Developing pedagogical students' competency for educating life values in general education

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Abstract Living values are broadly promoted standards that uniquely impact the formation of knowledgeable and civilized individuals. Specifically, life value education is crucial for pedagogical students' professional and ability development. Hence, there has been a growing tendency among individuals to prioritize the development of life values and educational competencies for students; however, research in this area remains limited in Vietnam. This study aimed to investigate the subject matter and implementation of life value education among students by synthesizing findings from prior research. In addition, methods for enhancing pedagogical students' competency in life value education are proposed in this study. Life-based educational materials must be developed, coordinated, and integrated into the curriculum of pedagogical students, while capacity is maintained and enhanced through practical experience. Based on the analysis above, educators must collaborate with schools, parents, and other available resources to develop students' ability to recognize life values. Providing practical foundations and theoretical and valuable information about life values is essential to guarantee comprehensiveness and efficacy. Furthermore, the study emphasizes the importance of selecting suitable content and methods when instituting integrated models of life value education for students, given that youth values constantly fluctuate in response to social change.

Keywords: pedagogical students, life values, life values education, competency

1. Background

University students can be described as social groups with various spiritual and developmental requirements (Sharapov, 2011). Students also have the desire to take advantage of cultural possibilities and their opinions with respect to historical and cultural values. A significant developmental challenge university students face is discerning their desired career direction and life purpose. During the period from 18 to 25 years old, individuals engage in the process of exploring various life prospects, shaping their identities, and discovering life objectives and their role within society. Today, the phenomenon of value transformation among young people is influenced by globalization and domestic causes such as psychological stress and shifts in family values. The development of technological advances has had an enormous effect on perception and culture, particularly among contemporary university students, due to the influence of online media and its associated societal ideals and concepts. Globalization, characterized by significant advancements in information and technology, necessitates conceptual knowledge and proficiency in 21st-century skills. These skills include critical thinking and problem-solving abilities, creativity, and innovation, as well as effective communication and collaboration skills. This situation affects the necessity of cultivating education that focuses on acquiring conceptual understanding, practical abilities, and other essential life skills (Griffin et al., 2011). In the modern 21st century, it is necessary for students to acquire life skills. Educational institutions are responsible for contributing to developing these life skills by ongoing learning. Within professional higher education, individuals develop attitudes toward the professional or learning environment based on personal interpretations of past experiences. Education plays a role in developing people's values and assisting them in aligning with their professional aspirations for the future professional globe (Seryj, 2004). The growth of individual passions and values is closely related to establishing core values in the learning process. Modern college students possess a more vital consciousness of ideology and autonomy, which leads to the development of a unique set of criteria for life values. It is necessary for the value of life education to be consistent with the principles held by university students.

2. Definition of life values and education on life values

The development of modern technology has greatly influenced societal values and ideas through internet media, particularly impacting the field of contemplating, culture, and the minds of current university students. Currently, university students are highly vulnerable to issues such as diminished empathy, warped principles, and diminished value of life. University students engage in instances of suicide, homicide, and other unlawful and criminal behaviors because of detrimental psychological factors. Values are crucial in shaping one's identity during adolescence and young adulthood. They...
greatly influence the way people observe the world, set goals and attitudes, and behave. Values also affect how individuals interact with society and professional development (Bardi & Goodwin, 2011). Life values are integral to the development of social action since they are a fundamental component of an individual’s cognitive system and significantly impact attitudes, beliefs, and actions (Bardi & Goodwin, 2011). Values in life are linked to the ideas and ideals that an individual considers essential for leading a meaningful existence. These values significantly impact an individual’s cognition, conduct, and decision-making process. According to Schwartz (1992), values are symbolic representations of objectives and motives. Fundamental human values correspond to biological requirements, social relationships, and universal group activities that differ throughout many civilizations. Values are abstract ideas or principles connected to desirable conditions or actions; values serve as a framework for choosing or assessing behaviors and occurrences and are organized based on their significance (Schwartz, 1992). Over the years, several studies have emphasized the significance of life values. (Savina Rani et al., 2022) argue that values play a significant role in defining individuals’ lives, and it is crucial for the school system to impart these values to young children. According to Schwartz (1992), fundamental values act as guiding principles that elucidate individuals’ and societies' decision-making processes and behavior.

Life values are perceived as significant, indispensable, and meaningful components of an individual’s existence. The formation of attitudes toward adversity and resilience, which subsequently impact an individual’s capacity to manage and recuperate from traumatic incidents, is significantly influenced by life values (Arredondo & Caparrós, 2023). The life values of university students comprise a collection of beliefs and principles that affect their decisions and behaviors inside and outside the classroom. The formation of individuals’ values and coping strategies is significantly influenced by their level of education, which, in essence, impacts their holistic welfare (Novikova & Fomchenkova, 2021). Integration occurs through the educational process, which produces civilized individuals, including cultivated individuals. Life value education is an essential component that penetrates the entirety of the educational experience (Komalasari et al., 2014). Life value education attempts to inculcate in students the values that will enable them to lead improved lives and productive careers and contribute positively to families, communities, schools, and society at large (Trang, 2011). The purpose of developing life value education in university students is to facilitate their comprehension and acceptance of the meaning of existence, foster an appreciation and adoration for life’s values, improve human qualities and appreciate individual aspects of life, and ultimately commit a life to serving society in pursuit of personal value realization. Training students in a positive, wholesome, and moral outlook on life is the ultimate objective activity in values education and is categorized as follows: engaging in value reflection, imaginative exercise, relaxation and concentration practices, creative expression, personal growth activities, social skills, awareness of values, and societal equality; cultivating abilities in social solidarity; and incorporating values into preexisting curricula (Tillman & Colomina, 2001). According to the Values Education Program of UNESCO, value education has been found to benefit children’s mental, emotional, and social development (Hassan & Kahil, 2005). Incorporating the life values education model into instructional materials enhances students’ responsibility (Komalasari, 2016).

3. The importance of life value education for university students

Essential life values education is a method in which society emphasizes the development of students’ personalities; as such, these values are changeable and tolerant of customs, culture, and necessities. Teachers and students equally perceive and believe that teaching about human values positively affects students; consequently, value education is a requirement in academic institutions, and both formal and informal learning are present (Mohanty, 2014). Nevertheless, several research studies have indicated that a considerable proportion of students maintain optimistic, currently disjointed notions regarding the future (Baburkin et al., 2016). Vedeneyeva et al. (2019) believed that young people have the most difficulty responding to the political, economic, and social changes occurring in society due to their deficiency of an established worldview or system. Consequently, the greatest challenge in modern education is to identify methods and strategies consistent with the fundamental values of young people, thereby assisting them in conforming their life values to contemporary realities. Mondal (2017) noted that when values are integrated into the entire educational system, the transmission of values is enhanced. Aspects of 12 fundamental life values are incorporated into the educational curriculum, including love, harmony, collaboration, tolerance, sincerity, compassion, respect, honesty, humility, happiness, and solidarity (Veryawan et al., 2023). According to an investigation conducted among young people in 2020, young people consider the following essential life values: material security, achievement and recognition, political events, social stability, employment, family and children, and material security (Novikova & Fomchenkova, 2021). Furthermore, Harb (2010) indicated that the most significant factors regarded by participants were hospitality, honor, and values, including benevolence, safety, success, and self-direction. Jarrar (2013) reported that spiritual, emotional, social, biological, and spiritual values were the most frequently selected priorities by those students. Individuals from various nations can attribute different meanings, levels of importance, and behaviors to the same life values (Hanel et al., 2018). According to a study by Marques et al. (2020), university students in Lebanon place a premium on advancement and acceptable values, demonstrating concern for survival, health, and stability in addition to pursuing professional and academic achievement and a positive reputation. Furthermore, Tayli (2015) showed that gender differences in preferences for life values significantly correlate with life satisfaction. Girls prioritize security, conformity, and universality, whereas boys are more concerned with power (Tayli, 2015). According to a study by Baburkin et al. (2016),
women prefer values such as family, health, and affection. Conversely, males associate their life values with lucrative employment and professional backgrounds.

Research has revealed that students have positive perceptions of their personal, social, and environmental values, with age differences affecting respondents' evaluations of these aspects. Concurrently, parents' educational attainment impacts participants' values (Malaluan & June, 2022). Furthermore, an additional significant life value, developing an identity, is affected by parental support (Law et al., 2019). Students who gain parental support are more likely to develop a perception of meaning and purpose in their lives, thereby reinforcing life values. By providing emotional and practical information, parents can assist their children in identifying and embracing their values, beliefs, and goals (Chen et al., 2020). In addition, it is essential to note that the learning environment, encompassing factors such as the classroom environment, interactions between teachers and learners, and school culture, could influence the relationships among academic achievement, parental support, extracurricular activities, and the development of life values and health among students (Dede Yildirim & Roopnarine, 2019). A notable correlation has been observed among university students' academic achievement, contentment, life values, and parental support for extracurricular activities (Guo et al., 2024). An additional significant determinant that can impact resilience and life value is gender (Zabaniotou et al., 2020).

The implementation of the life values education paradigm and acquaintance process considerably enhances 42.1% of students' personality development (Saripudin & Komalasari, 2015). According to Komalasari (2016), value-based educational resources significantly influence the personality development of students. Character development and the active involvement of academic institutions serve as critical elements in fostering motivation among individuals from various backgrounds. As it promotes the development of influential citizens and supports the maintenance of social order, providing students with quality education via online instruction can significantly benefit society (Deveci, 2015). High self-esteem and academic achievement are associated with a commitment to emotional and student engagement, the pursuit of self-actualization, and the value of personal goals (Barros, 2018).

4. Content in developing the life values competency of Vietnamese pedagogical students.

The competency to impart life-value education can be defined as the capacity to integrate subject-matter expertise, attitudes, and skills to execute life-value education activities through the institutionally recognized objective of life-value education. The process of expanding and enhancing the necessary capacity system of all individuals (particularly pedagogical students) to efficiently execute activities in accordance with predetermined objectives is known as capacity development. In Vietnam, educational institutions also emphasize the importance of education for developing life values. Quynh (2017) highlighted the significance of life value education, proposed several concepts about values, and identified twelve globally recognized life values that should be taught to young people across the globe. The Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam introduced a continuing education program in 2018 that encompasses five traits aligned with five life values. These values include compassion, nationalism, diligence, honesty, and responsibility (Ministry of Education and Training, 2018b). The implementation of life value education for pedagogical students has resulted in favorable outcomes, enhancing the efficacy of life value education in pedagogical institutions (Tú, 2017). Therefore, it is imperative that life value education for pedagogical students encompasses a holistic approach, offering valuable insights into theoretical and practical aspects, research materials, and effective approaches to enhancing knowledge (Tuân, 2023).

Following the goals and programs for pedagogical students and the structure of the ability to teach high school instructors about life values, the content of developing the competency to educate pedagogical students about life values must be determined. This article outlines several fundamental components that can be utilized to enhance the competency of pedagogical students in life value education as follows:

**Competency to comprehend the goals of life value education:** Students at all levels of high school must be able to identify the objectives of life value education. Students must understand and evaluate the comprehensive general education program's objectives and the correlation between life value education and attaining objectives. The Comprehensive General Education Program in Vietnam has established educational goals to equip students with the skills necessary to acquire knowledge, apply it practically in their daily lives, and develop social connections. By doing so, they are expected to lead meaningful lives and contribute constructively to countries and global communities. The following qualities are promoted and encouraged in students: patriotism, benevolence, cooperation, communication, problem solving, and originality (Ministry of Education and Training, 2018a).

**The competency in designing life values:** Involves identifying the substance of such values and constructing them into thematic structures that align with the unique attributes of individual educational levels and schools. Students must understand the goals, design steps (explore, connect, practice, implement, evaluate), fundamental activities, time, conditions, means for each activity, assessment, and participating forces, as well as comprehend the objectives and design steps based on experiential activity methods.

**Competency to coordinate the execution of student life value education plans:** Students have the ability to apply techniques and methods utilized in high school life value education using experiential learning experience. Organizing experiences is intended to facilitate student reflection on the significance and substance of life values by establishing
connections with their own experiences; concurrently, it generates situations and activities that instill life values and provide students with numerous opportunities to practice and implement values in their daily lives. Consequently, seven primary strategies are typically employed to promote student positivity and facilitate learner-centered value education: collaborative instruction, case studies, creativity, problem-solving, role-playing, activities, and projects.

*Competency in comprehending the structure of life value education organizations:* Educational institutions employ a wide range of methods to incorporate life value instruction, encompassing experiential learning and vocational guidance. Each of these categories guarantees that students are afforded the chance to encounter, articulate, develop, and implement life values that are linked to subject significance elements that are established according to academic levels and classes. Furthermore, students acquire the ability to impart life value through integrated instruction across various subjects.

All high school curricula could incorporate frameworks and life value education. As a result, students must realize these objectives of life value education, select the content that effectively integrates living value education, and ascertain suitable organizational methods and structures.

5. Some approaches to developing competence in life value education for pedagogical students.

The ability to provide life value education is a significant component of pedagogical capacity; however, this competency needs to be specified in the output standards (Rieckmann, 2018). Analyzing the characteristics of general education at all levels, the functions of teaching life values, and the specific competencies of educational capacity life values education for pedagogical students are the foundations of result standard development (Kunter et al., 2013). There are numerous ways to form and develop competence in instilling life values in students; however, the following are some fundamental approaches:

5.1. Develop and coordinate life value education subjects and topics

The subjects and modules were constructed and arranged according to the faculty and school's output standards and training programs (Malinen et al., 2012). The ability of pedagogical students to fulfill the obligations and responsibilities of value education in both learning and practice should be the focal point of subjects, topics, and independent modules (Singh, 2011). The course syllabus typically comprises the following seven sections: topic designation; overarching module summary; educational resources; instructional goals; defining the integration matrix between the learning outcomes and the function of the training program, as well as implementing results standards; subject material, methods of instruction, assessment, and credit systems; and regulations and policies (Singh, 2011).

5.2. Incorporate training material on life values education competency for pedagogical students

Practical training with specialized knowledge training is a crucial responsibility for pedagogical students to acquire expertise and competencies in teaching. By incorporating life value education material into science courses to pique students’ interest, the resulting educational effect is subtle yet significant, straightforward to understand, and enduring throughout the subject’s instruction (Sabanci & Alikulaç, 2020). Moreover, all pedagogical students are required to take pedagogical profession courses. Therefore, incorporating life value education into the pedagogical profession will train pedagogical students to utilize life values in their professional endeavors while establishing a connection between life values and the development of their careers. Furthermore, incorporating educational material into pedagogical disciplines will unify the educational effects that emanate from the institution in relation to the objectives of student training (Deveci, 2015).

5.3. Enhancing and maintaining competency in life value education through pedagogical training activities and practical educational experiences

Life value education may be conducted through regular pedagogical professional training activities and professional practice (Malla & Puhan, 2023). Another approach is to develop life values through learning and pedagogical practice. Students may effectively implement their knowledge, life values, and education skills in real-world educational activities through pedagogical skills and academic training. Specifically, students have the opportunity to develop and refine their occupational skills, mainly by engaging in thematic instructional activities. Students can utilize their design abilities, implementation skills, and life value education skills (Malla & Puhan, 2023).

6. Final considerations

Consequently, it is crucial to establish life value education for pedagogical students to fulfill output criteria and match the demands of current educational innovation. Determining the goals and curriculum for enhancing students’ competency in value education will provide a foundation for proposing strategies for encouraging that ability in educational institutions. The development of extensive pedagogical expertise and the ability to teach life values to students requires strong collaboration between academic institutions and the active involvement of instructors and students. Based on this research, developing, structuring, and arranging programs and models that incorporate life value education for students in pedagogical
instruction is crucial. Universities need to make impactful efforts to equip students with the competence to increase their principles and values. This study proposes implementing a proficient guidance and counseling program to assist students in enhancing and reinforcing their life values. It is crucial to provide an educational understanding of life values to promote consciousness among students and foster a positive, healthy, and accurate way of life.

**Ethical considerations**

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**Conflict of Interest**

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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