BULLETIN OF EDUCATIONAL STUDIES

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Secondary School Students' Mental Images of the Concept of "Goodness"

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ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

We can say that the concept of goodness is a concept that is known by everyone in social life and that everyone has different views on this issue. Goodness is also a concept in which a positive or negative point of view is formed depending on the lifestyles, life expectations and social situations of individuals. The aim of this research is to reveal the differences of these perspectives and how much the gender status affects these differences through the mental images created by the students. The study group of this research consists of 28 female and 32 male secondary school students studying in Malatya. Data of secondary school students in the study group "Goodness is similar to ...., because ...." is obtained by completing the sentence. Content analysis technique was used in the analysis and interpretation of the obtained data. As a result of the research, it has been revealed that secondary school students girls and boys see "goodness" more as "the concept of goodness as a human perception".

1. Introduction

The concept of image, which is an important tool for individuals to express their abstract thoughts by concretizing them, is frequently used especially in metaphorical expressions. According to TDK (2019), an image is defined as a similar image reflected in the mind of an object that the sense organs can see and perceive from the outside. Based on this definition, we can say that images, which are called mental or mental, are the reshaping of the concepts in the real world in the imagination of people because what we call image is not a copy of real phenomena, but a reconstructed form of reality through the filter of reason. Therefore, the created phenomenon actually represents something new (Keser, 2005). Mental images may vary according to the events that people experience in their own lives, their mind structures, vocabulary or imagination.

In the emergence of mental images; the likeness, the likened and the interest between the two is very important (Coşkun, 2010). We can say that it is extremely important to establish a connection between the image to which an object will be compared and to explain the object to be compared with a strong metaphor. While mental images are created, the simulated object may not be seen or heard in the environment. The mental images we create are seen and heard to visualise a schema in our minds in the absence of the instantaneous simulated emotional input (Kosslyn et al., 1995, cited in Nanay, 2021). According to some researchers who support this situation, mental images are not a depiction of the objects that exist at the moment, but actually a description of the situations or objects stored in our minds (Kosslyn et al., 2006, cited in Borst & Kosslyn, 2008).

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Although the concept of mental image is a concept that many researchers look at from a different point of view and produce different theories about its emergence, it can be said that it is basically a mental production, more simply a process of analogy. When it is desired to reveal mental perceptions about any concept, the concept of mental image can be utilised. In this study, mental images were used to reveal the perceptions about the concept of "goodness".

The concept of well-being, which almost everyone can express an opinion about, can be stated as the absence of disease or any disability in the person until the 1940s, but with new definitions, it has been explained not only as the absence of disease but also as the individual not feeling deficient in terms of internal and social aspects (Doğan, 2006). While the concept of well-being was more associated with physical or mental health in the past, social workers have taken into consideration the high levels of happiness, pleasure and perception of the meaning of life in the measurement of well-being (Oishi, 2010, cited in Attepe Özden et al., 2017).

This concept of goodness, which has changed over time, has become one of the main objectives of education, and it has become a virtue to raise good people and to ensure that a person helps another person without any material or moral benefit (Aktepe & Aktepe, 2009). It can be said that this concept that education wants to gain has a very important place in social life and positively affects the mood of the person. In addition to education, people are always advised to be good in divine or non-divine religions (Şahin, 2010). We can say that goodness and being good is a concept that should always exist for the whole world. In this study, it was tried to reveal how this concept, which is one of the important factors that ensure the continuity and peace of social life, is perceived by secondary school students.

1.1. Purpose and Importance of the Research

The aim of this study is to learn the mental images of secondary school students about the concept of "goodness" and to reveal how secondary school students perceive the concept of goodness. In the study, data were collected by having the study group complete the sentence "Goodness is similar to ...., because ....". Depending on the main purpose, answers to the following questions were sought.

What are the mental images of secondary school students about the concept of "goodness"?

In which categories can the mental images that secondary school students have about the concept of "goodness" be grouped?

What is the relationship between the mental images formed by male and female secondary school students about the concept of "goodness"?

The limited number of studies conducted with secondary school students on the concept of goodness and the limited number of secondary school students' perspectives on the concept of goodness make this study important. It is hoped that this study will contribute to the field.

2. Method

The study protocol was approved by the Social and Human Sciences Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee of İnönü University (Decision number: E.673721).

2.1. Research Model

In the study, phenomenology design, which is one of the qualitative research methods, was used in order to reveal the mental images of secondary school students regarding the concept of "goodness". The phenomenology design focuses on phenomena that we are aware of but do not have a detailed and deep understanding (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2021). At the same time, we can say that the phenomenological design is also suitable for measuring people's emotional experiences, for example; Trotman (2006) used the phenomenological design to measure how imagination affects the creativity of primary school students and how this is reflected in education (Merriam, 2018).

2.2. Working Group

The study group of the research consists of 28 female and 32 male secondary school students studying in Malatya province. The main factor in the determination of this study group was the fact that middle school students' cognitive development level requires them to develop the skills of perceiving, interpreting and expressing abstract concepts through symbolic expressions. In addition, the fact that the demographic structure of Malatya province, where the research was conducted, was capable of representing the research population and the sample size was sufficient to serve the purpose of the research was also effective in the selection of this group.

2.3. Data Collection

The data of the study were obtained through a structured metaphor form in order to reveal the perceptions and thoughts of the participants in depth. Before the metaphor forms were distributed, students were informed about what a mental image is and asked to create an image of the concept of "goodness". Secondary school students participating in the study were asked to fill in the sentence "Goodness is similar to ...., because ...." in a sincere way. The students likened goodness to a single concept in line with the information they received about mental imagery and explained why they likened it to this concept by providing justification after the phrase because.

In this process, a non-directive, open-ended approach was adopted so that the students could think freely and express their

feelings and thoughts comfortably; thus, the meanings that the participants attributed to the concept of goodness in their inner worlds were revealed in a unique way. The metaphor form was used as a data collection tool suitable for reflecting the subjective perceptions, experiences and value judgments of individuals in accordance with the qualitative nature of the research. The metaphorical expressions obtained from the interviews provided important clues in terms of revealing both the students' perspectives on the concept of goodness and the meanings they attribute to abstract concepts.

In addition, it was observed that students reflected their cognitive and affective orientations together in the process of producing metaphors; this situation enabled in-depth analysis of the data and added richness to the interpretation process. Volunteerism was taken as a basis throughout the process, students' identity information was kept confidential and ethical principles were followed. The data collected in this direction provided a qualified and meaningful content in achieving the objectives of the research.

2.4. Analyzing the Data

Content analysis technique was used to analyze the data collected with metaphor forms and a specific order was followed in the analysis process. Metaphors were analyzed in 4 different stages (Yıldız & Ertürk, 2019).

2.4.1. Coding and extraction

The open-ended interview forms collected from the students in the study group were analysed and the forms of the students who could not form valid mental images were excluded from the study and the valid mental images were coded in alphabetical order and gender.

2.4.2. Sample mental image compilation

The mental images created by the study group were collected and it was seen that the students created 33 valid mental images. The ones that best represent the theme of these images are given as examples under the relevant table in the findings section.

2.4.3. Category development phase

After the mental images related to the concept of "goodness" were given in a single table, 11 themes were formed in this direction by analysing the relationships between the images created by the students and their reasons. While creating the themes, Koçoğlu (2018), Yıldız and Ertürk (2019), Kekeç and Töre (2020) studies were used. These themes are:

"Goodness as the Perception of Togetherness and Trust Environment", "Goodness as the Perception of Dependency", "Goodness as the Perception of Basic Life Function", "Goodness as the Perception of Purity and Cleanliness", "Goodness as the Perception of Production Place", "Goodness as the Perception of Abstract Concept", "Goodness as the Perception of Order Providing Power Element", "Goodness as the Perception of Human Being", "Goodness as the Perception of Warmth Source", "Goodness as the Perception of Natural Assets", "Goodness as the Perception of Materiality".

2.4.4. Validity and reliability

Before the 33 mental images created by the students in the study group were placed in the categories developed to ensure reliability, an expert in the field of curriculum and instruction was consulted and asked to place the mental images in the categories he found appropriate.

3. Findings

According to the findings obtained in the study, it was observed that female and male secondary school students produced 33 valid mental images related to the concept of "goodness" (Table 1). These collected images were categorised under 11 similar themes.

3.1. Mental Images of Secondary School Students Regarding the Concept of "Goodness"

When the mental images of secondary school students regarding the concept of "goodness" were examined, 28 female and 32 male secondary school students within the scope of the research created a total of 33 valid mental images. Secondary school students tried to explain how they created the images they produced about the concept of "goodness" with their own thoughts.

3.2. Distribution of Mental Images Formed Regarding the Concept of "Goodness" According to Similar Aspects

3.2.1. The concept of goodness as the perception of togetherness and trust environment

The theme of "Togetherness and Trust Environment" includes the images of "family" of 1 female student and "football club" of 1 male student (Table 2).

Table 1. Perceptions of the study group regarding the concept of well-being.

Mental image code	Mental Image Name	Gender	Secondary School Students Representing Mental Imagery	
			f	%
1	Tree	2m 3f	5	8.6
2	Family	1f	1	1.7
3	Alcohol	1m	1	1.7
4	Shopping Addiction	1f	1	1.7
5	Mum and Dad	5m 5f	10	17.2
6	Friend	2m	2	3.4
7	Ataturk	1f	1	1.7
8	Cloud	1m	1	1.7
9	Flower	1m1f	2	3.4
10	Factory	1f	1	1.7
11	Football Club	1m	1	1.7
12	Youth	1f	1	1.7
13	Sun	3m	3	5.1
14	Judge	1f	1	1.7
15	Life	2m 1f	3	5.1
16	Internet	1f	1	1.7
17	Profession	1f	1	1.7
18	Breath	1m	1	1.7
19	Forest	1m	1	1.7
20	Teacher	1m	1	1.7
21	Money	1m 1f	2	3.4
22	Police	1m	1	1.7
23	Wind	1f	1	1.7
24	Love	1m 2f	3	5.1
25	Cigarette	1f	1	1.7
26	Soba	1m	1	1.7
27	Water	2m 1f	3	5.1
28	Field	1m	1	1.7
29	Drugs	1f	1	1.7
30	Virus	1m	1	1.7
31	Investment	1f	1	1.7
32	Food	2f	2	3.4
33	Newborn Child	1f	1	1.7

Table 2. Distribution of mental images formed regarding the concept of goodness as a perception of togetherness and trust environment.

Mental Image Code	Goodness as a Perception of Togetherness and Trust Environment	Gender	Student Representing Mental Imagery	
			f	%
2	Family	1f	1	1.7
11	Football Club	1m	1	1.7

When the mental perceptions under the theme of the concept of goodness as the perception of togetherness and trust environment are examined, we can say that 1 female and 1 male student tried to explain the concept of goodness with family and football club and saw goodness as the basis of togetherness.

Examples of mental images created for the concept of goodness as a perception of togetherness and trust environment are given below.

"Favour is like a family. Because when we do good, we feel happy like we are with our family." (Female secondary school student)

"Goodness is like a football club. Because in order to be successful in a football club, everyone has to help each other." (Male, secondary school student)

Table 3. Distribution of mental images formed regarding the concept of goodness as addiction perception.

Mental Image Code	Well-being as a Perception of Addiction	Gender	Student Representing Mental Imagery	
			f	%
3	Alcohol	1m	1	1.7
4	Shopping Addiction	1f	1	1.7
25	Cigarette	1m	1	1.7
29	Drugs	1f	1	1.7

When the mental images under the theme of goodness as a perception of addiction are analysed, it is possible to say that 4 secondary school students see goodness as an addiction that people who feel it once will want to experience that feeling all the time.

Some examples of mental images related to the concept of well-being as a perception of dependency are given below.

"Favour is like a drug. Because even if you don't want to do it, your body wants to repeat it constantly with a conscientious instinct." (Female, secondary school student)

3.2.2. The concept of well-being as a perception of dependency

The theme of "Goodness as a Perception of Dependence" includes the mental images formed by 3 female and 1 male student participating in the study about the concept of goodness.

"Favour is like alcohol. Because you know that it will make you feel better when it exists." (Male, secondary school student)

3.2.3. Well-being as a perception of basic life function

The theme of "Goodness as a Perception of Basic Life Function" includes the mental images created by 2 female and 1 male students.

Table 4. Distribution of mental images formed regarding the concept of well-being as a perception of basic life function.

Mental Image Code	Well-being as a Perception of Basic Life Function	Gender	Student Representing Mental Imagery	
			f	%
18	Breath	1m	1	1.7
32	Food	2f	2	3.4

When the mental images forming the theme of goodness as the perception of basic life function are analysed, it can be said that 3 secondary school students see goodness as a basic concept that must exist in life and ensures the continuity of life.

Some examples of mental images created for the concept of well-being as a perception of basic life function are given below.

"Goodness is like breath. Because while breath enables people to exist in life, goodness enables people to exist in society." (Male, secondary school student)

"Goodness is like food. Because food fills one's stomach, but kindness fills one's soul." (Girl, secondary school student).

3.2.4. Goodness as the perception of purity and cleanliness

The theme of "Goodness as the Perception of Purity and Cleanliness" includes the concepts of newborn child and water that 2 female and 2 male students formed about the concept of goodness.

Table 5. Distribution of mental images formed regarding the concept of goodness as the perception of purity and cleanliness.

Mental Image Code	Goodness as a Perception of Purity and Cleanliness	Gender	Student Representing Mental Imagery	
			f	%
27	Water	2m 1f	3	5.1
33	Newborn Child	1f	1	1.7

When the mental images forming the theme of goodness as the perception of purity and cleanliness are analysed, it can be said that 4 secondary school students wanted to indicate that the nature of goodness is completely far from evil by likening the concept of goodness to concepts that are described as clean in every aspect.

Some examples of mental images created for the concept of goodness as the perception of purity and cleanliness are given below.

"Goodness is like water. Because goodness is clean and pure like water. There is no equivalent." (Girl, secondary school student)

"Goodness is like a newborn child. Because the newborn child knows no evil and makes everyone happy." (Girl, secondary school student).

3.2.5. Goodness as a perception of place of production

The theme of "Goodness as a Perception of Place of Production" includes the images created by 1 female and 1 male student in the study group.

Table 6. Distribution of mental images formed regarding the concept of goodness as a perception of place of production.

Mental Image Code	Favour as a Perception of Place of Production	Gender	Student Representing Mental Imagery	
			f	%
10	Factory	1f	1	1.7
28	Field	1m	1	1.7

When the mental images that constitute the theme of goodness as the perception of a place of production are examined, we can say that 2 students tried to explain the concept of goodness by likening it to a production centre that produces and multiplies and is multiplied to be enough for all people.

Examples of mental images created for the concept of favour as the perception of production place are given below.

"Favour is like a field. Because good or bad, you always get your reward." (Male, secondary school student)

"Goodness is like a factory. Because the more products you produce in a factory, the more you earn. The more favours you do among people, the better you get in return." (Female, secondary school student).

3.2.6. Goodness as an abstract concept perception

The theme of "Goodness as an Abstract Concept Perception" covers the mental images created by 5 female and 5 male students in the study.

Table 7. Distribution of mental images formed for the concept of goodness as an abstract concept perception.

Mental Image Code	Goodness as an Abstract Concept Perception	Gender	Student Representing Mental Imagery	
			f	%
12	Youth	1f	1	1.7
15	Life	2m 1f	3	5.1
16	Internet	1f	1	1.7
24	Love	1m 2f	3	5.1
30	Virus	1m	1	1.7
31	Investment	1m	1	1.7

When the mental images forming the theme of goodness as an abstract concept perception were analysed, 10 students tried to explain the concept of goodness with abstract concepts whose existence cannot be seen but which are felt by all of us.

Some examples of mental images related to the theme of goodness as an abstract concept perception are given below.

"Goodness is like youth. Because as you live, you feel yourself developed and renewed, and as you do good, you experience the reality and pleasure of world life." (Female, secondary school student)

"Favour is like an investment. Because if you help a person in a difficult situation, that person will help you when you are in a difficult situation in the future." (Male, secondary school student)

"Goodness is like a virus. Because the more the virus spreads, the more people it infects." (Male, secondary school student).

3.2.7. Goodness as a perception of order providing power element

The theme of "Goodness as the Perception of Order-Providing Power Factor" includes the mental images formed by 1 female and 1 male student in the study group towards the concept of goodness.

Table 8. Distribution of mental images formed regarding the concept of goodness as the perception of the power element providing order.

Mental Image Code	Goodness as a Perception of Order Providing Power Element	Gender	Student Representing Mental Imagery	
			f	%
14	Judge	1f	1	1.7
22	Police	1m	1	1.7

When the mental images that constitute the theme of goodness as the perception of order-providing power element are analysed, we can say that 2 students tried to explain goodness with the professions that should exist in society that provide order.

Examples of mental images created for the theme of favour as the perception of a power element providing order are given below.

"Goodness is like the police. Because it maintains order in society." (Male, secondary school student)

"Goodness is like a judge. Because the judge removes bad people from the society, and goodness removes bad people from the society." (Female, secondary school student).

3.2.8. Goodness as human perception

The theme of "Goodness as Human Perception" covers the mental images created by 6 female and 8 male students in the study group.

Table 9. Distribution of mental images formed regarding the concept of goodness as human perception.

Mental Image Code	Goodness as Human Perception	Gender	Student Representing Mental Imagery	
			f	%
5	Mum and Dad	5m 5f	10	17.2
6	Friend	2m	2	3.4
7	Ataturk	1f	1	1.7
20	Teacher	1m	1	1.7

When the mental images created about the concept of kindness as a human perception are analysed, it can be said that 14 students tried to explain the concept of kindness with people who are close to them, whom they consider very valuable to them and whom they have great love for.

Some examples of mental images created for the concept of goodness as a human perception are given below.

"Favour is like a parent. Because it is as valuable, important and loving as a parent." (Female, secondary school student)

"Goodness is similar to Atatürk. Because Atatürk, just like goodness, is a person who stands against evil and strives to prevent it." (Female, secondary school student).

3.2.9. Goodness as a perception of warming source

The theme of "Goodness as a Perception of Warming Source" includes the mental images created by 4 male students in the study group.

Table 10. Distribution of mental images formed regarding the concept of goodness as a source of warming.

Mental Image Code	Goodness as a Perception of Warming Source	Gender	Student Representing Mental Imagery	
			f	%
13	Sun	3m	3	5.1
26	Stove	1m	1	1.7

When the mental images created about the concept of kindness as a perception of warming source are examined, we can say that 4 students tried to explain the concept of kindness with beings that warm both themselves and their surroundings and give them energy.

Some examples of mental images created for the concept of goodness as a perception of warming source are given below.

"Favour is like a stove. Because the more you light the stove, the more you do good deeds, the warmer you get." (Male, secondary school student)

"Goodness is like the sun. Because, like the sun, goodness illuminates the world and makes people happy." (Male, secondary school student)

3.2.10. Goodness as the perception of natural assets

The theme of "Goodness as the Perception of Natural Entities" includes the mental images created by 5 female and 5 male students for the concept of goodness.

Table 11. Distribution of mental images formed regarding the concept of goodness as the perception of natural assets.

Mental Image Code	Goodness as a Perception of Natural Entities	Gender	Student Representing Mental Imagery	
			f	%
1	Tree	2m 3f	5	8.6
8	Cloud	1m	1	1.7
9	Flower	1m 1f	2	3.4
19	Forest	1m	1	1.7
23	Wind	1f	1	1.7

When the mental images created for the concept of goodness as the perception of natural entities were examined, 10 students tried to explain goodness with natural entities that it should exist spontaneously and naturally in society, such as entities that exist spontaneously in the natural environment.

Some examples of mental images created for the concept of goodness as the perception of natural beings are given below.

"Goodness is like a tree. Because trees provide shade where people can rest, and goodness is something that people who are tired of evil can rest." (Female, secondary school student)

"Goodness is like a flower. Because flowers beautify the world like goodness." (Male, secondary school student).

3.2.11. Goodness as a perception of materiality

The theme "Goodness as Material Perception" consists of the mental images developed by 2 female and 1 male students about the concept of goodness.

Table 12. Distribution of mental images formed regarding the theme of goodness as perception of materiality.

Mental Image Code	Goodness as a Perception of Materiality	Gender	Student Representing Mental Imagery	
			f	%
17	Profession	1f	1	1.7
21	Money	1m 1f	2	3.4

When the mental images created for the theme of goodness as a materialistic perception are examined, we can say that 3 students tried to associate and describe the concept of goodness with the logic of gain.

Some examples of mental images related to the theme of goodness as perception of materiality are given below.

"Favour is similar to a profession. Because in a job, you work to earn money, and when you do a favour, you do it to be rewarded." (Female, secondary school student)

"Favour is like money. Because the more it is, the happier it makes people." (Male, secondary school student)

3.3. Comparison of the Mental Images Formed for the Concept of "Goodness" Related to Gender Variable

In the table below, the study group in the research is compared in terms of gender variable. In Table 13, the mental images formed by female secondary school students and male secondary school students for the concept of goodness show differences. The distribution of these differences is also indicated in the table.

Table 13. Distribution of mental images formed regarding the theme of goodness as perception of materiality.

| Themes | Gender | | | | | |
| | Female Secondary School Student | | Male Secondary School Student | | Total | |
	f	%	f	%	f	%
1. The Concept of Goodness as a Perception of Togetherness and Trust Environment	1	1.7	1	1.7	2	3.4
2. The Concept of Well-Being as a Perception of Dependency	3	5.1	1	1.7	4	6.8
3. Well-being as a Perception of Basic Life Function	2	3.4	1	1.7	3	5.1
4. Purity and Cleanliness Goodness as Perception	2	3.4	2	3.4	4	6.8
5. Goodness as a Perception of Place of Production	1	1.7	1	1.7	2	3.4
6. Goodness as an Abstract Concept Perception	5	8.6	5	8.6	10	17.2
7. Favour as a Perception of Order-Providing Power Element	1	1.7	1	1.7	2	3.4
8. Goodness as Human Perception	6	10.3	8	13.7	14	24.1
9. Goodness as a Perception of Warming Source	0	0	4	6.8	4	6.8
10. Goodness as a Perception of Natural Entities	5	8.6	5	8.6	10	17.2
11. Goodness as a Perception of Materiality	2	3.4	1	1.7	3	5.1

4. Discussion and Conclusion

Within the scope of the research, it was tried to find out how secondary school students view the concept of well-being, how they shape it, and what importance it has in their lives. It can be said that the concept of goodness is generally perceived as good physical health and good mood. However, it can be stated that secondary school students perceive the concept of goodness as something that is not bad and is for the benefit of human beings. This situation can also be explained by the connection that individuals establish with social relations and moral values in their lives (Narvaez, 2006). Within the scope of the research, it was concluded that the students in the study group formed quite different images from each other and that male students approached the concept of goodness more emotionally, albeit with a slight difference. Similarly, Gilligan (1982)'s ethical care theory also supports these emotional differences of the students.

In general, when the well-being levels of individuals are evaluated, the proportion of positive emotions is more important than negative emotions (Diener & Lucas, 2000, cited in Yalçınkaya et al., 2019). Similar to this situation, for secondary school students, goodness and well-being match more with positive elements. Lyubomirsky et al. (2005) also revealed in their study that positive behaviours such as kindness and helpfulness increase an individual's subjective well-being. In this direction, it can be said that the students have high rates of likening the concept of goodness to elements that are seen positively by everyone. Many students in the study group tried to express that kindness protects, raises and develops people by associating kindness with parents, which is seen as a positive concept by almost everyone. Again, some of the students in the study group associated goodness with the tree, which evokes positive emotions in people, and emphasised that goodness is

very important and deep-rooted for human life. This metaphor shows that the individual constructs meaning through the symbolic bond he/she establishes with nature, and it may also be compatible with Lakoff and Johnson (1980)'s conceptual metaphor theory framework.

In Güleç (2021)'s study on the concepts of goodness and evil with primary school fourth graders, while primary school students expressed the concept of goodness with feelings, thoughts or concepts that are seen as moral, in this study with secondary school students, with the increase in age level - although positive mental images were more - students likened goodness to drugs, alcohol or different addictions. This result also shows that with the onset of adolescence; students start to develop a more aware and critical view of environmental risks (Steinberg, 2005). At the same time, the increase in the level of social awareness of this age group enables them to orientate towards a wider range of conceptualisations (Eccles, 1999).

Most of the students in the study group tried to explain the concept of goodness with values that should exist in human life and provide order and continuity in society. In the study of Yaşaroğlu and Biçer (2020), in which they examined the metaphorical perceptions of primary school students about the root values, it is similar to the result of the study that primary school students explained the root values of Honesty, Self-control, Respect and Benevolence with the concepts of goodness.

In line with the mental images created by the middle school students in the study group, it can be said that they tried to explain the concept of goodness with concepts that do not seem bad to them. In line with this result in Karasu (2018)'s study on philosophising with fourth-grade primary school students, it is

possible to see that students try to explain goodness as something that is not bad. In this context, it is seen that the difference of two or three years in the age range of the students does not cause very significant changes in the concepts.

As a result, students' intellectual structures about the concept of goodness are strongly influenced by family, school environment, social expectations and developmental levels. For this reason, it is important that value education is systematically included in curricula and that basic human concepts such as kindness are addressed from cognitive and affective aspects. Revealing the meanings that students attribute to concepts through mental images will contribute to more meaningful and effective foundations of educational policies.

5. Recommendations

In line with the results obtained in the study, the following suggestions can be developed:

In order to increase the awareness of secondary school students about the concept of kindness and to develop their thoughts about this concept, in-class or out-of-class social activities can be organised through implicit learning. These activities can be enriched with practices such as volunteering activities, in-group cooperation activities, drama, story completion and empathy-based workshops. In particular, teacher-guided activities that will enable the modelling of goodness behaviour can contribute to the positive development of students' mental images.

Teachers can focus more on these concepts and ensure their continuity in order to reduce misconceptions in students and to ensure that the concepts that should exist in terms of society are fully perceived by students in order to raise conscious and socially beneficial students. Teachers can be supported to create cognitive and affective awareness in students through in-class discussions, story analyses, metaphor studies and activities based on peer interaction.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

The study protocol was approved by the Social and Human Sciences Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee of İnönü University (Decision number: E.673721).

Conflict of Interest

The authors have no conflict of interest to declare.

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