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Moral and citizenship educational goals in values education: A cross-cultural study of Swedish and Turkish student teachers' preferences

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HIGHLIGHTS

- Turkish student teachers were more morally committed and eclectic than Swedish student teachers.
- Women were more morally committed than men in the Swedish student teacher sample.
- Gender difference in ethics of care was only found among Swedish student teachers.
- Swedish student teachers more often displayed pure critical-progressive goal preferences.
- Turkish student teachers more often displayed traditional-conservative and critical-progressive hybrid goal preferences.

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the present study was to examine Swedish and Turkish student teachers' moral educational and citizenship educational goal preferences in values education. The participants were 198 Swedish and 190 Turkish student teachers. While Turkish student teachers seemed to be more morally committed and eclectic than Swedish student teachers, hypothesized gender differences could only be found in the Swedish sample. Whereas there was no difference in their commitment towards critical-progressive goals, Turkish student teachers expressed a stronger commitment to traditional-conservative goals than Swedish student teachers.

1. Introduction

Values education can be defined as the aspect of educational practice in which moral or political values — as well as norms, dispositions, and skills grounded in those values — are mediated to or learned by students (Aspin, 2000; Jones, 2009; Lovat, Toomey, & Clement, 2010; Stephenson, Ling, Burman, & Cooper, 1998; Taylor, 1994, 2000; Thornberg, 2008). In this study, we use the term values education in line with Taylor (1994, 2006) as an overarching concept that includes concepts such as moral education, character education, ethics education, civic education, and citizenship

education. As shown in a survey of 26 European countries (Taylor, 1994), the scope of values education is often extensive and includes a number of themes, many of which overlap and are closely related to the historical and ideological evolution of the respective countries. Examples of identified themes include moral, religious, civic, democratic, national, personal, and social goals and issues. Overall, values education consists of two more-or-less integrated educational goals that influence: (a) students' *moral development* into informed, committed, active, responsible and reflective moral agents; and (b) students' *civic socialization* into informed, committed, active, responsible and reflective citizens (Halstead & Pike, 2006; Orlenius & Bigsten, 2006). The former goal usually falls under the domain of *moral education*; it is associated with moral philosophy (particularly normative ethics) and the psychological field of moral development. The later goal usually falls under the domain of *citizenship education* and is associated with political

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science, sociology, political philosophy, and the field of socialization.

According to Kymlicka (2002) there is a fundamental continuity between moral philosophy and political philosophy, as moral philosophy sets the background and the constraints for political philosophy. Normative political philosophy refers to ideas and theories of social justice, human rights, citizenship, and the good society, which can be understood as applications or expressions of moral values such as ideas of, for example, the principles of justice, equality, the common good, duties, utility, welfare, virtues, solidarity, social contracts, and rights. There is thus also continuity between moral education and citizenship education. In Sanger and Osguthorpe (2005) framework for understanding the underpinnings of approaches to moral education, the beliefs or preferences of teachers and student teachers regarding moral educational goals can be related to the concept of *moral assumptions* and — more specifically — to its sub-concept *normative assumptions*, which addresses what is good, right, caring or virtuous. Any given approach to moral education "must make or imply some assumptions about the nature or scope of morality in order to refer to *moral* education at all" (p. 64). Therefore, to better understand everyday values education in terms of both moral education and citizenship education, it is crucial to examine and make explicit teachers' normative assumptions, cognitive representations, personal epistemologies or educational goals concerning values education.

In their case study, Brownlee et al. (2012) found patterns of relationships between teachers' personal epistemologies for moral education and their pedagogies for moral education. Such personal epistemologies or normative assumptions could thus be transformed into moral educational goals that motivate teaching practice in moral education. According to the cognitive view of motivation (Fuente Arias, 2004), the term *goals* refers to cognitive representations, or personal, subjective conceptions or 'theories' about the purposes of a certain practice, activity, action, or achievement. They show stability as well as contextual sensitivity. In the field of education, Rich and Almozlino (1999) define *schooling or educational goals* as "the broad aims or purposes of education that teachers hold for their students" (p. 616). They also refer to Lortie (1975), who formulated them as "what teachers seek to attain in their classwork work" (p. 109). Teachers — and student teachers as well, when they consider their forthcoming teaching practice — might hold different educational goals across different domains. Examining goals that people hold is important because these goals motivate and guide their actions (Fuente Arias, 2004; Kaplan & Maehr, 2007; Schunk, Pintrich, & Meece, 2008). Thus the educational goals of teachers and student teachers, in their current or forthcoming work in values education, will function as cognitive representations that motivate and guide their work in this domain.

2. Aim and hypotheses

The aim of the present study was to examine Swedish and Turkish student teachers' moral educational and citizenship educational goal preferences in values education. *Moral educational goal preferences* refers to the morals that the student teachers in the present study wanted their future students to learn or develop as an outcome of their forthcoming practice in moral education. We intended to examine their moral educational goal preferences by measuring their proximity to virtue ethics, deontological ethics, consequential ethics, and ethics of care as normative educational goals in moral education. Because of measurement reasons, we excluded deontological ethics as moral educational goals in the study (with some exceptions; see below). *Citizenship educational*

goals refers to how student teachers want their future students to approach the moral and political values and norms in society as an outcome of their forthcoming practice in citizenship education. We intended to examine the citizenship educational goal preferences of student teachers by measuring their proximity to traditional, conservative approaches as well as to critical-liberal approaches (we merged liberal-progressive and critical goals into one variable; see below) as normative educational goals in citizenship education.

Regarding the moral educational goal preferences of student teachers, we formed two hypotheses. First, we hypothesized that Swedish student teachers would consider virtue ethics as a less important goal than the ethics of care and consequential ethics. Second, we hypothesized that Turkish student teachers would consider virtue ethics as more important in comparison with Swedish student teachers. Other possible cross-cultural differences regarding moral educational goal preferences were given an exploratory examination.

Regarding citizenship educational goal preferences, we again formed two hypotheses. First, we hypothesized that Swedish student teachers considered critical-liberal goals as more important than traditional, conservative goals. Second, we hypothesized that Turkish student teachers would attach greater importance to traditional, conservative goals than Swedish student teachers would. Other possible cross-cultural differences regarding citizenship educational goal preferences were given an exploratory examination.

Finally, we also tested a hypothesis about gender differences, separately within the Swedish and Turkish samples. We hypothesized that, compared with male student teachers, female student teachers would consider ethics of care to be a more important moral educational goal. Other possible gender differences were given an exploratory examination.

3. Values education in Sweden and Turkey

After the Second World War, progressive ideals of democracy and democratic citizenship education — in parallel with scientific ideals of rationality and objectivity — challenged the previous traditional, conservative approach of values education in Sweden. Progressivism and liberal democracy strongly influenced educational policies and ideals in Swedish teacher training programs and in the school system. The ultimate aim of values education became the realization of the political ideas of democracy, equality, and social justice (Hartman, 2005; Orlenius, 2001; Svingby, 1994). As a part of the progressive movement in Sweden, schools must apply democratic working forms in everyday school life in order to prepare students for active participation in society (Lindström, 2013). Furthermore, there have been critical movements in politics and education in Sweden that problematized social injustice, cultural reproduction, gender socialization, marginalization of minorities, and heteronormativity. These are based on political, societal and educational critical analyses advocated in critical pedagogy and what is called 'norm-critical pedagogy', aimed at getting students to be aware of, to scrutinize, and to challenge: culturally norms that are taken for granted; how particular norms influence our perceptions, attitudes, and actions; how they influence our views of people and contribute to social injustice, discrimination, oppression, and harassment; and privileges and positions, including one's own (e.g., Lundberg & Werner, 2013; Martinsson & Reimer, 2008).

The schools in Turkey must all be national, secular and modern, in accordance with the Turkish Basic Law of National Education No. 1739 (MoNE, 1973). This law has been heavily influenced by progressivism, human rights, and Western democratic values (Stanley, 2013). The aim of education in Turkey is to maintain democratic values, which address a commitment to collective solidarity

(Salmoni, 2004). A constructivist view of learning, and skills such as critical thinking, communication, and problem-solving are emphasized in Turkish primary curricula. At the same time, the aims of Turkish curriculum include getting students to attach importance to national, moral, ethical, historical, cultural, social, and esthetical values. The schools should strengthen national emotions and thoughts, and influence students' development of tolerance, affection, respect, peace, benevolence, truthfulness, righteousness, justice, open-mindedness, patriotism, and obedience to rules, as well as encouraging cleanliness and willingness to protect and develop their cultural heritage (Demirel, 2009). Furthermore, there have been more recent changes in the Turkish schools' curriculum of the religious culture and morality toward more conservative values and religionization of education as a result of the growing islamization of the society and politics in Turkey (Kaya, 2015).

Western cultures (such as Sweden) tend to emphasize personal needs, attitudes, unique personalities, and individual beliefs and values, as well as focus on developing the internal self. In contrast, Eastern cultures "support development of larger units including villages, work communities, religious groups, and the nation as a whole" (Stanley, 2013, p. 44), resulting in a stronger emphasis on collectivism, conformism, traditionalism, and patriotism. Members of Eastern cultures tend to favor cultural values over individual values. Although Turkey is a mix of East and West (Ersoy, 2010; Stanley, 2013), the Eastern notion of collectivism must be recognized as an important influence on teachers and schooling in Turkey (Stanley, 2013), and in a way that differentiates Turkish schools from Swedish schools. In addition, although there has been a clear influence from progressivism and constructivism, classrooms in Turkish schools are still generally teacher-centered (Stanley, 2013). Nevertheless, it is important to recognize that the notion of individualism/collectivism has been criticized to downplay the complexities, diversities, and differences within cultures (Wainryb & Recchia, 2014).

Anyway, whereas the values education movement in Sweden leans toward liberal-progressive and critical approaches, the values education movement in Turkey emphasizes both conservative and liberal-progressive approaches. Furthermore, morality has been a concept avoided in Swedish school policies, curricula and practice, and has actually been replaced with the vague and nonacademic concept "*värdegrund*" (meaning approximately "value foundation"; cf., Orlenius, 2001; Thornberg, 2004). Swedish teachers have uncertain and mixed feelings toward values education (e.g., Thornberg, 2008), whereas Turkish teachers tend to consider moral education as essential and want to deal with it in their classes (Temli, Şen, & Akar, 2011). According to Turkish teachers, moral and character education should be a part of the formal education, included in all classes. Turkish teachers emphasize societal and global values, and link morality to *virtues* (LePage et al., 2011).

Taking into account the stronger focus on character and virtues in the Turkish school system as compared to Sweden, we hypothesized a stronger preference towards virtue ethics as a moral educational goal among Turkish student teachers as compared to Swedish student teachers. We also assumed virtue ethics would be less preferred as a moral educational goal among Swedish student teachers compared to feminist ethics of care and consequential ethics. This is with reference to the absence of the concept of character education (often considered as an outdated concept, historically replaced with a progressive and democratic educational discourse; see Orlenius 2001), and the movements of critical pedagogy and feminist and post-structural criticism of gendered power structures and heteronormativity in Swedish teacher education, school policy, and the political debate. Furthermore, because collectivism and patriotism are much more strongly emphasized in

the Turkish school system than in the Swedish, we hypothesized that Turkish student teachers would be more committed to traditional, conservative preferences concerning citizenship educational goals as compared to Swedish student teachers. In addition, we assumed Swedish student teachers would consider critical and progressive goals as more important than traditional, conservative goals.

4. Morality in values education

According to the moral philosopher Rachels (1999), *morality* deals with how we ought to live and why, and *moral philosophy* is the attempt to achieve a systematic understanding of the nature of morality. *Normative ethics*, in turn, is a field within moral philosophy that is occupied with theorizations and qualified rationales about how to judge human conduct to be good or bad, right or wrong, including reasons to show the correctness or plausibility of such judgments (Fox & DeMarco, 2001). Four influential theoretical frameworks within normative ethics are: virtue ethics, deontological ethics, consequential ethics, and ethics of care. According to *virtue ethics*, with roots in the ideas of the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle (1962) on virtues and practical wisdom ("phronesis"), ethics refers to character traits that make a person a good person. A virtue, in turn, is a character trait manifested in habitual action that is considered good or admirable. Different proponents of virtue ethics present slightly different lists of good or desirable virtues. Common suggestions are benevolence, compassion, honesty, courage, self-control or moderation, justice, generosity, truthfulness, righteousness, loyalty, friendliness, and good judgment (see also Carr, 2008, 2011; Statman, 1997). Communitarianism is a neoconservative approach that emphasizes traditional values, character-building and shared virtues based on and legitimized by a shared tradition, a community and a culture (McIntyre, 1981). The individual citizens should acquire the virtues prescribed and provided by the society or culture in order for the society to hold together and flourish.

Deontological ethics (from the Greek *den*, "duty") states that there exist moral duties, rules or principles as a basis for moral reasoning and judgment as regards how to act and how not to act (Alexander, 2003; Davis, 1991; Fox & DeMarco, 2001). Moral principles could be (a) prohibitions of certain kinds of actions, (b) duties to perform certain kinds of actions, or (c) permissions or justifications for certain kinds of actions (Fox & DeMarco, 2001). Moral principles or rules cannot be determined in an arbitrary manner or by referring to tradition or authority; they must be constructed according to rational procedures. To decide what can be elevated to universal moral duties or rules, the eighteenth-century German philosopher Immanuel Kant formulated what he called the 'categorical imperative' by asking: Which maxims or fundamental principles can be applied to all people without assuming anything specific about individuals' desires, interests or social relations? Typical suggestions for moral principles are (a) do not harm others or yourself, (b) act in accordance with principle(s) of justice, and (c) do not violate the freedom of others (cf., Fox & DeMarco, 2001). Deciding how to act in accordance with universal moral principles in each situation, people must be aware of and accept these moral principles and make moral judgments based on logical, impartial, rational and objective moral reasoning free from biases and subjective emotions.

Consequential ethics refers to ethical theories that argue the consequences of actions for oneself and others must be considered when reasoning and deciding morally, and to choose the right action on this basis. Different theories of consequential ethics exist; the most famous of them is utilitarianism, which states that there is only one basic moral principle: the utilitarian principle, which

argues that in each situation we should choose the action that maximizes the welfare for all those affected by our choice of action. An action is right only if it has better consequences than other alternative actions. Considering the relation between one's own welfare and that of others, utilitarianism requires strict impartiality and not letting self-interests take precedence (Brandt, 1979; Lyons, 2001; Mill, 2002).

According to *ethics of care*, morality cannot be reduced to logical reasoning and abstract generalizations detached from feelings, empathy and personal relationships. Ethics are not a mathematical problem to be solved, but a question of how we take care of each other and the formation of caring relations. The ethics of care emerged as a feminist critique of the rational deontological ethics that omitted emotions, empathy and personal relations as bases for moral actions (Gilligan, 1982; Larrabee, 1993; Noddings, 1984). Instead of meeting the criteria of principled thinking, in this position moral judgments are oriented toward issues of responsibility and care embedded in social relationships, and in which life is seen as dependent on relationships (Gilligan, 1982). The ethics of care revolves around responsibility and relationships rather than rights and rules; it is contextualized and thus tied to concrete circumstances rather than being formal and abstract and it is best expressed as an activity — "activity of care" — and not as a set of principles (Tronto, 1993, p. 242). This morality deals with the ability to achieve intimacy, maintain relationships, and act as caretakers — moral agents who are empathic, connected and attached rather than separated and detached individuals — and based on social relationships, nonviolence, and harmony (Brabeck, 1993).

5. Citizenship in values education

Different general approaches to values education, based on different views of citizenship and socialization into society, are described in the literature. The *traditional* or *conservative approach* emphasizes adult transmission of the morals of society (Durkheim, 1961); students are seen as passive recipients of their socialization (Jones, 2009). The aim is to directly and systematically shape the behavior of students and to cultivate their character (Arthur, 2014), to teach and discipline them to conform to the dominant values, the legitimate rules, and the authority of society, and to prepare them to fit in and follow the conventions of the social, civic, religious or local community (Jones, 2009).

The *progressive* or *liberal approach* emphasizes students' active construction of moral and political meaning and a commitment to principles of fairness, as well as concern for the welfare of others through active participation in deliberative discussions and a democratic decision-making process (Dewey, 1916; Gutmann, 1987; Power, Higgins, & Kohlberg, 1989). Democracy, pluralism, equality, human rights, and rational debates and negotiations are central (Halstead & Pike, 2006). The distinction between traditional-conservative and progressive-liberal approaches has been criticized, however, for simplifying the field (e.g., Sanger & Osguthorpe, 2005); educational programs or approaches can be a hybrid between them (Berkowitz, 2011; Narvaez, 2006).

In addition, a third approach can be identified: a *critical approach*, which claims that moral and political influence in schools — especially in the disciplinary practices and a hidden curriculum — can be questioned, and has far-reaching effects without being noticed (Bernstein, 2000; Giroux & Penna, 1983; Jones, 2009). Jones (2009) actually makes a distinction between critical and postmodern orientations to values education. A critical orientation aims to engage students more actively in social issues and actions, getting them to identify and question values and practices that are unjust or unsustainable, and to bring about a more peaceful, just and sustainable world through their actions. The postmodern

orientation involves a critique of notions of truth and reality. The educational goal is "to develop in students a critical oppositional position in relation to the dominant order, self-reflexivity and awareness of partiality" (Jones, 2009, p. 44). In the current paper, we label both critical and postmodern approaches as a critical approach. Research within a critical approach focuses on issues such as how to uncover, problematize, deconstruct, and counter heteronormativity, oppressive gender norms, and social injustice, in schools as well as in society and the world in general (e.g., Boylan & Woolsey, 2015; Collier, Bos, & Sandfort, 2015; Perumal, 2015).

6. Method

6.1. Participants

The study's participants comprised 388 student teachers (283 women and 105 men) in the first year of their teacher education training program. The Swedish sample consisted of 198 student teachers (147 women and 51 men), ranging from 18 to 35 years old (M = 21.5; SD = 2.6; of the student teachers, 93% were between 18 and 25 years old). Of the Swedish student teachers, 37% intended to become elementary school teachers (class teachers who teach children between 7 and 12 years of age), and 63% intended to become secondary-school teachers (school subject teachers who teach teenagers between 13 and 19 years of age). The Turkish sample comprised 190 student teachers (136 women and 54 men), ranging from 17 to 27 years old (M = 18.7; SD = 1.2; of the student teachers, 98% were between 18 and 25 years old). Of the Turkish student teachers, 69% intended to become middle school teachers (teaching students between 10 and 13 years of age) and 31% intended to become teachers who teach from primary school to high school (i.e., teaching students between 6 and 17 years of age).

6.2. Procedure and measures

The participants were given a questionnaire to fill out in one of their ordinary classroom settings. They responded anonymously to the questionnaire, which started by asking a few background questions including gender (female = 1, male = 2), age, and teacher category (elementary teachers or secondary teachers in the Swedish sample; primary, middle or high school teachers in the Turkish sample), followed by a moral educational goal scale and a citizenship educational goal scale developed by the two researchers — one of whom is from Sweden and the other from Turkey. As concluded by Kaplan and Maehr (2007) in their review, assessing goal orientations with inventories using Likert type scales is common, as is the case in the current study.

6.2.1. Moral educational goal scale

An 11-item scale was developed to measure student teachers' moral educational goal preferences in values education. The content of the scale was drawn from the literature of normative ethics (e.g., Becker & Becker, 2001; Fox & DeMarco, 2001; Rachels, 1999; Singer, 1991; Sterba, 2002). The participants were asked to respond to the statement, "My opinion is that, through values education, students in school should learn …", which was followed by eleven statements designed to tap four goals (2 items represented virtue ethics, 3 items represented deontological ethics, 3 items represented consequential ethics, 3 items represented ethics of care). Participants rated each item on a five-point scale (1 = "Strongly disagree", 2 = "Disagree", 3 = "Neither agree nor disagree", 4 = "Agree", 5 = "Strongly agree"). A factor structure of the moral educational goal items was analyzed by an exploratory principal component factor analysis of the Swedish sample using maximum likelihood. Because we failed to come up with a four-

factor model we excluded the most problematic factor − the three deontological ethical items − and computed a new exploratory principal component factor analysis using maximum likelihood with the remaining 8-item scale. The result, rotated using Varimax with Kaiser normalization with three fixed factors, resulted in a model that explained 69% of the variance (see Table 1). The three remaining factors were ethics of care (3 items, Cronbach's α = .77), virtue ethics (2 items, Spearman−Brown coefficient = .70), and consequential ethics (3 items, Cronbach's α = .63). KMO was .82, which indicated a very good structure of factors. An exploratory factor analysis was replicated to analyze the Turkish data, but failed to come up with a three-factor model. Instead all items loaded into one factor due to higher inter-correlations between the items (cf., Table 4). However, with reference to the field of normative ethics and supported by the Swedish sample, we decided to treat the scale as a three-factor scale in the current study. The reliability of each of the three factors was slightly higher in the Turkish sample as compared with the Swedish sample: ethics of care (Cronbach's α = .78), virtue ethics (Spearman−Brown coefficient = .79), and consequential ethics (Cronbach's α = .71).

As can be seen in Table 1, the subscale of ethics of care (Factor 1) represented the capacity for developing caring relationships (Gilligan, 1982; Noddings, 1984), and in these concrete circumstances feeling empathy and showing concerns for the people whom the moral agent is connected with (Brabeck, 1993; Tronto, 1993). The subscale of virtue ethics (Factor 2) represented the development of moral virtues in terms of fine and admirable traits, desirable habits, and good character (Aristotle, 1962; Carr, 2008, 2011; Statman, 1997). The subscale of consequentialist ethics (Factor 3) represented the moral capacity of considering, in every situation, which effects different possible actions have on others' welfare and to choose the alternative action that maximizes the welfare for all those who are influenced by one's action (Brandt, 1979; Lyons, 2001; Mill, 2002). The three items that were designed to measure the moral educational goal preference toward deontological ethics in the original scale were excluded from the final scale ("Universal moral principles and always live by them", "To choose, in every situation, the alternative action that reflects principles of justice", "Moral principles and to apply them in different situations"; Cronbach's α = .67). However, we still conducted three separate t-tests considering deontological ethics to make the findings less incomplete from a moral point of view.

6.2.2. Citizenship educational goal scale

A 10-item scale was developed to measure the preferences of student teachers regarding citizenship educational goals in values education. The content of the scale was drawn from the values educational literature that makes distinctions between different political approaches (e.g., Goodman, 2000; Jones, 2009; Narvaez, 2006; Solomon, Watson, & Battistich, 2001). The participants were asked to respond to the statement, "My opinion is that, through values education, students in school should learn …", which was followed by ten statements designed to tap three goals (5 items tapped a conservative goal, 3 items tapped a progressive goal, and 2 items tapped a critical goal). Participants rated each item on a five-point scale (1 = "Strongly disagree", 2 = "Disagree", 3 = "Neither agree nor disagree", 4 = "Agree", 5 = "Strongly agree"). The factor structure of the citizenship educational goal items was analyzed by an exploratory principal component factor analysis of the Swedish sample using maximum likelihood. The outcome, rotated using Varimax with Kaiser normalization, resulted in two factors with eigenvalues above 1, which together explained 56% of the variance (see Table 2). The progressive goal items and the critical goal items were merged into one factor called the critical-progressive goal preferences. To be sure that this two-factor model was superior to a three-factor model we also computed an exploratory principal component factor analysis using maximum likelihood, rotated using Varimax with Kaiser normalization and with three fixed factors, but failed to come up with a three-factor model due to double loadings. The KMO for the two-factor model was .79, which indicated a good structure of factors. The two factors were traditional-conservative goal preferences (5 items, Cronbach's α = .82), and critical-progressive goal preferences (5 items, Cronbach's α = .77).

A replicated exploratory principal component factor analysis of the Turkish data using maximum likelihood analysis supported the two-factor model. The result, rotated using Varimax with Kaiser normalization, resulted in two factors with eigenvalues above 1, which together explained 66% of the variance (see Table 3). The KMO was .89, which indicated a very good structure of factors. The reliability of each of the two factors was once again slightly higher in the Turkish sample as compared with the Swedish sample: traditional-conservative goal preferences (Cronbach's α = .86), and critical-progressive goal preferences (Cronbach's α = .86). As can be seen in Tables 2 and 3, the subscale of traditional-conservative goal preferences (Factor 1) represented an adult transmission of the morals of society, and with the educational goals of compliance with and cultivation and maintenance of traditional values and morals that hold the society together (Arthur, 2014; Durkheim, 1961; also see Jones, 2009). The subscale of critical-progressive goal preferences (Factor 2) covered both liberal-progressive and critical goals in terms of the commitment to principles of fairness and active participation in democratic and deliberative processes (Dewey, 1916; Gutmann, 1987; Halstead & Pike, 2006; Power et al., 1989), the capacity to be norm-critical and to expose and counteract discriminations, oppressions, and social injustices, and the commitment to work to change the society into a more egalitarian and just society (Boylan & Woolsey, 2015; Collier et al., 2015; Halstead & Pike, 2006; Jones, 2009; Perumal, 2015).

Table 1
Exploratory factor analysis of items of moral educational goals in values education (Swedish sample).

Items	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
3. To develop caring relations with other people	.74		
8. To feel empathy and show concern for people they share their life with	.84		
10. To care for, empathize with, listen to, and be sensitive to others' feelings	.61		
4. To develop fine and admirable personality traits		.87	
6. To develop desirable habits and a good character		.73	
2. To judge how right and wrong an action is by consider its consequences			.77
7. To consider, in every situation, what effects different possible behaviors have on others' physical, psychological, social or economical welfare, and choose the behavior that has a good impact as possible			.59
11. To choose, in every situation, the alternative action that maximizes the welfare for all those who are influenced by one's action			.70

Table 2
Exploratory factor analysis of items of citizenship educational goals in values education (Swedish sample).

Items	Factor 1	Factor 2
1. To comply with the values and norms derived from the traditions of our country	.80	
2. To defend the values and norms that hold our society together	.73	
4. To internalize the morals and ethics borne by our history and culture	.77	
7. To internalize the morality based on and borne by religion and tradition	.82	
10. To defend and maintain traditional beliefs about morality, family, work, and honor	.69	
3. To challenge and critically scrutinize widespread social norms that oppress groups in the society based on gender, ethnicity, social class, sexuality, etc.		.64
5. To participate freely and equitably in democratic conversations in joint searching for the better arguments for how we best should solve problems, conflicts or dilemmas		.82
6. To expose and counteract social injustices in our society		.80
8. To understand that ethics and morals always have to be subjected to reconsiderations, changes, and critical discussions		.67
9. To work to change our society into a more egalitarian and just society		.68

Table 3
Exploratory factor analysis of items of citizenship educational goals in values education (Turkish sample).

Items	Factor 1	Factor 2
1. To comply with the values and norms derived from the traditions of our country	.82	
2. To defend the values and norms that hold our society together	.75	
4. To internalize the morals and ethics borne by our history and culture	.71	
7. To internalize the morality based on and borne by religion and tradition	.81	
10. To defend and maintain traditional beliefs about morality, family, work, and honor	.72	
3. To challenge and critically scrutinize widespread social norms that oppress groups in the society based on gender, ethnicity, social class, sexuality, etc.		.70
5. To participate freely and equitably in democratic conversations in joint searching for the better arguments for how we best should solve problems, conflicts or dilemmas		.76
6. To expose and counteract social injustices in our society		.71
8. To understand that ethics and morals always have to be subjected to reconsiderations, changes, and critical discussions		.67
9. To work to change our society into a more egalitarian and just society		.76

Table 4
Correlations between all variables.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Sex	−	.06	−.25***	−.14	−.19**	−.19**	.06
2. Age	.13	−	−.08	−.01	.03	.01	.09
3. Virtue ethics	.03	−.09	−	.43***	.56***	.31***	.25***
4. Consequential ethics	.01	.02	.68***	−	.56***	.20**	.39***
5. Ethics of care	.01	−.04	.73***	.73***	−	.17*	.50***
6. Traditional-conservative	−.05	−.05	.58***	.55***	.53***	−	−.06
7. Critical-progressive	.04	.04	.63***	.67***	.66***	.59***	−

Note: Swedish participants are presented above the diagonal and Turkish participants are presented below the diagonal. Sex: 1 = female; 2 = male. $^*p < .05$; $^{**}p < .01$; $^{***}p < .001$.

6.3. Calculating effect size

When we performed independent t-tests and ANOVAs, Cohen's d was calculated as effect size based on means and standard deviations. In repeated ANOVAs, the partial eta square was first calculated as effect size for the main effect. In the post-hoc tests, Cohen's d_z was calculated from t-value using a dependent t-test and N (see Lakens, 2013). When repeated ANOVAs with only two compared variables have been computed, both the partial eta square and Cohen's d_z have been reported to make comparing effect sizes across the outcomes easier.

7. Results

7.1. Inter-correlations

The correlations between the variables are presented separately for the Swedish sample and the Turkish sample in Table 4. The results of correlational analyses yielded a number of significant associations. Among Swedish student teachers, women rated virtue

ethics, ethics of care, and traditional-conservative objectives more important in values education than men. Gender was not associated with any variables in the Turkish sample. The three moral educational goal preferences (virtue ethics, consequential, and ethics of care) were inter-correlated, and these inter-correlations were stronger in the Turkish sample. Among the preferences for the three moral educational goals in the Swedish data, while ethics of care was most strongly associated with the critical-progressive goal preferences, virtue ethics were the most strongly associated with the traditional-conservative goal preferences. All three moral educational goal preferences, however, were significantly correlated with both citizenship educational goal preferences. Among the Turkish student teachers, all three moral educational goal preferences were more strongly associated with both citizenship educational goal preferences, and these associations were strongest in relation to the critical-progressive goal preferences.

Furthermore, the traditional-conservative goal preferences and the critical-progressive goal preferences were uncorrelated in the Swedish sample but moderately correlated in the Turkish sample, which indicated that Turkish student teachers displayed hybrids

between traditional-conservative and critical-progressive approaches to values education to a greater extent than the Swedish student teachers. When using 4 as a cut-off value (i.e., the mean has to be 4.00 or higher), it was possible to categorize the student teachers into four groups − (a) those with high pure traditional-conservative goal preferences, (b) those with high pure critical-progressive goal preferences, (c) those with high traditional-conservative and critical-progressive goal preferences, and (d) those with low citizenship educational goal preferences (i.e., less than 4.00 in both variables). In the Swedish sample, 2% displayed high pure traditional-conservative goal preferences, 56% displayed high pure critical-progressive goal preferences, 14% displayed high on both the traditional-conservative goal and critical-progressive goal preferences, and 29% displayed low citizenship educational goal preferences. In the Turkish sample, 15% displayed high pure traditional-conservative goal preferences, 20% displayed high pure critical-progressive goal preferences, 47% displayed high goal preferences on both the traditional-conservative goal and critical-progressive goal, and 18% displayed low citizenship educational goal preferences.

7.2. Within-group ratings of moral and citizenship educational goals

A series of repeated one-way ANOVAs for each cultural sample was performed to examine the preferences of Swedish and Turkish student teachers in moral and citizenship educational goals. Mauchly's test in the first ANOVA, which examined moral educational goal preferences in the Swedish sample, indicated that the assumption of sphericity had been violated ($\chi^2 = 27.65$, $p = .000$, $\varepsilon = 88$); degrees of freedom were therefore corrected using Greenhouse-Geisser estimates of sphericity. The results show a significant main effect ($F(1.77, 348.19) = 70.72$, $p = .000$, partial $\eta^2 = .26$). Post hoc tests using Bonferroni correction revealed that among the Swedish student teachers, ethics of care ($M = 4.30$, $MD = .59$) was significantly rated as the most important goal compared to virtue ethics ($M = 3.73$, $MD = .85$, $p = .000$; Cohen's $d_z = .80$) and consequential ethics ($M = 3.82$, $MD = .70$, $p = .000$, Cohen's $d_z = .79$). No significant difference between virtue ethics and consequential ethics was found (for a bar graph of the mean differences, see Fig. 1).

Mauchly's test in the second ANOVA, which examined moral educational goal preferences in the Turkish sample, indicated that the assumption of sphericity had been violated ($\chi^2 = 6.09$, $p = .048$, $\varepsilon = .88$); degrees of freedom were therefore corrected using Huynh-Feldt estimates of sphericity. The results showed a significant main effect ($F(1.96, 370.06) = 36.75$, $p = .000$, partial $\eta^2 = .16$). Post hoc

tests using Bonferroni correction revealed that among the Turkish student teachers, virtue ethics ($M = 4.41$, $MD = .85$) was significantly rated as the most important goal compared to consequential ethics ($M = 4.02$, $MD = .81$, $p = .000$; Cohen's $d_z = .57$) and ethics of care ($M = 4.22$, $MD = .76$, $p = .000$; Cohen's $d_z = .31$). Moreover, Turkish student teachers rated ethics of care as a significantly more important goal than consequential ethics (Cohen's $d_z = .34$; for a bar graph of the mean differences, see Fig. 1).

The third ANOVA, which examined citizenship educational goal preferences in the Swedish sample, showed a significant main effect ($F(1, 197) = 180.12$, $p = .000$, partial $\eta^2 = .48$). Among the Swedish student teachers, critical-progressive goal preferences ($M = 4.13$, $MD = .59$) was significantly rated as more important than traditional-conservative goal preferences ($M = 3.16$, $MD = .80$, Cohen's $d_z = .95$). The fourth ANOVA, which examined citizenship educational goal preferences in the Turkish sample, showed a significant main effect ($F(1, 189) = 14.64$, $p = .000$, partial $\eta^2 = .07$). Also, among the Turkish student teachers, critical-liberal goal preferences ($M = 4.12$, $MD = .75$) was significantly rated as more important compared to traditional-conservative goal preferences, although the effect size was considerably lower compared to the Swedish sample ($M = 3.92$, $MD = .83$, Cohen's $d_z = .28$; for a bar graph of the mean differences, see Fig. 2).

7.3. Cross-cultural and gender differences

Mean differences between Swedish and Turkish student teachers were explored using a series of independent one-way ANOVAs. Compared with Swedish student teachers, Turkish student teachers expressed significantly higher rates of virtue ethics ($M_{Turk} = 4.41$, $SD_{Turk} = .85$, $M_{Swe} = 3.73$, $MD_{Swe} = .85$, $F(1, 386) = 61.23$, $p = .000$, Cohen's $d = .79$), and consequential ethics ($M_{Turk} = 4.02$, $SD_{Turk} = .81$, $M_{Swe} = 3.82$, $MD_{Swe} = .70$, $F(1, 386) = 7.36$, $p = .007$, Cohen's $d = .28$) as moral educational goal preferences. No significant cross-cultural difference was found in student teachers' rating of ethics of care as moral educational goal preferences (for a bar graph of the mean differences, see Fig. 1).

Even though we had to omit deontological ethics in the main analysis due to the exploratory factor analysis of the scale, we still conducted a separate t-test to examine whether there was a cross-cultural difference in our data. Compared with Swedish student teachers, Turkish student teachers expressed significantly higher rates of deontological ethics ($M_{Turk} = 4.06$, $SD_{Turk} = .74$, $M_{Swe} = 3.58$, $MD_{Swe} = .70$, $t = 6.46$, $p = .000$, Cohen's $d = .67$).

Furthermore, Turkish student teachers expressed a significantly stronger commitment to traditional-conservative goals than Swedish student teachers ($M_{Turk} = 3.92$, $SD_{Turk} = .83$, $M_{Swe} = 3.16$,
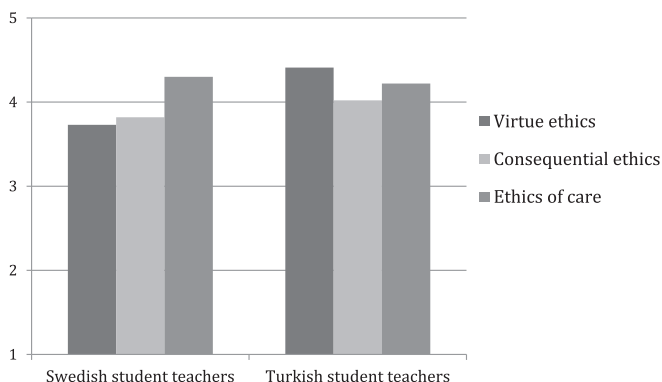

Fig. 1. Bar graph of the mean differences in moral educational goal preferences within and between the Swedish subsample and the Turkish subsample.
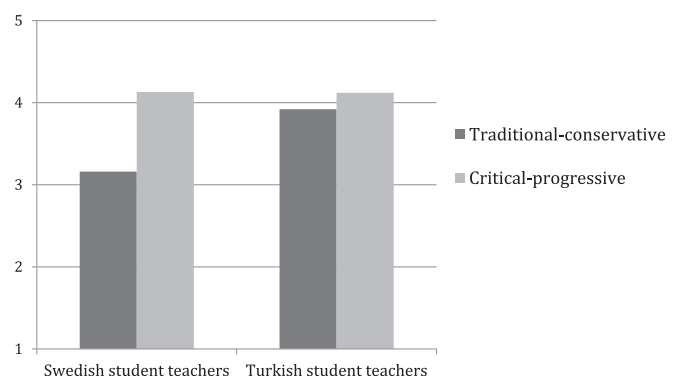

Fig. 2. Bar graph of the mean differences in citizenship educational goal preferences within and between the Swedish subsample and the Turkish subsample.

$MD_{Swe} = .80$, $F(1, 386) = 85.51$, $p = .000$, Cohen's $d = .94$). No significant cross-cultural difference was found in their commitment towards critical-progressive goals (for a bar graph of the mean differences, see Fig. 2).

Gender differences were explored within the two cultural samples using a series of independent one-way ANOVAs. Compared with Swedish male student teachers, Swedish female student teachers rated virtue ethics ($M_f = 3.86$, $SD_f = .80$, $M_m = 3.37$, $MD_m = .90$, $F(1, 196) = 12.97$, $p = .000$, Cohen's $d = .57$), and ethics of care ($M_f = 4.37$, $SD_f = .52$, $M_m = 4.12$, $MD_m = .73$, $F(1, 196) = 6.95$, $p = .009$, Cohen's $d = .39$) significantly higher as moral educational goals. No significant gender difference was found in Swedish student teachers' rating of consequential ethics ($M_f = 3.87$, $SD_f = .59$, $M_m = 3.65$, $MD_m = .93$). Among the Turkish student teachers, no significant gender difference was found when considering their rating of virtue ethics ($M_f = 4.39$, $SD_f = .85$, $M_m = 4.44$, $MD_m = .84$), ethics of care ($M_f = 4.22$, $SD_f = .75$, $M_m = 4.23$, $MD_m = .79$), and consequential ethics ($M_f = 4.02$, $SD_f = .85$, $M_m = 4.04$, $MD_m = .71$) (for a bar graph of the mean differences, see Fig. 3).

Furthermore, compared with Swedish male student teachers, Swedish female student teachers rated deontological ethics significantly higher as moral educational goals ($M_f = 3.66$, $SD_f = .58$, $M_m = 3.40$, $MD_m = .94$, $t = 2.23$, $p = .027$). The effect size however was low (Cohen's $d = .33$). Among the Turkish student teachers, no significant gender difference was found when considering their rating of deontological ethics ($M_f = 4.10$, $SD_f = .75$, $M_m = 3.94$, $MD_m = .72$).

Furthermore, Swedish female student teachers expressed a significantly stronger commitment to traditional-conservative goals than Swedish male student teachers ($M_f = 3.25$, $SD_f = .72$, $M_m = 2.89$, $MD_m = .97$, $F(1, 196) = 7.57$, $p = .006$, Cohen's $d = .41$). No significant gender difference was found in their commitment to critical-progressive goals ($M_f = 4.12$, $SD_f = .55$, $M_m = 4.19$, $MD_m = .69$). Among the Turkish student teachers, no significant gender difference was found when considering their ratings of traditional-conservative goals ($M_f = 3.95$, $SD_f = .84$, $M_m = 3.86$, $MD_m = .79$) and critical-progressive goals ($M_f = 4.10$, $SD_f = .76$, $M_m = 4.17$, $MD_m = .75$) (for a bar graph of the mean differences, see Fig. 4).

8. Discussion

Although teaching is a complex moral enterprise (Carr, 2011; Colnerud, 2006; Lovat et al., 2010; Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2009, 2011) and values education is inevitably embedded in teachers' work (Buzzelli & Johnston, 2002; Jackson, Boostrom, & Hansen, 1993; Lovat et al., 2010; Thornberg, 2009; Willemse, ten Dam, Geijsel, van Wessum, & Volman, 2015), there has still been very little research conducted in examining the preferences of teachers
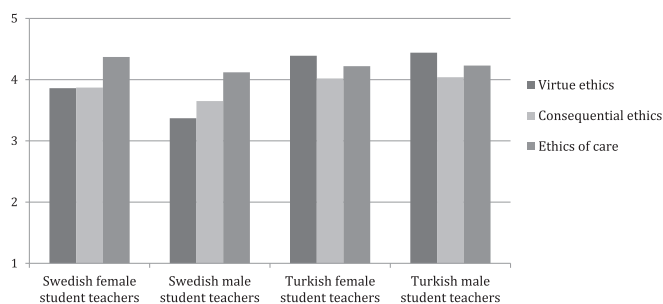
Fig. 3. Bar graph of the mean differences in moral educational goal preferences between female and male student teachers within the Swedish subsample and the Turkish subsample.
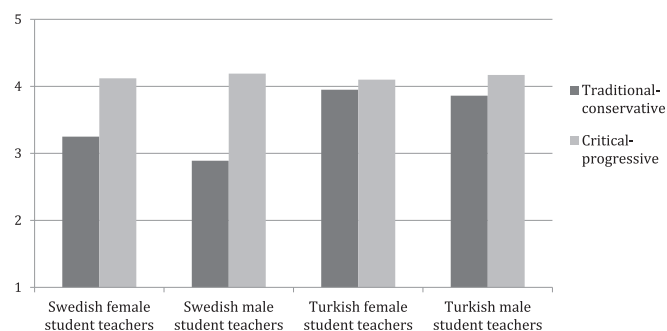
Fig. 4. Bar graph of the mean differences in citizenship educational goal preferences between female and male student teachers within the Swedish subsample and the Turkish subsample.

and student teachers in educational goals and the normative assumptions behind their practice in moral and citizenship education (for exceptions, see Brownlee et al., 2012; Powney et al., 1995; Stephenson et al., 1998; Thornberg, 2008; Thornberg & Oğuz, 2013). Previous studies have found that teachers display a lack of professional meta-language in the domains of teacher ethics and values education; they refer to their childhood, their parents, personal experiences and worldviews as a source of values and knowledge rather than theories and research in education, moral philosophy, philosophy of education, curriculum theory, moral psychology, sociology of education, political science, sociology of morality, and so on (Colnerud, 2001; Ohnstad, 2005; Powney et al., 1995; Temli et al., 2011; Thornberg, 2008; Thornberg & Oğuz, 2013). This could be explained, at least in part, by poor training in teacher ethics and values education, which has been shown to be a global problem in teacher education (Bergdahl, 2006; Frånberg, 2004, 2006; Sockett & LePage, 2002; Taylor, 1994). There is thus a need for increasing teachers' awareness of values education and its implicit presence in their practice (Willemse et al., 2015).

We investigated the preferences of first-year student teachers in moral and citizenship educational goals because of the significance of teachers' personal preferences and worldviews when articulating value preferences in values education. We examined the degree to which their personal moral assumptions about their forthcoming practice in values education are similar to the core assumptions of different normative perspectives regarding ethics and citizenship in schooling. It is important to recognize that we have not directly investigated their conceptual understanding of ethics and citizenship, but examined how close their goal preferences in values education are to different normative ethical perspectives and citizenship ideals. Nevertheless, their goal preferences might of course indicate — and thereby shed some light on — their underlying conceptual understanding of ethics and citizenship.

Moreover, the current study is the first to examine cross-cultural differences between Swedish and Turkish student teachers, as well as gender differences within both subgroups. We found that educational goals close to virtue ethics (Aristotle, 1962; Carr, 2008, 2011; Statman, 1997), deontological ethics (Fox & DeMarco, 2001), consequential ethics (Brandt, 1979; Lyons, 2001; Mill, 2002) and ethics of care (Gilligan, 1982; Larrabee, 1993; Noddings, 1984) were generally represented as moral educational goals among student teachers, even though some significant variation existed. As hypothesized, Turkish student teachers expressed a significantly stronger commitment to teaching virtue ethics than Swedish student teachers. Our findings thus supports LePage et al. (2011), who found that Turkish teachers linked morality to virtues, whereas the Swedish school system de-emphasizes virtues to a greater degree in favor of the political ideals of democracy, equality, human rights,

and social justice (Hartman, 2005; Orlenius, 2001; Svingby, 1994). Thus, character education (cf., Arthur, 2014) aimed at cultivating character traits that make students become moral persons (cf., Aristotle, 1962; Carr, 2008, 2011) seemed to be a more prominent and natural part of Turkish student teachers' educational goals as regards their forthcoming work of values education.

Nevertheless, a closer examination of the findings revealed a rather complicated picture. In general, Turkish student teachers appeared to be more morally committed and 'eclectic'. They displayed stronger preferences towards virtue ethics, consequential ethics and deontological ethics compared to the Swedish teachers, whereas ethics of care was similarly highly rated by both Swedish and Turkish student teachers. There are some possible reasons for this. Overall morality has been a concept avoided in Swedish school policies, curricula and practice; it has been replaced with the vague, non-academic concept "värdegrund" (Thornberg, 2004; Orlenius, 2001). In addition, Swedish teachers generally have unsure and mixed feelings considering values education (e.g., Thornberg, 2008). In contrast, Turkish teachers tend to consider moral education as essential and want to teach it in their classes (Temli et al., 2011). Moreover, the stronger commitment to deontological ethics among the Turkish student teachers, might, at least in part, be explained by the more widespread religion-based ethics with their moral obligation to obey divine commands (cf., Kaya, 2015) in Turkey as compared to Sweden. In line with these possible explanations, our findings indicate that moral preferences in teaching seem to be more strongly embraced by Turkish student teachers than Swedish student teachers early on in their teacher education training.

In addition, whereas the inter-correlations among the three normative ethical goal preferences were moderate among the Swedish student teachers, they were strong among the Turkish student teachers (deontological ethics was not included in the correlation analysis in the Results but additional correlation analyses revealed that deontological ethics was stronger correlated with the three other normative ethics in the Turkish sample [r ranged from .62 to .66] than in the Swedish sample [r ranged from .42 to .52]); this also supports the conclusion that Turkish student teachers displayed a more eclectic set of moral assumptions than the Swedish student teachers. This in turn might explain why the exploratory factor analysis of the Moral Educational Goal Scale succeeded in coming up with a three-factor model (i.e., a distinction between virtue ethics, consequential ethics, and ethics of care) in the Swedish data, but it failed to accomplish this in the Turkish data. Instead, all the items were loaded into one factor. Further research is needed to explain why Turkish student teachers seem to be more morally committed and eclectic than Swedish student teachers as regards values education in their future teacher practice. Although we adopted the concept of eclectic in the current study, we still do not know how informed by moral philosophy the participants actually were, simply because we examined neither their knowledge in this field nor their reported sources or references. The degree of proximity to the normative ethical perspectives as moral educational goals might express cognitive representations (Fuente Arias, 2004) that are built on more intuitive, personal assumptions of what morals they think students should learn or develop – something that previous studies have indicated (e.g., Colnerud, 2001; Thornberg, 2008; Thornberg & Oğuz, 2013).

Our hypothesis that female student teachers rated ethics of care as a more important moral educational goal than the male student teachers was only partially confirmed. Gender differences – in which female student teachers rated ethics of care, virtue ethics, and deontological ethics as more important than male student teachers did – were only found in the Swedish sample; no significant gender difference was found considering consequential ethics. Hence, the current study highlights the importance of contextualizing moral preferences in people's cultural settings by showing that gender differences in ethics of care, virtue ethics, and deontological ethics were found in the Swedish data but not in the Turkish data. This should be investigated in further research.

Also in line with our hypothesis, Turkish student teachers were more committed to traditional-conservative goals than Swedish student teachers were. To a higher degree, Turkish student teachers emphasized adult transmission of the morals of society (cf., Durkheim, 1961) and the aim of teaching and disciplining students to conform to the dominant values, legitimate rules, and the authority of society; and to prepare them to fit in and follow the conventions of the community (cf., Jones, 2009). This might be explained by the stronger focus on traditional-conservative values and goals (but in combination with liberal-progressive values and goals) in the Turkish school system (Demirel, 2009; Kaya, 2015; Salmoni, 2004) as a result of the Eastern notion of collectivism in the mix of East and West in Turkey (Stanley, 2013) as compared to Sweden (Hartman, 2005; Lundberg & Werner, 2013; Orlenius, 2001; Svingby, 1994).

Furthermore, both Swedish and Turkish student teachers rated critical-progressive goals as more important than traditional-conservative goals, although Turkish student teachers were more committed to traditional-conservative goals than Swedish student teachers were. Thus, both Swedish and Turkish student teachers agreed on the importance of teaching and encouraging students to participate in deliberative discussions and democratic decision-making processes (cf., Dewey, 1916; Gutmann, 1987; Power et al., 1989), and to engage them more actively in social issues and actions, to identify and counteract social injustice and oppression (cf., Giroux & Penna, 1983; Jones, 2009; Perumal, 2015).

Whereas a slight majority (56%) of the Swedish student teachers displayed a greater preference for pure critical-progressive goals, only 20% of the Turkish student teachers did the same. In contrast, 15% of the Turkish student teachers displayed greater preferences for pure traditional-conservative goals, whereas only 2% of the Swedish student teachers did. Nevertheless, the common distinction between traditional and progressive approaches (see for example, Goodman, 2000; Narvaez, 2006; Solomon et al., 2001) has been criticized for simplifying the field (e.g., Sanger & Osguthorpe, 2005); educational approaches can be hybrids between them (Berkowitz, 2011; Narvaez, 2006; Thornberg, 2008; Thornberg & Oğuz, 2013). Such hybrids of preferences in citizenship educational goals were more widespread among the Turkish student teachers (47% displayed high on preferences for both traditional-conservative and critical-progressive goal preferences) than the Swedish student teachers (14% displayed high on both goal preferences); if we had used a lower cut-off value in our categorization, the overlaps between the goal preferences would have been much larger in both subsamples (e.g., if we had used 3 instead of 4 as the cut-off value, 88% of the Turkish student teachers and 69% of the Swedish student teachers would had been categorized as displaying hybrids between traditional-conservative and critical-progressive goal preferences, which would indeed support Sanger and Osgurthorpe's critique of the distinction).

Once again, the findings revealed a more widespread eclectic approach to values education among the Turkish student teachers than among the Swedish student teachers. Whereas preferences for pure critical-progressive goals were more common among the Swedish student teachers, goal preferences based on a hybrid between traditional-conservative and critical-progressive goals were more common among Turkish student teachers. A possible explanation of this cultural difference might, as stated above, be the mix of East and West in Turkish culture (Ersoy, 2010; Stanley, 2013),

which in turn might create a more eclectic moral and political orientation in student teachers' preferences in values education, as compared to a more "pure" Western culture in Sweden (however, for a critique of the notion of collectivist and individualist cultures, see Wainryb & Recchia, 2014).

8.1. Limitations

Some notes of caution, however, need to be added regarding the current findings. The Moral Educational Goal Scale was brief and did not include the full range of ethical normative assumptions (e.g., ethics of rights, discourse ethics, pragmatic ethics, and ethics of prima facie duties). We also had to exclude the deontological ethics in the main analysis, with the exceptions of the three separate *t*-tests we conducted to examine cross-cultural and gender differences. It is also important to recognize that the scale was selective and limited concerning the normative ethics measured (e.g., the focus on utilitarianism when measuring consequential ethics). A more extensive scale would cover a fuller range of normative ethics and variation within each of them.

In addition, although it is common to make a distinction between deontological and consequential ethics in the literature (e.g., Singer, 1991), others argue that both can be considered deontological theories. Statman (1997), for example, states that these two approaches share some essential characteristics, including that "all human beings are bound by some universal *duties* (which are either prior to or derivative from some notion of the good); that moral reasoning is a matter of applying *principles*" (p. 3), in which agents must remain impartial. This critique further points to the problem with treating normative ethics as a set of neat categories. The field of ethics is indeed broader, complex and overlapping.

Furthermore, with reference to the statistical analysis, we did not make a distinction between progressive and critical approaches but merged them into one factor. Thus, in future research it would be valuable to cover a more diverse range of citizenship educational goal preferences in terms of conservative, progressive, and critical (and perhaps even between "critical" in a post-Marxist and feminist sense and "postmodern") approaches.

Another limitation is, as Kaplan and Maehr (2007) put it, "using scales to operationalize constructs implies that the construct has essentially the same meaning to each and every individual" (p. 149), which might be even more problematized in cross-cultural studies such as the current study. Future cross-cultural studies should examine student teachers' preferences in moral and citizenship educational goals by adopting qualitative methods such as in-depth interviews in order to be more sensitive to their normative assumptions and educational goals. The sample in this study is based on first-year student teachers from a university in Sweden and a university in Turkey, which of course limits the transferability. Including student teachers from several universities in both countries would have increased the representativeness of student teachers in both countries. Moreover, self-reported questionnaire data can always be problematic in terms of ecological validity and shared method variance.

8.2. Conclusions and implications

Despite these limitations, our findings show cross-cultural differences in moral commitments and preferences when considering values education among student teachers. Whereas Turkish student teachers seemed to be more morally committed and eclectic than Swedish student teachers, the hypothesized gender difference concerning ethics of care could only be found in the Swedish sample. This in turn highlights the importance of taking the cultural context into account when examining, analyzing, and discussing ethics, values education and student teachers' moral assumptions in teacher education. Our findings revealed that at the beginning of their teacher training, student teachers already had a set of moral educational goal preferences that were more or less close to virtue ethics, deontological ethics, consequential ethics, and ethics of care.

In accordance with Sanger and Osguthorpe (2005) framework for understanding the underpinnings of approaches to moral education in order to prepare student teachers for values education, it is crucial to allow them to explore and discuss moral assumptions (normative and meta-ethical assumptions) as well as psychological assumptions (moral psychology and development), educational assumptions (the scope of teaching and education) and contingent factors (contextual factors such as personal, historical, social, political, and institutional factors). Studying normative ethics as a part of their training in values education must be included in teacher education in order to support student teachers in developing a qualified professional meta-language (Thornberg, 2008). Increasing teachers' ethical knowledge is particularly urgent because without a moral vocabulary, it is difficult to see how teachers can address the complexity of moral judgments they must make with either confidence or competence, how they can develop moral understanding, and how they can teach children to think about and reflect on moral issues (Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2011; Sockett & LePage, 2002). Furthermore, our study demonstrated the importance of cross-cultural comparisons in teacher education when teaching and discussing moral assumptions in values education, as well as recognizing and addressing culturally dependent differences in moral assumptions among student teachers. This is particularly important considering the growing globalization, migration, and multiculturalism around the world.

Teacher education also needs to address normative assumptions in political and civic socialization associated with values education by inviting student teachers to examine and discuss their preferences in citizenship educational goals and their underlying normative assumptions, and to compare these with established traditional-conservative, progressive-liberal and critical approaches and the underlying theoretical frameworks, arguments, and normative assumptions in the literature. The impact of political philosophy, sociology, and political science on theory and research on values education must be included in teacher education in order to develop student teachers awareness of their preferences in citizenship educational goals and to build up their professional meta-language in this domain. Once again, cross-cultural comparisons would be essential to make student teachers aware of how citizenship educational goals are closely related to the historical and ideological evolution of the respective countries (cf., Taylor, 1994).

Further research should examine how student teachers' moral and citizenship educational goals are associated with socio-ecological factors such as national and cultural contexts, gender, socio-economic background, and ethnicity or race. In addition, qualitative interview studies with student teachers in different countries would make a deeper, more sensitive examination of their normative assumptions and educational goal preferences possible, as well as an analytical comparison of their elaborated descriptions with different theoretical frameworks within the values education literature, including normative ethics, moral and developmental psychology, political socialization, and sociology of education.

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