involved in values education.

In addition, teachers shared their desire for a change in how the values are communicated in description and in their use in practice. They suggested school-wide recognition and involving all stakeholders in values education. In addition, they commented that they could use better definition and support of values education by administration. In overview, collaboration is noted as a key to successful implementation of values education: teaching and working with administration can support understanding and implementation of appropriate practices.

### **Implications for Future Research**

This study examined perspectives of teachers and approaches implemented by them within a values education program in an international school in Central Asia. The findings of the study can be useful for other schools in Kazakhstan in light of the educational reform which prompted schools to begin implementation of the national values education program. This study cannot be translated directly as the program implemented within this research has no obligation to the nation. Therefore, further research of values education beyond the international private schools is necessary to provide additional insights in the field of values education in Kazakhstan.

In this research, I explored the perspectives and approaches of elementary homeroom teachers within a values education program through the data collected from one-on-one interviews, lesson observations and document analysis. The values education program was examined within the level of classroom teaching. Future studies could examine this values education program and how it is implemented across the school, as enacted by the school ethos, and could include the perspectives of administration, parental and student body, as well as graduates of the school. Moreover, the advantages of collaborative work, which was highlighted in this case study, should be studied, such as the possible opportunities for more collaboration between staff and other stakeholders.

## References

- Badjanova, J., & Ilisko, D. (2015). Making Sense of Holistic Approach in the Context of Primary Education Content. *Procedia - Social And Behavioral Sciences*, 191, 1517-1521.  
doi:10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.04.343
- Benninga, J. S., Berkowitz, M. W., Kuehn, P., & Smith, K. (2006). Character and academics: What good schools do. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 87(6), 448-452.
- Berkowitz, M. W., & Bier, M. C. (2007). What works in character education. *Journal of Research in Character Education*, 5(1), 29-48.
- Bloomberg, L. D., & Volpe, M. (2012). *Completing your qualitative dissertation: A road map from beginning to end*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Clark, N. (2014, July 8). The Booming International Schools Sector. Retrieved June 18, 2018, from <http://wenr.wes.org/2014/07/the-booming-international-schools-sector>
- Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research*. Boston, MA: Pearson Education.
- Creswell, J.W. (2014). *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research*. Essex, United Kingdom: Pearson Education Limited.
- Curren, R. (2010). Aristotle's Educational Politics and the Aristotelian Renaissance in Philosophy of Education. *Oxford Review of Education*, 36 (5), 543–559. doi: 10.1080/03054985.2010.514434
- Davidson, M., Khmelkov, V., & Lickona, T. (2010). The power of character: Needed for, and developed from, teaching and learning. In T. Lovat, R. Toomey & N. Clement (Eds.), *International research*

handbook on values education and student wellbeing (pp. 427-454). Dordrecht, Netherlands: Springer.

Davidson, M., Lickona, T., & Khmelkov, V. (2008). Smart and good schools. In L. Nucci, D. Narvaez & T. Krettenauer (Eds.), *Handbook of Moral and Character Education*, (pp. 370-390). New York, NY: Routledge.

DEEWR (2008). At the heart of what we do: Values education at the centre of schooling. Report of the Values Education Good Practice Schools Project – Stage 2. Melbourne: Curriculum Corporation. Retrieved from [http://www.curriculum.edu.au/values/val\\_vegps2\\_final\\_report,26142.html](http://www.curriculum.edu.au/values/val_vegps2_final_report,26142.html)

DEEWR (2010). Giving voice to the impacts of values education. Final report of the Values in action Schools Project. Melbourne: Education Learning Services. Retrieved from [http://www.curriculum.edu.au/verve/\\_resources/VASP\\_FINAL\\_REPORT\\_2010.pdf](http://www.curriculum.edu.au/verve/_resources/VASP_FINAL_REPORT_2010.pdf)

Denzin, N. K. (2001). *Applied Social Research Methods: Interpretive interactionism* Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications Ltd doi: 10.4135/9781412984591

DEST (2005). National framework for values education in Australian schools. Canberra, Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training. Retrieved from [www.curriculum.edu.au/verve/\\_resources/Framework\\_PDF\\_version\\_for\\_the\\_web.pdf](http://www.curriculum.edu.au/verve/_resources/Framework_PDF_version_for_the_web.pdf)

Froumin, I.D. (2011). Intellektualnaya nisheta vysokih stremleniy [Intellectual poverty of higher motives.] *Voprosy obrazovaniya*, (4).

Goren, H., & Yemini, M. (2016). Global citizenship education in context: Teacher perceptions at an international school and a local Israeli school. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, 46(5), 832-853.

Halstead, J.M. & Taylor, M. J. (1996). *Values in Education and Education in Values*. Oxon, UK: Falmer Press.

- Hawkes N. (2009). Values and Quality Teaching at West Kidlington Primary School. In Lovat T., Toomey R. (Eds.), *Values Education and Quality Teaching*, (pp. 105-120). Springer, Dordrecht
- Hawkes, N., & Heppenstall, L. (2002). Living values-one primary school's way of encouraging a values-based education. Retrieved July 30, 2017 from [https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/PDF/nl9\\_five.pdf](https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/PDF/nl9_five.pdf)
- Hayden, M. C. & Thompson, J. J. (1995). International Schools and International Education: A Relationship Reviewed. *Oxford Review of Education*, 21(3), 327-345. doi: 10.1080/0305498950210306
- Iscan, C. D. (2015). Views on Values Education: From teacher candidates to experienced teachers. *Education*, 136(2), 192.
- Jones, T. M. (2009). Framing the framework: Discourses in Australia's national values education policy. *Educational Research for Policy and Practice*, 8(1), 35-57.
- Keller, D. (2015). Leadership of International Schools: Understanding and Managing Dualities. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 43(6), 900-917. doi: 10.1177/1741143214543201
- Langford, M. (2001). Global nomads, third culture kids and international schools. In M.C. Hayden & J. J. Thompson (Eds.), *International Education: Principles and practice* (pp. 28-44). Oxon, UK: RoutledgeFalmer.
- Leavy P. (2017). *Research Design*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.
- Lickona, T. (1991). *Educating for character: How our schools can teach respect and responsibility*. New York, NY: Bantam Books.
- Lickona, T. (1996). Eleven principles of effective character education. *Journal of moral Education*, 25(1), 93-100.

- LisieVICI, P., & Andronie, M. (2016). Teachers Assessing the Effectiveness of Values Clarification Techniques in Moral Education. *Procedia - Social And Behavioral Sciences*, 217 (Future Academy Multidisciplinary Conference), 400-406. doi: 10.1016/j.sbspro.2016.02.111
- Lovat, T. (2011). Values education and holistic learning: Updated research perspectives. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 50(3), 148-152.
- Lovat, T., & Hawkes, N. (2013). Values education: A pedagogical imperative for student wellbeing. *Educational Research International*, 2(2), 1-6.
- Maharajh, L. R. (2014). Values! A Hot Topic. *ANTHROPOLOGIST*, 17(2), 491-500.
- Mills, J., Bonner, A., & Francis, K. (2006). The development of constructivist grounded theory. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 5(1), 25-35. doi:10.1177/160940690600500103
- National Academy of Education named after I. Altynsarin. (2016). Ob osobennostyah organizatsii obrazovatel'nogo processa v obsheobrazovatelnykh shkolah Respubliki Kazakhstan v 2016-2017 uchebnom godu: Instruktivno-metodicheskoye pis'mo [On peculiarities of organizing educational process in public schools of Kazakhstan during 2016-2017 academic year: Instructional and methodological letter]. Astana, Kazakhstan: National Academy of Education
- Nazarbayev, N. (2012). President Nazarbayev's address to the nation of Kazakhstan [Transcript]. Retrieved from <https://strategy2050.kz/ru/news/29013>
- Ofsted (2007). Inspection report: West Kidlington Primary School: 21-22 March, 2007. Manchester, UK: Office for Standards in Education
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2005). The definition and selection of key competencies: Executive summary.

- Pajares, M. (1992). Teachers' Beliefs and Educational Research: Cleaning up a Messy Construct. *Review of Educational Research*, 62(3), 307-332. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1170741>
- Pereira L.J. (2016). Values education in Bangladesh: Understanding high school graduates' perspectives (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from Proquest Dissertation Database.
- perspective. (n.d.) In Cambridge Dictionary Online. Retrieved from <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/perspective>
- Raths, L.E., Harmin, M., & Simon S.B. (1966). Values and teaching: working with values in the classroom. Columbus, Ohio: C.E. Merrill Books.
- Richardson, V. (2005). Constructivist teacher education: Building a world of new understandings. Routledge.
- Saldaña, J. (2015). The coding manual for qualitative researchers. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Sanderse, W. (2015). Aristotelian action research: its value for studying character education in schools. *Educational Action Research*, 14p. doi:10.1080/09650792.2015.1067161
- Schreiner, P., Banev, E., & Oxley, S. (2005). Holistic education resource book. Waxmann Verlag.
- Shobha, S., & Kala, N. (2015). Value Education towards Empowerment of Youth-A Holistic Approach. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 172 (Contemporary Issues in Management and Social Science Research.), 192-199. doi: 10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.01.354
- Sinclair, M. (2004). Learning to live together: building skills, values and attitudes for the twenty-first century. Paris, France: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1998). Basics of qualitative research techniques. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

- Sutrop, M. (2015). Can Values be Taught? The Myth of Value-free Education. *Trames: A Journal Of The Humanities & Social Sciences*, 19(2), 189-202. doi: 10.3176/tr.2015.2.06
- Veugelers, W. (2000). Different ways of teaching values. *Educational review*, 52(1), 37-46. doi: 10.1080/00131910097397
- Veugelers, W. (2011). A humanist perspective on moral development and citizenship education. *Education and humanism*, 9-34. doi: 10.1007/978-94-6091-577-2\_2
- Vickroy, D. (2017, December 27). Helping teens turn off in a world that's 'always on': The links between technology and depression. Retrieved June 18, 2018, from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2017-12-teens-world-links-technology-depression.html>
- Walker, D. I., Roberts, M. P., & Kristjánsson, K. (2015). Towards a new era of character education in theory and in practice. *Educational Review*, 67(1), 79-96. doi:10.1080/00131911.2013.827631
- Yin, R. K. (2014). *Case study research: Design and methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Yin, R.K. (2009). *Case study research. Design and Methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Inc.



## Appendix A

### INFORMED CONSENT FORM

#### Values education in an international school in Central Asia

**DESCRIPTION:** You are invited to participate in a research study on understanding the views of elementary homeroom teachers towards a values education program, as well as the approaches which they implement within a values education program. In order to participate in this research, you should meet the following criteria: be familiar with the concept of ‘values education’ and have at least 3 years of experience working with the values education program in this school system.

You will be asked to participate in a face-to-face one-hour interview with your permission to record it. Your confidentiality will be protected with the use of pseudonyms. The recorded interviews will be stored on my personal password protected computer and will be deleted after transcribing the interviews. The next stage will be participating in a lesson observation. The researcher will observe one lesson with the duration of approximately 45 minutes. Your lesson will not be evaluated, instead I will take the notes of the activities, language and setting related to values education. The final stage will include participation in a one-hour focus group interview. Every participant whom I interviewed before will join a focus group interview where I will again ask you some questions about values education and the approaches you use within a values education program, while encouraging exchange of opinions and group discussions.

**TIME INVOLVEMENT:** Your participation will take approximately two hours of your time, plus observation of one of your lessons.

**RISKS AND BENEFITS:** The study has no potential risks concerning your personal and professional life. The research will maintain confidentiality of your names. However, a number of minor risks might occur such as the time you will spend for the interview which might cause disruption to your professional and personal lives. In this consideration, I will allow you to choose the location and time at your convenience. Another risk might be the feeling of discomfort when asked to answer some questions, however you will always have an option to skip the question.

The benefits which may reasonably be expected to result from this study include opportunities for you to reflect on your practices within a values education program, to learn new approaches from other colleagues during a focus group interview, and to raise your awareness of the concept of values education for improving your teaching practices.

Your decision whether or not to participate in this study will not affect your employment.

**PARTICIPANT’S RIGHTS:** If you have read this form and have decided to participate in this project, please understand your participation is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw your consent or discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. The alternative is not to participate. You have the right to

refuse to answer particular questions. The results of this research study may be presented at scientific or professional meetings or published in scientific journals.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

*Questions:* If you have any questions, concerns or complaints about this research, its procedures, risks and benefits, contact the Master's Thesis Supervisor for this student work, Dr. A. S. CohenMiller, [anna.cohenmiller@nu.edu.kz](mailto:anna.cohenmiller@nu.edu.kz), +77011090392.

*Independent Contact:* If you are not satisfied with how this study is being conducted, or if you have any concerns, complaints, or general questions about the research or your rights as a participant, please contact the NUGSE Research Committee to speak to someone independent of the research team at +7 7172 709359. You can also write an email to the NUGSE Research Committee at [gse\\_researchcommittee@nu.edu.kz](mailto:gse_researchcommittee@nu.edu.kz)

Please sign this consent form if you agree to participate in this study.

- I have carefully read the information provided;
- I have been given full information regarding the purpose and procedures of the study;
- I understand how the data collected will be used, and that any confidential information will be seen only by the researchers and will not be revealed to anyone else;
- I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason;
- With full knowledge of all foregoing, I agree, of my own free will, to participate in this study.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The extra copy of this signed and dated consent form is for you to keep.

## Appendix B

### INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Date:

Place:

Time:

Interviewee:

#### Interview components:

- Greeting the participant
- Informing about the confidentiality issues and duration
- Informing how the interview will be conducted, including audio recording
- Giving the hard copy of the consent form, having it signed by the participant
- Giving a possibility for a participant to ask questions
- Interview itself
- Saying goodbye and informing of a possibility for a member check

#### The Semi-structured interview sample questions for individual interviews

- 1) What is values education? Can you define it with your own words?
- 2) Tell me about your experience with values education.
- 3) Which values do you teach in your classroom?
- 4) What are the potential benefits of having a values education program at your school?
- 5) What potential pitfalls of implementing a values education program at your school do you see?
- 6) What approaches do you implement within a values education program at your school?

7) Which approaches do you see as the most effective?

### Appendix C

#### OBSERVATIONAL PROTOCOL

**Project:** Values education in an international school in Central Asia

**Setting:**

**Lengths of Observation:** 45 minutes

**Date:**

**Time:**

**Observer:**

**Observed:** How are elementary teachers' approaches implemented within a values education program?

| Descriptive notes | Reflective notes<br>(Questions\interpretations) |
|-------------------|---|
|                   |   |

*Source: Creswell, 2014*

## Appendix D

### SAMPLE OF INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Date: January 11, 2018

Place: classroom

Time: 15.40

Questions and Responses:

What is values education? Can you define it with your own words?

R.: To me the value education is like the character of students, how they treat each other. And with our school system, we use words like responsibility, kindness and trustworthiness. And we kinda focus on these throughout the school year. And every time we have a report that we send home for grades, we include our assessment of I guess their character or [REDACTED]

Tell me about your experience with values education? Whether at this school or other schools.

R.: Well, I think even as a young student, I recall there would be some comments about whether I don't even if it was kind and responsible, probably different words, but a letting the parents know kind of how you are doing kind of like character education, and here values education. So I went to a Christian school, Catholic school, and that was part of our education as well. And yeah, and so and the younger ages then, there would just be comments how your behavior was at school, you getting along well with others, and that sort of thing. And huh, since I've been working with [REDACTED], it's been a big part of education here, so I kind of remember that when I was young. And I feel that it's an important part of growing up and learning to be a valuable member of society.

How long have you worked at [REDACTED]?

R.: I've been working with [REDACTED], I think, it's about [REDACTED] years. Possibly a little more. But Yeah...

So what is your view towards a values education program taught at [REDACTED]?

R.: I feel like it's very important. The children need to learn how to treat each other well. This will benefit them as they become adults. And of course then they can teach their own children this sort of values. And I try to include it, you know, like all of our [REDACTED] as we go through each month or so, we kind of switch to a different uh [REDACTED]. And focus on that.

Can you number the values we have at [REDACTED] from most to least important?

R.: (laughter) I don't know. I need to think about that. I think there's quite a few that are very important to me. (laughter) Like responsibility and trustworthiness. Um. I guess you really need to have those, especially when you get older too, you have to. Or when you are working somewhere, even in your family, those are kind of qualities that people need to depend on you. And know that you are going to have a certain amount of responsibility or trustworthiness. So I'd say those are definitely the ones to have.

- to be able to function successfully in the society.

Right. And even just in your family, friends, um, in all areas of your life whether personal or working.

## **Appendix E**

### Coding of Interview in MAXQDA

The screenshot displays the MAXDictio software interface. The top navigation bar includes: Home, Import, Codes, Variables, Analysis, Mixed Methods, Visual Tools, Reports, Stats, and MAXDictio. The left sidebar contains icons for: New Project, Open Project, Document System, Code System, Document Browser, Retrieved Segments, Logbook, User Management, Save Project As, Save Anonymized Project As, Project from Activated Documents, Export Exchange File, Merge Projects, Open Exchange File, and External Files. The main workspace shows a document titled 'Document Browser: interview2'. The text content is as follows:

R.: How do you reward students behavior?  
 -- Um, rewarding behavior  
 R.: Can you give me examples?  
 -- I mean yeah, I mean I think when you reward a student behavior, you give them privilege, you give them compliment, you offer them opportunities above and beyond. I think you offer them an opportunity to have more autonomy. There is a cheesy or kind of simple thing that is from a Spiderman movie, and that people will agree with, is that power comes with great responsibility. And I think that students earn that responsibility, they earn a power to make more decisions for themselves, and they by doing it and not sitting around and micro-managing students in every little behavior or idea that they do gives them a chance to grow independently and the freedom to succeed or to fail. It's ok to fail. Every student should understand that is ok. Some people say failure is not an option, yeah, it is that it's a way to learn. You know. People lose battles. People lose games. People lose loved ones. People lose you know lose food or whatever money and all. When something negative happens, there is an opportunity for you to grow there and learn from that, and part of that comes from giving kids the autonomy or freedom to do it. So I mean complimenting and giving them freedom is the ways that I've implemented those types of things. So that they could define their own values in my classroom.

6. Who do you involve in v.e.?  
 -- Who do I value? Or who should I involve?  
 R.: Who do you involve? If you do involve somebody from outside the classroom.  
 -- Um here there's not much because there's no I mean I feel like I'm all by myself. Because there is no leadership that takes it upon them that helps us define it. There's no parents that are actively involved enough to adopt that same idea. And most of our parents don't come in with the idea when they are looking for school or what other values, what's the values of the school? In American society thirty-fourty years ago it was still in the power of the parent and the responsibility of the parents to ensure rights of the school. And then it was in programs outside the school such as religion, and scouting, and community service, and different avenues such as that, sports teams, and the arts, things like that did a little bit of value teaching, but it was primarily the parents' responsibility to put an opportunity for that to happen. And over the past like twenty-some years, twenty-five years, that has flipped where public education has taken on the role of pastoral care and defining the values of what they have to be. But then parents complain about that they believe in this and we don't, well, you have given the school the responsibility to do that because you as a family are not taking care of that. So that's a very controversial view point because I'm in the minority of people who believe that. You know, I believe, I'm from a conservative area. I feel that people have become more lackadaisical and lazy as parents, and I believe what the devalue of religion over the past 40 years in European and in American culture, at the same time, a rise in religious culture and religious vigor and philosophical beliefs in South America, in Central and South Eastern Asia, you know you see a rise of different sects of Christianity even within

The interface also features a bottom toolbar with icons for document management and a status bar at the bottom right showing 'Simple Coding Query (OF combination of codes)'.