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Perspectivas de los adultos sobre la pérdida de valores, la disminución de la conciencia social y los caminos para la renovación

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Resumen. El objetivo de este estudio es examinar las perspectivas de los adultos, como actores sociales, sobre la relación entre la sensibilidad social y los valores. Esta investigación se llevó a cabo siguiendo el modelo de caso, uno de los modelos de investigación cualitativa, y el grupo de estudio estuvo compuesto por 85 adultos voluntarios. Los datos de la investigación se obtuvieron a partir de las respuestas a cuatro preguntas de una entrevista semiestructurada y se analizaron mediante el método de análisis de contenido. Según los resultados, la mayoría de los participantes asociaron la sensibilidad social con el valor del respeto y afirmaron que la sensibilidad social ha cambiado negativamente debido al debilitamiento de este valor. Los hallazgos son en gran medida consistentes con estudios previos en el campo, que muestran que la erosión de los valores reduce la conciencia colectiva y la solidaridad. Con base en estos resultados, se sugiere que los talleres educativos diseñados para promover el aprendizaje experiencial y participativo pueden ayudar a reintroducir valores fundamentales relacionados con la conciencia social. También se espera que las universidades puedan servir como plataformas efectivas para seminarios informativos destinados a crear conciencia. Esta investigación revela las percepciones de los adultos sobre la relación entre la sensibilidad social y los valores. Se espera que esto ilumine futuras investigaciones en el campo de la responsabilidad social y la educación sobre los conceptos de sensibilidad y valor

social. Además, las actividades comunitarias que priorizan el compartir y la cohesión, junto con iniciativas centradas en la familia y los niños, pueden contribuir a fortalecer la unidad. Finalmente, los eventos culturales y festivales que fomentan la inclusión y la aceptación entre grupos diversos podrían contribuir a fortalecer la cohesión social.

Palabras clave: adulto, conciencia social, valor, filosofía.

Adults' perspectives on value loss, declining social awareness, and paths for renewal

Abstract. The aim of this study is to examine the views of adults, as stakeholders of society, on the relationship between social sensitivity and values. This research was conducted in the case pattern, one of the qualitative research models, and the study group consisted of 85 volunteer adults. The data of the research were obtained from the answers given to four semi-structured interview questions and were analyzed with the content analysis method. According to the results, most participants associated social sensitivity with the value of respect and stated that social sensitivity has changed negatively due to the weakening of this value. The findings are largely consistent with previous studies in the field, showing that the erosion of values reduces collective awareness and solidarity. Based on these results, it is suggested that educational workshops designed to promote experiential and participatory learning may help reintroduce core values related to social consciousness. It is also expected that universities could serve as effective platforms for informative seminars aimed at raising awareness. This research reveals the perceptions of adults regarding the relationship between social sensitivity and value. It is expected to shed light on future research to be conducted in the field of social responsibility and education regarding the concepts of social sensitivity and value. In addition, community-based activities that emphasize sharing and cohesion, along with family- and child-focused initiatives, may contribute to strengthening unity. Finally, cultural events and festivals that encourage inclusivity and acceptance among diverse groups could play a role in reinforcing social cohesion.

Keywords: adult, social awareness, value, philosophy.

INTRODUCTION

Societies are formed by individuals and other beings living in it. Individuals in a given society can be grouped as babies, children, young people, adults and the elderly. Among the individuals who form the society, adults are defined as those between the ages of 30 and 65. Adults are mostly individuals who have established their own lives and developed an order in most areas (Aksel, 2012). Today, adults are known as Generation X and are located between the “Baby Boomers” generation, which includes the elderly, and the “Z” generation, which includes the young people. This situation affects the majority of society and prepares the ground for disagreements that may arise during the next generation. Especially in the developing and changing world, the fact that technology penetrated in every area of our lives has been effective in the emergence of the “Alpha” generation, which includes children. In this context, adults in society are trying to adapt to the

social changes they experience. This causes adults to suffer from various difficulties and problems in the social sphere (Canatan, 2008).

In order to mitigate the problems, they experience in society, adults should learn about innovations through lifelong learning and be an exemplary role model for future generations. The most important of them, social sensitivity, involves individuals being aware of events and problems in the society they live in instead of merely focusing on their personal lives and producing solutions to problems as responsible citizens. Accordingly, adults should keep up with the age, adopt the innovations brought by their times, and use them correctly and effectively so that they can be seen as role models by future generations (Arikhan, 2022).

The world we live in is changing on a daily basis; along with the changing world, the society we live in and its structure are also transforming. This situation reveals people's attitudes towards social sensitivity. The most important element of social sensitivity is mutual understanding of people, which reveals the value judgments that exist in society. Humans are social beings who try to adapt to the beliefs and culture of their society. The characteristic that distinguishes a given society from other societies is its cultural beliefs which are seen as the values adopted by that society. Values are behaviors that are learned by seeing, living and feeling in our natural environment. Love, respect, tolerance, honesty, peace, modesty, cooperation, sincerity, harmony, freedom, responsibility, and empathy are among the most pronounced values. These are also interrelated, so they cannot be considered independently of each other. For example, the value of respect is based on the value of tolerance, and the value of tolerance is based on the value of empathy. All these values enable people to understand each other (Aslan, 2017).

Each individual and society has different value judgments that add meaning to human life. These values are classified as "national" and "universal" values, as well as in other fields. In the history of philosophy, values are classified as moral, aesthetic, political and religious. The concept of value itself, on the other hand, is located in the ethics section of philosophy and includes the notion of morality (Çetin and Balanuyer, 2015). When we look at the origin of philosophy in Greek, the language of its birth, we see that it is "philosophia" meaning "love of wisdom". Therefore, philosophy has the concept of "love" in its literal meaning, which is included in other universal values. In this context, axiology is the branch of philosophy that makes human life meaningful and examines the nature, source and meaning of people's behavior and the choices they make. There is universality in the nature of philosophy, just like in values; in other words, philosophy embraces the entire world (Kuyurtar, 2022).

Generally speaking, individuals who make up a society and the value judgments in that society constitute a whole. All individuals who make up a society, such as children, youth, adults and the elderly, form the value judgments of the society they are affiliated with. These values, in turn, affect social sensitivity. One study conducted on high school students representing different segments of society examined the views on the value of tolerance. Examinations revealed that high school students suffer from weaknesses in the value of tolerance towards their peers from different segments of society (Bakiler, 2016). Another study examined the respect for differences among fourth-grade primary school students. Within the scope of the study, activities for multicultural education were prepared and the opinions of the students were asked. As a result of the study, it was determined that there were some weaknesses in the value of respect for differences among the students (Öztürk, 2018). In another study, the opinions of sixth-grade foreign students at middle school regarding

the value of respect for rights and freedoms were taken within the scope of the social studies course. As a result of the study, it was determined that there were changes in the value of respect for rights and freedoms depending on the country of origin of the students, but no significant difference was found depending on their gender. All students stated that they took their teachers as role models in learning values (Özdemir, 2018). Another study attempted to determine the perceptions and opinions of fourth-grade primary school students about the value of love. As a result of this study, it was determined that there was a significant difference in female students compared to male students in terms of moral behavior towards the value of love. The examination of the pictures that the students drew about the value of love revealed that different perceptions were formed about love (Kılıç, 2019).

Values are the cornerstones of social sensitivity. They also play a very important role in ensuring that individuals feel that they are a part of society and make society a whole. The main purpose of this study on social sensitivity and values, which are declining and changing day by day, is the determination and examination of the views of adults as regards the relationship between social sensitivity and values.

METHOD

Research model

This study aims to determine the status of social sensitivity in adults. Therefore, this research was conducted with a case study design, one of the qualitative research models. Qualitative research is performed in natural environments to obtain the opinions of individuals on a certain subject (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Klenke, 2016). A case study is a qualitative research design in which a situation or event is examined in depth through observation, interview, visual/auditory devices, documents and reports (Creswell, 2007).

Study group

The study group consisted of 85 volunteer adults aged 30 and over who were considered to be able to respond to the semi-structured interview questions prepared in line with the purpose of the study.

The demographic characteristics of the participants in the study group are given in Table 1.

When Table 1 is examined, the distribution of the participants according to their demographic characteristics is seen as “age, gender, nationality, occupation and educational status”. It is observed that the majority of the participants are between the ages of 35-49 and 30-34, that 48 are female and 37 are male, and that their nationality is mostly T.R.N.C. (74). In terms of occupation, the first three ranks are occupied by teachers (16), bank personnel (15) and civil servants (12), and in terms of educational status, it is seen that university graduates take the first place (35).

Data collection instruments

In line with the purpose of this study, research data were obtained through 4 semi-structured interview questions. The interview questions were prepared by the researcher and turned into a semi-structured interview form after receiving expert opinion.

TABLE 1. Demographic characteristics of the participants.

Theme		f
Age	30-34	23
	35-39	24
	40-44	13
	45-49	10
	50-54	8
	55-59	7
Gender	Female	48
	Male	37
Nationality	T.R.N.C.	74
	R.T.	11
Occupation	Teacher	16
	Insurer	6
	Bank Staff	15
	Clerk	12
	Pharmacist Apprentice	3
	Housewife	6
	Nurse	1
	Kitchen Manager	1
	Beauty Specialist	1
	Distributor	1
	Cleaning Staff	2
	Electrician	1
	Plumber	1
	Architect	1
	Engineer	5
	Sailor	1
	Journalist	1
	Baker	1
	Marketer	1
	Farmer	1
	Driver	2
	Food Technician	1
	Drama Instructor	1
	Officer	1
	Machinist	1
	Accountant	1
Educational Status	Primary School	7
	Secondary School	6
	High School	17
	University	35
	Master's Degree	18
	Doctorate	2

Permission was obtained from the participants before the interview in order to increase the quality and reliability of the study. The interviews were conducted face-to-face with the participants in a quiet environment. Interview is a data collection tool used in qualitative research methods and consists of face-to-face dialogue of at least two people (Fontana & Frey, 2000). The semi-structured interview form includes open-ended questions prepared to obtain the opinions and thoughts of the participants within the framework of the research to be conducted (Patton, 2018). The following questions were asked in the interviews within this study:

- 1) Which values (love, respect, tolerance, honesty, etc.) do you associate with social sensitivity? Could you explain it in a few sentences?
- 2) In your opinion, has there been a change in social sensitivity compared to previous years? In what direction is this change? Could you explain it in a few sentences?
 - a) If you think social sensitivity has declined, which value do you think is the most likely cause of this deficiency? Could you explain it with examples?
- 2) What kind of social activities can be done to increase social sensitivity in adults? Could you explain it with examples?

Analysis of data

In the study, the answers given by the participants were noted on the interview forms prepared by the researcher. Then, the answers in the interview forms were written on the computer. The obtained data were analyzed with the content analysis method. The purpose of content analysis is to combine similar data and concepts within a certain thematic framework (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2011). The semi-structured interview forms, each consisting of 2 pages, including of the answers given to 4 questions asked to 85 participants during the interview, were carefully read by the researcher. Then, the obtained data were coded and analyzed in the light of the themes.

Findings

This section includes the participants' responses to four semi-structured questions regarding the relationship between social sensitivity and values.

TABLE 2. The relationship between social sensitivity and values in adults.

Values	f	%
Respect	40	34
Love	19	16,15
Tolerance	12	10,2
Empathy	8	6,8
Honesty	4	3,4
Peace	1	0,85
Justice	1	0,85

Table 2 shows that the participants associated social sensitivity with 7 different value judgments. When the responses given by the participants are examined, it is seen that the values of respect, love, tolerance, empathy, honesty, peace and justice are mentioned.

The frequencies of the values stated by the participants vary between 1 and 40, and it is seen that the value with the highest frequency is “respect” (40), which is followed by “love” (19), “tolerance” (12), “empathy” (8) and “peace” (4).

Quotations from participant statements regarding the relationship between social sensitivity and values in adults are given below:

Respect: *People living in society should respect objects and people in the same way. If a person respects others, it means that he/she also respects himself/herself (K40).*

Love: *Social sensitivity begins with the value of love and is formed with the totality of other values. Love is the basis of everything (K19).*

Tolerance: *Social sensitivity is being tolerant of the environment you live in and differences. Social sensitivity becomes inevitable where there is no tolerance (K12).*

Empathy: *Empathy is the most important value for people to understand each other in society (K8).*

Honesty: *Honesty is the cornerstone of society (K4).*

Peace: *The value of peace is critical in society, for a peaceful world to exist (K1).*

Justice: *The most important value in society is justice (K1).*

TABLE 3. The direction of change in social sensitivity towards adult views over the past years.

There has been a change	F	%
Positive	6	5,1
Negative	79	67,15
Total	85	100

Table 3 shows the direction of change in the social sensitivity of the participants in the past years. 85 people who took part in the study voluntarily emphasized that social sensitivity has changed compared to the past years. Six participants stated that this change was positive, while 79 stated that it was negative.

TABLE 4. Social sensitivity and declining value judgments.

Values	F	%
Respect	40	34
Empathy	18	15,3
Tolerance	12	10,2
Love	8	6,8
Honesty	3	2,55
Cooperation	2	1,7
Justice	1	0,85
Conscience	1	0,85

Table 4 reveals that participants associated the decreasing value judgment within social sensitivity with 8 values. An examination of the participants' responses shows that the values of "respect, empathy, tolerance, love, honesty, cooperation, justice, and conscience" were mentioned. The frequencies of the values indicated by the participants varied between 1 and 40. The value with the highest frequency was "respect" (40), followed by "empathy" (18), "tolerance" (12), "love" (8), "honesty" (3), and "cooperation" (2).

Quotations from participant statements regarding the relationship between social sensitivity and declining value judgments are given below:

Respect: *People's respect for the environment, education, and individuals with special needs has decreased, and life has become difficult. With the increase in technology, there is no more respect. Even during hospitality, people are busy with their phones instead of chatting (K40).*

Empathy: *Since empathy is no longer found in society, even the family structure has begun to deteriorate, and old traditions and moral values have disappeared. Unity in society has disappeared; everyone acts individually, and the biggest factor here is the lack of empathy (K18).*

Tolerance: *Previously, it was difficult to access some things, and people would approach each other with tolerance because of this. Now, things are easily accessible, but there is no tolerance. Tolerance has gradually disappeared in society; people do not approach each other with tolerance, even in traffic (K12).*

Love: *Previously, people would approach their families and their surroundings with more love, but now no one has any love left. Everyone in society is now sincere with each other, but no one loves each other (K8).*

Honesty: *There is no more honesty in society. We have become a society where theft and tax evasion are considered normal (K3).*

Cooperation: *There has been an increase in cooperation due to the negative events experienced in society in recent years (K2).*

Justice: *I think that individuals have a high value of justice, no one violates each other's rights (K1).*

Conscience: *The value of conscience no longer exists in society; therefore, murders are on the rise (K1).*

TABLE 5. Recommendations of adults for increasing social awareness.

Recommendations	f	%
Social activities such as theaters, sports events, concerts, and social responsibility projects where people can spend time together should be increased	38	32,3
Educational Workshops can be organized	19	16,15
Training can be organized for adults and children	14	11,9
Seminars can be organized	9	7,65
Festivals can be organized	4	3,4
Living conditions and economic conditions need to be improved	3	2,55

When Table 5 is examined, it is seen that the participants offered 6 recommendations regarding increasing social awareness. Accordingly, it was concluded that the participants offered the following suggestions: "Social activities such as theaters, sports events, concerts, and social responsibility projects where people can spend time together should be increased/ Educational Workshops can be organized / Trainings can be organized for adults and children / Seminars can be organized/ Festivals can be organized/ Living conditions and economic conditions need to be improved." The frequencies of the recommendations offered by the participants range from 3 to 38. The recommendation with the highest frequency is "Social activities such as theaters, sports events, concerts, and social responsibility projects where people can spend time together should be increased" (38). This recommendation is followed by "Educational Workshops can be organized" (19), "Training can be organized for adults and children" (14), "Seminars can be organized" (9), "Festivals can be organized" (4) and "Living and economic conditions need to be improved" (3).

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Societies today are witnessing a technological age where information can be accessed quickly, with technology advancing rapidly and claiming its place in all areas of humanity. Simultaneously, social sensitivity and value judgments are decreasing day by day. In this study, opinions of 85 volunteer adult participants were obtained regarding 4 semi-structured questions prepared to investigate the relationship between social sensitivity and values among adults.

According to the results of the study, 34% of the participants associate social sensitivity with the value of respect, 16.15% with the value of love, 10.2% with the value of tolerance, 6.8% with the value of empathy, 3.4% with the value of honesty, and 0.85% with the values of justice and conscience. In addition, 85 participants expressed that there has been a change in terms of social sensitivity. While 5.1% of them emphasize that this change is positive, 67.15% complain that it is a negative change. This shows that social sensitivity has changed in a negative way at a high rate. 34% of the participants emphasize that the decrease in social sensitivity is due to the weakening of the value of respect, 15.3% draw attention to the lack of empathy, 10.2% to the lack of tolerance, and 6.8% to the weakening of the value of love. 2.55% of the participants blame the decline in the value of honesty, 1.7% hold responsible the weakening of the value of cooperation, and 0.85% find fault in the decline in the values of justice and conscience.

Bozkan (2019) examined the social sensitivity of classroom teachers in a similar study and used the "Social Sensitivity Scale for Classroom Teachers" consisting of 13 items. As a result of this study, it was concluded that while the individual and national sensitivities of classroom teachers were high, their environmental sensitivity levels were at a moderate level.

In another study, Oral (2022) conducted an action research to develop social sensitivity, critical literacy and reflection skills among high school students using the transformative learning model. In the study, it was found that as a result of the implemented activities, the students' average scores from SOSDÖ and EODBF increased significantly.

In his study, Küllüoğlu (2018) examined a total of 42 students taking the 5th grade social studies course, 19 of whom formed the experimental group and 23 of whom formed the control group, and applied the educational program integrated with values within the scope of the social studies course to the students in the experimental group. As a result of the study, it was concluded

that there was a significant difference between the students in the experimental group and the students in the control group regarding the perception of the value of honesty. In our study, on the other hand, 2.55 of the adults stated that the value of honesty has declined in society.

In a similar study, Dalyan (2020) examined 41 primary school students regarding the value of respect in the curriculum of the religious culture and morality course, placing 22 of these students in the experimental group and 19 in the control group. The value of “love” was conveyed to the students in the experimental group in a story-based manner within the religious culture and morality course. As a result of the study, it was observed that the students in the experimental group showed an increased tendency towards the value of respect. In our study, 34% of the adults emphasized that the value of respect in society was gradually decreasing.

In another similar study, Yaylı (2020) obtained the opinions of pre-service classroom teachers using the creative drama method. Forms prepared in accordance with the purpose of the study were presented to the pre-service teachers participating in the study before and after the creative drama application, and the participants’ opinions on the value of love were obtained. Comparison of these forms revealed that the responses given after participating in creative drama applications were more meaningful, and pre-service teachers stated that the creative drama method provided permanent learning. In our study, 16.15% of the participants associated social sensitivity with the value of respect.

In another similar study, Öztürk (2020) evaluated the academic honesty value of middle school students in relation to Kohlberg’s moral development theory. As a result of the study, it was concluded that the academic honesty values of the students were high, but it was determined that the students did not have sufficient information about the value of academic honesty. In our study, 3.4% of the participants correlated social sensitivity with the value of honesty.

In another similar study, Polat (2021) examined the metaphor perceptions of primary school 4th grade, middle school 8th grade, high school 12th grade students, their parents, and teachers regarding the value of respect. As a result of the research, 4th grade students associated the value of respect with the metaphors of “love, joy, appreciation, and honesty”. While 8th grade students related it with the metaphors of “love, honesty, and manners,” 12th grade students created the metaphors of “love, water, value, and flower.” Teachers associated the value of respect with the metaphors of “water, mirror, and flower,” and parents associated it with the metaphors of “love, flower, and value.” In general, it was seen that the value with the highest frequency was respect, while the lowest frequency was respect “as an element that takes differences into account and happiness.”

In another similar study, Çelik (2022) examined the impact of the value of tolerance on the culture of social peace and compromise. As a result of the research, it was concluded that the value of tolerance has served as a very effective value in ensuring peace and compromise throughout history. It was also emphasized that values are changed and transferred in different dimensions and forms over time, and that the value of tolerance should reclaim its place in our society with a well-intentioned and inclusive acceptance.

This is where axiology comes to the forefront. Researching what is good, beautiful, right and desirable and presenting it to society is among the most basic purposes of axiology. Just like in philosophy, there is a good intention and existence in every value. Presenting these values to society in the most accurate way is among the subjects of philosophy. Socrates said “know thyself”; this

means that the real source of values is people's inner worlds and that contributing to society by revealing these values starts with knowing oneself.

When the findings of similar studies and this research are examined, it is concluded that the social sensitivity of all individuals in society, such as adults, young people and children, and their responsibilities regarding the value judgments that create society are gradually decreasing.

This research reveals the perceptions of adults regarding the relationship between social sensitivity and value. It is expected to shed light on future research to be conducted in the field of social responsibility and education regarding the concepts of social sensitivity and value. The following recommendations can be developed based on the results achieved in this study:

- Social activities aimed at social awareness can be increased.
- Creative drama workshops that support learning by doing and experiencing can be organized.
- Educational packages for usage in schools or for individuals to utilize easily can be developed.

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